

STAGEW



SEAFORD LITTLE THEATRE NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 - January 2020

our next production :

THERE GOES THE BRIDE by Ray Cooney & John Chapman

The opening production of 2020 is **There Goes The Bride** by Ray Cooney & John Chapman directed by Phil Armstrong.

It is the wedding of Judy, the daughter of Timothy and Ursula Westerby, and they have organised a lavish day of celebration at their Kensington home. Unfortunately the father of the bride, an advertising executive, is also pre-occupied with his latest campaign for Perkin's Bras. Following a freak accident he not only forgets it is his daughter's wedding day, but also that he has a wife of his own. As the day descends into hilarious chaos, family and friends rally round to try and get matters back on track.

Jon Terry plays the hapless Timothy with Jenny Humphries as his long suffering wife,



Ursula and they are joined by a cast of favourites including Clare Forshaw as Judy, Josie Hobbs and Roland Boorman as the bride's grandparents Daphne and Gerald, Dennis Picott as Timothy's business partner Bill, Alan Clifford as the father of the groom and Andrea Lowe as the mysterious Polly Perkins.

This play was a huge hit in the West End in the mid seventies starring Bernard Cribbins and Peggy Mount and was subsequently made into a 1980 film featuring the talents of Twiggy and Phil Silvers.

The show opens on Friday 7 February 2020 and runs through to the following Saturday 15 February with a matinée only on Saturday 8 February. Evening performances commence at 7.45pm and the matinée will start at 2.30pm.

a happy new year to all our members and friends

Luvvie Loquacity - The Thoughts Of Thespians

I should have suggested a minute's silence.

Alan Bennett on being asked how to celebrate Harold Pinter's birthday

FOR ALL BOOKING INFORMATION SEE PAGE 12



THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Margaret Kennedy

WHAT AN interesting quiz Tanya Baxter devised and organized for us in October. Good fun and great food. Well done Tanya!!

At the AGM in November you voted me in as Chairman, and we said a big thank you to our outgoing Chairman Dennis Picott, as well as Secretary Mary Young and Friend's Secretary Cicely Ridley. Both these ladies have served us faithfully for many years: Mary was Secretary to several Chairmen before becoming Chairman herself, then when no-one else would take on the Secretary role stepped back in, as well as running both the Production Committee and the monthly Playreading evenings. Cicely also purchases biscuits, wine and ices for all our plays as well as keeping us stocked up with toilet rolls and cleaning materials, and is a stalwart of the Social Committee, all of which she will continue to do. They have both been made Life Members and Mary has accepted the role of Honorary President, which has been vacant since the death of Valerie Shepherd.

We welcomed Dennis back on to the committee along with Garry Fowler and Roger Trace, who has volunteered to cover both the outgoing ladies' roles and is already proving to be a very efficient Secretary. They complete a dedicated and hard working team.

Later in the month *On Golden Pond* opened and was very well received by audiences. Congratulations to Trish Richings and her team. As well as appreciation for a well-cast play, the set and the wardrobe came in for praise too, and what I think is the greatest compliment, one person said they could happily come back and see it again!

It was at the end of this run that we heard of the sad death of Stella Dench, and in December many of us who had known her attended her funeral and her wake back at the Theatre. Later that evening 60 of us gathered for a Christmas Dinner at Diella's. It was great to meet up with so many old friends and we took the opportunity to give Stella one final round of applause which we had felt restrained to do at the funeral. A very big thank you to Ray and Debbie for organizing a great way to round off the year, before their final burst with the Retro Disco.

Tickets for our next play *There Goes The Bride* will soon be on sale, let's hope that the new system works smoothly.

Writing this before the festivities I do hope that you have a good one, and come back refreshed and ready to go again as we approach our 75th year.



Debbie Cox
Tel: 07596709044
Email: coxdeb8@gmail.com.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



Firstly, as the year ends, a really heartfelt thankyou to all the talented, hardworking chums (and Ray) who helped throughout the year. Our social events and activities take a surprising amount of time and preparation, as a variety of skills are required as well as a lot of hard graft and patience.

