



LEWES THEATRE CLUB
Newsletter No.39 SEPTEMBER 2012



calendar girls

written by **Tim Firth**

based on a Miramax motion picture
by Juliette Towhidi and Tim Firth

directed by

Sandra Tomlinson

Saturday 13 October to Saturday 20 October 2012
at 7.45 pm except Sundays
Matinee Saturday 20 October at 2.45 pm

Editor's notes

Welcome to our new season. Last season finished with a flourish as audiences rocked in their seats with laughter during *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Modesty forbids me to comment further except to say that I was proud of the cast and crew for overcoming initial problems and ending with a roaring success. Particularly successful aspects of the play were the set and costumes – well done team. Props were also very demanding with two tea parties demanding fresh food each night – well managed, team. We start the new season with *Calendar Girls* and members are advised to book early for this popular play.

We are still open to non-members and still recruiting new members. The AGM, on 25 September, will decide whether or not to continue allowing public attendance at performances.

Micheal Turner

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STOP PRESS

We are saddened to have to report the death of Tim Frost, past Hon. General Secretary of Lewes Theatre Club and Chairman of the Falstaff Club and long term active member. Tim passed away on Wednesday 15 August, after a short illness, aged 82. Funeral will be at St Anne's Church, Lewes at 2pm. on 2 September.

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DIARY DATES

PERFORMANCES

CALENDAR GIRLS

13 - 20 October

**THE BROWNING VERSION
& ANIMAL FARM**

1 - 8 December

AUDITION

THE BROWNING VERSION

15 September 10.30pm

AGM

22 September

WARDROBE SALE

29 September
10.00am to 12.30pm

PREVIEW

calendar girls

written by Tim Firth



based on the Miramax motion picture by Juliette Towhidi and Tim Firth

Evening performances at 7.45pm. Matinee at 2.45pm on Saturday 20 October.
THE BOX OFFICE 01273 474826 will be open daily except Sundays from Monday 8 October to Saturday 20 October 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.

Calendar Girls is an extremely funny yet moving play based on the true story of a group of W.I. members who posed nude for a calendar to raise money for the Leukaemia Research Fund.

Based on the Miramax motion picture, *Calendar Girls* opened at the Chichester Festival Theatre in 2008 and has since become the fastest selling play in British theatre history.

Audiences are in for a treat. You can't help but warm to and relate with the 'real-life' characters and situations that this play presents. I'm delighted to have such a strong cast for *Calendar Girls*, welcoming both old and new members. When Annie's husband John (David Morley) dies of leukaemia, she and best friend Chris (Jenny Lloyd Lyons and Avril Bell) resolve to raise money for a new settee in the local hospital waiting room. They manage to persuade four fellow Women's Institute members, Cora, Celia, Ruth and Jessie, (Bekki Noone, Gini Comyns, Charlotte Tayler, Lizzie Hutcheson) to pose nude with them for an 'alternative' calendar, with a little help from hospital porter and amateur photographer Lawrence (Ben Gurney). The news of this innovative charitable venture spreads and proves to be a great success. Hordes of press soon descend on the small village of Knapeley in the Yorkshire Dales. Other members

of the cast include Miles Jenner, Margaret Funnell, Gill Garrett and Star Bray.

Relationships are explored with humour and pathos and we see how these women grow during their experiences. Audiences should expect to laugh, cry and maybe even leave the theatre humming Jerusalem!

Don't miss this exciting production opening the Lewes Theatre Club 2012-13 season!

The sunflower is used as a symbol of the original *Calendar Girls*. When John was diagnosed with lymphoma in 1998 he coped by focusing on short term goals – the main one being to see his favourite plant, the sunflower, bloom again. Sadly he didn't live to reach his goal. We have been very touched by this story and have linked with local W.I. groups to use this event to support fundraising for Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research. There will be W.I. stalls in the foyer to look at before the production. You can find out more about fundraising at beatbloodcancers.org/research.

Sandra Tomlinson
Director

The IMPORTANCE of BEING EARNEST

REVIEW

Oscar Wilde's *The Importance Of Being Earnest* is a timeless and much-loved comic masterpiece. It is a delight from start to finish with Wilde employing high farce and glittering, delicious dialogue in a perfectly observed satire about social status, sense of duty, and keeping up appearances.

