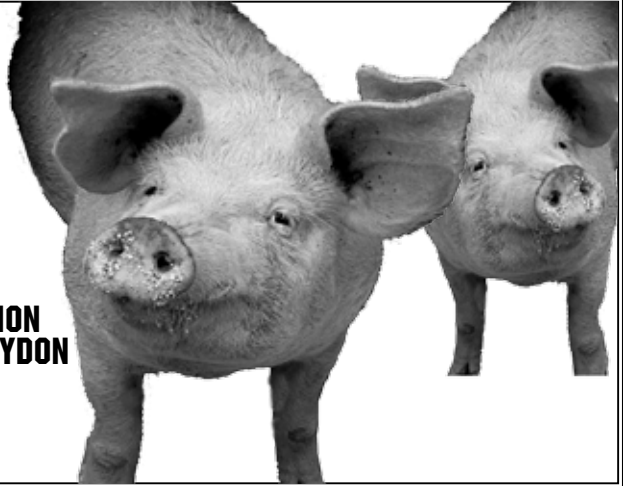




LEWES THEATRE CLUB
Newsletter No.40 NOVEMBER 2012

ANIMAL FARM

BY GEORGE ORWELL
A YOUTH THEATRE PRODUCTION
DIRECTED BY JAMES FIRTH-HAYDON
& TIM ROWLAND



A DOUBLE BILL



The Browning Version

By Terence Rattigan
Directed by Cathryn Parker

Saturday 1 December to Saturday 8 December 2012
at 7.45 pm except Sundays
Matinee Saturday 8 December at 2.45 pm

Editor's notes

Our new season got off to a flying start with the popular contemporary play *Calendar Girls*. With its combination of laughter and sorrow it really involved our audiences. Whether it was curiosity or prurience that brought them in I wouldn't like to say. We achieved our highest audience numbers for the last two years thanks in part to the interest shown by local Women's Institute members. The set was simple and effective and the sunflowers were a potent reminder that it was a play about life after bereavement. The cast and crew bravely posed for their own calendar in aid of Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research and the profits from selling the calendars will go to that charity. There are still some calendars available at the theatre - they would make good Christmas presents.

The AGM was inquorate and there had to be a further meeting, an EGM, to conduct the business of the club. Fortunately this meeting was quorate and all the business was transacted legally. Joanne Cull was elected as the club president following Miles Jenner's retirement from the committee for business reasons. Congratulations Joanne.

The next show is a double bill with the Youth Theatre group performing George Orwell's *Animal Farm* followed by Cathryn Parker's production of Terence Rattigan's *The Browning Version*.

Micheal Turner

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DIARY DATES

PERFORMANCES

THE BROWNING VERSION & ANIMAL FARM

1 - 8 December

SHAKESPEARE'S R & J

26 January - 2 February

PREVIEW



ANIMAL FARM

by George Orwell, adapted by Peter Hall

directed by James Firth-Haydon & Tim Rowland

**"Beasts of England! Beasts of Ireland!
Beasts of land and sea and skies!
Hear the hoofbeats of tomorrow!
See the golden Future rise!"**

When the downtrodden beasts of Manor Farm oust the drunken farmer, all are awash in collectivist zeal. Too soon, however, the pigs, who consider themselves superior in intelligence, succumb to the temptations of privilege and power.

This fast-moving dramatisation of George Orwell's classic satire *Animal Farm* is fresh and immensely enjoyable without jeopardising the savagery of the original material.

Animal Farm is regarded as one of the greatest works of twentieth century literature and this adaptation holds up to this esteem. The use of narration is still strong and the animal characters bring to light the important political and moral issues of the novel.

The Youth workshop leaders have spent much thought on the casting of these brilliant characters and the children and young adults are excited about the venture. Along with James and Tim they will utilize their brilliant imaginations and performance skills to agitate the audience into a revolution!

PREVIEW

The Browning Version

by Terence Rattigan, directed by Cathryn Parker

Andrew Crocker-Harris was a brilliant prize-winning Classics scholar at Oxford in the 1920s and believed he had a glittering career in education ahead when he entered the hallowed portals of the minor public school that he is just about to leave due to ill health after nearly 20 years. Married to the unsuitable, haughty, bitter and unfaithful Millie, they can barely disguise the contempt and disgust that now characterises their failed relationship. In the last 24 hours before he leaves the

school to which he has given his life and his health, Crocker-Harris is forced to come to terms with how his ideals have turned to ashes in the face of a series of disappointments which border on the tragic. In a painfully accurate portrayal of thwarted hope and ambition, Rattigan both robs his protagonist of all apparent "comforting illusions" before giving him one last opportunity to emerge from the ruins of his career and marriage with his humanity intact. But will he grasp it?

