



LEWES THEATRE CLUB
Newsletter No.47 December 2013

My Boy Jack

by

David Haigh

directed by Mike Turner



Saturday 1 February to Saturday 8 February 2013
at 7.45 pm except Sundays
Matinee Saturday 8 February at 2.45 pm

Editor's notes

The season's second double bill featured the Youth Theatre group presenting *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* with adult players taking on some roles and *Gosforth's Fete* a one act play by Ayckbourn presented for our delectation by our comedy duo – Adrian Bowd and Keith Gilbert. This was a splendid co-operation between the Youth Theatre with a guest appearance by the Professor, Dudley Ward, in the Narnia play and a walk on role in *Gosforth's Fete* by Youth Theatre member Henry Fouch. This was a splendid evening of youthful energy and comic chaos based on a great deal of work by all concerned. The sets were well made and nicely contrasting, the lighting and sound were most effective in the scenes beyond the wardrobe and the comic special effects worked well in the adult play.

75th Anniversary Special 2 for one Ticket Offer

For *My Boy Jack* and for the remaining productions this season, we are offering a 2 for 1 ticket offer for members only when booking seats for the first night of each production.

Booking two seats will therefore cost you £8, four seats £16, and greater savings will apply for larger orders.

For clarification, the total cost of booking three seats would be £16, and for five seats, the cost would be £24.

We hope that this offer will prove popular with members, and will give an additional boost to the season's productions, by ensuring good houses on their opening nights.

Micheal Turner
michealturner@btinternet.com

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DIARY DATES

PERFORMANCES

My Boy Jack

1- 8 February 2014

Under the Greenwood Tree

17 December & 19-23 December

Lecture Trench Warfare WW1

by Peter Chasseaud

17 January 7.00 pm

Youth Theatre Presentation

Cafe Sunday XL

23 February

AUDITION - *Time of My Life*

15 February 10.30 a.m. in the Foyer

PREVIEW

My Boy Jack

By David Haigh directed by Mike Turner



2014 is the first year of the commemorations for the First World War and Lewes Theatre has programmed in a most appropriate play in *My Boy Jack*. Not only does it examine the issues of patriotism and jingoism that were part of the causes of the upheaval and conflict but it also examines one family as a microcosm of the effect the war had on everyday lives. But in this play more than that is relevant to us. Kipling lived and wrote in Sussex, celebrated our scenery and our customs and his house Bateman's is still a memorial to him and his family including Jack.

I have been fortunate in being able to assemble a first rate cast and technical team for this play. Kipling is played by Peter Wellby, who will be remembered for his role in *The Browning Version* at

Lewes and his wife, Carrie, is played by Jenny Lloyd Lyons, who won an award for best actor in the Brighton & Hove Arts Council's Play Competition. Owen Daughtery, one of our Youth Theatre members plays Jack and he is supported by Lauren-Nicole Little as his sister Elsie. Robert Woodbridge whose last appearance at Lewes was in *The Importance of Being Earnest* is back for this play. The rest of the cast includes two new young members, James Meikel and Daniel Grimson. Roger Murray and Dominic Ramos appear in cameo roles. This play is both exciting and moving – full of sound and fury, both domestic and military and it has great significance for all those who have lost loved ones in war and the dead heroes we yearly promise to remember.

Mike Turner

Evening performances at 7.45pm. Matinee at 2.45pm on Saturday 8 February.

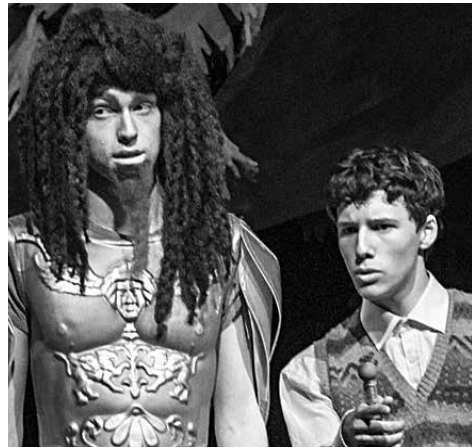
THE BOX OFFICE 01273 474826 will be open daily except Sundays from Monday 27 January to Saturday 8 February 10.30 am until noon and from 7pm to 7.30pm. Postal bookings received before the Box Office opening period will be given priority. Tickets not paid for 15 minutes before the performance is timed to start may be resold.

In any case seats booked in advance but not taken up must be paid for if not resold.

