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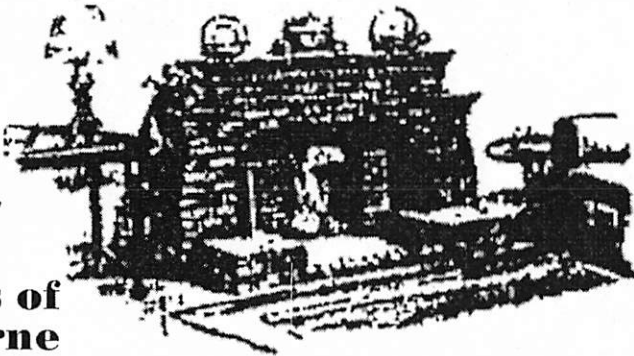
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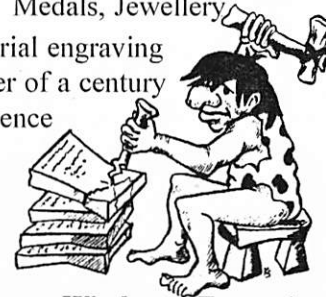
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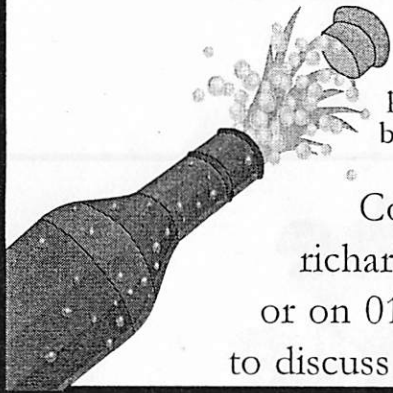
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Contact Richard Neal at  
[richard\\_neal@lineone.net](mailto:richard_neal@lineone.net)  
or on 01258 450564  
to discuss sponsorship opportunities

Wimborne Drama always welcomes new members to its friendly club. Our next meeting is on Thursday 28th February, 7.30pm, in the Tivoli Flat when we shall be holding auditions for ARMS AND THE MAN - our next production. Telephone Richard on 01258 450564 for further details  
<http://website.lineone.net/~wimborne.drama>

# **WIMBORNE DRAMA**

presents

# AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J.B. Priestley

Directed by Martin Matthews  
20-23 February 2002  
Tivoli Theatre, Wimborne

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# COMMON MAN

JOHN Boynton Priestley was born on 13th September 1894 and was raised in a modest but thoroughly middle-class home in Bradford, Yorkshire, where his father was a schoolmaster. J.B. Priestley's grandparents had been mill workers, and it was his visits to their 'wretched little back-to-back house' that gave him real experience of working-class life and people and was the inspiration for his socialist beliefs.

On leaving school he went to work in the local wool trade, and at the age of sixteen he was already writing pieces for Bradford newspapers. He served in the 10th Duke of Wellington's Regiment on the front line in France during the First World War. He was buried alive and injured when a trench collapsed, and was later gassed and invalided home. On demobilisation in 1919 he was awarded a government grant which enabled him to go to Trinity Hall, Cambridge where he read Modern History and Political Science. At the university he supplemented his grant by writing. He married Pat Tempest, a young woman he had met in Bradford, in 1921, and on leaving Cambridge he worked as a freelance writer and a reader for the publishing company Bodley Head.

His articles in the Times Literary Supplement earned him a good reputation. In 1925 his wife died of cancer. The following year he married Jane Wyndham Lewis, with whom he had been having an affair during Pat's illness, and by whom he had had a daughter, Mary, while Pat was still alive. Despite numerous affairs his marriage to Jane lasted for twenty-six years. After this he married the archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes.

J.B. Priestley achieved a series of reputations in different spheres. At first he was a literary critic and essayist; among his early books were *The English Comic Character* and *The English Novel*, and scholarly biographies of Peacock and Meredith. Next he began to write novels (over 20 in all), and in 1929 everybody was reading and praising *The Good Companions*, his novel about theatrical life that made him famous all over the world. He also wrote seven



J.B. Priestley in  
1960

books which were a mixture of semi-autobiographical and travel writings (some as a result of visits to America, Egypt and the Sudan) and seven volumes of social history.