It wasn't until 1946 that the play entered the mainstream theatre arena again. Since then there have been countless high profile productions and three film adaptations.

Now Mike Turner and his cast have taken it on. I spoke to Mike on the phone while he was in rehearsal and he said, quite rightly, that the play is to some extent 'actor proof' but that he hoped his actor's would bring something fresh to the parts. And yes it did feel fresh and exciting, his actors all bringing something particularly their own to these well-loved, well-trodden, perfectly drawn comic characters.



The play begins in Algernon Moncrieff's drawing room and Wilde immediately sets up what is probably the main theme of the play - that of class status - with Lane, his sardonic man servant,

barely concealing his disdain for his young boss. In the famous 'cucumber sandwiches' scene Peter Wellby as Lane was pitch perfect and wonderfully poised and Robert Woodbridge, as a puckish Algernon, clearly enjoyed every opportunity to play the mischievous and arrogant qualities the part requires. Enter Jack Worthing, very well played with great detail and gusto by Simon Hellyer.



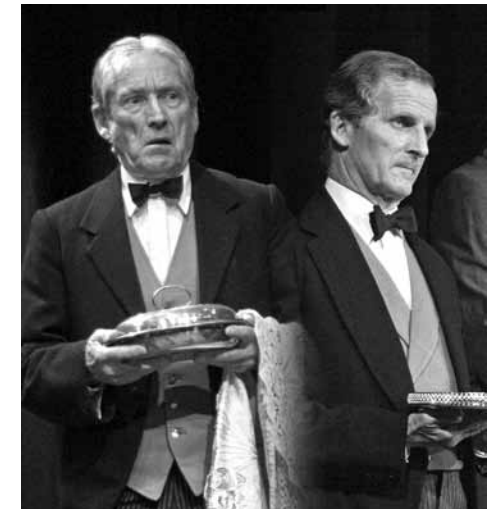
His amour Gwendoline, played by Meg Depla-Lake delighting in her control over the male species, was perfectly coquettish but with a tough edge which helped to show her to be very much her mother - Lady Bracknell's - daughter. Lindsey Holledge as Cecily was a very good casting contrast to Gwendoline. Cecily's earthy practicality was charming and candid and played with confidence and assurance. So now to Lady Bracknell played by Trish Richings. What a wonderful opportunity for any actress and what a tall order. Just how do you tackle probably two of the most famous words ever uttered on the English stage? I refer, of course to, 'a handbag?' ... I really enjoyed the warmth and candour Trish brought to this part

The IMPORTANCE of BEING EARNEST

and it was a brave choice to hold back on the line, uttering it under her breath with quiet confusion rather than the usual outrage



This part really is a tour de force full of wordy, bombastic, satirical pronouncements. However the rewards when you get it right are wonderful and Trish pulled it off. To quote Joyce Grenfell she was, appropriately, 'stately as a galleon'. Barrie Smith as a seedy, but at the same time pious, Chasuble was perfect and proved that 'there is no such thing as a small part only small



other put upon but not cowed servant, Merriman. Christine Murphy as Miss Prism was an absolute delight. It is rare, especially with very well-known plays, that an actor can twist lines and surprise you. Her speech describing how she mislaid a baby, absentmindedly placing it in a handbag, was simply wonderful and I can't imagine it being delivered a lot better.

The audience, both in the interval and at the end of the show, clearly loved seeing this perfect piece of theatre and very much enjoyed the LLT production. In 1895 the actor Allan Aynesworth who first played Algernon Moncrieff said 'I never remember a greater triumph than that night'. It looked as though Mike Turner's cast really enjoyed themselves too. Well done Mike Turner for taking this on and pulling it off with aplomb.

Lucie Fitchett

AUDITION ALERT AUDITION ALERT

The Browning Version by Terence Rattigan

directed by Cathryn Parker

Saturday 1 - Saturday 8 December 2012

Audition Date: Saturday 15 September at 10.30am Theatre Foyer

Plot

Andrew Crocker-Harris was a brilliant prize-winning Classics scholar at Oxford in the 1920s and believed he had a glittering career in education 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?

This is a powerful and emotional drama set in 1948, giving superb acting opportunities to every member of cast.

