



H.A.T.S. SPRING NEWSLETTER 2015

www.holsworthytheatre.co.uk

Bodmin Street Holsworthy

01409 253826



RECENT PRODUCTIONS



Pantomime 'Babes in the Wood' 2015

Here is the performance review, by Ian Goodenough from NODA. Date of review 7th February 2015

"The annual pantomime by HATs is always a crowd-pleaser but with this year's 'Babes in the Wood', the society really seemed to have upped their game, by producing a funny show with great pace and ingenuity. First good choice was the script. HATs are great script choosers - something that is so important to a production. It isn't enough to pick a title that sounds like it will 'sell' if the casting and writing will have a detrimental effect on the show and society's reputation. In the case of "Babes in the Wood", HATS chose a sturdy script that they knew (as panto-pros) they would be able to embellish and produce something special. And they did just that.

The cast were fab, with all the traditional characters showing their faces. Comic capers and general baboonery was provided by henchmen Floggem & Whippem - they worked well as a team demonstrating great comic timing and rapport with the audience. Meanwhile their boss, the evil Sheriff, elicited plenty of Boos and Hisses from the audience and dominated the stage whenever he was present, much in the same way the excellent Dame (Nurse Jemima Jollop) did. She was stunning (metaphorically), festooned as she was in various OTT costumes, each larger and grander than the next. Never 'camping it up', she played the dame just right - and she got the audience whooping, hollering and heckling perfectly. I'm fairly sure the audience were performing their own script with her at one point!

Jemima wasn't alone with her impeccable wardrobe as the whole cast was decked out in fantastic costumes, which was not a surprise as HATS never dress their cast in anything less than the best! Robin Hood and his nifty fight scenes with sticks and swords was every bit the hero. Alongside Robin were his band of trusted 'Merry Men', who brought more fun to the show (particularly with their 'Men in Tights' number!!), supporting the strong company's performance. In fact their efforts strongly echoed the rest of the chorus, who were also strong onstage, always engaged in the action (rather than staring blankly at whomever happened to be talking - I hate that!) and interacting within their own groups. Tribute to a strong director who takes in the 'big picture' and doesn't get distracted by those pesky principles!

Still learning their crafts, the Babes were sweet and innocent and Green Willow was the voice of 'good' in the forest, representing nature and getting shouts from us all when her magic 'listening tree' sprang into life – while her opposite in magic was the incredible Nell Nightshade. She was superb, in character, comic timing and stage technique in general - such strong talents as Nell and the other principals are great assets to the society and, at the risk of sounding weird, I hope HATS are taking full advantage of them in developing their younger members!

From a staging point-of-view here were some very well executed ideas. In particular the 'Spooky Bedroom' scene (one of many very nice sets) in which ghosts appeared behind doors, bedsheets vanished and a headless spook appeared, whose lips still moved despite being located under his arm with the rest of his bonce. It was also a very clever trick to setup the 'haunted' portrait of Sir Wilfred as a video projection. I always love seeing this kind of innovation and this worked very well. Ignored by the cast onstage, Sir Wilfred thoroughly entertained us all with his facial expressions and drunken antics.

Choreography was kept simple and, although it was a little repetitive in places, gave the show enough movement to keep it fresh and mixing in some tracked music amongst that provoked by the small band. I particularly liked the dance with the toys, which was clever, funny and a creative idea. While the singing from the cast was un-complicated, it worked well and had been arranged in such a way that it kept the show flowing and felt like each number belonged, rather than being jammed into place.

I was worried that the final number was going to be a bit slow, but it ended up being a very uplifting number with some clever use of torches, which spurred the audience into whipping out their phones to shine back, rock-concert style! In fact I would say I enjoyed this performance from beginning to end - even the dreaded sing-a-long in which I participated loudly (us men were robbed of our victory, but I'll not hold that against anyone)! I thought last year's production was good. This year you topped it. I can't wait for 2016!"

Here is a message from Phil Barfett, who directed the pantomime:

"Many thanks to everyone on and off stage who helped so much with 'Babes in the Wood'. Without you the show would not have been such a success. Thank you for the card and present which was much appreciated and I will enjoy for some time!!!!!"

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



Rotary Extravaganza – Annual variety show

Friday 27th March 2012 Doors open 7.00 for 7.30 pm



Booking now: 'Coodes', 4 Bodmin Street, Holsworthy (01409 253425) or Ian Parker (01409 254286)

HATS will be performing a selection of numbers from the musical 'Cats'. Rehearsals are already well under way. Get your tickets soon.