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

THE BOX OFFICE 01273 474826 will be open daily except Sundays from Monday 26 November to Saturday 8 December from 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

calendar girls

written by Tim Firth



The real story of *Calendar Girls* is one of a community uniting in an attempt to make something positive out of a tragedy. In 1998 a group of WI women in Yorkshire planned a fund raising operation in aid of Leukaemia Research after the husband of one member was diagnosed with the disease and subsequently died. The resulting saucy, humorous, nude calendar featuring the WI women far outsold the initial print run and became a worldwide media story. The fictional story of *Calendar Girls* began life as a film based on fact in 2003. With a cast including Helen Mirren and Julie Walters, it did very well at the box office and won a number of awards. Tim Firth, who wrote the screenplay, went on to write a stage version which premiered at The Chichester Festival Theatre and transferred to the West End

in 2008. Productions of the play continue to tour nationally and worldwide. I saw the play in the West End a few years ago when a friend of mine, a Lewes-based actor who plays Kenton Archer in the Archers, played Rod alongside Kelly Brook, Hannah Waterman and Arabella Weir. I remembered it as a mildly entertaining and cleverly commercial show.

So at Lewes Little Theatre I was happy to find that there is much more to the play than I found that night in London. The play benefited from being in an intimate space which is, as befits the location of the play, part of a local community. The committed cast and a caring director gave the piece authenticity and did justice to what is an extremely well crafted, funny play

REVIEW

calendar girls

written by Tim Firth

with pathos and warmth at its heart. Before the LLT show I overheard director Sandra Tomlinson saying that the first thing she had done with her cast was to take them to a real WI meeting and how much they had enjoyed it. Her wish to make the world of the play real and not just something out of a cosy sitcom paid off.

A perfectly executed set by Adrian Bowd with an excellent almost photographic screen drop painting of England's green and pleasant land visible through the window of the village hall set up the world of middle England.

I enjoyed all the performances a lot. The feeling of camaraderie which is crucial to this play was apparent, and the cast worked with commitment and energy. Being an actress myself, I could well imagine the fun they must have had together especially, of course, negotiating the naked element! In fact, the saucy, nude aspect that the play is perhaps best known for lasts for a very short time and is all over by the interval. It is in the second half that the real emotional meat unfolds when we learn more about the women's backstories, motivations and stresses.



In an ensemble piece it is always hard, and perhaps unfair, to pick out particular actors. However, David Morley as John was excellent and perfectly cast as the central character whose death gives rise to the fund raising plan. Charlotte Tayler completely inhabited her part of Ruth, who as the wife of a man playing away, has lost all her confidence. The excellent Jenny Lloyd Lyons played Annie, John's widow, with poise and truth. But once again I must say I enjoyed all the performances and thought that Sandra Tomlinson cast well and directed with detail and care.

The fictional life of the *Calendar Girls* goes on with many, professional and amateur, productions performed worldwide. The fundraising life of *Calendar Girls* continues too. In October the Royal Albert Hall hosted a celebration of 13 years of the Yorkshire ladies fundraising journey with has so far raised over £3 million for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research.

REVIEW**calendar girls**

written by Tim Firth



Real life widow Angela sums up the extraordinary story of the *Calendar Girls*, "I think that we've all coped really well with what has happened. We've done the most amazing things but we've kept our feet on the ground and we've never forgotten why we did what we did. We didn't do the calendar because we wanted to be famous but because we wanted to raise money in John's memory. It has been the most marvellous experience."

I really enjoyed seeing this play the second time around and can only imagine that for the cast and crew the execution of this production has also been 'the most marvellous experience'. Judging by the comments of the audience members I heard they'd certainly had a great evening.

Lucie Fitchett

**Club Director's notes**

During the break, we have been busy getting ready for the new Season. With the admittance of the cinema proprietors hiring our premises, we had to install their screen, build a new shelf to take their projector and make room for their sound system alongside ours. We are hoping that the cinema will bring new people to our theatre. Perhaps some of them may become members who will then come to see the plays as well as the films.

The foyer was re-painted, but we haven't yet finished the complete refurbishment. I've managed to re-cover the benches and I have also started on the old sad looking red chairs. We have had these for many years and considered buying new ones, but as they are fairly comfortable, we have decided to keep them.

The new curtains are in place and we have a glass cabinet on the front wall, out of the sunlight. Small articles from the wardrobe department will be displayed in it and changed periodically. By December when our Double Bill is performed, we will have pictures and photos on the walls, hanging from the new picture rail.

We are also hoping to have a projector installed on the ceiling. We can then project photographs and advertise the coming productions on the white wall. There is a projector, but now we need a computer to run it! Unfortunately this all takes time and money, but I'm sure we'll get there in the end.

