

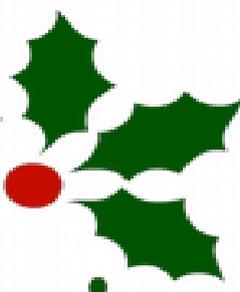
Canterbury Players Amateur Dramatic Society

December 2016

page 1 of 5



Merry
Christmas

A graphic of green holly leaves and a red berry, positioned to the right of the word 'Merry'.

Chairman's Message

The society has had a really successful year, with two highly acclaimed main stage productions at Brook Road and a fun summer social. Our main productions of *Relatively Speaking* earlier in the year and *Gaslight* a couple of weeks ago were well regarded by audiences and the press alike. I know everyone involved had a huge amount of fun putting the productions on, even with a few behind the scenes hiccoughs which resulted in both plays being presented slightly later than originally intended.

During 2016 we have welcomed a number of new committee members - Peter Holstein as stage manager and Janet Bellass. Peter has worked technical wonders with our staging, with a huge amount of help from society members. Judy and Heather have both done brilliantly at sourcing props, furniture and other items for all our productions this year - all of which have had some sort of period element to them, which makes them great fun but with equal challenges. Away from the stage, the committee have been putting into place plans for 2017.

Starting next Tuesday - December 13 - we will be hosting an irregular series of play readings, which will act not only as social opportunities for members, but also as a way of choosing potential plays for future performance, and encouraging members to try acting which could lead to greater things. Details are elsewhere in the newsletter.

In the spring we hope to hold a social event involving food and a series of "turns" from our members. If you have anything you'd like to perform - a song, a monologue, a sketch, a piece of music or anything else then please do let us know.

We also need people to be involved in productions both on the stage, behind the scenes and "front of house" during play week. We'll obviously let you know when these opportunities arise, but in the meantime if you want to get involved please do let us know.

We would also like to tap into your expertise if you have any ideas about publicity. Whilst our plays are hugely appreciated, audiences remain lower than we would like. Whilst we do not set out to make a profit, it would be great if we could get audience numbers that allowed productions to break even. So if you have any thoughts about how to publicise our productions, get more people to come along and generally publicise our society then please do let us know.

Finally, I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and 2017 is everything you want. We'll see you next year!

Gareth Bevan



Canterbury Players Amateur Dramatic Society

December 2016

page 2 of 5



Coming Soon

We'd like to let you know that we have decided not to perform in the spring but hope you will continue to support us, firstly in the summer for another comedy at **Urmston Sports Club**, when we hope to be part of the **Flixton Folk Festival**. Our November production will take place at Brook Road, as usual.

In the early months of next year we hope to put on one or two social events but our main objective is to do some remedial work above and below stage. A good deal needs sorting and updating; all very time consuming. Our stage manager has already begun and we have a video camera at the back of the hall, focussed on the stage, so everyone in the wings and dressing room can see what is happening. Wonderful! We also hope to unearth some 'treasures' in boxes under the stage, which have not been opened for many years!

The committee



Play Reading

Come and join us for an informal play reading upstairs at the newly refurbished **Bird In Hand** in Flixton on Tuesday 13th December at 7:30pm. We'll be reading a couple of "**Fawlty Towers**" episodes.



Gaslight

In case you missed it in the Messenger, here's Julia's review of our recent production.

Messenger

The Canterbury Players' Gaslight "sends shivers down your spine" 24 Nov 2016 / [Julia Taylor](#)



Canterbury Players ensure that *Gaslight* written in 1938, and set in a claustrophobic Victorian house, sends shivers down your spine. Patrick Hamilton's eerie masterpiece features a woman who is driven to the verge of madness by her manipulative husband.

In an inspired performance Rex Mears illustrates how a husband can reduce his wife to a nervous wreck by playing mind games with her. Objects mysteriously disappear, the gas lights flicker (thanks to lighting designer Bill Palmer) and, to rub salt in it all, he sets his lecherous sights on the maid. The ultimate act of cruelty is when he appears to be kind and promises Bella, his wife, a trip to the theatre, only to change his mind after some minor perceived misdemeanour on her part.

Debbie Dickerson takes the audience with her on her path of fear when she plays the pale, shivering wreck who is Bella. In a no holds barred performance, she weeps, cries out and even shouts in a bid to establish her innocence. The Canterbury Players are lucky to have an actor of this calibre among them.

The frayed atmosphere is apparent from the start when, trembling with fear, Bella tries to serve some muffins. This nervous wreck of a woman is finally saved when the bewhiskered Detective Rough (a solid Colin Baker) arrives to prove her husband guilty of an earlier serious crime.

Glad director Ann Robinson emphasises the melodrama. Star rating: * * * *

Canterbury Players Amateur Dramatic Society

December 2016

page 3 of 5



Your Committee

We continue to work on your behalf and meet alternate months. We are looking at ways to promote both the society and its productions, including a vertical banner at the library and contacting the new retirement homes in Urmston for ticket sales. Two new members have joined the committee, so we thought we would take this opportunity to let you know a little about us and what we love doing, usually quietly in the background. We remain absolutely committed to the future of the society and its development as an artistic force, in our local community.



