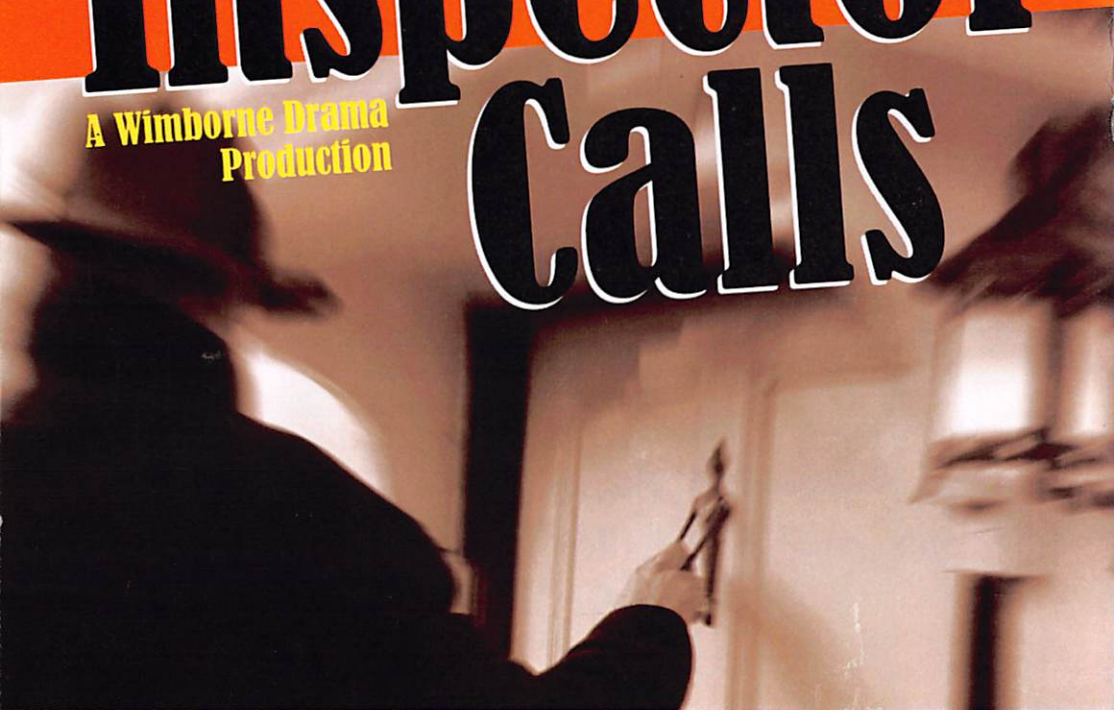


**An** JB Priestley's  
classic thriller

# Inspector Calls

A Wimborne Drama  
Production



**Thu 17th, Fri 18th & Sat 19th October 2013**

Evenings at 7.30pm - £10    Saturday matinee at 2.30pm - £8

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Wimborne Drama Open Air Theatre

# Lord Arthur Savile's Crime

A Comedy by Constance Cox based on a story by  
**Oscar Wilde**

**28th - 30th June 2013**

**Deans Court  
Wimborne**





# Welcome

Hello and welcome to Wimborne Drama's third outdoor adventure here in the magnificent setting of Deans Court's delightful gardens. I was lucky enough to be able to direct a very successful production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* here two years ago and I'm thrilled to be returning with more of Wilde's work.

*Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* started off as a rather dark short story in the late nineteenth century; Wilde's black humour poking fun at the morality of the upper classes and stretching the light satire of *Earnest* into a morbid tale of murder. The novella was certainly one of the author's more obscure efforts until the 1950s when adaptor Constance Cox saw the opportunities the story held and crafted a highly successful three act play. Since then, several other versions have surfaced including a recent two man show. The idiocy of Arthur's quest to find marital happiness through blithely bumping off a relative or two has been a popular choice for production for many years. I have enjoyed above all the characterisations in the piece and my cast have been magnificent in bringing them all to life. I would like to thank them profusely for their dedicated hard work. From the first read-through we have enjoyed ourselves and I hope the humour translates onto the stage.

Even more so than when we are resident at the Tivoli, the backstage team is utterly essential for the smooth running of the show. Indoors we do not need to worry about hiring microphones, lights – or indeed toilets! I have been very lucky indeed to have assembled such a hard-working, professional team who are ensuring that all runs smoothly. They are named elsewhere in the programme and I cannot thank them enough. Many thanks as well to all on the committee of Wimborne Drama, whose helpful support and ideas have been most welcome.