Trevor Morgan is working on our new website, so I'm sure it won't be long before we'll be properly online again. Our backstage crew and set builders were preparing the excellent set for our

first play of the Season, *Calendar Girls* which was a great success, playing to almost full houses every night. The props list was endless and the number of costume changes required rails placed backstage. There was no time to dash up to the dressing rooms to change! Everyone involved in this production worked so hard, showing such commitment that the applause and accolades were well deserved. It was a wonderful start to the season and a great team effort. The play was entered for the Brighton and Hove Arts Council Drama Awards and we will hear the results in December.

The Calendar Girls Calendar has been selling well and there are a few left which we can sell in December in time for Christmas. A last minute present, perhaps?

The Browning Version and *Animal Farm* are now rehearsing on stage. We feel it is important to encourage the young people to work on the main stage preparing them for participation in our adult productions. Last season we used our young members in *Flare Path* and *Gaslight*, so I am very pleased that Cathryn Parker, James Firth-Haydon and Tim Rowland are working on this project. In the next Newsletter which will be sent out in January, I will let you know how much money was donated to Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research. Although this is rather early. May I wish you all
A Very Happy Christmas!

Pat Shrimpton

OBITUARY

Tim Frost



Lewes Theatre Club has always been fortunate in attracting members who become loyal servants to it. Tim Frost fitted this category admirably. Having joined as a member in the mid 1950s he became a committee member in the early 60s serving continuously until he was appointed Hon. General Secretary, a post he held with distinction for 14 years. In addition he was a founder member of the Falstaff Club, where, at its foundation meeting in May of 1972, he was elected as Chairman and continued in that office until his death. He rarely missed a meeting of either of the Committees and brought to them both sound common sense and invaluable business acumen. In addition he appeared as an actor in dozens of productions over the years. He was always the most reliable of actors and for me the very moving portrayal by him of Aston in Pinter's *The Caretaker* was perhaps the highlight of his career. He was also remarkable on the stage as being completely unfazed.

I remember an incident when we were both appearing in *The Recruiting Officer*

and were both involved in a sword fight, my sword broke and the blade went skittering across the stage. I stood there transfixed. Tim, with hardly a beat, wandered down the stage, still in character, picked up the sword blade, put the blade under my arm, gave me a kiss and fed me the next line! Chris remembers a time when during the production of *Henry IV Part One* and he and Tim were required to create offstage the sounds of the Battle of Shrewsbury. This they did by banging iron pokers against a fire shield, while shouting at the tops of their voices. They were described by the reviewer of the production as being the worst example of rhu-barbing that he had ever heard. Tim was a raconteur par excellence, as evidenced by those who were lucky enough to see his performance a few years ago of his *In His Anecdote* which was hugely entertaining and enjoyable. In many conversations I have had with him over the years, Tim would always be reminded of some apt and very amusing story which he would relate with much laughter.

He loved theatre as a whole. He and Patty were regular attenders at Stratford, Chichester and the National Theatre and his views of productions that he had seen were always fascinating to listen to, as was his somewhat acerbic humour if the play he had seen had not reached his high standards. He was also for many years an Usher at Glyndebourne Opera House, an exacting job which he typically regarded as a pleasure to do. Outside the theatre, he much enjoyed cricket and rugby - Sussex County Cricket in particular where he was a regular attender at both home and away matches involving that club. He was a member of the Sussex Cricket Society since 1985 and had served the

Jean Ford

Jean Ford, who died at the end of October, was a member of Lewes Theatre Club for over 40 years. She will be remembered by many of the older members. She was for a long time a member of the refreshment team. Although she was never actively involved in productions she was a calm and patient support to her husband, Tony, who was for over 30 years the theatre's production manager. She continued to take an active interest in the Theatre and attended performances up to the end of last season.

Joan Skeet

organisation as a Committee Member, Vice Chairman, Chairman and finally from 2001 until his death, President. He made friends wherever he went - he had a host of them. Chris and I are privileged to count ourselves as two of them. He was a man who was much loved and respected whom we all shall miss very much.

Our hearts go out to Patty and her family in their loss. But they will know, as Tim's beloved Shakespeare said, "Praising what is lost makes the remembrance dear".

Farewell old friend. We shall greatly miss you and your wit and infectious laughter.

**Nick Betteridge
& Chris Weber-Brown**

Margot Forrest

We have just heard of the death at the end of October of Margot Forester, a Club member for many years. Our condolences go to her family.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Box Office Manager Mike Piller, who has done sterling work in managing the box office for the past four years is looking to relinquish the post in the near future. Induction training and follow up mentoring will be provided to anyone wishing to take on this job. There is a good team of supporters and there are some interesting developments. Anybody who would like to take on this essential role in Lewes Theatre Club should have a preliminary talk with Mike on 01273 472566.

