Darlings, where DID the Time Go?

Perryway Players
75 Years On
Historical – and hysterical

Perryway Players of Frampton-on-Severn have a history that goes back to 1938. The Second World War put a temporary halt to proceedings not long after, but the Players were soon back in the footlights.

The first panto put on by the Players did not hit the stage until nearly forty years after they were founded. ‘Tom Thumb’, by Trudy West, went on in 1975.

The Players’ first melodrama was The Murder of Maria Marten, aka The Red Barn, by Brian J Burton. The Wizard of Oz was first staged by the Players in 1980 – thirty two years on, we can’t wait to hit that yellow brick road again!

In Spring 1989, Perryway Players celebrated their 50th Anniversary by putting on a Historical Revue, with many original sketches by Dave Wheeler; debatable whether this was more hysterical than historical! In 1993, URGE pulled down more barriers (or was it towels?) – a worthy forerunner to Who Goes Bare?

Another landmark production was David’s ‘Did Elizabeth Stay Here?’, based at historic Wick Court in Arlingham, where the first Elizabeth was rumoured to have had a tryst with the handsome Earl of Essex.

Oscar Wilde’s ‘The Importance of Being Earnest’, staged in Spring 1998, saw some glittering performances in this iconic play – creating all the more contrast with the brooding tension of Patrick Hamilton’s ‘Gaslight’ the following year.

We hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane – and if you were in any of the productions, or can plug a gap (and there may still be some!), do contact us on facebook.com/perrywayplayers or twitter:perrywayplayers or check out the website: www.perrywayplayers.com

THANK YOU AND ENJOY!
David Wheeler has been a stalwart of Perry Players for several decades – and we’re lucky that he likes to turn his hand to writing, with many hilarious revue pieces to his credit. But with ‘Did Elizabeth Stay Here?’, David chose a serious historical theme and created a moving, lyrical drama. Set in nearby Wick Court in Arlingham, David’s 1996 play starred one of our best loved and finest actresses, Maureen (Mo) Day. Her gorgeous costume was designed by Philippa Parker. Mo is sadly no longer with us, but can also be seen as the definitive Lady Bracknell (page 11).
"DID ELIZABETH STAY HERE?" FRIDAY 22 MARCH 96

Did she? we can only guess. A very wordy play that would have taxed the skills of experienced Shakespeare actors, yet no so wordy that it was not understandable. A very good well written play by Director David Wheeler, well within the scope of a good Dramatic group, especially one that wishes to expand, and stretch the skills of it's acting members. A very good mix of characters, something for everyone. Whether the production I saw had been rehearsed enough is open to discussion. Some of the cast were as comfortable as if they were wearing nice fitting slippers, some were wearing brand new badly fitting shoes. To do a play of this nature you have to know your history, as regards mannerisms, costumes, how to wear certain items, how to move. The aristocracy were nothing, if not elegant. The servants were servile.

The Prologue might have been better as a narrative, whilst we watched 'Justin' and 'Picca' preparing for the 'Party'. It might then have been more descriptive. The remainder of the production flowed quite well. The scene changes were long enough to give us time to think, yet not long enough to allow us to get bored. The characters on the whole were believable, the plot easy to follow, the events also believable, they may not have all happened in the same house, but they would have happened somewhere in the village. A nice relaxing way to spend an evening, though I would like to have seen more 'life' at the 'Party' in 1989.

