



**ST MARTIN'S PLAYERS
IN A PLAY BY ARNOLD RIDLEY**

**DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY STEVE MORLEY AND PAUL RENDLE
THIS AMATEUR PRODUCTION IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH SAMUEL FRENCH LTD.**



**AT THE HUXTABLE HALL,
ST MARTIN'S CHURCH, ERITH ROAD, BEXLEYHEATH**

FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER 2013, 7:30pm

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 2013, 2:30pm

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 2013, 7:30pm

PROGRAMME - 50p

www.stmartinsplayers.co.uk

THE DIRECTOR WELCOMES YOU..

'Leaves on the line', 'slippery rain', 'the wrong type of snow' – there are many excuses that have been used for delayed and cancelled trains. Unfortunately, we had to add 'difficulties obtaining the required permissions' to the list, when we had to postpone this production, which we had hoped to perform this time last year. As soon as the licence became available, we were more than happy to resume rehearsals, so we apologise for the delay, and hope that the wait has been worthwhile.

I had been looking forward to directing a play that would suit our group, yet be a bit different from our usual type of production; I achieved this when I directed 'Jekyll' a few years ago. This time, I have chosen another thriller, and have been joined by first-time producer Paul who I have worked with many times behind the scenes. We were fortunate that almost all of the original cast were able to take part in this year's production. Sadly, we had to lose Bethany, our original 'Peggy', as she moved to Scotland a few weeks ago, but thank her for her continued enthusiasm for 'filling in' as the other players took their holidays this summer. Additionally, Rae could not take part this year, and we spent many weeks this year trying to fill the role of 'Jackson' – who would have thought it would be so difficult to fill a part with only eight lines! Thankfully, Christine saved the day by stepping in only this week – so well done!

The play has given me the chance to travel around the country for inspiration; I have travelled to York and Swindon to visit rail museums, giving us the chance to make the production as authentic as possible. Additionally, I visited two other productions of the play in Bolton and Havant to see some alternative approaches to the performance; this has made the play especially enjoyable for me to direct.



I would like to thank everyone who has helped with the production, especially David and Chris, the unsung heroes at the back of the hall, who will be treating us to some rather intense sound and light effects, and Dave for his weeks of hard work in finishing the set. We hope you enjoy the show.

SDM

THE PLAY AND THE WRITER...

'The Ghost Train' was written in 1923 by Arnold Ridley, inspired by his own experience of being stranded overnight in Mangotsfield Railway Station, near Bristol. The play was performed to packed houses at the St Martin's Theatre for two years, and has been adapted for films on numerous occasions, most notably in 1941, starring Arthur Askey. Ridley, who had fought in both wars, was discharged from the Army following injuries sustained at the Somme, so returned to the stage on both occasions. He was known for writing over thirty plays ('The Ghost Train' being his most famous).



Ridley was struggling to develop his film company between the wars, so chose to sell the performing rights to the play to pay off the staff, rather than go bankrupt. Many years later, he lived to regret that decision, as the play became so popular with amateur groups. It is believed that the play is performed somewhere in the world every night of the year; the influence was so strong, the world's first 'ghost train' ride, which opened at Blackpool Pleasure Beach in 1930, was named after the play. Later in life, He returned to acting, portraying a number of film and television roles, ultimately performing his most famous role as Pte. Godfrey in 'Dad's Army'.

A party of train passengers travelling through Cornwall miss their connection due to the irresponsible actions of one of their group, and find themselves stranded at a deserted railway station. The group have no choice but to stay overnight, choosing to ignore the warnings of the stationmaster that the station is haunted. The body of the stationmaster is soon found on the platform, and a visit from a local girl confirms the story, so the group regret their decision. The supernatural events continue to unfold, until their salvation comes from a rather unexpected source.

**Set in the early 1920s,
the action takes place in the waiting room
of Fal Vale Station, on a cold, wet autumn evening.**

**The play comprises three acts:
There will be a short interval between Acts 1 and 2,
when raffle tickets will be on sale at the rear of the hall,
and a longer interval between Acts 2 and 3,
when refreshments will be available in the small hall.**

THE CAST..



Tony Robins
as Saul Hodgkin



Wendy Barnett
as Elsie Winthrop



Richard Percival
as Richard Winthrop



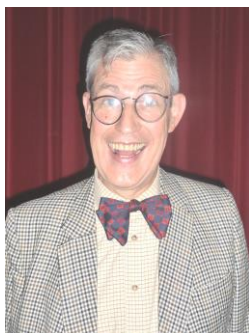
Val Coates
as Miss Bourne



Anna Sims
as Peggy Murdoch



Martin Stone
as Charles Murdoch



Mark Jamieson
as Teddie Deakin



Victoria Jamieson
as Julia Price



Simon Watkins
as Herbert Price



Dave Barnett
as John Sterling



Christine Belsham
as Jackson

THE CREW...