Then in 1932 he began a new career as a dramatist. *Dangerous Corner* was the first of some forty plays that he wrote or co-wrote, many of them like *An Inspector Calls* giving clues to his socialist beliefs. He became a theatre director, and even took over once, at twenty-four hours' notice, the leading part in *When We Are Married*. At this time he was determined to give the public something more than the conventional 'West End success'; to make them feel or think more deeply and more originally; and at the same time to hold his own financially in

the theatre industry. He had some disappointments, but on the whole his plays were very popular.

During the Second World War he established a new reputation, this time as a broadcaster; by his *Postscripts* to the Sunday night news bulletins he did much to sustain people's spirit with his forthright common sense and humanity. He was not afraid to criticise the government and to comment on what he thought was wrong with society, and his broadcasts caught the mood of the 'common man' and helped to create the huge shift in consensus that resulted in the 1945 election victory for Labour. The war had broken down the class and occupational barriers that had existed before, and Priestley argued

that all men and women had a value to society.

Although very interested in politics, J.B. Priestley seemed to have trouble settling down with the policies of any one political party. He made an unsuccessful attempt to stand for Parliament as an Independent



Priestley gives comfort to the nation in one of his war-time broadcasts

## PRESIDENT RETIRES AFTER 25 YEARS

SIR Michael Hanham retired as President of Wimborne Drama at our AGM earlier this month.

Sir Michael had been our President for 25 years and both he and Lady Hanham have been wonderful supporters of the club, both in our previous life at the Allendale Centre and now at the Tivoli Theatre.

The couple are pictured at a garden party for patrons and sponsors of Wimborne Drama held at their Deans Court home last September. They were presented with gifts and thanked for their enthusiastic support over the years. Sir Michael and Lady Hanham will continue to be Patrons of Wimborne Drama.

We are delighted to announce that Anthony Oliver has succeeded Sir Michael as President.

Anthony needs no introduction, having served Wimborne Minster so magnificently as Councillor and Town Mayor. Anthony and his wife Christine are also long-standing Patrons of Wimborne Drama.

### DOUBLE AWARD

OUR 2001 production of *The Madness of George III* has picked up two prestigious Daily Echo Curtain Call Awards.

Richard Neal won the Barbara Warde Cup for Best Director of a Drama or Thriller.

Geoff Whipp scooped the award for Best Actor in a Drama or Thriller for his outstanding portrayal of the title role.



Sir Michael and Lady Hanham



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# A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU

NINETEEN ninety-four was a momentous year for Wimborne Drama when we staged our very first production at the Tivoli Theatre - *Bedroom Farce*. We have been the resident amateur drama company ever since and *An Inspector Calls* is our twenty-second production. Along the way we have built a loyal fan base and won several Daily Echo awards.

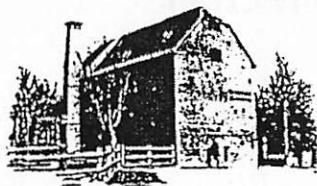
None of this would have been possible without one man - Malcolm Angel. It was Malcolm who had the vision to save this great theatre and his leadership of a team of caring and dedicated volunteers has ensured his dream has been realised.

Thank you Malcolm for inviting us to come to the Tivoli. We wish you success and much happiness in your future endeavours.

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candidate in 1944, and in 1945 he visited the Soviet Union where *An Inspector Calls* had its first production. This visit gave him an insight into how the people of communist Russia really lived.

After the war he was chosen as a delegate to UNESCO. In the late 1950s he became an active supporter of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament but turned his back on it when he felt it was attracting too radical a group of people.

He was awarded the Order of Merit in 1977 and died in 1984.

## TIME THEORIES

J.B. PRIESTLEY was very interested in theories about time. His interest was sparked by *A New Model of the Universe* written in 1931 by P.D. Ouspensky, and by two books written by J.W. Dunne - *An Experiment with Time* (1927) and *The Serial Universe* (1934). In *An Inspector Calls* we see J.B. Priestley's interpretation of Ouspensky's theory that existence is a cycle of lives from which we can only escape if we change for the better. His plays *Dangerous Corner* (1932), *Eden End* (1934) and *Time and the Conways* (1937) all contain important elements of time theories which suggest that, in our lives, there are important moments when the decisions we make can lead us towards either disaster or salvation.

## Director's Notes

GOOD evening and welcome to the Tivoli. I am delighted to have had the opportunity to work on *An Inspector Calls*, a play known and loved by theatre goers all over the world for many years.

It is still such a fantastic mix of emotion and intellect, and still very much relevant today across a whole variety of ages, classes and political agendas.