John Stower
1938  
Toby Jug/After the Event/Moment Musical/Poison Party

1939  
Mrs Waterbury’s Millennium/Progress/Dear Departed/Six Queens of Henry

1940  
Monkey’s Paw/Hand of Hardain/5 Pound Piece/Lead a Horse

1951 Autumn  
Sanctuary/End of a Fairytale/Hand of Hardain

1954  
Young Mrs Barrington

1955 Spring  
Ladies in Retirement (1974, 1992)

1955 Autumn  
Wasn’t It Odd?

1956 Spring  
The Offending Hand

1956 Autumn  
Without the Prince (1973)

1957 Spring  
Winter Sunshine

1957 Autumn  
Fit for Heroes

1958 Spring  
Laughter in the Dark

1959 Spring  
Murder Mistaken

1959 Autumn  
Small Hotel

1960 Spring  
Haul for the Shore

1961 Spring  
Gathering Storm

1961 Autumn  
Love in a Mist

1962 Spring  
Killer Dies Twice

1962 Autumn  
On Monday Next

1963 Spring  

1963 Autumn  
They Came to a City

1964 Spring  
Sailor Beware

1964 Autumn  
The Orchard Walls

The quotation from ‘Romeo and Juliet’ casts the sinister shadow of this R F Delderfield drama.
1965  Spring  Miranda
1965  Autumn  Brush with a Body – see next page
1966  Spring  Night Must Fall
1966  Autumn  Still Life/Ways and Means
1967  Spring  Pools Paradise – see opposite
1967  Autumn  Down Came a Blackbird
1968  Spring  See How They Run
1968  Autumn  Dangerous Corner
1969  Spring  Look out for the Catch
1969  Autumn  Book of the Month
1970  Spring  Watch it, Sailor
1970  Autumn  An Inspector Calls
1971  Spring  Rock-a-Bye Sailor
1971  Autumn  I’ll Get My Man
1972  Spring  Dead On Nine
1972  Autumn  Trial and Error
1973  Spring  Without the Prince (1956)
1973  Autumn  Cancelled
1974  Spring  Ladies in Retirement (1955, 1992)
1975  Spring  Chalk Garden
1975  Winter  Tom Thumb
1976  Spring  Post Horn Gallop (2007)
1976  Autumn  Bonaventure
1976  Winter  Sleeping Beauty
1977  Spring  Panic Stations
1977  Autumn  The Murder of Maria Marten

The Players’ first melodrama.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Production</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Aladdin</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<td>Cat on the Fiddle</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<td>1979</td>
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<td>1979</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Winter</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>1981</td>
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<td>1981</td>
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<td>1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
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<td>1982</td>
<td>Winter</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>1983</td>
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<td>1984</td>
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<td>1985</td>
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<td>1985</td>
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<td>1986</td>
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<td>Outside Edge</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Rose and Crown/Dust in the Air Suspended/Space Between the Years</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Tomb with a View – see opposite</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Jeckyll and Hyde Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>50th Anniversary Historical Revue</td>
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‘Brush with a Body’ by Maurice MacLoughlin – spot the well-known names in 1965!
1989 Autumn & Winter no productions: building work
1990 Spring Still Life/Fumed Oak
1990 Autumn A Murder Has Been Arranged
1990 Winter Humpty Dumpty
1991 Spring The Drunkard, or Down With Demon Drink
1991 Winter Peter Pan
1992 Spring Breath of Spring
1992 Autumn Ladies in Retirement
1992 Winter Queen of Hearts
1993 Spring Historical Revue 2
1993 Autumn Urge – say no more!
1993 Winter Cinderella
1994 Spring Last Orderlies
1994 Autumn Murder at Deem House
1994 Winter Puss in Boots
1995 Autumn Canterbury
1995 Winter Sing a Song of Sixpence
1996 Spring Did Elizabeth Stay Here?
1996 Autumn Farndale: Haunted Through Lounge
1996 Winter Dick Whittington
1997 Spring Wild Goose Chase
1997 Autumn 60th Anniversary Revue
1997 Winter Robinson Crusoe
1998 Spring The Importance of Being Earnest
1998 Autumn Murdered to Death
1998 Winter Aladdin
1999 Spring Who Goes Bare
1999 Autumn Gaslight
1999 Winter Mother Goose
2000 Spring Postponed
2000 Autumn Blithe Spirit
2000 Winter Ali Baba

Phil Cheesman and his bevy of beauties in URGE. (You can run, but you can’t hide!)

What a laugh!

LAUGHS galore were on the menu at the Frampton-on-Severn Community Centre at the weekend. Excellent acting and an amusing plot combined to make the Perryway Players production of URGE very entertaining.

Set in a lonely lighthouse on a remote island in 1944, it had numerous plots and counterplots as well as plenty of romantic inter-

BRYHER GOLDING BARRETT

At the theatre est and confusion. The cast had the audience in stitches in the endless search for Alfred Fogerty, the unseen lighthouse keeper.

