



ST. MARTIN'S PLAYERS



present



A Comedy by Derek Benfield

*Directed and Produced by
Dave Barnett and Richard Percival*



Friday 17 May 2024, 7:30pm

Saturday 18 May 2024, 2:30pm, 7:30pm

at the Huxtable Hall, St Martin's Church, Erith Road, Bexleyheath

PROGRAMME £1

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.

WELCOME TO THE SHOW!

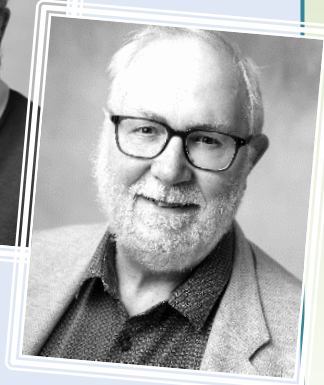
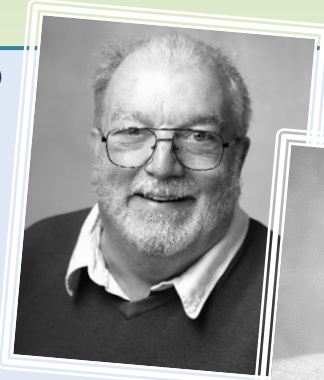
Welcome to our 95th production: this time, two of our veteran members have taken the helm, having played over a hundred roles between them and directed and produced on many occasions, but they haven't directed a play together for a while (*Key For Two*, 2016).

Richard offered to take the challenge this time while ably assisted by Dave, who sadly can't be with us for the performances. Dave insisted on a perfect performance for the first dress rehearsal, his only chance to see the full play, so we hope he was pleased, and we have kept up the high standard he always expects.

For the fifth time, we present a Derek Benfield play, having first performed one of his plays thirty years ago, but our first for several years. This play is a comedy rather than a farce, so watch out for the funny lines and characterisation, rather than an overly complicated plot with the distraction of running around, lost items of clothing and innuendo. We have an experienced cast, and hope that you'll be laughing as much as they have throughout the last few months of rehearsals.

Following the marathon effort of three short plays last September and our annual pantomime, we were aiming for something that would be simpler to stage. Sadly, this never happens as we like to get more and more adventurous with our sets – this time, we have tried setting the room at an angle, giving a different perspective, plus two new backdrops, one of which leads right into the wings. As always, we can't do this without a dedicated team of builders and artists, so thank you to everyone who has been involved in making the play look and feel true to its intended setting.

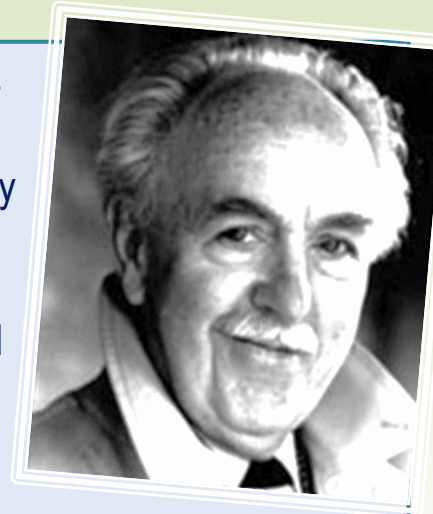
We hope that you enjoy the show and look forward to seeing you at our next production in the autumn.



THE WRITER AND THE PLAY



Born in 1926, **Derek Benfield** made dozens of big- and small-screen appearances spanning six decades until shortly before his death in 2009, including recurring and one-off roles in many well-known series. In his career, he wrote over thirty comedy plays and is one of our group's 'go-to' writers when we are looking for a good laugh. Our group has previously performed *Post Horn Gallop* (1994), *Running Riot* (2002), *Over My Dead Body* (2010) and *Panic Stations* (2012).



Fish Out Of Water was first performed at the New Theatre, Bromley, in April 1962. For those who can't picture where this theatre was – it was located at the end of the High Street (where Barclay's now stands) but was destroyed by a fire in 1971; the theatre was where David Jason broke into the acting world, performing in a pantomime and a Noel Coward play in 1965.

'***Fish Out Of Water*** takes place in a sun-drenched hotel somewhere on the Italian Riviera: the sort of romantic, sweet-smelling spot we all long to escape to for a little piece and quiet after the bustle of London. Into this idyllic setting strides Agatha Hepworth, a loud, outspoken, jovial cockney widow, and her timid spinster sister, Fiona Francis. Agatha, rosy and beaming, crushes all protests as she rounds up the hotel guests into communal games and joint enterprises of every kind. They came on holiday, she maintains, to enjoy themselves – and she is going to see that they do! With untiring energy, she invades the private lives of all the characters with surprising and riotous results'.



