



ST. MARTIN'S PLAYERS



present

Move

Over

Mrs

Markham



*A Farce by Ray Cooney and John Chapman
Directed and Produced by James Belsham and Ciara Cogley*

Friday 19 May 2023, 7:30pm

Saturday 20 May 2023, 2:30pm, 7:30pm

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

PROGRAMME

50p

WELCOME TO THE SHOW!

Welcome to our latest production: this time, James and Ciara form our youngest production team – their combined age is still less than some members of the cast! We once again return to the genre of farce: while our directors have plenty of on-stage experience, they are so young, some of the slightly dated references in the script had to be explained to them!



Our team have had to overcome some challenges in preparing for the production: there are the usual problems of positioning the cast on stage (especially since there are two rooms in such a small space), rehearsing precise movements and ensuring that no one gets hurt throwing themselves around (Mark is becoming an expert at slapstick and falls). However, unusually, there were some challenges that we haven't faced before: finding loud wallpaper for the bedroom was no problem, but sourcing somewhat plain wallpaper required many hours of research (in the pub). We needed bottles of champagne – one per performance – but now have more than enough for a convivial after-show party. And then there was the problem of turning a rectangular double bed and mattress into a round one – time to break out the angle grinder!

In this production, we welcome Eleanor to our group for her first role; sadly Sabrina (our original Sylvie, and director of our last pantomime) had to pull out, so we immediately welcomed Eleanor to her second role – in the same play.

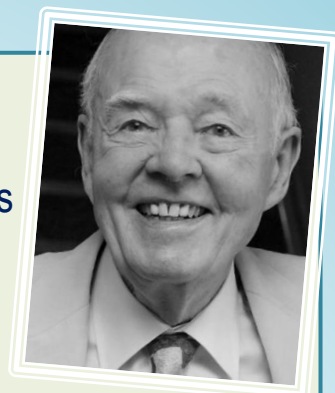
We hope that you enjoy the show and look forward to seeing you again in September for a trio of mysteries.



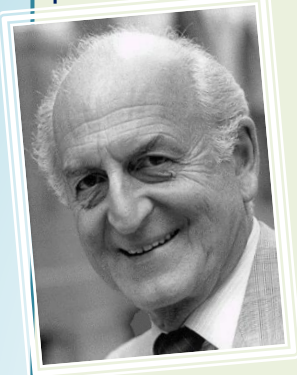
If you would like to take advantage of our hearing induction loop system, please adjust your hearing aid to the 'T' setting.

THE WRITERS AND THE PLAY

Ray Cooney OBE first appeared on stage in 1946, appearing in many of the Whitehall farces throughout the next two decades, but turned his hand to writing during the 1960s, writing over twenty plays in his career. His son Michael, who is a screenwriter, also working with his father on occasion, wrote 'Cash On Delivery' – the play we performed this time last year.



John Chapman (1927-2001) also made his first appearance in 1946 performing in farce. In 1954 he returned to Brian Rix's company with his first play, 'Dry Rot' (something that some members of our group are keen to perform in future). Ray Cooney joined the cast of this production, soon beginning their collaboration in writing for stage and television.



Move Over Mrs Markham was first performed at the Richmond Theatre in 1969, in which Ray Cooney played the leading male role himself; the play later enjoyed a two-year run at the Vaudeville Theatre.

“Move Over Mrs Markham is set in a very elegant top floor London flat, belonging to Philip and Joanna Markham. The flat has been under renovation, and thus has been largely empty. Philip is a straight-laced publisher of children's books, and he shares an office with his partner, Henry Lodge, on the ground floor. Reluctantly, Philip agrees to let Henry borrow his apartment for the evening to "entertain" his latest girlfriend. At the same time, Joanna Markham is persuaded by Linda Lodge to let her borrow the apartment, so she can entertain her lover. What nobody knows is that the interior designer who had been decorating the apartment for the past three months has decided that this was the night he and the au pair girl would try out the new round bed! When all three sets of people converge on the apartment, expecting to find it empty, chaos and confusion ensue.

The play comprises two acts; there will be a short interval at the end of Act One. Refreshments will be available in the Small Hall during the interval.

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.

THE CAST

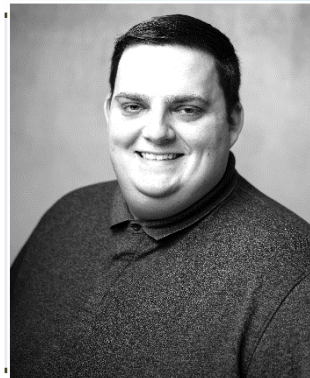


RAE CALNAN as Joanna Markham

Rae is the longest-serving member of the group appearing in this play 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* – will she behave herself this time?

