

Banbury Cross Players

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“A CUP OF TEA and a FLAPJACK”

From the pen of Director, Ray Atkinson

#BCPPeople

“Behind the pictures of houses and countryside that seem so tranquil, secure and timeless, there are often dramatic stories of eleventh hour attempts at rescue, of extraordinary generosity and far-sightedness and occasionally of lost opportunities”.

Parts of this extract from “The National Trust – The First Hundred Years” could have been written about Alan Bennett’s People.

“I’ve been a strong supporter of The [National Trust](#) for many years” says Director, Ray Atkinson. “I believe in their vision Forever for Everyone and, like Alan Bennett, the playwright, wonder where and how they should be investing their precious funds. Should they be spending money on a dilapidated place like Stacpole House, the fictional stately home in People? Or are there other properties that might better represent the “Real England” if they were available? The play suggests the childhood home of Cilla Black, pithead baths in Featherstone and the last functioning children’s library in the north-east. What would you choose?

“When I visit National Trust properties I don’t spend much time looking at the valuable furniture in the main house, preferring instead to look at what made the house ‘tick’ like the kitchens, the vegetable gardens and the stables. In recent years, The National Trust has focused much more on these areas recognising the connection visitors make with their own lives.”

With two young grandchildren in tow, Ray has noted the introduction of ‘activities’ - Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween quizzes and Bug Hunting trails – all designed to attract a younger, family audience. Isn’t the real value of The National Trust the thousands of miles of countryside they have preserved or rescued from developers, for us and future generations to enjoy?

All of these themes - not forgetting the ubiquitous “cup of tea and a flapjack” - are explored in People. Dorothy, the reluctant inheritor, and her younger sister, try to decide whether to gift Stacpole House to The National Trust or accept an offer from a property developer who wants to move it to Dorset. Then there’s the extra funds available from the film company who have hired the house – and its Chippendale Four Poster bed – to make risqué movies!

“Forever for Everyone” is the vision of The National Trust. But will it be achieved at Stacpole House, the fictional stately home in People?

People runs from 25th - 28th April 2018 at The Mill Arts Centre, Banbury. Tickets are available now from the Box Office on 01295 279002 or online at <https://www.themillartscentre.co.uk/Event/141154>



Alan Bennett's

*Hilarious ...
moving ...
and a little bit
naughty!*

PEOPLE

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