REVIEW**The Lion,
The Witch and the Wardrobe**

Playwright Glyn Robbins adapted many classic children's books for the stage including *The Hobbit*, *Wind in the Willows* and *Treasure Island* as well as four by C.S. Lewis. He was married to the successful theatre producer Vanessa Ford, a specialist in children's theatre. Lewes Youth Theatre chose his adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* for their winter production. It successfully distils the key elements and themes in the much loved book. The characters are strong and clear, the dialogue is lively, assured and authentic while the story rattles along. Directed by Tim Rowland and James Firth-Haydon, who run the Youth Theatre, the cast were assured and committed. Since their last production of *Animal Farm* the confidence and stage awareness of the group has clearly developed.

The directors cast well. Owen Daughtery was the responsible and ultimately heroic older brother Peter, Henry Fouch played the head strong Edmund, Ophelia Hunter the gentle, thoughtful Susan and Becky Clark the charmingly candid and brave Lucy. All these actors had excellent moments. Dudley Ward as The Professor who welcomes the children into his house was sweet and wise and right out of a story book. Adelaide Cannel inhabited the strict Mrs Macready well and with detail. Rupert Flowers was very touching as a lost and lonely Mr Tumnus. Inez Skilling, a strikingly beautiful White Witch, showed strong concentration and conviction. Mel Henderson doubled as Mrs Beaver and the fierce Maugrim never letting up in focus and conviction. Lucy Zara as The Dwarf was very funny with lot of natural charisma. Dan Hardwick

REVIEW**The Lion,
The Witch and the Wardrobe**

looked as though he had done a lot of character work on the animal he was portraying, which was great to see. Gem Pennington Boulter had developed well vocally to fill the mighty character of the beloved Aslan and brought warmth and concentration to a difficult role. Connie Pike and Adelaide Cannel as leopards worked professionally during the set changes, often a forgotten but

very important aspect of stage work discipline.

I really liked the simple pop-up book style set. It was clean, clear and well executed. When the centre piece opened out from the wardrobe to the forest there were ooohs and aaahhs from an appreciative audience.

Lucie Fitchett

REVIEW GOSFORTH'S FETE



The Christmas double bill continued with Alan Ayckbourn's *Gosforth's Fete*, a one-act play originally part of *Confusions*, a five act piece written in 1974. We were in for some classic poignant Ayckbourn farce born out of the human need to put on a brave face and keep up appearances while the ship is sinking. Keith Gilbert and Adrian Bowd cast 6 strong comedic actors to do justice to Ayckbourn's script in their production, and the audience howled with laughter.

Henry Fouch (Wolf Cub) had presence and perfect comic timing setting the scene for us as he relished reorganising the signage in the tea tent. I loved Lindsey Hолledge in the typical Felicity

Kendall role of Milly – the not so innocent spinster of the parish. This is the best thing I've seen her do. Simon Hellyer worked well as Gosforth (with a distinct feel of John Cleese about him) whose quest to mount the village fete to end them all ends in personal and practical disaster. Douglas Wragg had appropriately walked straight out of a vintage sitcom playing the rather bumbling village Vicar. Trish Richings was perfectly ghastly as the Tory councillor who hilariously topples from her perch while being caked in mud and finally electrocuted. Mike Piller relished his place centre stage as Stewart - the cuckolded fiancé of Milly. Hitting the sherry bottle after hearing over the

REVIEW GOSFORTH'S FETE



public tannoy system that Milly and Gosforth have had a liason resulting in a pregnancy, he treated us to a complete melt down employing all his skills as a comic actor.

As with the previous piece, I noticed the professional and authentic looking set by Adrian Bowd, Keith Gilbert, Geoff Parker and Joanne Cull and the care taken by Gerry Cortese and the team on sourcing the costumes.

The Financial Times described Gosforth's Fete like this - "Runs the gamut of comic technique from faintly pathetic situation comedy to outright farce.... Ayckbourn has demonstrated once again that even in a trivial situation

he can hold the attention with his matchless ear for conversational speech, and in untrivial situations shows himself a comic writer of immortal quality."

This production was well directed and acted by a cast who did justice to Ayckbourn's script and worked perfectly with each other. It was a very good show. Over the year I have been reviewing for LLT I have never heard the audience laugh as much they did last night.

And it was good to see the Lewes Youth Theatre and the more experienced members on the same bill.

Lucie Fitchett

AUDITION ALERT AUDITION ALERT

TIME OF MY LIFE by ALAN AYCKBOURN

Directed by Gini Comyns

Performance Dates: 19 - 26 July 2014

Audition Date: Saturday, 15 February at 10.30 a.m. in the Foyer

For his 44th major stage work, Alan Ayckbourn's *Time of My Life* centres on a family celebration meal. Set in an eccentric restaurant of indeterminate ethnic origin, family members gather for Laura's 54th birthday, in what proves to be an enormously funny but also sometimes bleak play - looking at the failure to acknowledge happiness, and the disintegration of relationships. Ayckbourn's theme is to ask whether we can live in the moment, to appreciate the 'moment' when it is happening, i.e. do we ever know we may be having the time of our life, or can it only be judged retrospectively?