What I personally find so brilliant about this play is the fact that you can constantly mine it for new gems - rather like finding new things to appreciate in a painting every time you look at it. The cast and crew have thoroughly enjoyed rehearsals, and I am grateful for their enthusiasm in working for a first-time director.

Thanks too to the Tivoli management, staff and volunteers who have all made this such a pleasant place in which to work.

**Martin Matthews**

# THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The Edwardian age was probably the last period in history when the fortunate thought they could give pleasure to others by displaying their good fortune before them. *Edwardian Promenade, James Laver, 1958*

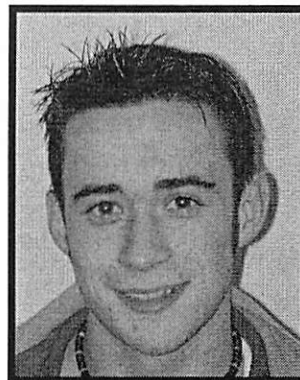
IN 1912, the year in which *An Inspector Calls* is set, the upper and middle classes, numbering between five and six million people, took two-thirds of the national income, while the working class of 39 million existed on the remaining third. The lowest paid of all workers were the women in the sweat trades, while the worst-paid men were the agricultural labourers, of whom there were 650,000 and whose earnings were often less than £1 a week.

The old liberal idea that taxpayers' money must not be squandered and that idleness must be discouraged still prevailed. But the tide was beginning to turn. The Royal Commission on the poor law, which sat from 1905 to 1909, rejected the principle of 'less eligibility'. It had recognised that unemployment was not a symptom of laziness but a product of trade fluctuations over which workers had no control.

Nearly all working-class families lived in houses rented from private landlords. None could afford to buy their own homes, and the council house was a thing of the future. Most people lived in streets of terraced houses without gardens. The



**Sweated workers made clothes, such as the evening dress above, in cramped conditions and for poor pay**



## CHRIS PIPER (Eric Birling)

The role of Eric, the half shy, half assertive youngest member of the Birling family, is Chris's first for Wimborne Drama. Chris is currently at Big Little Theatre School, where he is Dance Captain, and has performed at Bournemouth Pavilion. Not only does Chris have wide experience on stage, but also in television and film - he has recently finished *Same Difference*, a film produced for the Arts Institute.



## MARTIN MATTHEWS (Director)

Martin makes his directing debut with this production. He played William Pitt in the award winning production of *The Madness of George III*. More recently he was seen as Uriah Heep in *David Copperfield*. Martin has also played Rowland Torre in *The Roses of Eyam*, Dennis in *Habeas Corpus*, and appeared in *Sweeney Todd*, *The Crucible* and *No Room For Love*.

Martin was involved with Wimborne Arts project *Rings of Change* at Knowlton Church. Shakespearean roles include Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* and Antipholus of Ephesus in *The Comedy of Errors*.





## RUSS GUILLAUME (Arthur Birling)

Russ was an active member of Wimborne Drama in the 1960s and appeared in several productions at the Church House. His last major role was in *The Ghost Train* at the Allendale Centre. He moved away from the area and due to work commitments

appeared only in *Time and the Conways*, another J.B. Priestley play, on the Isle of Wight and as an extra in an episode of *Inspector Morse*. Russ has always kept in touch with the club and for many years was a Patron. Now settled once more in the area, Russ appeared in our last production, *David Copperfield*.

He says he is honoured to be asked to play Arthur Birling and is looking forward to performing this challenging role.

## TRACEY NICHOLLS (Edna/Company Stage Manager)

Tracey is a former member of Wimborne Community Theatre and appeared in *Rings of Knowlton*, *Voyages* and the millennium play *The Quarterjack's Challenge* at Wimborne Minster. For Wimborne Drama she worked backstage on *Ten Times Table* and played Agnes Wickfield in *David Copperfield*.

Edna doesn't contribute much verbally or dramatically but is possibly eavesdropping at the keyhole, listening to all the shocking revelations!