And a thank you also goes out to the members who regularly attend our events ... so all you wonderful quizzers, bakers, boppers, bat the ratters, trekkers, tea and toasters, etc, etceterers, take a bow. We couldn't (and wouldn't) have done it without you. We have some old favourites lined up for the new year and some fresh new events, so if Tea & Toast isn't your cup of tea (or coffee) and burnt dough, then there are a variety of titbits to tickle your palette.

Now on with some dates for the coming weeks.

FRIDAY 31 JANUARY

Homedrive Seaford Little Theatre Doors open 6.00pm

After last year's successful try-out we are having another Homedrive evening. For the uninitiated it is a board game similar to a beetle drive and is good social fun and simple to do. Please bring along your own food and drink. There is just a nominal entry fee of £1.



SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY

There Goes The Bride Wrap Party

There will be the usual Wrap Party, following the last performance, of our latest production *There Goes The Bride*. Please, as usual, bring some food and whatever you want to drink to help celebrate, with the cast and crew of the production, after what I am sure will be another success.



SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY

Theatre Clean Up Seaford Little Theatre from 2.00pm

All cast and crew members of *There Goes The Bride* to please attend to clean and tidy up the Theatre after this production. The costumes, props etc., will need to be returned and to be sorted beforehand and the Theatre to be cleaned through. There will also be a get together afterwards for a meal.

SATURDAY 29 FEBRUARY

A Leap Year Kath Kennard Walk Meet 10.00am The Salts Cafe

Our last walk at the beginning of November was one just for the hardy few, as we were blasted by wind and rain along the River Ouse and around the village of Rodmell. Only four walkers and one plucky cockapoo braved the extreme elements and almost managed to keep upright to the end (Gail Armstrong decided to have a brief sit down



on the riverbank), but the severity of the conditions made the warm drinks and food in the Courtyard Cafe afterwards seem all the tastier.

The next excursion will, hopefully, be a lot milder, as we grab the bonus of an extra day this year and explore the region around Rookery Wood and Norton. The walk will last approximately two hours at a very leisurely pace and will start and finish at the Salts so we can enjoy refreshments afterwards. Make this the start of your post xmas fitness regime.

FRIDAY 6 MARCH

Bingo with Roger & Karen **Seaford Little Theatre** **Doors open Lucky 7.00pm**



It's time to get your eyes (and the rest of your body) down to the Little Theatre for a game of Housey Housey conducted by Roger and Karen Trace. The fun starts at 7.30pm and the cost of **Garden Gate** pounds (£8) includes the usual excellent nibbles (please bring your own drink). So get your turbo dibber fired up and ready and book yourself a place.

FRIDAY 3 APRIL

Quiztime with Roger & Karen **Seaford Little Theatre** **Doors open 6.30pm**

Roger and Karen are returning in April to bring us one of their quiz nights, which are already popular in East Dean. The quiz will start at 7.00pm and the cost is £9 to include a ploughman's supper (please bring your own drinks). Teams are welcome - up to a maximum of six, but don't worry if you don't have one, just come along and join up with others on the night. It's a great social event which everyone enjoys.



SATURDAY 13 JUNE



The Mystery DJ Show **Seaford Little Theatre** **Doors open 7.30pm**

It's boogie time as the mystery DJ brings us a night of 90's, and naughties tunes, including drum 'n' base, club anthems and general cheese. The cost is £9 to include a buffet and puds (but bring your own drinks as usual). Lots of bangin' tunes to get you going.

For all events please let me know ASAP if you will be attending, and any dietary needs - veggie, vegan, gluten-free etc. For further details about any of the social activities, or if you have any comments/suggestions please contact me, Debbie Cox, on 07596709044 or email at coxdeb8@gmail.com. For tickets to Roger and Karen's Bingo or Quiz you can also contact Roger Trace on 07714736737. Thank you for your continuing support.

I look forward to hearing from you soon, Debbie

TEA & TOAST COFFEE MORNINGS



Our Tea & Toast mornings take place on the last Monday of each month (excluding bank holidays) from 10.00am, with a nominal charge of £1. Last year we collected for MacMillan Cancer Support and raised over £100 as we sipped and munched our way through oodles of tea and coffee and acres of toast and crumpets. The charity for 2020 is the British Heart Foundation and we hope to do just as well, so please continue to show your excellent support for the coming year. Any new tea and toasters always welcome. Just show up and join in.