The action hops across three time zones - yesterday, today and tomorrow (though not necessarily in that order) and looks at the family's lives, shuffling the calendar and the clock. This is a play that will resonate with today's audiences, dealing as it does with a recessionary period in the early 1990's, which has obvious political relevance today. That is not to say this is a dark play, it is full of comedy - but the themes within it will strike a chord in 2014.

The characters:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Gerry Stratton - 50+ | A self made businessman, builder turned developer, gruff. |
| Laura Stratton | Gerry's wife. A monstrous mother-in-law, sour-faced, selfish. |
| Glyn Stratton - 30+ | The eldest son, unfaithful, arrogant, smug workaholic. |
| Adam Stratton - 18+ | The youngest son, idealistic, naive, sensitive, an artistic drifter. |
| Stephanie - 25+ | The beleaguered wife of Glyn... but with an inner strength. |
| Maureen - 18+ | Adam's girlfriend. a punk-ish, loud, no-nonsense hairdresser. |
| Waiter | FIVE waiters in the restaurant, all played by the same actor, displaying a variety of personalities. Demanding role! |

If you would like a script, please contact Don Funnell on 07966 205306 or at the theatre

Club Director's notes

Our Youth Theatre opened the second production of the season with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as part of a Double Bill with our adult members supplying the cast for Alan Ayckbourn's *Gosforth's Fete*. The members have been working hard since September to perform the play as they only have one day a week in which to rehearse, so Tim has been rehearsing with those who can make it on Saturday mornings for a few weeks before the opening night. It would be easier if the production could be later in the year, but parents of the older ones are particularly concerned that their children are not stressed by learning lines and rehearsing as exam time approaches, which is totally understandable.

The adults working backstage noted how well the children responded to the responsibility of putting on the production, working as a team, seamlessly moving props, furniture and scenery. Thanks to their directors James and Tim, these young members are growing in confidence on stage and learning some of the many aspects of stagecraft. It's also heartening to see that those who joined as young children are still with us as teenagers.

I believe our Youth Theatre is an important part of our organisation which we couldn't operate without James and Tim their teachers.

We are also indebted to our chaperones, without them we could not function during productions. If there is anyone who could join their ranks we would be most grateful.

I'd like to thank Adrian Bowd and Keith Gilbert for offering to direct *Gosforth's Fete* and the actors for giving us such polished performances. In typical farcical Ayckbourn situations, everything that could go wrong- does! Luckily however, all the backstage effects, lighting and sound, including echoes, explosions and smoke which are so essential to this production, were spot-on.

The sets in both productions were good and we now have some young people helping backstage, in the workshop, painting and in the lighting/sound box. This is really great news for us.

An enormous amount of work took place in the foyer for The Little Pendon Grand Fete.

I may be mistaken, but I think that this is the first time in 75 years that we have sold ice cream? If I'm wrong, please let me know. I would like this to be a regular feature, but there are two problems. The actual freezer – which we had to borrow and the people to sell the ices.

Keith Gilbert who was responsible for the Fete in the Foyer also managed to persuade or dragoon the volunteers into manning the posts. Thanks Keith, it was great fun.

Richard III has been cast and by the time this Newsletter reaches you, the audition for *Enjoy* will have taken place.

The Youth Theatre are scheduled for a Café Sunday on 23 February 2014.

A Miscellany of Readings, first heard at Anne of Cleves House is to follow on Sunday 13 April 2014. I wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year!

Pat Shrimpton

ANNOUNCEMENTS

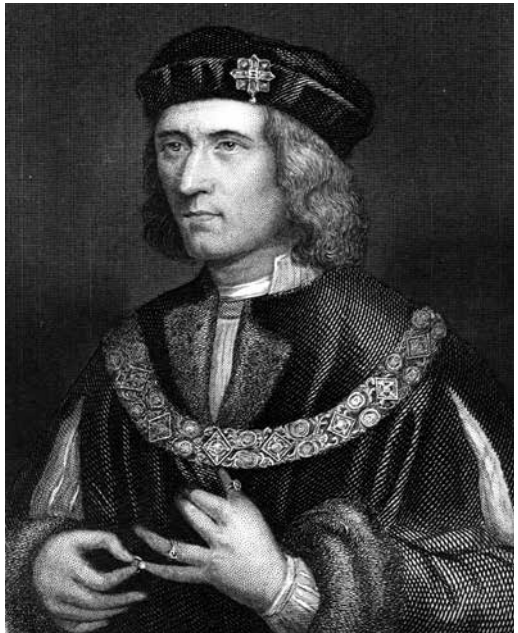
Richard III

It is nearly 10 years since a Shakespeare production was presented at Lewes Little Theatre.