'Blithe Spirit'

Thursday 21st – Saturday 23rd May; Thursday 28th – Saturday 30th May

Eve Earles is directing this famous farce by Noel Coward, set in the 1940's, which features fussy novelist Charles who, with his wife Ruth invites Madame Arcati, an eccentric medium to hold a séance at their home. Elvira, Charles' late first wife, materialises as a ghost and begins to haunt him - his life will never be the same again! David Moorley is stage manager.

Eve has cast the parts for the play but she is looking for a member to be prompt. If you would like to help, contact Eve on 01409 220293.

Also, the hunt is on for an old-fashioned electric gramophone. It does not have to be working but should look as if it is! Again, contact Eve if you can help in any way.

Booking opens: Monday 27th April

'Noises Off'

(September 2015)

Here is a message from Sarah O'Connor, the director

'Noises Off' by Michael Frayn is a farce about farce, taking the clichés of the genre and shaking them inventively through a series of kaleidoscopic patterns. Never missing a trick it has as its first act a traditional farce; as its second a contemporary variant on the formula; as its third an elaborate undermining of it all.

The play opens with a touring company at their final dress/technical rehearsal as the hours tick away towards opening night of 'Nothing On', a conventional farce. We are then taken backstage where you see the angst between the characters while moving on stage to do the performance for the audience, various vicious actions cause the production to start to move into pandemonium! The third act is the final performance in the tour by which time everyone is struggling to get through the night without a great deal of success.

"Mixing mockery and homage, Frayn heaps into this play-within-a-play, an hilarious melee of stock characters and situations. Caricatures – cheery char, outraged wife and squeaky blonde – stampede in and out of doors. Voices rise and trousers fall ... a farce that makes you think as well as laugh."

For us in HATS this means we need to maintain the timing which is extremely important, have actors who can move between 'on stage' and 'off stage' voices and characters, keeping fast movement and able to mime the words they are trying to say when back-stage. If not played carefully the whole thing (especially Act 2) can become a bit of a muddle, as it is on some of the YouTube versions you can see.

There are parts for six men, of varying ages and sizes of parts. Also four women, including a very dizzy blonde and a young and impressionable Director's assistant.

All great fun and I owe it to Michael Frayn to get us doing a really magnificent performance...but *that* is another story!! I hope to see a lot of you at the readings after the current production: Blithe Spirit.



Donation to the Long House Appeal:

A sum of £624, the total of ticket sales from the first night of the pantomime, has been offered as a donation from HATS to the Long House Appeal, Holsworthy. A formal presentation is to be held on Wednesday 18th March, 7.30pm, at the theatre to hand over the cheque. All are welcome to attend.

Publicity:

Carole Wright has kindly agreed to arrange publicity for productions and has already started her new role by organising press releases and coordinating promotion for the play, Blithe Spirit.

Window dressing:

You will have seen that the windows of the solicitors 'Peter, Peter and Wright' in Holsworthy are dressed each year to promote the pantomime and each of the plays. New members are required to take on this role so if you would like to get involved please call Annette (01409 254757) or email the website.

Stewards:

A member to coordinate stewarding for theatre productions is needed – if you feel you could do this Annette would love to hear from you (01409 254757).

Lighting and sound department:

More members are needed to help in this department in order to provide cover for all theatre productions. If you think you could help, please call Ian on 07920 132530

Theatre building:

The committee is planning to hire a unit on the Industrial Estate to provide extra storage for theatre props etc.

Theatre Bookings:

Amanda Brooks Dance School has booked the theatre for several dates at the end of June and beginning of July

HATS logo sweatshirts and polo shirts:

These are now available and are displayed in the foyer. Contact a committee member if you would like to buy one.

FUNDRAISING

Social events:

The committee is considering a change of venue and /or format for the annual bash in February. They would like to hear your views on this and also on other possible social events for members. If you have any suggestions please call Annette (01409 254757) or send an email via the website.

Launceston Male Voice Choir

The total raised by the performance of the choir in October 2014 was £300. It was an excellent evening's entertainment.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Wonnacott Trophy:

Kay Napier is the delighted and deserving recipient of this year's trophy.

Future Plays:

Ken Tyrrell has agreed to direct a play in September 2016. Offers from members to direct plays or other productions will be greatly welcomed by the committee.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Q. Why do you tell an actor to 'Break a leg'?

A. Because he is already in a cast!!

Q. What's the difference between a stage manager and a terrorist?

A. You can negotiate with a terrorist!



Deadline for the summer newsletter is Friday 5th June 2015.

Thanks to the many members and sponsors who have registered to have their newsletters delivered by email.

Send any changes of email / address to: moorleydenise@gmail.com

PANTO PICS