THEATRE WORKS



Since the last newsletter the refurbishment of the dressing rooms has continued to take place with the installation of new(ish) furniture and mirrors and a general freshening up of the space. This will progress over the coming months - time permitting!

The saga of getting a broadband installation has now reached the proportions of Greek tragedy and, as the person tasked with overseeing it, I am quite close to falling on my sword as a blessed release. At the time of writing we have had a phone line installed which, for some reason

that no-one can fully explain, goes via an exchange in Chichester fifty plus miles away and consequently does not work. Suffice to say that the entertaining sight of an assortment of Open Reach engineers staring at the telephone socket, scratching their heads, sucking in a deep breath and then backing away slowly is beginning to wear a little thin. As is speaking to a variety of BT customer complaints personnel from Belfast.

On a more positive note, quotes have been received for the installation of air conditioning to the auditorium and we are hopeful that it will be in operation by the summer.

Once that has been done we want to get the auditorium repainted and generally freshened up. To this end Premises Manager, Gill Watson, has asked for the membership to be canvassed for any suggestions of good quality, reasonably priced contractors who might be able to take on the job.

Any suggestions should go to Gill on 07977 468101 or email: gillwatson69@gmail.com

Finally the defibrillator has been purchased and will be installed soon. See below.

DEFIBRILLATOR VOLUNTEERS

Now that we have a defibrillator in our theatre we would like to arrange training with the St John's Ambulance Brigade in both its use and CPR (cardiac pulmonary resuscitation). Courses are for a max of 8 people and take 3 to 4 hours. If anyone is interested in taking part please contact me, Dennis Piccott, at dennisandwendy2@gmail.com. I will try to arrange courses for March/April and will need to give St John's three alternative dates. As soon as I have sufficient volunteers I will make contact with you all regarding possible dates.



CLOSER TO YOU PROJECT - ST WILFRID'S HOSPICE



We have been contacted by Paul Wogan who is the Community Volunteer Project Co-ordinator at St Wilfrid's to tell us about the Closer to You Project, whereby they are trying to reach out to patients across the area that may have become isolated by their life limiting illness. The Community Support Volunteer program seeks people from the local community who are willing to visit patients for roughly 1-2 hours once a week or a fortnight to provide companionship, a cup of tea and perhaps a game of scrabble or similar. You can find out more about the role at:

www.stwhospice.org/community-support-volunteer-csv

If this sounds like it would be of any interest to you, Paul would be very happy to have a chat and tell you more.

You can contact him by telephone: 07784238544 or email: Paul.Wogan@stwhospice.org

PLAY READING GROUP

For information contact Deborah Lade
Tel: 01323 492177 Email: debilade@btinternet.com.



We always look forward to welcoming new members to our play reading sessions on the first Tuesday of the month at 19.30 in the Coffee Lounge (except during productions). There is a nominal charge of £1 for refreshments.

Everybody has their wish list of plays they'd like to read. There's a vast wealth of plays out there for us to get stuck into – the tricky thing is deciding which to do next. Therefore, for 2020, I am going to try a new format to these readings, in that each of the people that attend will be invited to submit a play they would like to be featured. At the end of the meeting one of these will be drawn and that play will be read as soon as script copies can be obtained. The successful member then has the opportunity, if they wish, to 'direct' for that session, assigning the roles to the people in attendance.

Of course you have to be prepared to wing it on the night, though, doubling up parts if there aren't enough people there, or dividing one role between two during separate acts if there are more readers than parts.

Please don't worry if you are not a performer – many of those who come have no desire to appear on stage, but that shouldn't stop us being creative. It's all about enjoying yourself and having a good time. And it's very relaxed, it doesn't matter if anyone messes up - there isn't the pressure of putting on a performance or having lines to learn. Everyone just turns up on the night, and off we go. You don't even have to read, you can just come along and listen.

