

# The Oxted Players

## Communicating Doors

Our autumn production, Alan Ayckbourn's comedy thriller *Communicating Doors*, ended on a high note having had excellent audiences and comments highly praising the production. We congratulate Catherine Webber, her team and the cast of Sarah Bell, Chris Bassett, Duncan Browne, Nicky Gill, Rhian Lally and Alan Webber for this memorable production. There were special compliments for the set designed by Catherine and Mike Sutton and for the intriguing "communicating door" itself which was operated faultlessly by Patrick Tricker.



Sarah Bell and Alan Webber 'communicating' with each other on stage

## It's Panto Time! Oh yes it is!

Our pantomime *Dick Whittington* (8 – 16 January 2010) has been fully cast and rehearsals have begun under the expert direction of Janette White, with Sarah Gillender as Choreographer and Ieuan Reece as Musical Director. We have a new *Dame* this year in the guise of Peter Calver who played *Robin Hood* in our 2009 panto. In addition we have Laura Brand (*Dick*), Jacob McIntosh (*Tommy the Cat*), Lotti Davies (*Alice*), India Martin (*Fairy Bow Bells*), Chris Bassett (*King Rat*), Sophie MacTavish (*Idle Jack*), Clive MacTavish (*Alderman Fitzwarren*), Jonathan Tull (*Captain Bilge*) and Ann Lovell (*Swab the Mate*) supported by a vibrant cast of dancers and chorus. There is a great demand for tickets and you are therefore urged to book quickly with the Ticket Secretary on 01883 724852 so as not to miss this fun production at very reasonable prices (Adults £9.00, Children £8.00).

## Supporting SCDF

We follow panto with two entries into the Southern Counties Drama Festival during the week 23 – 27 February 2010. Our adult entry is *Alternative Accommodation* by Pam Valentine directed by Tricia Whyte. This fast moving one act comedy is set in modern times and reflects upon a relevant social dilemma which affects most of us at one time or another. Three adult children meet to decide what to do with their ageing mother. Tricia has chosen for her cast June Brown as the mother and Nigel Brown, Ghislaine Bowden and Mandie Arbuckle as her children. Our youth entry is a new play specially written for the Festival and also directed by Ben Atterbury entitled *Joshua* about a boy in a coma. This innovative play will be performed by a small cast auditioned from our Young Players.

## Young Players March Forth

We are also very pleased to announce that our Young Players Biennial Production (12 and 13 March 2010 – 3 performances) will be *The Adventures of the Faraway Tree*, a play with music written by Ruth Summerfield (adapted from Enid's Blyton's popular book *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*). The play tells the story of three children who find a magic tree in the woods and embark upon a series of adventures. We had been waiting for formal approval of the script from the Enid Blyton Trust but this has now been given and so it is all systems go for June Brown and her team. Those children already on our Young Players Membership will be invited to auditions to be held in early December for the 20 characters and there will be additional chorus roles.

## Seaside in the Spring

Our spring 2010 Production (12 to 15 May) is the Alan Bennett comedy *Habeas Corpus* directed by Peter Shore. We meet the Wicksteed family from Hove, a seemingly respectable doctor and his wife along with their hypochondriac son. We then add a young lady patient who the doctor takes a fancy to, but who in turn takes an interest in his son, and the doctor's sister who is more concerned about her flat chest than her courtship with the limp but good natured vicar, Canon Throbbing. Finally we stir in with this the President of the British Medical Association and an assortment of characters which include a "bust" fitter salesman from Leatherhead and the result is this wickedly funny play. There is a read through for the play on Thursday 26 November at 7.30 pm at St. Peters Hall, Limsfield and auditions on Sunday 29 November at 2.30 pm at Hurst Green Community Centre. For further information please contact Peter Shore on [solutions@shores.demon.co.uk](mailto:solutions@shores.demon.co.uk) or 01883 741830.

## June's a Diamond

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of Oxted Players' (formerly Student Players) pantomimes and to mark the occasion we are having an Anniversary Celebration at the Theatre on Saturday 23 January 2010 from 7.30 pm. Anyone who has had any involvement with panto over the past 60 years, whether on stage or off, is invited to come along to this social occasion and to reminisce about their experiences. Photos and some videos from past productions will be on display. If you want to know more, please contact June Brown, who appeared in one of the first pantos, on 01883 714460.

## EMMA

Have you been watching the latest adaptation of Jane Austin's novel Emma on the BBC which came to an end recently? If so you may have recognised the family home and the gardens as being Squerryes Court in Westerham. I happen to have paid my first visit to this magnificent property just before it closed for the winter. The gardens are indeed a delight and you can look out across unspoiled countryside from every corner. I quite expected to bump into Emma herself so idyllic was the setting. If you have never been there it is well worth a visit when it reopens next spring.