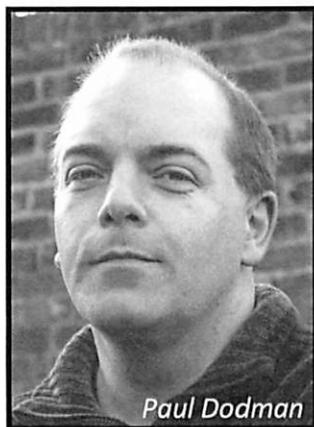
My thanks to Sir William and Lady Hanham for allowing us to return to their home, as well as Jonathan Cornish and all the staff here at Deans Court for their kind assistance and expertise. The setting is just perfect for a Victorian comedy and we can, as ever, only hope for the blessing of good weather.

One personal word of thanks goes to my brilliant assistant director, Tracey Nicholls. For various reasons I have been unable to attend all rehearsals and Tracey's wit and good humour have ensured that all has run smoothly and efficiently. She will be producing her own show soon and has enjoyed being involved in the precarious juggling act that directing involved. I thank her most sincerely.

It is always a commitment for the audience watching an outdoor show. You need to consider appropriate layers of clothing very carefully and make suitable contingency plans for various insects. Hopefully though, you will be enjoying both a delicious picnic and a pleasant summer's afternoon - am I asking too much of Dorset in late June? Here's hoping not.

Thank you for your attendance and enjoy the show.

**Paul Dodman - Director**



Paul Dodman

## Wimborne Drama Productions at the Tivoli Theatre

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17th-19th October 2013

When Inspector Goole arrives unexpectedly at the prosperous Birling family home, their peaceful dinner party is shattered by his investigations into the death of a young woman. His startling revelations shake the very foundations of their lives and challenge us all to examine our consciences

~ ~ ~

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**Jenn:** Something you don't mind getting the pages dog eared and sun cream covered!

**Sam:** Anything, as long as it's small enough to leave the other hand free for a drink.

**What crime would you commit if you knew you could get away with it?**

**Lauren:** Sneak into Buckingham Palace at night and run around all the rooms...whilst wearing the crown jewels!

**Jenn:** Steal a plane and hop around the

world (kidnapping Bill Bailey en route for company).

**Rob:** Well I would have to say murder. A few bullies from school would get their comeuppance...

**Tony:** Robbery (from a large non tax paying corporate company).

**Jan B:** I would rob a Las Vegas casino with George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon.

**Sam:** I have already committed it, and so far I've got away with it, so I'm not saying what it is!

## Constance Cox

Constance Cox, born in Sutton in 1912, earned a considerable reputation in the 1960s for her television adaptations of classic literature. The shocking realism portrayed in her 1962 dramatisation of *Oliver Twist* caused quite a stir at the time. Later, in 1967, she was one of the writers who turned *The Forsyte Saga*, John Galsworthy's tale of a family of London merchants from the 1870s to the 1920s, into a highly acclaimed television serial on the still-new BBC2. She also adapted *Jane Eyre* twice, in 1956 and 1968, *Pride and Prejudice* (1960), *Lorna Doone* (1963), *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1964) and *A Tale of Two Cities* (1968).

Her early career saw her adapt several novels for the stage. While working as a postmistress in Shoreham-by-Sea during the Second World War, she had her first West End success with *The Romance of David Garrick* (1942), charting the exploits in love of the celebrated 18th-century British actor-manager. It was staged by another famous actor-manager, Donald Wolfit, who accepted the play from Cox just a week after her husband, a fighter pilot, had been killed over the Channel.

Moving to Brighton, she helped her mother and sister in their tobacconist's shop but continued to write plays such as *The Boy from Belfast* (1944), *Remember Dick Sheridan* (1944) and *Madame Bovary* (1945), before her adaptation of *Vanity Fair* (1946) became a West End hit and enabled Cox to take up writing full-time.

There then followed *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1948), *Northanger Abbey* (1949), *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1949), *Mansfield Park* (1950), *The Woman in White* (1952), *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* (1952), *Quo Vadis* (1955) and *Wuthering Heights* (1974).

Constance Cox died in 1998.