Gareth Bevan - Chairman

Gareth is an avid theatre fan and joined the society over three years ago. He has already achieved a great deal and shown true loyalty. He was helping to direct *Something to Hide* and when a cast member needed replacing; he took over an important role and 'saved the day' with two weeks to go before opening night. He did this despite the fact that his wedding was imminent! He has since directed two successful plays. He appeared in *'Allo 'Allo*, *Fawlty Towers* and *Dad's Army*, which he also directed at the Sports Club, this summer. He has helped with set decorating, reads scripts, works *Front of House*, pours cups of tea and helps clear up after events!

April - Vice Chairman

April enjoys acting, when possible and stood in as Stage Manager when our long standing crew retired. She learnt how to construct sets and the necessary jobs relating to this role. She initiated and directed *'Allo'Allo*, *Fawlty Towers* and *The Vicar of Dibley* – which were all presented at Urmston Sports Club and several new members came on board. She used her home for most rehearsals, provided refreshments and encouraged everyone to enjoy themselves. April now lives in Cheshire but remains involved and enthusiastic about the society, regularly making the forty mile round trip to attend meetings and rehearsals. April's grandfather, Jimmy Johnson, was a long time member of the society; he was an actor and chairman and her interest and loyalty stem from this.

David Holstein - Treasurer

David designs and prints our posters, programmes and tickets, built and maintains our wonderful website, created and administers our Facebook page and, at home, stores society archives and our large library of scripts. He also initiated and is the editor and printer of our Newsletter. David helps to decorate the set, works *Front of House* and sets up a promotional display during play week. He has initiated many projects including the Hog Roast. Though not a stage actor, he took part in *'Allo 'Allo*, *Fawlty Towers* and *Dad's Army* as they were so much fun. A few years ago he won NODA's 'Unsung Hero' Award for all the extra work he does.

Judy - General Secretary

Judy is Ticket Secretary, attends many rehearsals and is happy to do anything needed. She heads the publicity team, liaises with the local press, advertises our plays on websites and puts posters in shops, libraries etc. She was Production Coordinator and sold tickets for our summer socials at Urmston Sports Club. She has also hosted meetings, rehearsals and a play reading afternoon, at her home, helps with set decorating and enjoys sourcing set items, particularly for our recent period dramas. Judy's Mum, June Lucas, joined the society in 1950 and was an actress, secretary, producer and eventually president of the society. This has given Judy great loyalty and interest in the society, since she retired, some years ago.

Peter Holstein - Stage Manager

Peter joined the committee this year, as Stage Manager. He has a huge variety of skills that make him a wonderful addition to the society. He has lots of good ideas and works well with Bill our lighting technician.

Canterbury Players Amateur Dramatic Society

December 2016

page 4 of 5



Through unavoidable circumstances, Peter was thrown in at the deep end earlier this year, when Dad's Army followed on, immediately after Relatively Speaking.

Heather Holstein - Membership Secretary

Heather was Secretary for some time and has acted in several plays. She had a NODA nomination for her cameo role in 'Something to Hide'! At her home she has hosted committee meetings, society BBQs, play readings, after show parties and has shown great hospitality, together with husband David. They enjoy cooking and made all the delicious food for 'Allo 'Allo, Fawlty Towers and Dad's Army. Heather has been Production Coordinator for many plays and has stepped in as prompt or props person, when necessary. She helps with set decorating and organises and works Front of House during play week.

Chris Perry - Committee Member

Everyone on the committee has something different to offer. Chris is one of our best actresses and contributes to meetings with her vast acting experience and knowledge. Besides Canterbury Players, she has acted with Altrincham Garrick, Club Theatre, and Urmston Musical Theatre. Her knowledge has helped on many occasions and she has read and reviewed many plays for us to consider performing. When she is not in a play, she always helps Front of House. Chris has recently moved to Bowdon but hopes to remain involved.

Janet Bellass - Committee Member

Janet is an active member of Brook Road Methodist Church and is a link between the church and our Society, offering excellent advice. For several years she has been in charge of the raffle for plays and society socials – always bringing in a good amount of extra revenue for us, with her raffle partner, Elaine. She appeared in Dad's Army as the loveable Godfrey and performed a mean Morris Dance! She joined the committee at the 2016 AGM.



Retiring

Terry and Norma retire as working members of Canterbury Players after 11 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work; Terry as Stage Manager and Norma as Scenic Artist. They have created some very good sets, their last one being for "Relatively Speaking" which was fantastic and well admired. I know I would not have been able to continue building sets for the last 11 years without the help from Terry, so once again my thanks go to Terry and Norma.

Good luck to our new Stage Manager, Peter Holstein.

Gordon Wells President

. . . and as for Gordon, well . . . This is his 60th year with the society! He has been a fantastic asset to Canterbury Players; over the years he has been - our Assistant Stage Manager, Stage Manager, Set Designer, Constructor and Decorator. He has been on the committee for many years and has now been our President for over five years.

These days you can see Gordon, front of house, doing all sorts of jobs! Elaine, his wife, was our Properties Mistress for a long time and she still supports us by doing the raffle for each production. It's wonderful to have such loyal and long standing members! A big thank you to you both!

The committee



Canterbury Players Amateur Dramatic Society

December 2016

page 5 of 5



A Look Back at 2016



Website

Our website has a new look and a new address: canterburyplayers.net