The action takes place in the hotel lounge.



Act 1 – Afternoon of a hot summer's day

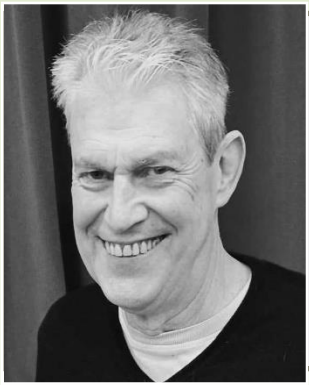
Act 2 Scene 1 – The following morning after breakfast

Interval: refreshments will be available in the Small Hall during the interval

Act 2 Scene 2 – Before lunch, the same day

Act 3 – After dinner, the same evening

THE CAST

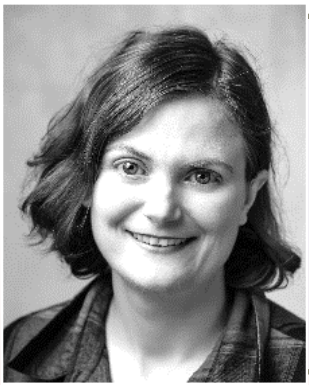


MARK JAMIESON as Brigadier Hubback

Mark made his debut on our stage thirty years ago in *Laugh! I Nearly Went To Miami*; while he was involved in many early productions and has always supported us, he has only been able to appear on our stage occasionally in recent years. Recent appearances include an Ugly Sister in 2022 and the central role in *Cash On Delivery*; he is best remembered for performing both Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde at the same time.

VAL COATES as Mrs Hubback

Val first appeared on our stage in *Murder In Play* (2008), playing various senior ladies, from the intelligent *Agatha Crusty* and Lady Agatha in *Hound Of The Baskervilles*, to dodderly drunk Miss Bourne in *The Ghost Train*, to the stern DSS supervisor in *Cash On Delivery* and, most recently, a confused children's writer in *Move Over Mrs Markham*; she has also played wicked panto stepmothers and the Dame on two occasions.



LINDSEY CLAYTON as Dora Cowley

Lindsey has made regular appearances since 2016 and is always ready to step into a role at short notice or lend a hand backstage to keep the show on track. She has appeared in almost every post-lockdown production, with recent roles including the Deputy Sheriff in *Who Shot The Sheriff?* And the bathing beauty in *Afternoon At The Seaside* – actually an undercover police officer who wasn't covered by very much.

RAE CALMAN as Marisa

Rae first appeared in *Play On!* (1995) and is our group's Chair, make-up and social media expert. Most recently, she has been seen as the saloon owner and murderer's accomplice in *Who Shot The Sheriff?* and the evil Fairy Pernicia in *Puss In Boots*; she was then framed for murder in *The Rats* (where she was on stage for the entire play) and as So-Shy in our latest pantomime.





HAZEL BERGMAN as Agatha Hepworth

First appearing in the chorus of *King Arthur* (2003), Hazel has played a range of characters, having the most fun when playing dominant, powerful characters, so her current role is perfect for her (although this time she doesn't get to throw soup over anyone's head, or put trifle down anyone's trousers). Most recently, she appeared as a marriage guidance counsellor in *Cash On Delivery* and as the Genie Of The Ring in our last pantomime.

CHRISTINE BELSHAM as Fiona Francis

First appearing in our second production of *Jack And The Beanstalk* (2009) Christine has played many smaller roles: sometimes in a quieter background part, but also as feisty, bossy strong women. Her biggest role to date was as the Vicar in *Murder At The New Vicarage*; she is excellently cast alongside Hazel once again – as her gentle Genie counterpart a few months ago and now as her shy sister.

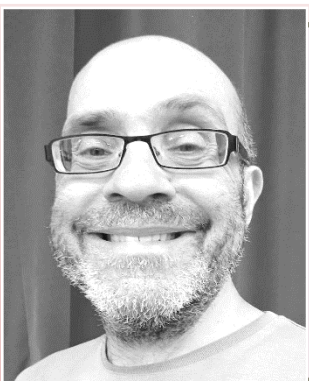


STEVE MORLEY as J C Mallett

First appearing in *The Roses Of Eyam* (1996), Steve has appeared in over forty roles, most recently as the Sheriff in *Who Shot The Sheriff*, and everyone still talks about the dwarf / traffic warden that has appeared in three separate pantos. Steve enjoys stage managing and directing, trying new effects and ideas, as shown in designing three very different sets to fit onto our stage when he directed last year's trio of Agatha Christie short plays.