# A Victorian Fad

Oscar Wilde's short story *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* was first published in *The Court and Society Review* in 1887. The story's original subtitle was *A Study Of Cheiromancy*.

Cheiromancy, or palm reading, was hugely popular in London society during the 1880s and 1890s.

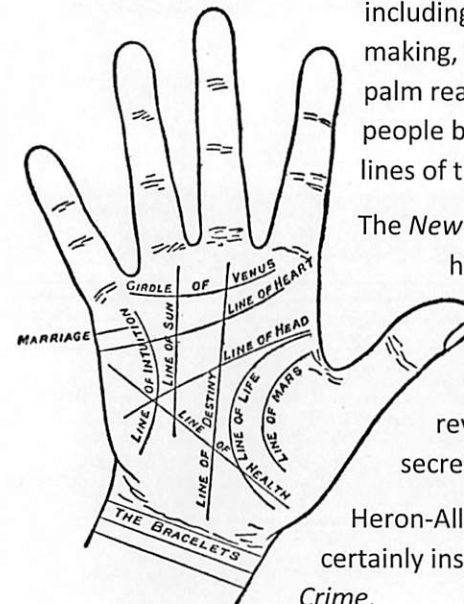
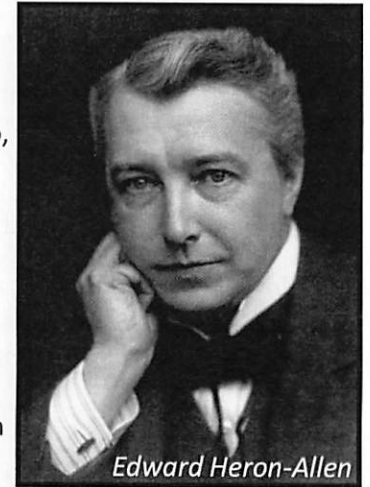
One notable exponent of this mysterious art was Dublin-born William John Warner, a teacher of astrology and palmistry. Using the sobriquet Cheiro, this self-described clairvoyant read the palms and told the fortunes of famous celebrities of the day, including Oscar Wilde, Mark Twain, Sarah Bernhardt, Mata Hari, Lillie Langtry and the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII).

Another expert was Edward Heron-Allen who was born in London and trained as a solicitor. He was an accomplished writer on a variety of subjects

including violin making, Persian texts and palmistry. He popularised palm reading as a contemporary science, making people believe they could read their lives in the lines of their hands.

The *New York Times* wrote: "It is through him and his books that all London society has so suddenly taken up this 'fad', so that wherever you go young ladies demand to see what kind of a line of life your hand reveals and if its wrinkles mask some ghastly secret."

Heron-Allen was a friend of Oscar Wilde and almost certainly inspired the writing of *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*.



# Oscar Wilde

## On food...

"I can't stand people who do not take food seriously."

## On the theatre...

"I love acting. It is so much more real than life."

## On England...

"I don't desire to change anything in England except the weather."

## On conduct...

"One should always be a little improbable."

## On crime...

"Murder is always a mistake... One should never do anything that one cannot talk about after dinner."



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# Cast in conversation

**What are you most looking forward to about performing at Deans Court?**

**Jan Bursby & Jan Stevenson:** Good weather!

**Tony Feltham:** Being back on the stage after a five year absence.

**John Sivewright:** As it's my first open-air production, I'm really looking forward to the experience as a whole.

**Penny Pearson:** It'll be my first time performing outdoors too, so I'm really looking forward to it, just as long as the weather's dry.

**Lauren Homer:** I don't mind being open to the elements - rain or shine! Though hopefully shine!

**David Pile:** I love Deans Court - a beautiful setting, great atmosphere. It's large yet very intimate for performing.

**Jenn Singleton:** I love the buzz of happy picnic-ers.

**Sam Moulton:** The magic of the long still summer evening in the lee of the old house, which holds who knows what secrets of times past, where "a fair dream spirit hovers near thee, weaving a web of gold and rose". Unless it rains.

