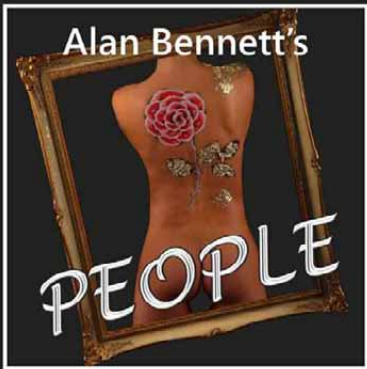




Alan Bennett's



PEOPLE

www.banburycrossplayers.org.uk

Apr 2018

Welcome to the Spring production of our 2017 / 2018 Season - *People*. Our third production this season offers something different from our previous two and comes from the sharp, observational pen of Alan Bennett. As well as a first-time director with BCP, in the shape of Ray Atkinson, there is a large cast with a sprinkling of new faces amongst the more familiar ones.



BCP members are busy working on several projects simultaneously. The cast was recently announced for our July production *The Cripple of Innishmaan* by Martin McDonagh - Director, Screenwriter and Producer of the Oscar-winning film *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*. We are all looking forward to seeing how the production team bring a small island off the West coast of Ireland to the stage here at The Mill Arts Centre. Tickets for this show are available at the Box Office tonight.

We are now in our ninth year of taking part in Drama Festivals at Lighthorne and Abingdon. This year we are looking to perform *Warm, Hot, Getting Hotter* by Lou Treleaven. At the time of writing there are roles available so if you fancy getting involved, speak to one of our members in the foyer.

BCP continues to thrive and we continue to focus on succession and training up the next generation of Theatre Practitioners in Banbury. If you'd like to be part of that next generation, do come along to one of our regular Tuesday evenings at The Mill Arts Centre, 7.30pm. You'll find details of how to join and our calendar of Tuesday events on our website www.banburycrossplayers.org.uk.



Next month I come to the end of my term as Chairman of Banbury Cross Players. I hope you have enjoyed the varied programme we have produced. I would like to thank you all for your support during these two years.

Enjoy the show!

Robin Williams
Chairman

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Director
Ray Atkinson

Stage Manager
Janice Lake

Lighting
John Hicks

Sound
Robin Williams

Props
Maggie Davies
Marilyn Fairbairn
John McCormick
Mary Sullivan

Costume
Lucy Byford

Prompt
Gill Huband

Set Construction
Richard Ashby
Chris Garrett
Nik Lester

Video
Madison Lee

Portraits
Peter Bloor

Production Manager
Linda Shaw

PEOPLE

CAST

Theodore
Dorothy Stacpoole
Bevan
Iris
June Stacpoole
Ralph Lumsden
Bishop
Bruce
Louise
Nigel
Les
Colin
Brit



Present Day. Stacpole House, South Yorkshire

Dave Smith
June Ronson
Dave Robinson
Brenda Williams
Hilary Beaton
Dave Candy
Terry Gallagher
Bruce Walton
Kate Groves
Jem Turner
Jayne Ryman
Alex Nicholls
Hana Ayers

Patrons are requested to switch off mobile phones before the performance and are reminded that photography and video recording are strictly prohibited.

Emergency exits are to the left of the stage and to the rear of the auditorium.

In case of emergency, please follow instruction from Front of House staff.



Front of House Manager
Mike Jack

Foyer Display
Clare Lester

Members of the Society
staffed Front of House
(... and emptied lots and cupboards in
the name of providing multitudinous
bric-a-brac to dress the set)

The Mill Management & Staff
Banbury Guardian
Banbury Cake
Oxford Mail & Times
Your Letterbox
Puritans Radio
Castle Quay Shopping Centre
BBC Radio Oxford
Pan Designs
St Mary's Church
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The Old Flight House
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THORPE WAY

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Ask me how I came to direct *People* and there's no single answer, but three.

Alan Bennett: I first became aware of him in the 1960s in the West End review *Beyond the Fringe* - which he starred in with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Jonathan Miller. Whether it's the care (or lack of) provided for Miss Shepherd in *Lady in the Van* or the education system highlighted in *The History Boys*, Bennett casts a light on England and how things have changed since the 1980s.



South Yorkshire: I lived here in the 1980s and witnessed, first hand, the destruction of the coal industry and the impact on mining communities. The theme of broken communities is expressed in *People* by Dorothy, owner of the once grand Stacpole House. The National Trust offer to take Stacpole on as an example of "Real England". Dorothy calls it "a pretend England" pointing instead to the mining community adjoining her land as "Real England".

The National Trust: I'm a strong supporter and believe in their *Forever for Everyone* vision. Like Bennett, I wonder where and how they should invest their precious funds. Should it be on a dilapidated place like Stacpole? Or are there other properties that better represent "Real England"? The childhood home of Cilla Black? A pithead baths in Featherstone?

In the end, it was seeing The National Theatre's touring production that really made me want to direct it. My good friend Adrian McGloughlin - who attended one of BCP's Play Selection evenings last year, and who played Les in the touring production - has been a great support. Here's a brief message from Adrian:



I fell in love with People at The National Theatre. In true Alan Bennett style it makes you laugh but explores important issues that affect us all, and about which he feels strongly - perfect theatre. We toured for five months and it was a treat to go on stage every night. We performed to gales of laughter nightly and our leading ladies - Sian Phillips and Bridget Forsythe - were stars in every sense of the word.

It was a magical play and a magical experience - and I even got to meet Alan himself a couple of times. What a sweet, self-effacing man. You will have a wonderful time watching Ray's production tonight.

What more can I say? I'm delighted to have been given the opportunity to direct *People* for BCP. I hope you have a great evening.

Ray Atkinson

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