HARRY OWEN as Len Barrett

Now appearing in his tenth production, Harry is the newest member of the group appearing this time. He first appeared in *Rapunzel* (2017) and has appeared in every pantomime since, from comedy double acts, to a giant, to a bossy Queen, and most recently as a dwarf / ballerina. Last year, Harry played a camp interior designer in *Move Over Mrs Markham*, but this time he's after the ladies...



PAUL BERGMAN as Julian Whittle

Paul joined us for the first time as one of the 'Sunshiners' chorus in our first musical production, *The End Of The Pier Show* (2004). He enjoys comical roles but can equally play deadpan characters and bring the tension to serious roles. Most recently, he has performed in *Cash On Delivery* and *The Rats*, and appeared as the Dame for the third time in our last pantomime.

THE CREW

<i>Prompt</i>	DARYL O'SULLIVAN
<i>Properties</i>	MARION BIRAM
<i>Wardrobe</i>	MONICA CANE, JULIE EXELL
<i>Make-Up</i>	RAE CALMAN
<i>Set Construction</i>	DAVE BARNETT, DAVID BATCHELOR, JAMES BELSHAM, MARK BELSHAM BARRY GAVIN, CHRIS SUGGITT
<i>Backdrop Artist</i>	DAVID BATCHELOR
<i>Lighting & Sound</i>	DAVID BATCHELOR, CHRIS SUGGITT
<i>Box Office</i>	SUE ADAMS
<i>Front Of House</i>	FRIENDS OF THE PLAYERS
<i>Refreshments</i>	2 ND BARNEFURST GUIDES
<i>Poster</i>	DAVE BARNETT
<i>Programme</i>	STEVE MORLEY



If you would like to take advantage of our hearing induction loop system, please adjust your hearing aid to the 'T' setting.

THE 'USUAL' SMALL PRINT... Please note that smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building. As a courtesy to those on stage and in the audience, please turn off your mobile 'phone and refrain from using flash photography. Fire exits are located at either side of the stage and at the rear of the hall; in the unlikely event of an emergency, please leave the hall by the nearest safe exit and assemble in the car park. Thank you.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR RAFFLE

As usual, we will hold a raffle for charity at each performance. Tickets will be on sale before the performance and during the interval; the draw will take place during final act, and the winning numbers will be announced at the end of the performance.



The Dan Guyton Foundation is based at Fosters Primary School in Welling. The school was founded almost 300 years ago using funds provided in the will of William Foster, initially to educate twenty poor children in reading, writing and arithmetic. Keeping true to the founder's wishes, the foundation helps those who are disadvantaged, but now supports those who struggle to feed their families.



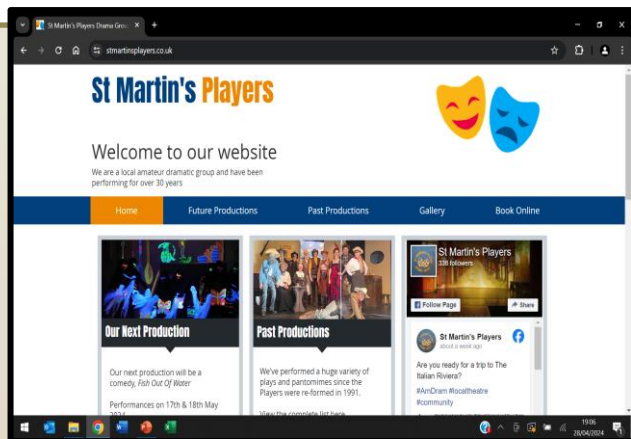
We are all affected by rising food prices and energy bills, and increasing numbers of our population are reliant on food banks across the UK – there are currently at least a thousand more food banks than McDonalds restaurants. Food banks can provide an emergency box with provisions for three days to those who need it, without any judgement. Many donations of food, toiletries and cleaning products are received by the foodbanks, and all monetary donations can help to support any shortfall in supplies.

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www.stmartinsplayers.co.uk

...to learn more about our archive of programmes and photos from past performances, find out what's coming up and even book your tickets online.