So make a note in your diary for the first Tuesday of every month. Hope to see you there.

PRODUCTIONS FOR THE 2020 SEASON

| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 07 - 15 February | THERE GOES THE BRIDE by Ray Cooney & John Chapman | directed by Phil Armstrong |
| 08 - 16 May | LADIES IN LAVENDER by Shaun McKenna | directed by Mary Young and Penny Cockell |
| 24 July - 1 August | SHOCK! by Brian Clemens | directed by Garry Fowler |
| 06 - 14 November | SEE HOW THEY RUN by Philip King | directed by Margaret Kennedy |

Luvvie Loquacity - The Thoughts Of Thespians

Eventually you reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Will Rogers

STELLA DENCH 22 MARCH 1925 - 15 NOVEMBER 2019

Stella's funeral took place at Seaford Cemetery Chapel on Friday 6 December 2019, followed by a gathering at Seaford Little Theatre. Despite the sadness of the occasion, there was a lot of laughter as Stella came back home to Seaford for her final performance, and the phrase 'she was quite a character' was heard more than once, both during the service and afterwards.



Stella was an integral part of the Little Theatre for many, many years, not just as a celebrated actor and well respected, decisive director, but behind the scenes in several capacities too, where she was untiring in her dedication to the theatre that she loved. As anyone who came into contact with her soon found out, she was not one to suffer fools gladly and never, ever shy of voicing her opinion, but she was also very warm and giving and had a laugh that could cheer you up no matter how down you felt, especially if it involved a risqué joke.

Her credits as an actor and director are too numerous to list, but as an indication of her character and spirit I will mention her appearance in **Laying the Ghost**. Whilst on stage during one performance she suffered what later turned out to be a series of mini strokes that rendered her quite disorientated and unable to remember her lines. Despite imprecations from everyone to seek medical assistance, she insisted on seeing the play through to the end, concealing the script in her copious handbag, so she wouldn't miss a line. And she turned out the next night too and for all the remaining performances until the run was finished.



That was Stella in a nutshell, someone who loved to perform and couldn't bear the thought of the production suffering because of some 'minor' complication in her fortunes.

When the funeral service was over, we left the chapel to the strains of **There's No Business Like Show Business**, which put a smile on everyone's face. I couldn't help thinking as we went that the lyrics could just as easily have been **There Was No Stella Dench Like Our Stella Dench**.

She was one of a kind who will be greatly missed.

SANTA'S GROTTO REVISITED



Now that the Christmas nonsense is finally out of the way, you'll all have had time to take stock and evaluate what Santa brought you this year.

If, while doing so, you decide you really could do without the novelty shoe horn/bottle opener/fish slice combination gadget from Great Aunt Dahlia, then why not donate it, and any similar gifts you could live the rest of your life not owning, to Debbie Cox for her stash of raffle prizes that she constantly needs throughout the year.

Think of it as a form of recycling which, while it may not save the planet, will keep your Social Secretary very happy and that can't be a bad thing, can it?

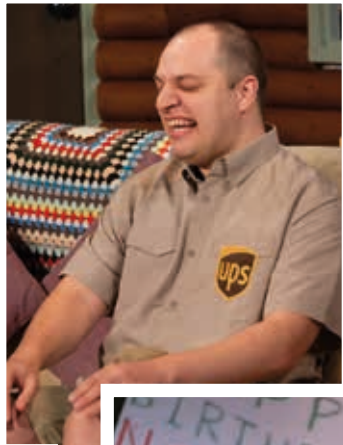
All contributions, no matter how small, gratefully received. Either leave them for Debbie's attention at the theatre or get in touch to arrange collection.

Tel: 07596709044 or email at coxdeb8@gmail.com.