Craig Hewlett’s DI quizzes a simpering Phil Cheesman in schoolgirl uniform.
2001  Autumn  September Tide
2001  Winter  Jack and the Beanstalk
2002  Spring  Tiptoe Through the Tombstones
2002  Autumn  Farndale : Murder Mystery
2002  Winter  Dracula The Panto
2003  Spring  Old Time Music Hall
2003  Autumn  Chase Me Up Farndale Avenue
2003  Winter  Sleeping Beauty/Snoozy Floozy
2004  Autumn  Revue 3
2004  Winter  Beauty and the Beast
2005  Spring  Gypsy’s Revenge
2005  Winter  Cinderella
2006  Spring  Golden Pathway
2006  Winter  Snow White and the Severn Pirates
2007  Spring  Post Horn Gallop (1976)
Summer 2007  Toad of Toad Hall (LiveWire)
2007  Autumn  Murder at the Manor
2007  Winter  Babes in the Wood
2008  Spring  Taking Umbridge
2008  Autumn  Radio Horror
2008  Winter  Peter Pan
2009  Spring  We found love aboard the SS Farndale Avenue
2009  Winter  Peter Pan
2010  Spring  Silent Movies
2010  Autumn  Talking Heads
2010  Winter  Dick Whittington
2011  Spring  Fistful of Groats
2011  Winter  Cinderella
2012  Winter  The Wizard of Oz
2013  Spring  Revue 4: and plenty happening alongside this, with Frampton celebrity stardom!
2013  Autumn  Watch this space!
The Importance of Being Earnest tapped into some of the finest talents at Perryway in 1998. Perryway Players’ first full colour poster was produced for Earnest, designed by Amanda Clements. This production, in Spring 1998, drew on a prodigious amount of talent, both off and on-stage, with set design by Rachel Cheesman, set management by Kevin Benn, costumes by Phillippa Parker and props by Nanetta Mowatt.
The course of true love runs anything but smoothly in the Players Spring 1998 production of The Importance of Being Earnest.

Gordon Hodgson plays Algernon Moncrieff and Emily Spargo the spirited Cicely Cardew.

Below, Maureen Day has another of her finest moments as Lady Bracknell.

Jane Ryan, who directed, says, “I would never have dreamed of putting on Earnest without Mo – she has always been the one and only Lady Bracknell for me. Among Mo’s many great acting qualities was her sense of timing – that pregnant pause before the thunderball of “A HANDBAG?” hits us!”

Playing the witty Gwendolen Fairfax is Fran Francis, with Phil Cheesman as the charming but bombastic John Worthing, realising that he is not her equal in the brains department.
In 1996, that Farndale Habit began...

Clockwise from L: Liz Leonard, Jacky Stewart, Pam Greenfield, Lesley Kaye, Jane Ryan

Jacky to Liz: What would you say the Farndale dramas are all about? C’mon, we’re being interviewed!

Liz: You know very well what they’re about – it’s this amateur dramatic society trying to put on a production and they’re mostly women who keep bitching at each other...

Jacky: And there aren’t enough of them, so each one has to play several parts...

Liz: Am I explaining this or are you?

Jacky: Sorry ...

Liz: And Mrs High and Mighty in pink here bosses everyone around.

Pam: You’re a fine one to talk – Thelma’s always flouncing off!

Lesley: Oh, come on all – can’t we pose nicely for one group shot?

Liz: Only if that gun’s aimed at her Highness’s left ear!

Above: Stewart Ross, sadly missed, helps to thicken the plot for Emily Spargo’s character.

Left: Jacky and Liz’s characters engage in lively conversation.
PERRYWAY PLAYERS AND FRAMPTON-ON-SEVERN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PRESENT

GAS LIGHT

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BY

PATRICK HAMILTON

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When the lights go down ....
Gaslight 1999

To conceal his own criminality, Bella Manningham’s husband Jack is succeeding in making her believe she is mad. Only Inspector Rough can give Bella the self-belief to escape from her murderous husband.

Pictured: Philip Cheesman, Jane Ryan and Gordon Hodgson
Friends all ...

Much missed, Stewart Ross was arguably the most gifted comedy actor ever to tread Perryway Players boards. Left, he adds to Phil Cheesman’s character’s bafflement in ‘Who Goes Bare? By playing his fiddle. Below, Stewart throws a tantrum as the definitive Dr No in Dave Wheeler’s History Revue sketch from 1992. Bond has no chance with that gun – you only had to look at Stewart to burst into laughter!

Both, sadly missed! Left, Stewart as uniquely hairy pantomime dame chats up Dave Hodges in Ali Baba, year 2000.

Tripping the light fantastic, Dave Wheeler and Mo Day in Queen of Hearts, 1992.

Stewart could have been a renowned serious actor, as well as a great comedian. Above, in ‘Did Elizabeth Stay Here?’, with Pam Greenfield, he inhabits his Elizabethan costume with complete conviction.

All the best to The Wiz!

Scarecrow: Craig Hunt, Dorothy: Jess Weaver, Tin Man: Wayne Weaver, Lion: Mark Niblett “Don’ be scared, now!”

GO TEAM, GO!
Bring it on!

Behind the scenes, so much work is going on to bring The Wiz to the stage for the big 75!

Clockwise from top: Music Director Brendan Press; Phil Parker and Nan Mowatt are seldom without a paintbrush in hand; Kevin Benn and Robin Wheeler confer; Ian Oliver and Harry Phillips paint the rainbow; Director Dave Wheeler in pensive mood with the Lion, Mark Niblett.

You heard!

Paint? Who said paint?