**Rob Cording:** It won't rain. We are going to bask in glorious sun every night!!

**What does summer mean to you?**

**Tony:** Light evenings, barbecues, ice cream.

**Jan B:** Warm sunshine - everything al fresco!

**David:** Summer means gardens, rain, barbecues, walks, heat.

**Jenn:** Rounders, sunshine, Pimms, travel, play!

**Jan S:** Sun, sun, sun, sun, sun.

**John:** Sun, sun and more sun!

**Lauren:** Sun (obviously), beach, barbecues, friends and fun.

**Rob:** Yes, having fun with great friends!

**Penny:** Sunny picnics with my family.

**Sam:** Sunshine, grass, sea, relaxation and Chardonnay!

**What's your favourite holiday destination?**

**Lauren:** Spain, to visit my Grandad.

**Penny:** Symonds Yat in the Forest of Dean. Perfect for walking, cycling or just enjoying the views.

**John:** Australia.

**Tony:** Thailand.

**David:** Canada.

**Jan B:** Any Caribbean island.

**Jan S:** Anywhere in America.

**Rob:** New York !!

**And your ideal holiday reading?**

**David:** Travel books

**Penny:** Something scary

**Jan S:** A good thriller

**John:** Any novel by Ken Follett

# Production Team

Director	PAUL DODMAN
Assistant Director	TRACEY NICHOLLS
Set Design and Construction	MARK ELLEN JACKSON ELLEN
Sound & Lighting	COLIN PILE STEVE SYMONDS
Properties	JUDY GARRETT MICHAEL J SMITH VERENA SMITH-MAURER PHYLLIS SPENCER
Costume Supervisor	LIZZIE PETERS
Hair & Make-up	CHARLEE HULBERT
Front of House Management	CHRISSIE NEAL RICHARD NEAL
Front of House Team	BOB HUCKLESBY SIMON JACKSON JACKIE McGUIRE VAL MANTLE

## Acknowledgements

Plants loaned by Wimborne Garden Centre  
Costumes provided by Hirearchy  
Sound & electrical equipment provided by Pete Alcock's Presentation Services  
Pyrotechnic assistance provided by Carl A'Court

Also we acknowledge the help and support of:

Daisy Graphic  
Deans Court Estate  
Forest FM  
Gullivers Bookshop  
Royal British Legion Wimborne  
Tivoli Theatre  
Wimborne Tourist Information Centre

Produced by Wimborne Drama Open Air Theatre at Deans Court 28th –30th June 2013

# Lord Arthur Savile's Crime

A comedy by Constance Cox based on a story by Oscar Wilde

## Cast

Lord Arthur Savile  
ROB CORDING

Baines, *Arthur's butler*  
SAM MOULTON

Sybil Merton, *Arthur's fiancée*  
LAUREN HOMER

Lady Julia Merton, *Sybil's mother*  
PENNY PEARSON

Lady Windermere, *Arthur's aunt*  
JAN BURSBY

Lady Clementina Beauchamp, *his great-aunt*  
JAN STEVENSON

The Dean of Paddington, *his uncle*  
DAVID PILE

Nellie, *the maid*  
JENN SINGLETON

Mr Podgers, *a cheiromantist*  
JOHN SIVEWRIGHT

Herr Winkelkopf, *an anarchist*  
TONY FELTHAM

## Scene Synopsis

The action of the play takes place in the conservatory of Lord Arthur Savile's London home. Time – the 1890s