Properties

Marion Biram

Wardrobe and Make-Up

Wendy Barnett, Anna Sims, Monica Cane, Julie Exell

Set and Furniture Construction

Dave Barnett, Barry Gavin, Chris Suggitt, Paul Rendle, Steve Morley

Backdrop Artist

David Batchelor

Sound and Lighting

David Batchelor, Chris Suggitt

Prompt

Monica Cane

Front-Of-House and Refreshments

Daryl O'Sullivan, Julie Exell, Ann Batchelor, Ann Rawlings, et al

Programme and Poster

Steve Morley

With Special Thanks To

Bethany Allchin

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR RAFFLE...

Tickets will be on sale before the play and during the intervals; for this production, we will be supporting the Mothers' Union 'Away From It All' appeal. Please remember to check your tickets at the end of the play to see if you are a winner!

Along with other branches across the UK, the Rochester MU branch has helped to support a number of families take a much-needed holiday this year. By supporting our raffle, you will be able to help boost the funds to enable the AFIA scheme to support more families next year – thank you!

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Registered Charity No. 240531
www.rochestermothersunion.co.uk

NEWS FROM THE PLAYERS...

We are pleased to announce that at the recent Bexley Drama Awards, St. Martin's Players were the recipients of two awards for our last production, 'Crazy Capers, Dodgy Deals'.

To our delight, Marion Biram received the Matt Crowley Cup and certificate for 'Best Actor In A Supporting Role'; to our further delight, and surprise, St. Martin's Players received the Certificate For Musical Excellence.



Our congratulations go to Marion for her fine performance as 'Karen', who after trial and tribulation was reunited with her childhood sweetheart; to Barry and Debra Gavin, who directed 'Crazy Capers' with enthusiasm and attention to detail that was duly rewarded, and to our Musical Director, Peter Wilson, whose patience, skill and enjoyment guiding us through unfamiliar material were key. DB



OUR NEXT PRODUCTION...



MOTHER GOOSE

*a pantomime by Roger Lamb & Bob Heather
directed by Anna Sims*

**24 January 2014, 25 January 2014
31 January 2014, 1 February 2014**

New members are always welcome!

*We will be reading for the next production on **Friday 11 October** (adults and children) and **Wednesday 16 October** (adults only).*

We meet on Friday evenings, from 8:00pm, in the Huxtable Hall.

Don't want to be on-stage? No problem – why not help behind the scenes!

Visit us online, at www.stmartinsplayers.co.uk, or find us on Facebook!

OUR PAST PRODUCTIONS...

1991

SLEEPING BEAUTY
SEE HOW THEY RUN!

1992

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARVES
VIRTUE TRIUMPHANT

1993

CINDERELLA
CONTINENTAL QUILT
SURPRISE PACKAGE

1994

ALADDIN
LAUGH! I NEARLY WENT TO MIAMI
POST HORN GALLOP

1995

BABES IN THE WOOD
KEEPING DOWN WITH THE JONESES
PLAY ON!

1996

DICK WHITTINGTON
WHEN WE ARE MARRIED
THE ROSES OF EYAM

1997

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK
PARDON ME! PRIME MINISTER
MURDER IN COMPANY

1998

PUSS IN BOOTS
PULL THE OTHER ONE
BLITHE SPIRIT

1999

MOTHER GOOSE
BEDROOM FARCE
PRIDE AND JOY
LAST TANGO IN BARNEHURST

2000

PETER PAN
SEE HOW THEY RUN!
MY FRIEND MISS FLINT

2001

TREASURE ISLAND
SHOCK TACTICS
OUTSIDE EDGE

2002

CINDERELLA
THE MURDER ROOM
RUNNING RIOT

2003

KING ARTHUR
PARTY PIECE
NO TIME FOR FIG LEAVES

2004

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY
KINDLY KEEP IT COVERED
THE END OF THE PIER SHOW

2005

BLUEBEARD
A MURDER IS ANNOUNCED

2006

ALADDIN
HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES
NOAH'S ANIMALS

2007

THE THREE MUSKETEERS
MURDER WEEKEND
OUT OF FOCUS

2008

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
MURDER IN PLAY
TOAD OF TOAD HALL

2009

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK
THE DAY GOD DIED
BARBECUES 'R' MURDER
LADY LOLLIPOP
JEKYLL AND HYDE

2010

DICK WHITTINGTON
AND THEN THERE WERE NONE
OVER MY DEAD BODY

2011

SNOW WHITE
ALICE IN WONDERLAND
MURDER AT THE NEW VICARAGE

2012

CINDERELLA
PANIC STATIONS

2013

ROBIN HOOD
CRAZY CAPERS, DODGY DEALS

COMING UP IN 2014...
MOTHER GOOSE



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2 Follow the link to one of the many retailers...

(or download the Fundraising Tool, and you can go straight to the retailer).

3 Buy something online, and the Scout Group receives a donation – AT NO COST TO YOU!