

# CHADS THEATRE BACKSTAGE – January 2019

Time does fly so fast for those who seem to be always at the theatre. What we would do without William Nolan I cannot imagine. Between a select few people the set is being built, Control Room is being finished, perhaps it should now be the Technical Suite! I don't know about the others but I am certainly ready for a week's holiday in the sun.

It's nearly time for the next play so I'm hoping all your tickets are booked ready for the fascinating story of Ruth Ellis. I am really looking forward to seeing the play on the last night and the Dress Rehearsal if I can.

The various rotas have been filled but we could do with more volunteers for both front of house and back stage so please join the band of people who do roles other than simply act. Mention your willingness and availability to any of those who are regularly at the theatre. Even if you're not sure what it involves come down on a Thursday evening or Sunday lunch time when the bar is open, it has been good to see more people coming down then for a drink.

See you all soon.

*Janine (President)*

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## Dates for your diaries:

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January -  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

The Thrill of Love, by Amanda Whittington

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> –  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Molly Sweeney, by Brian Friel

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> –  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March

A View From The Bridge, by Arthur Miller

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Poynton Royal British Legion Concert Band

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## **Band Concert**

Poynton Royal British Legion Concert Band's annual concert is on Saturday 23rd March at 7.30 pm

Tickets (£6) can be booked in advance by phoning 0161 428 8712



## The ArtCo reports.....

*Blithe Spirit* played to an audience of 97.62%. Directed by Mike Bullimore (assisted by Chris Bullimore), the cast and crew gave us a very entertaining interpretation of this audience favourite. Well done to all concerned. The GMDF adjudication can be found on the Chads website.

*The Thrill of Love* by Amanda Whittington opens on the **26th January**. A preview can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. It is, perhaps, not surprising that sales have been slow (currently some 36%) given the intervention of the Christmas and New Year festivities. Please get booking...and encourage anyone you know to do likewise.

*Molly Sweeney* by Brian Friel (Studio - **20th to 23rd February**) is now in rehearsal. The cast, directed by John Blunden-Ellis, comprises Tracy Burns, Mike Gallagher and Sandy McGregor.

*A View from the Bridge* by Arthur Miller (main stage - **9th to 16th March**) starts rehearsal very soon with Nigel Westbrook as the Director (assisted by Sue Stokoe). The cast includes Steve Berrington, Carmel Bird, Mel Beswick, Harry Chalmers-Morris, Ted Walker, Victor Hassan, Andrew Kirby, Alex Newman, Tony Kane and Jacob Ireland.

The Youth Production (main stage - **4th to 6th April**) will be *The Wardrobe* by Sam Holcroft.

The PS&CC have now appointed Directors for the 2019/20 Season. I am grateful to them for all the time which they have spent so far in their deliberations. Their Chairman, Nigel Westbrook, has kindly supplied further details of the plays and Directors (see below). Reading and audition dates for each play will be provided as soon as possible. In the meantime, 3 dates have been scheduled for the readings - 20th, 22nd and 27th March. Auditions are scheduled to take place on 7th, 10th, 12th and 14th April.

*Hamish Lawson*

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### Newsletter Contributions

Contributions for the next newsletter are due by 23<sup>rd</sup> February for issue 25<sup>th</sup> February.

E-mail: [andyandjulie@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:andyandjulie@tiscali.co.uk) (PLEASE PUT "CHADS NEWSLETTER" IN SUBJECT).



## Our Next Production

### The Thrill Of Love

by Amanda Whittington

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January - Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

This play marks a turning-point in British criminal justice. Its subject is Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged for murder in this country, an occasion which provoked a huge public outcry. Despite the letter of the law, it was rare for women to be executed, and there was deep public concern about the whole issue of capital punishment. Ruth was hanged in 1955, for shooting her abusive lover, and in spite of the fact that she admittedly intended to kill him, the sentence of death shocked and horrified many people.

Ten years later, an act of parliament set out to consider various degrees of murder, and four years later, in 1969, the death penalty was finally abolished.