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OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

‘TEN TIMES TABLE’

A Comedy by Alan Ayckbourn, Directed by Stephen Brody

The leading lights of the village have decided to hold a pageant of local history based on a somewhat vague event, "The Massacre of the Pendon Twelve". But there's a young left-wing teacher on the committee who decides to turn it into a rally for proletarian revolution. Committee meetings become symbolic battlefields for conflicting views - the right-wing faction being led by the Chairman's conservative wife. The event turns into a violent confrontation between the two extremes, with cataclysmic results. Police intervention brings matters to a relatively quiet conclusion, but already another pageant - Romans versus Britons - seems an attractive possibility.

4 – 5 October 2024

**Readings and auditions will take place in the next few weeks
- please check online for dates and times.**

COME AND JOIN US!

We always welcome new members (over 18s, with opportunities for young people to join our pantomime chorus): whether you want to tread the boards or help backstage, we'd love to hear from you. Just come along to one of our rehearsals (Friday evenings in the Church Hall) or contact us online – we look forward to hearing from you!

Our next production includes three one-act plays, so why not start out with just a small role to see if you enjoy it? You could also try working on props, being prompt or even producing on a small scale, alongside our experienced members, learning a new skill before trying a full-size play.



COMING SOON TO ST MARTIN'S



ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

QUIZ NIGHT

£6
per person

8 JUNE

6:30pm (7pm START)

St Martin's Church Hall,
Erith Rd, DA7 6LE

Teams of up to 8

Book your place:

fundraising.stmartins@gmail.com

OUR PAST PRODUCTIONS



- 1991 **Sleeping Beauty, See How They Run!**
- 1992 **Snow White And The Seven Dwarves, Virtue Triumphant**
- 1993 **Cinderella, Continental Quilt, Surprise Package**
- 1994 **Aladdin, Laugh! I Nearly Went To Miami, Post Horn Gallop**
- 1995 **Babes In The Wood, Keeping Down With The Joneses, Play On!**
- 1996 **Dick Whittington, When We Are Married, The Roses Of Eyam**
- 1997 **Jack And The Beanstalk, Pardon Me! Prime Minister, Murder In Company**
- 1998 **Puss In Boots, Pull The Other One, Blithe Spirit**
- 1999 **Mother Goose, Bedroom Farce, Pride And Joy, Last Tango In Barnehurst**
- 2000 **Peter Pan, See How They Run!, My Friend Miss Flint**
- 2001 **Treasure Island, Shock Tactics, Outside Edge**
- 2002 **Cinderella, The Murder Room, Running Riot**
- 2003 **King Arthur, Party Piece, No Time For Fig Leaves**
- 2004 **The Sleeping Beauty, Kindly Keep It Covered, The End Of The Pier Show**
- 2005 **Bluebeard, A Murder Is Announced**
- 2006 **Aladdin, How The Other Half Loves, Noah's Animals**
- 2007 **The Three Musketeers, Murder Weekend, Out Of Focus**

OUR PAST PRODUCTIONS



- 2008** Little Red Riding Hood, Murder In Play,
Toad Of Toad Hall
- 2009** Jack And The Beanstalk, The Day God Died,
Barbecues 'R' Murder, Lady Lollipop, Jekyll And Hyde
- 2010** Dick Whittington, And Then There Were None,
Over My Dead Body
- 2011** Snow White, Alice In Wonderland,
Murder At The New Vicarage
- 2012** Cinderella, Panic Stations
- 2013** Robin Hood, Crazy Capers, Dodgy Deals, The Ghost Train
- 2014** Mother Goose, Henry The Tudor Dude, Murder Backstage
- 2015** Sleeping Beauty, The Wizard Of Oz, See How They Run!
- 2016** Aladdin, Key For Two, Hound Of The Baskervilles
- 2017** Beauty And The Beast, I'll Get My Man, It's Never Too Late
- 2018** Rapunzel, Free And Easy, Love Begins At Fifty
- 2019** Treasure Island, Agatha Crusty And The Murder Mystery Dinner,
Frankenstein
- 2020** Jack And The Beanstalk
- 2022** Cinderella, Cash On Delivery, Who Shot The Sheriff?
- 2023** Puss In Boots, Move Over Mrs Markham,
The Rule Of Three (Afternoon At The Seaside, The Rats, The Patient)
- 2024** Aladdin

Genova e la Riviera Italiana



PESARO



Riviera LIGURE



ITALIA



VIAREGGIO

LIDO DI CAMA
MARINA DI PIETRA

FORTE DEL MARMI