Scripts available from Chris Weber Brown or Don Funnell at the theatre or 01273 474826.

Characters

JOHN TAPLOW Schoolboy of about 16 – genuinely likes Crocker-Harris in spite of himself. Not the brightest of students but under all the selfishness and insensitivity of youth beats a heart capable of kindness. Capable of serious thought he has wit and charm. A good egg, probably.

FRANK HUNTER 28 – 35 A rugged young man – not perhaps quite as rugged as his deliberately cultivated manner of ruthless honesty makes him appear but wrapped in all the self confidence of a popular master. In the throes of a meaningless affair with Millie Crocker-Harris, he suddenly finds his contempt for Crocker-Harris giving way to something much more complex and challenging. A very complex and rewarding role.

MILLIE CROCKER-HARRIS 40s A social climbing, name-dropping, unfaithful snob with a bitter and mean-spirited heart. Millie has been serially unfaithful to her long-suffering and ineffectual husband and she is now a desperate, disappointed and dangerous woman clinging to the illusion that she is still

AUDITION ALERT AUDITION ALERT

desirable, but involved in an affair that is in reality as loveless as her sterile marriage. We have to believe that at one time she was a warm and charming woman who had dreams which time and failure have stolen from her. She treats Andrew appallingly. Their relationship is mutually destructive – the tragedy is that if only they could communicate it needn't be.

Dr. FROBISHER 60s Bookish, bombastic and slightly cowardly headmaster. On the surface, affable, but steel underneath. He is used to getting his own way in all situations. Humourless and thoughtless, his unkindness is all the worse for not being intended.

ANDREW CROCKER-HARRIS mid 50s A good deal older than his wife. Horrors seen in WWI are perhaps the reason for his inability to demonstrate love or affection. He is the epitome of good manners and soft-spoken propriety. Underneath the disappointment at his failure to inspire his pupils to the fervent love he himself possesses for the classics, there is still a spark of idealism. He purports to be indifferent to his lack of popularity with the boys and the coldness of his wife, but he is a deeply wounded man, both physically and psychologically, channelling his considerable intellectual energies into the complexities of creating the perfect school timetable. The audience should feel sympathy and empathy rather than pity. A neat trick if we can pull it off! A demanding and rewarding role.

PETER GILBERT 22 The new Classics master. Has won nearly as many prizes as his predecessor. Idealistic and destined to be popular. Earnest and kindly and madly in love with his wife of two months but trying desperately to be grown up and hide it. Seeds of history repeating itself in his relationship with...

MRS GILBERT 20 His doting and frivolous wife. Her exuberance and hope stand in direct contrast to the drab reality of the Crocker-Harris relationship. She's probably not as empty headed as her nervousness implies. Small but important role.

Audition pieces

pp 3 – 6 from Hunter: Do I know you? to Taplow: You must know what sadism is? Hunter & Taplow

pp. 9 – 12 from Millie: Thank you for coming round. to Millie: Then show me. Hunter & Millie

pp. 17 – 21 from Andrew: Ah Taplow. Good. To Andrew: ... get that last line right. Andrew, Taplow, Millie & Hunter

pp. 22 – 25 from Frobisher: Have the Gilberts called on you yet? to Andrew: What is the other delicate matter etc.

Frobisher & Andrew

pp. 29 – 30 from Millie: Well, did we get it? To: I didn't give two hoots! Millie & Andrew

pp. 30 – 32 from Mrs. Gilbert: Mr. Crocker-Harris? to Millie: Well, these days...etc Gilbert, Mrs Gilbert, Millie, Andrew

pp. 32 – 34 from Andrew: Don't you want to see...? To ...that will become my epitaph Andrew & Gilbert

pp. 38 – 41 from Andrew: Come in. to Andrew: Goodbye Taplow and thank you...Andrew & Taplow

pp. 42 – 44 from Hunter: Your husband... to I'm not coming to Bradford! Hunter, Millie & Andrew

pp. 48 – 51 from Andrew: Are you leaving so soon? To Hunter ...be of some help. Andrew & Hunter

Please feel free to contact me for an informal chat about the production on 01444 248129 or by emailoneoakgeo@aol.com

Club Director's notes

With *The Importance of Being Earnest* we have come to the end of another season. The audiences enjoyed the performances and the costumes and set were a delight. Mike Turner, the cast and crew worked hard to create such a successful production.