Amanda Whittington is a successful playwright, with over thirty plays to her credit, but she is best known for lighter works (such as *Be My Baby*, *Ladies' Day*, and *Ladies Down Under*). This is a serious attempt to present the background events which led up to the tragic conclusion.

This production is directed by David Quaipe, and the cast is Lesley-Ann Birley, Heather Bowman, Eilidh Pollard, Jane Wood and Simon Darlington.

*Derek Slater*

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### **Plays for 2019-2020 Season** (prepared by Nigel Westbrook)

1. September 7-14 2019 **Table Manners** by **Alan Ayckbourn** directed by **Nigel Westbrook** (3f 3m)

The first of The Norman Conquest trilogy, one of Ayckbourn's most brilliant comic achievements, involves three siblings: the placid Reg, married to the dominant but frustrated Sarah, Annie, unsatisfied with her shy would-be suitor Tom the incompetent vet, and brusque business woman Ruth, whose husband Norman plots to spend a dirty weekend away with Annie in East Grinstead.

2. October 19-26 2019 **The Secret Rapture** by **David Hare** directed by **Victor Hassan** (4f 2m)

In the Thatcherite 80s, sisters Isabel, who runs a small business, and Marion, a Tory government minister, have to deal after their father's death with their much younger, wild stepmother Katherine, and with crises both professional and personal. A powerful and perceptive insight into its time, and still with many resonances today.



## Plays for 2019-2020 Season (cont.)

Studio 1 November 20-23 2019 **Stevie** by **Hugh Whitmore** directed by **Simon Darlington** (2f 1m)

A funny and moving portrait of the eccentric writer Stevie Smith and her loving relationship with the aunt she cares for. A male actor helps narrate her life and perform some of her beautifully quirky poems.

3. December 7-14 2019 **Arsenic and Old Lace** by **Joseph Kesselring** directed by **David Quaipe** (3f 11m, 9m with doubling)

The classic black farce set in 1940s Brooklyn, where theatre critic Mortimer Brewster, about to be married to the girl next door, discovers his two beloved aunts have been killing off lonely single men and burying them in their cellar, helped by his mad brother Teddy. Complications increase when his psychopathic older brother Jonathan returns home, with his own secrets to hide...What more could anyone want for perfect Christmastide entertainment?

4. January 25- February 1 2020 **Iron** by **Rona Munro** directed by **Mike Rogerson** (3f 1m)

A powerfully moving contemporary prison drama. When Josie visits her mother Fay, convicted fifteen years before of the murder of her husband, their memories are gradually revealed to us and to Fay's guards, one a girl of Josie's age, the other an older man with his own daughters, as Munro invites us to understand what happened from several different perspectives.

Studio 2 February 19-22 2020 **No Man's Land** by **Harold Pinter** directed by **Tracy Burns** (4m)

Premiered at the National Theatre in 1975 with John Gielgud and Ralph Richardson as the leads, a quintessentially Pinteresque cocktail of witty banter, mystery and intimidation as the down-at-heel poet Spooner tries to infiltrate the house of the wealthy Hirst, but finds his position threatened by the interventions of two younger men, apparently a secretary and driver, though in Pinter's world of fluid identities and conflicting memories who can say for sure?

5. March 7-14 2020 **Rumours** by **Neil Simon** directed by **Pete Curran** (5f 5m)

An ingenious farce liberally sprinkled with Simon's one-liners, unusually in this version with an English setting. Four couples arrive at a party, only to find the hostess disappeared and the host unconscious after what appears to have been a suicide attempt. A mad sequence of false cover-up stories ensues, only to be complicated further when two police arrive to investigate.



Plays for 2019-2020 Season (cont.)

6. May 23-30 2020 **Separate Tables** by **Terence Rattigan** directed by **Hamish Lawson** (8f 3m)

Two brilliantly written, interlinked one-Act dramas share the same seaside hotel setting, where the regular guests are witness to, first, a fraught relationship between a disgraced politician and his former wife and, second, a supposed retired major revealed to have been caught interfering with women in a local cinema and facing a scandalised demand for his eviction.