High time therefore to present one and there can be no more fitting time than in Shakespeare's 450th anniversary .

I feel very privileged to have been asked to direct Richard III - one of the great History plays and very apt as his remains have recently been discovered and he is very much in the public eye. Bearing in mind it is one of Shakespeare's lengthier plays I have made a number of cuts so that the running time is approximately 2.5 hrs. I have now cast the play and look forward to rehearsals commencing in January.

Nick Betteridge



BOX OFFICE ASSISTANT MANAGER

So that the volunteers in the Box Office can offer an even better service, Mike Piller, who manages the office with his stalwart team, is looking for an Assistant Manager. If you think you might enjoy this role, please contact him on mpillerllt@hotmail.co.uk to discuss the role.

CLUB NIGHT

Members are reminded that Tuesday evenings from 7.00 - 10.00 pm are club nights when sets are built and painted, costumes selected and adjusted and there are opportunities to help with preparations for productions. The bar is open after 10.00 for members to refresh themselves at bargain prices. Just turn up or contact Chris Weber-Brown on 07588 531888

It is with great sadness that we have just been informed of the death of Donald Bishop, who for many years was a supporter of the theatre and helped with many performances on the organ and piano. We will publish a full obituary in the next newsletter.

Letters...

Dear Editor,

Before launching into my tiny criticism, I should say how much I enjoy the newsletter and the productions that I attend.

I was lucky enough to be in the audience for *Crime and Punishment* and *Polly Honeycombe* and was very glad to have had the opportunity to see these excellent and contrasting plays. I always read the reviews and spotted the following today "...a light hearted satirical look at the novel reading habits of young ladies of the time." I know that the poor old hyphen is losing its appeal but it is often helpful to the reader, e.g. light-hearted', and sometimes essential for understanding, as in 'novel-reading'. I do hope you don't mind my pointing this out, I suspect there are others who care about this sort of thing among your readers.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Newbury

As Editor I try to keep our style contemporary which would tend towards minimising punctuation. However Fowler's Modern English Usage says: 'Hyphens No attempt will be made here to describe modern English usage in the matter of hyphens; its infinite variety defies description. No two dictionaries and no two style rules can be found to give the same advice.' The reviewer is at liberty to use the language as she wishes with my editing lightly used – I would accept 'light-hearted' but not 'novel-reading.'

YOUTH THEATRE

Re: Cafe Sunday in February

The recent Youth Theatre group's production along with *Gosforth's Fete* was a joint success and indeed great fun for both the audience and the cast. Tim and I were very proud to see them evolve during the run and for them to play to a wider audience than just immediate family which is one reason the double bills have become part of the season.

The production showcased the many talented members of the Lewes Youth Theatre and earned them the respect and standing they deserve. The show was well supported by the parents and also by the theatre members who came along to see the production

and we hope that many who came and saw the show will now return to watch future Youth Theatre productions.

Our next theatrical outing will be the Cafe Sunday XL on 23 February 2014. Next year (gulp!)

Cafe Sunday is a little less formal than the main stage productions and both Tim and I think it is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the group's individual talents by performing monologues, duologues and maybe a few surprises. Please come along and see for yourselves.

Merry Christmas and thanks for your support.

James Firth-Haydon

My Boy Jack

OPENING

Saturday 1 February 2014

7.45pm

BOOK NOW



NAME

MEMBER NO

ADDRESS

TEL DAY TEL EVE

Please complete the form legibly and send it with remittance and S.A.E. to Box Office, Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster St. Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2PX. Cheques should always be made payable to LEWES THEATRE CLUB.

TELEPHONE BOOKINGS: 01273 474826. See page 3 for Box Office hours.

PLAYS	Preferred Date	Alt. Date	Matinee or Evening	No. of seats	Preferred Location	Total
My Boy Jack	First night only 2 for 1	X				
My Boy Jack			Evening £8.00			
My Boy Jack		X	Matinee £6.00			
Richard III	First night only 2 for 1	X				
Richard III			Evening £8.00			
Richard III		X	Matinee £6.00			
Grand Total						

Please note. If the Box Office is able to fulfil only part of a request, a refund may be collected from the Box Office during opening hours. Alternatively, members may prefer to enclose either separate cheques or an open cheque crossed with a maximum amount.