Sadly Alan Bucksey who was cast as Dr. Chasuble withdrew early on through ill health. It was a shock to all of us when he died shortly before the production. He was a fine actor and a lovely man and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with his family.

Once again, Sally Jenner produced a wonderful Volunteers' Lunch in July. We decided to bring it forward so that it would be held within the current Season rather than during the Summer break. Our Volunteers who number more than 100 are essential to the running of the Club and we greatly appreciate the time and commitment they give to us.

Next Season 2012 -13

Calendar Girls has been cast and is now in rehearsal. It has been noticed that several drama groups have chosen to perform this play at a similar time as ours. The reason for this overlapping is that the play is only on offer to amateurs for a limited period, so we have little choice about when it can be performed. In preparation for *Calendar Girls*, the ladies in the cast were invited to a meeting of the Neville W.I. where we were made very welcome. I went along too not knowing quite what to expect. We all joined in with Jerusalem, heard the latest W.I. News and listened to a talk by an author. We really had a great time and I never realised W.I. meetings could be so amusing! There was so

much laughter that if I wasn't so busy with the Theatre, I'd consider joining the Neville Group!

The Youth Theatre will be performing *Animal Farm* as half of the Double Bill. The other half will be Cathryn Parker's production of *The Browning Version*. The audition for this play will be held on 15 September.

Unfortunately we could not get permission for Joyce Fisher's choice of play, *The Birthday Party* by Harold Pinter. Therefore Joyce is going ahead with *The Diva In Me* by Charlotte Jones who wrote *Humble Boy*, which we performed in 2006.

There is only one character in this play which Joyce has had to pre-cast. We are still waiting to see if *The Sunshine Boys* will be available for Jenny Lloyd Lyons July production. We may have to wait until December before we announce the final play of the Season.

I mentioned in a previous newsletter that an Acting Workshop would be arranged if there was sufficient interest. As I have had only one enquiry I will not pursue the idea.

The Foyer is being repainted during the break. It's impossible to choose a colour scheme that appeals to everybody, so I apologise in advance if you don't like the results!

Looking forward to seeing you next season.

Pat Shrimpton

OBITUARY

Alan Bucksey



We are sad to report the death of Alan Bucksey. Alan passed away peacefully after a short illness on 22 June 2012 aged 74 years. Much loved husband of Anne and father to Paul and Helen, Alan's funeral service was held at St Peter's Church, Old Town, Bexhill on Monday 9 July. Sue Tait and Mike Turner represented Lewes Theatre Club.

Born in Greenwich, South London in 1938, Alan spent some of the war years evacuated to Devon and Northamptonshire with his beloved mother, whilst his father was away in North Africa. His brother, Colin was born in 1946, soon after the end of the war. At school, Alan excelled at literature,

history and music and it was there that he began a life-long love of the theatre. Alan forged a career in the motor trade and spent his leisure time in amateur theatre. Show business runs in the family - his younger brother Colin has had a career in the world of international television and film.

Alan was a long-standing Hastings Stables actor, involved in some of their most memorable productions. At Lewes Theatre Alan was Patrick in *The Hostage* and gave an outstanding performance as the title character in *The Handyman*.

Mike Turner

ANNOUNCEMENTS**LEWES LITTLE THEATRE**

Lancaster Street Lewes BN7 2PX



Costumes, Fabrics & Assorted Items
Saturday 29 September 2012
 10.00am to 12.30pm
 entry 50p

ANNOUNCEMENTS**Mobility Requirements**

We want your visit to Lewes Little Theatre to be as comfortable as possible, so if you use a walking aid, stick, wheelchair, walking trolley or you have any other mobility requirements, please tell us at the time of booking, or give us as much notice as possible before your attendance date. We regret that if we are not told of your requirements ahead of your visit we may not be able to accommodate you on the day.

Contact us on **01273 474826**

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
 Gen Secretary Derek Watts
 Membership Secretary Nick Cooper

calendar girls

written by Tim Firth



OPENING

Saturday 13 October 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
Calendar Girls			Evening £8.00			
Calendar Girls			Matinee £6.00			
The Browning Version & Animal Farm			Evening £8.00			
The Browning Version & Animal Farm			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.