

e: meophamplayers@aol.com

Sylvia Stickings remembers our Eileen



I first met Eileen about 40 years ago. The players usually entered a one act play into the Medway Little Theatre Festival - later known as the Duncan Rand Festival. She was a very enthusiastic "techy" from whom everyone sought advice about the lighting facilities. All down the years, Eileen has been a driving force on all aspects of amateur theatre. Sonia Williams and I made a friend of Eileen and finally managed to persuade her to join the Players in 2006. Apart from lighting plays, she

offered to direct, her first

production for us being The Lights are Warm and Coloured. Many plays followed including Outside Edge, Peggy for You, Snake in the Grass and lastly, Dead Guilty. But her most successful production was Calendar Girls in 2013, which was so much fun to do! Although very encouraging and enthusiastic to new recruits, she sometimes had a short fuse. On one occasion, after a long rehearsal, someone had forgotten to take on a prop and she was heard to shout: "where"s the effing bottle?" Another time, a cake tin was carried on sideways and after a few choice comments, she shouted "For crying out loud, there is supposed to be a bleeding cake inside that tin!" She was not a happy committee member, preferring to work on the side lines, but she did serve many years, always coming up with ideas for recruiting new members and bringing in several actors from other societies. She organised our Wednesday

meetings with play readings

and workshops with Paul

Doust, who has become a

firm friend of the Players.

always come up with an

Any problems, Eileen would

answer, sometimes at very

Meopham Players

Newsletter

www.meophamplayers.co.uk

September 2018/ Issue 45

short notice.

Together with four other Player friends we met for lunch monthly, trying out local hostelries. She always arrived first, enjoying a glass of wine. Her droll, dry wit, sometimes a bit caustic, always amused her friends. One always got a straight answer from her - offend or please - with no nonsense advice.

I visited her several times during her illness and marvelled at her stoic acceptance of her fate, able to talk quite openly and giving us her scripts and books. We have lost a truly charismatic friend who will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with

Sylvia Stickings

Footnote

Stephen and Jaqui.

Thanks to everyone who sent in their condolences. There are far too many to quote here, but they were all appreciated and as a further act of appreciation, our October production: A Wilde Night Out, will be performed in her memory, the proceeds being shared with cancer research charities, so please be generous.



FREDA STARE EXPLAINS



Hello everyone! You might be somewhat surprised to find that we will NOT now be performing *Breath of Spring* in October as stated in the last newsletter. For various reasons we have had to postpone

it until Autumn 2019. However, we have instead had the great good fortune to engage the talents of Paul Doust who will present His one-man show entitled A Wilde Night Out. As you will see from the poster above, Paul will be giving readings from a number of Wilde's bestloved works in the first half, following in the second half with a performance of *Lady* Bracknell's Confinement. And here she is in the next column, looking very confined and perhaps a little bit like Frankie Howerd in drag. This is a must-see performance and although we have had to increase our seat prices,

I'm sure you will find the experience to be well worth the extra cost. And remember, a proportion of the proceeds will be going to Cancer Research charities in memory of our Eileen.



POPPY COCK'S COLUMN



Hello darlings!

Yes, I'm back from my holiday and I suppose I should thank Freda for standing in for me - but is she trying to take over?

Never mind, I'm not one to shy away from a

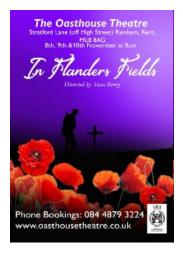


challenge, so let me tell you about what has been happening in the panto world while I was away. Now you may remember we were having a brand new pantomime written especially for us by young playwright Percy Veerance. Sadly he did not live up to his name so in the time honoured phrase of frustrated employers the world over, we had to let him go, along with Alan Din and his Wonderful Magic Lamp. But, worry ye not (Frankie Howerd again?) Producer, Linda O'Byrne has stepped into the breach and has written the first act of... YES! Magical Meopham which contains characters from almost any pantomime you can think of (apart from Aladdin, of course). Now, it may not be the same pantomime, but everything we said in the last newsletter still obtains - there will be

lots of dressing up and singing and dancing; and most of all it will be FUN. Auditions will be held at the October 3rd Monthly Meeting in the Village Hall. The cast will be as big as we can make it so if you want to take part there will almost certainly be a place for you. The performance dates are Thursday, Friday and Saturday 25th, 26th and 27th January 2019. Ticket prices are £8.50 per person which includes the programme. The Theatre Experience price, which incorporates a seat, a programme and a twocourse meal is now £23.50 per person.