Act 1: Scene 1 – Evening

Scene 2 – The following morning

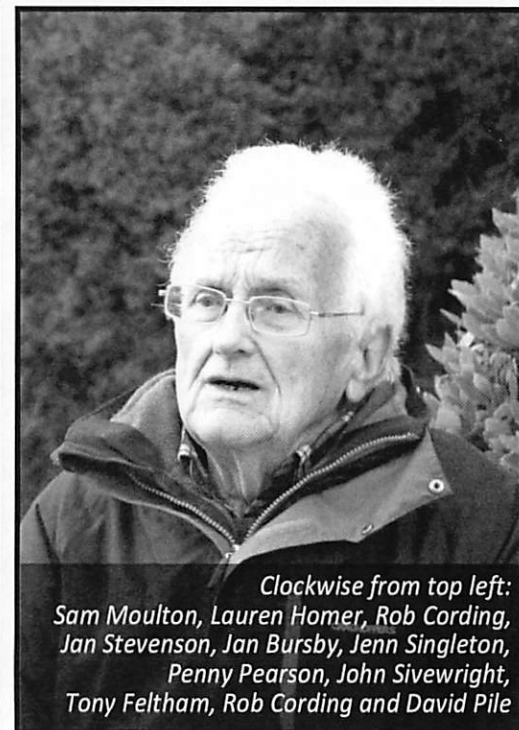
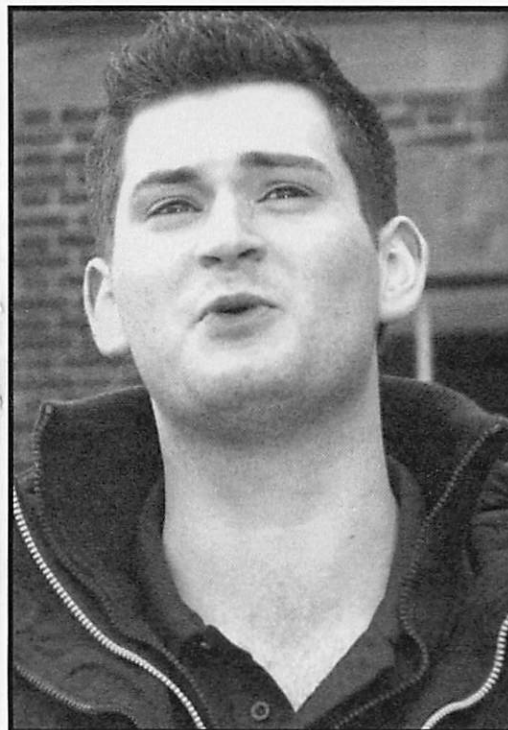
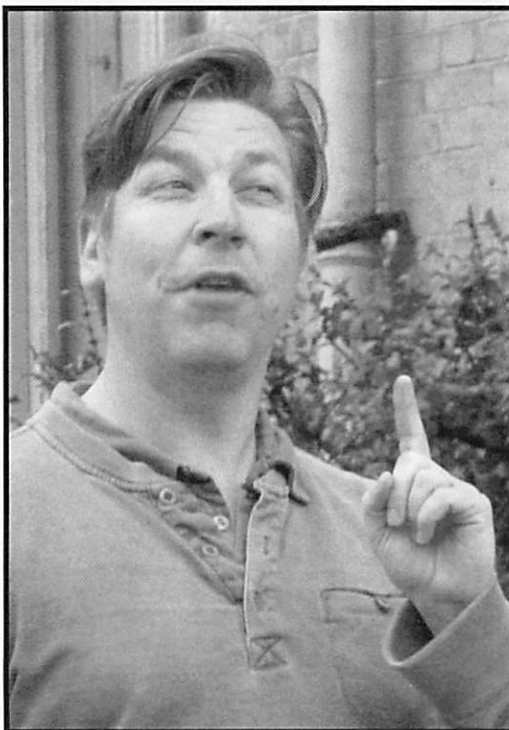
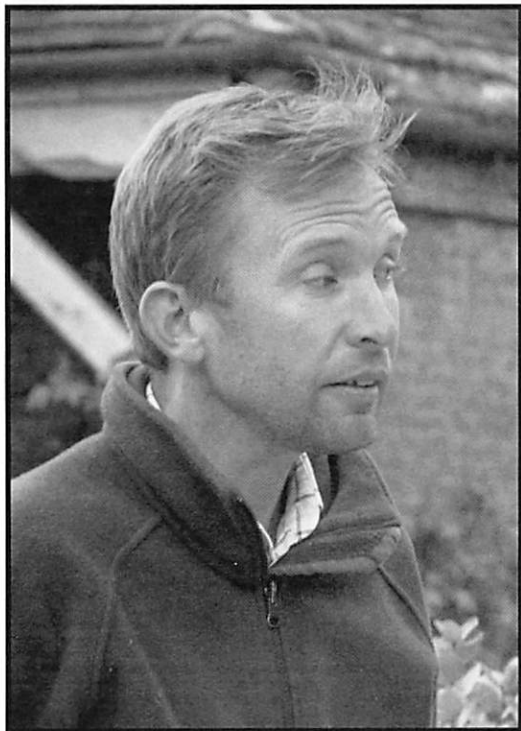
Act 2: Scene 1 – Morning, three days later

Scene 2 – Early evening, three days later

Scene 3 – The following morning

There will be one interval of approximately 20 minutes between acts





*Clockwise from top left:  
Sam Moulton, Lauren Homer, Rob Cording,  
Jan Stevenson, Jan Bursby, Jenn Singleton,  
Penny Pearson, John Sivewright,  
Tony Feltham, Rob Cording and David Pile*