HARRY OWEN as Alistair Spentlow

Harry first appeared in *Rapunzel* in 2017 and has been known for appearing as part of various panto comedy double-acts but was last seen as the Queen in *Puss In Boots*. Away of Pantoland, Harry has portrayed characters in *Free And Easy* and *Agatha Crusty*; recently, he has also directed a school production of *Oliver!*



ELEANOR JANE STEVENS as Sylvie and Mrs Wilkinson

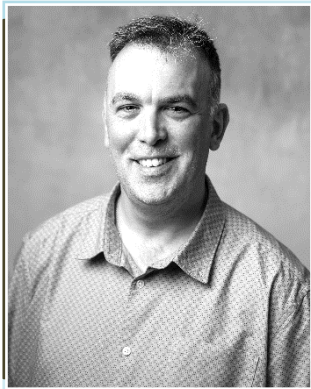
We welcome Eleanor to her first production with us – jumping in at the deep end by taking on two roles. She has seen several productions before and is keen to take part again (three roles could be possible in September!). Eleanor has previously been involved in children's productions and hoped to join some grown-ups this time.

LINDSEY CLAYTON as Linda Lodge

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. Recent appearances include Prince Charming in *Cinderella*, a tearful fiancée in *Cash On Delivery* and the Deputy Sheriff in *Who Shot The Sheriff?*



THE CAST

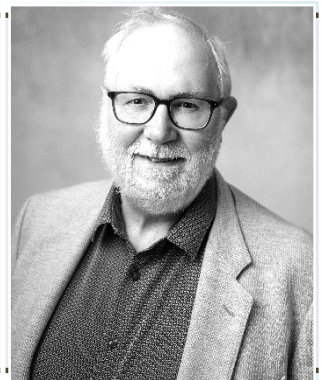


MARK FOULDS as Philip Markham

Having appeared on stage elsewhere (and often rehearsing more than one play at a time), Mark first joined our group in 2017 in *I'll Get My Man*; he has also appeared in *It's Never Too Late*, and as the dame in *Rapunzel* and as Frankenstein's creature. In his last role, he played a DSS inspector, showing great versatility as he was attacked by a washing machine, got rather drunk and was finally struck by lightning.

RICHARD PERCIVAL as Henry Lodge

Richard has appeared regularly on our stage since 1999 and served as our Chairman for many years. Most recently, he has appeared as Baron Hardup, a wild-west barman and a King with much to say but no chance of avoiding interruption. Other notable roles include Bluebeard, the Tinman, Sherlock Holmes, Noah, various murderers and Tinkerbell.



STEPHEN BRODY as Walter Pangbourne

Although he is one of the group's newer members, Stephen has appeared in every production since joining us for our 2020 pantomime. Whether he is in the panto chorus (where his timing is improving!), playing naughty old Uncle George in *Cash On Delivery*, or has the stagecoach driver obsessed with lavender bath flakes in *Who Shot The Sheriff?*, Stephen has certainly given us some memorable performances.

VAL COATES as Miss Smythe

Val first appeared on our stage in 2008, playing various senior ladies of all types, 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 Ms Cowper in *Cash On Delivery* and wicked panto stepmothers; she has also played an ugly sister and Widow Twankey.



THE CREW

Prompt	DARYL O'SULLIVAN
Properties, Stage Crew	MARION BIRAM
Wardrobe	JULIE EXELL
Make-up	RAE CALNAN
Set construction	DAVE BARNETT, DAVID BATCHELOR, BARRY GAVIN, CHRIS SUGGITT
Lighting & sound	DAVID BATCHELOR, CHRIS SUGGITT
Box Office & poster	DAVE BARNETT
Front of House	WENDY BARNETT, MONICA CAHE, STEVE MORLEY, MARTIN STONE
Refreshments	VICTORIA WHITEHEAD et al
Programme	STEVE MORLEY
Cast photographs	GRAHAM BAKER

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.



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.



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www.ellenor.org

Registered Charity No. 1121561

ellenor is the provider of all-encompassing hospice care for both adults and children living in North Kent and Bexley. Their services include providing hospice care in clients' homes and in care homes to those with life-limiting illnesses, wellbeing and therapeutic services. The charity aims to provide personal support to meet the needs and wishes of those they work with, respecting their dignity and independence as they provide quality care and support.

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

Agatha Christie

'THE RULE OF THREE'

'AFTERNOON AT THE SEASIDE'

'THE RATS'

'THE PATIENT'

Three One-Act Plays, Directed by Steve Morley

29 – 30 September 2023

Readings and auditions will take place
on Friday 2 June and Friday 9 June in the Small Hall.





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