Moving on, I noted that in last month's newsletter, Freda made mention of a production of a World War I Centenary show to be performed by Rainham **Amateur Theatre Society**

(RATS) from 8th to 10th of November at the Oathouse Theatre. At the time of writing, poor Freda hadn't been able to find any mention of it on the RATS web site - or maybe she hadn't looked properly. Anyway. I've had a look and there it is listed under "Ticket Source". There are no tickets left for the Thursday performance, but there are for the other two nights. The show is called In Flanders Fields and tickets are priced at £10.50. This is the site of the Booking Office: www.ticketsource.co.uk/ boxoffice/venueplan/eKC AlhBScYkt

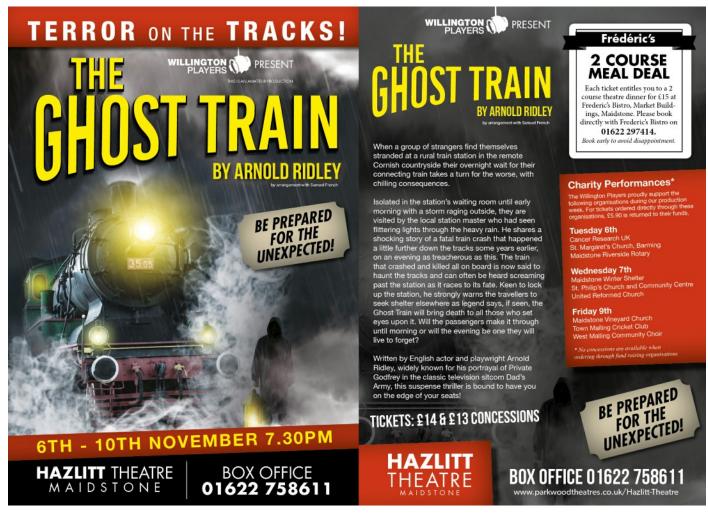


CORRESPONDENCE

Remember, if you would like to contribute to the newsletter or comment on something in it you like or dislike, we'd love to hear from you. Just email the editor on:

meophamplayers@aol.com

But perhaps, you might be thinking you would prefer something a little more modern than the First World War. In which case what about going to see the Willington Players production of *The Ghost Train* at the Hazlitt Theatre. This was written in 1923 by Arnold Ridley, who you may remember played the part of Private Godfrey in Dad's Army.



BREAKING NEWS - AN INVITATION FROM SYLVIA STICKINGS!

THERE WILL BE A SING SONG AND READ THROUGH OF THE PANTO AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER. EVERYONE IS INVITED, JUST TO COME AND SPEND AN EVENING AND HAVE A CUP OF TEA EVEN IF YOU DON'T WANT TO AUDITION ON THE 3RD. BUT, PLEASE THINK ABOUT BEING IN THE CHORUS IF YOU DON'T WANT A MAIN PART. THERE ARE PLENTY OF BACK STAGE JOBS AND HELP IN MAKING PROPS. WE WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL FOR HELP WITH THE COSTUMES. ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE CLEVER WITH A NEEDLE!

WE WILL HAVE THE SERVICES OF OUR FRIEND, SYLVIA MANN, WHO WILL BE PLAYING FOR US.

DO COME ALONG AT 8 PM AND LET US HAVE A SMASHING EVENING!

OUR DIRECTOR, LINDA O'BYRNE IS ITCHING TO GET STARTED, SHE HAS WRITTEN THE SCRIPT AND WOULD APPRECIATE LOTS OF SUPPORT FROM YOU ALL!