Photos from the set of
On Golden Pond
 taken by Andrew Parkinson
www.rememberingwhen.co.uk

Good As Gold



On Golden Pond
 with John Hamilton, Ann Mabey,
 Peter Barnes, Paula Woolven, Logan
 Brewer and Alan Lade



AUDITION NOTICE

LADIES IN LAVENDER

adapted by Shaun McKenna from a screenplay by Charles Dance

Audition Date: Friday 17 January 2020 - 7.30pm

Seaford Little Theatre

Production dates: 8 - 16 May 2020

Based on the film, from a screenplay by Charles Dance and taken from a short story by William L Locke, this is the tale of Ursula and Janet Widdington, set in a Cornish fishing village in 1936. When a handsome and talented young Polish violinist is washed ashore, the sisters take him under their wing and nurse him back to health. However, the presence of the mysterious young man disrupts their peaceful lives and the community in which they live.

Scripts are available from Mary (07891 691341) or at the theatre. Please read, copy any passages you require and return so that other people can access a script.

Rehearsals will normally be Mondays & Thursdays (subject to discussion). A full rehearsal schedule will be available in due course.

If you are interested but unable to attend the audition date, please contact us so that we can arrange an alternative. There is a possible additional date on Friday 24 January. If you are able to help behind the scenes, we would also be very pleased to hear from you.

Mary Young Tel: 07891691341 or 01323 351882
Email: gmaryyoung@gmail.com

Penny Cockell Tel: 01323 897517
Email: pennycockell@gmail.com

| CHARACTERS | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| JANET WIDDINGTON | Middle class Spinster lady of 60+ |
| URSULA WIDDINGTON | As above, but younger sister 60+ |
| DORCAS | Local Cornish maid/ housekeeper 50+ |
| ANDREA MOROWSKI | Young Polish musician 20ish |
| DR MEAD | Local GP 50+ |
| OLGA DANILOFF | Russian artist /summer visitor 30ish |

AUDITION PIECES

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| JANET | 12 - 14, 71 - 74, 80 - 83 |
| URSULA | 12 - 14, 71 - 74, 80 - 83 |
| DORCAS | 12 - 14, 58 - 60 |
| ANDREA | 62 - 64, 74 - 77 |
| DR MEAD | 65 - 67, 80 - 83 |
| OLGA | 65 - 67, 74 - 77 |

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL



If you haven't paid your membership fees for the coming year yet, then please make use of the form below to get them renewed. Membership now runs for a calendar year, alongside the season's productions, from January to December. Once completed either hand the form in at the theatre or send it direct to Penny Cockell.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Name(s)

Address

Phone No(s)

Email(s)

Membership Fee
(tick one)

Adult

Student

I/We wish to renew my/our membership of Seaford Little Theatre for 2020.
The membership fee for 2020 is £10 per person (students - £5)

Please return this form with the appropriate amount (cheques payable to Seaford Dramatic Society) to:

Penny Cockell (Membership Secretary), 30 St Crispians, Seaford, BN25 2DY
Tel: 01323 897517 Email: memsec@seafordlittletheatre.co.uk

BOOKING INFORMATION



The ticket prices are £9.00 each for the tiered seats and £8.00 each for all other seats.

Tickets for members (don't forget your membership card please) and Friends of the theatre are available in advance from Friday 10 January 2020 at our **NEW** box office:

**SEAFORD TOURIST OFFICE,
37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG**

Telephone Enquiries & Booking:
(01323) 897426

Email: seaford.tic@lewes.gov.uk

We are also now offering an on-line booking system via TicketSource. This can be found at:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/seaford-little-theatre

or through our website, address below. Please note a small booking fee applies to all on-line sales. Unfortunately, due to the way in which the system operates, this facility cannot be used when exchanging Friend's Vouchers. These must still be presented at the Box Office as usual.

Postal applications should be sent to:

Diane Guyatt, 31 Pondsyrde Court, Sutton Drove, Seaford, BN25 3ET

They must be accompanied by a cheque made out to 'Seaford Dramatic Society' and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If the position you seek is not possible the nearest available seats will be sent.

Could you also provide an alternative date in case the the one you request is sold out.

**Tickets for this production on sale from
Friday 10 January 2020**



Contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. Send your pieces to:

newsletter@seafordlittletheatre.co.uk



**For an on-line version of this newsletter and lots of other information
visit the Seaford Little Theatre Website:
www.seafordlittletheatre.co.uk**

**Copy deadline for next edition of the newsletter:
20 MARCH 2020**