NO DODDY AT LANCASTER STREET

Ken Dodd is the last survivor of the great tradition of stand-up Music Hall comics and has become almost a national treasure. He once expressed a desire to play as many of Britain's working theatres as he could. So the General Secretary, Derek Watts, wrote and asked if the Theatre Club could host *An Evening with Ken Dodd*. Ken's Personal Assistant, Anne Jones, replied from Knotty Ash - (No, seriously...she did!) "Thank you for your recent letter. I was very interested to read about your lovely Lewes Theatre Club. Regarding your invitation to have a performance by Ken unfortunately it would not be possible. ...We are amazed at how many small theatres there are, which is wonderful to know. As time moves on we are taking on less work and the only small theatres we play are generally special charity nights and then only local to our area. However, thank you very much for the invitation anyway, and we do wish your group every success in keeping open a live theatre - there's nothing like live performance, is there?"
Yours sincerely, Anne Jones."

HELP FOR TANZANIA'S CHILDREN

Joanna Watts, Derek Watts' daughter, is a professional violinist with the BBC Concert Orchestra, the London Festival Orchestra and the Welsh National Opera. In March she is going out to Tanzania to work as a volunteer in the children's cancer ward at the Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam. She'll be offering music therapy and face-painting. Would any of our theatre club members help her work? Jo says, "I need to take old recorders, light percussion instruments, tiny soft toys for the under-fives and small face-painting packs. Music is great therapy for sick kids as it's a most rewarding way for them to express their love of life." If you can help, please contact Derek Watts at derek@watts457.freemove.co.uk or 01273-471680.

THE WARDROBE SALE

This summer we had new storage units in the wardrobe constructed by Dave Sharpe and the workshop team. This allowed a massive clearing of the wardrobe stock by Alison Soudain and Gerry Cortese. Consequently we had a good show of items to sell on 28 September. It was a lovely morning and there was a huge queue at the door and customers flocked in and gathered armfuls of items to buy. More than a dozen helpers sold items, took payments and ensured the morning ran smoothly. The total taken was over £2,120 which goes to theatre funds. After the sale we donated leftover theatrical and fancy dress items to Glad Rags, a community group in Brighton and sent lots of shoes to local charity shops. Many thanks to all involved.
Anne Turner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

With the rising cost of postage it is important that as many newsletters as possible are delivered by hand. We have an intrepid band of volunteers to whom the Theatre Club is very grateful, but there are some areas where we do not have deliverers. If you have received this newsletter by post and think you could deliver in your area, please get in touch. My email is jackthevlak@hotmail.co.uk or call 01273 475404 and I will give you details of when and where to pick up your batch of newsletters.

In particular we need people to deliver in the following areas of Lewes (the codes are our own delivery codes).

LS03 - Downside, Houndean Close, Houndean Rise and Southdown Avenue.

LS13 - Area including Barons Down Road, Bishops Drive, Brighton Road, Clevedown, Montacute Road.

LS16 - Cranedown, Juggs Close, Juggs Road, Kingston Road

Thank you
Jack Wilkinson

INFORMATION

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION £10 Double £16
Over 60s, Student & Juniors £6 Double £10
ADMISSION PRICES Evenings £8.
Matinées £6

THE FALSTAFF CLUB

Anthony Jenner Bar, all L.T.C. members are automatically members. The Bar is open before, during and after all evening performances and on special Club social occasions. Interval drinks may be ordered in advance.

THE NEWSLETTER

Published before each production. Contributions in the form of articles or correspondence are welcomed and should be addressed to The Editor, Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2PX.

MEMBERSHIP

Applications should be sent to the Membership Secretary. Acting Membership involves no extra subscription. Members wishing to act are invited to attend auditions announced in the Newsletters.

CAR PARKING

Limited space at the theatre is available to those with disabilities. Municipal Car Parks, close by in Brook Street and the Needlemakers Centre, are open free of charge after 6pm.

THE WORKING PARTY

This hard-working group undertakes set building, costume, repairs and maintenance, both inside and out, meeting every Tuesday evening.

THE WARDROBE

Hiring of costumes – phone the Wardrobe Team. Alison 479471 Kate Palmer 472622 or Gerry 479432 ten days before to make an appointment. Deposit required.

DISABLED PEOPLE

Members who have difficulty negotiating stairs and steps may enter the Theatre by the former entrance on the east side of the building. Seating close to this entrance is in Rows G9-11, H10-12 and J5-7. We can accommodate one wheelchair at certain performances. For details, ask at the Box Office. A disabled persons' toilet is located between the two main doors to the Auditorium. A fully operational induction loop has been installed. Aids should be adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

OFFICERS

Director Pat Shrimpton
Treasurer Bob Leeds
General Secretary Derek Watts
Membership Secretary Nick Cooper

ANIMAL FARM & The Browning Version



OPENING

Saturday 1 December 2012

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
The Browning Version & Animal Farm			Evening £8.00			
The Browning Version & Animal Farm		X	Matinee £6.00			
Shakespeare's R & J			Evening £8.00			
Shakespeare's R & J		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.