# OF AN INSPECTOR CALLS

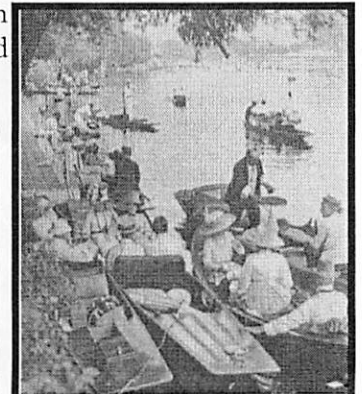
single tap and sink would either be in the scullery or in a corner of the kitchen. Bathrooms, indoor lavatories and hot water systems were virtually unknown. Back-to-back houses were still common in west Yorkshire, where Priestley was born, and tall tenement blocks were normal in parts of London and central Scotland.

Higher education was still the privilege of the upper classes. Although new universities were founded in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Bristol between 1903 and 1909, the number of students attending these institutions was small. Indeed, Britain's total student population in 1912 was only 9,000, which compared unfavourably with Germany's 60,000.

During the years between the turn of the century and the First World War the glitter of rank, wealth and fashion was not confined to England... (it existed) with a considerable amount of cross-fertilisation, assisted by a world press that employed more and more gossip-writers and photographers. But it was the English Edwardians who occupied and decorated the central position and did most to bring the myth of the lost golden age into the twentieth century.

It might be found that any society nearing the end of its high time, making hay while the sun still shines, overdoes everything... toiling away at pleasure, these drones and butterflies might as well be worker ants... just below the conscious level, there was a vague feeling that the end was almost in sight, that their class was now banging away in the last act. So they overdid everything.

*The Edwardians*, J.B. Priestley, 1970



The Edwardians  
at play

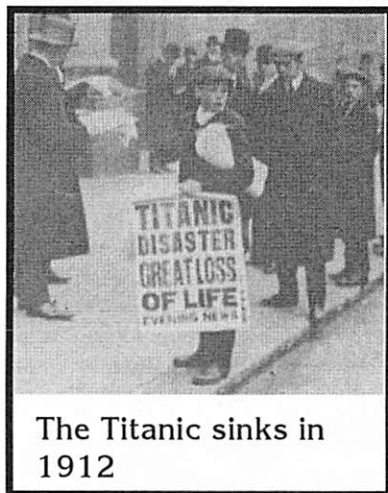
We must stop thinking in terms of property and power and begin thinking in terms of community and creation. We want a world that offers people not the dubious pleasures of power, but the maximum opportunities for creation. And, even already, in the middle of this war, I can see that world shaping itself.

*Postscripts*, J.B. Priestley, 1940

“IN twenty or thirty years’ time... you’ll be living in a world that’ll have forgotten all these Capital versus Labour agitations and all these silly little war scares. There’ll be peace and prosperity and rapid progress everywhere”

Arthur Birling, *An Inspector Calls*, Act I

- 1910 Edward VII dies  
The murderer, Dr Crippen, is the first criminal suspect to be caught as a result of a radio message  
First demonstration of motion picture with sound  
Pure Radium isolated by Marie Curie
- 1911 James Ramsay MacDonald elected leader of the Labour Party
- 1912 White Star liner Titanic sinks with loss of over 1500 lives
- 1914 Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand sparks off First World War
- 1915 German submarine sinks Cunard liner Lusitania, killing some 1400 passengers including 128 American citizens
- 1917 Tsar Nicholas II abdicates as rebellion grows in Russia  
America declares war on Germany and joins allies
- 1918 Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicates and Armistice ends the war  
Representation of the People Act gives married women over 30 the right to vote
- 1919 Alcock and Brown complete first non-stop transatlantic flight
- 1920 League of Nations has its first meeting  
Coal miners strike throughout Britain
- 1921 Irish Free State created as a British dominion



## BOO DICKSON (Sheila Birling)

Sheila Birling is a strong willed character not afraid to speak her mind, much to the dismay of her parents - some might say just like Boo herself!

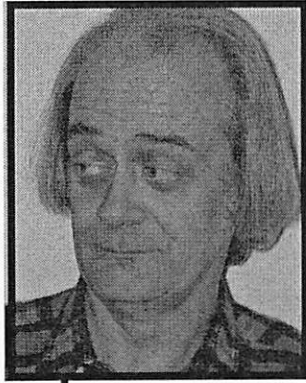
This is Boo’s second play with Wimborne Drama although she has performed in several musicals with other societies. Previous roles include Rosa Dartle in *David Copperfield* and Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Boo is hoping that her engagement to Tony off stage runs smoother than Gerald and Sheila’s!

## TONY FELTHAM (Gerald Croft)



This is Tony’s twenty-sixth production with Wimborne Drama. Roles have included a disfigured hunchback, a cold blooded murderer and a camp interior designer. Away from Wimborne Drama, Tony has performed in several musicals with the highlight being the lead in *Me and My Girl*.

His first role with Wimborne Drama was in 1984 when he played a police constable in *A Murder is Announced*. With the guiltless arrogance of Gerald Croft, he now finds himself on the other side of a police investigation.



## JEREMY AUSTIN (Inspector Goole)

At first sight, the role of the Inspector seems straightforward. Almost as if they find it harder to lie to themselves, all his suspects yield to his strange adeptness at teasing out their every secret. The ultimate mystery though, is provided by the Inspector himself...

Jeremy's previous appearances with Wimborne Drama include DS Troughton in *Run For Your Wife*, Samuel Pepys in *And So To Bed*, Headmaster in *Forty Years On*, Baines in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Thomas Stanley in *The Roses of Eyam*, Charles in *Blithe Spirit*, Wicksteed in *Habeas Corpus* and Danforth in *The Crucible*.

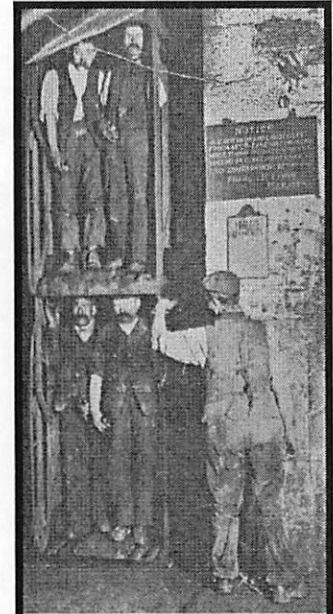
## JAN BURSBY (Sybil Birling)

Introduced as her husband's social superior, the extremely snobbish Sybil seems to feel qualified to judge what is 'respectable', 'deserving' and a person's 'duty', especially when it comes to what she regards as people from the 'lower classes'.

New to the area, Jan makes her second outing with Wimborne Drama (she played Auntie Betsey Trotwood in *David Copperfield*). Drama school trained, Jan has appeared in many plays including *Educating Rita*, *The Ghost Train* and *Seasons Greetings*, as well as Shakespeare. Jan has also done some radio work.



- 1922 Irish Republican Army shoots Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in London
- Mussolini leads his Fascists on Rome
- 1923 German currency collapses
- 1924 First Labour Government formed under Ramsay MacDonald
- 1926 General Strike hits British industry
- 1923 Equal Franchise Act gives vote to all women aged 21
- 1929 American economy hit by slump and Wall Street crash
- 1931 Rising unemployment in United Kingdom leads to protests, strikes and hunger marches
- 1933 Hitler, leader of Nazi Party, elected Chancellor of Germany
- 1936 King George V dies. Edward VIII becomes king, but abdicates, before his coronation, less than a year later
- 1939 German invasion of Poland leads to outbreak of Second World War
- 1940 Battle of Britain
- 1941 Germany attacks Russia, and Japan attacks American fleet at Pearl Harbour. Russia and America join allies
- 1944 Allied armies invade Europe - D-day
- 1945 Hitler commits suicide; Germany surrenders
- Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki lead to surrender of Japan and end of Second World War
- Churchill's wartime government resigns
- Labour Government formed under Clement Attlee
- An Inspector Calls* has its first showing in Moscow



The miners go on strike in 1920



Clement Attlee's Labour Party wins the 1945 election

AN  
**INSPECTOR  
CALLS** by J.B. Priestley

INSPECTOR GOOLE  
Jeremy Austin

ARTHUR BIRLING  
Russ Guillaume

SYBIL BIRLING  
Jan Bursby

GERALD CROFT  
Tony Feltham

SHEILA BIRLING  
Boo Dickson

ERIC BIRLING  
Chris Piper

EDNA  
Tracey Nicholls

The action takes place in the dining room of the Birlings' house in Brumley, an industrial city, one evening in spring 1912. There are three acts which run continuously. There will be an interval of 15 minutes after Act II

DIRECTOR  
Martin Matthews

DESIGNER  
Amanda Brown

COMPANY STAGE MANAGER  
Tracey Nicholls

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
Jan Stevenson

MAKE-UP  
Chrissie Neal & Clare Downs

THEATRE STAGE MANAGER  
Ashley Thorne

LIGHTING & SOUND  
Tivoli Theatre Technicians

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