

AGATHA CHRISTIE

THE HOLLOW

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Supporting Players of Wimborne Drama

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Yvonne Henley
(Veronica Craye)



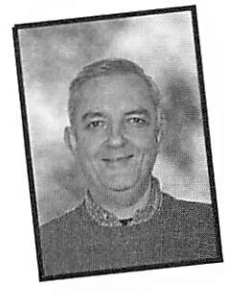
Yvonne studied Theatre & Performance Studies at Warwick University, and was a member of Broadstone Players for a number of years, appearing most memorably as Florence in the female version of *The Odd Couple*. Since joining Wimborne Drama in 2002 she has played Christopher in *On the Razzle* and Bathsheba in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Yvonne teaches English and Drama at Twynham School.

Carolyn Hewitt
(Gerda Cristow)



Carolyn joined Wimborne Drama more than 25 years ago when she took the part of Susie in *The Amorous Prawn*. During those years she has been involved in most aspects of production and taken a number of stage roles, most recently Daphne in *A Voyage Round My Father*, Johanna in *Sweeney Todd*, Sybil Merton in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Connie in *Habeas Corpus*, Peggotty in *David Copperfield* and Frau Fischer in *On the Razzle*.

Simon Jackson
(Gudgeon)



Simon has been involved with various groups in both Yorkshire and Dorset. Recent productions include Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; for Wimborne Drama, *An Evening with Gary Lineker*, *Fur Coat and No Knickers*, *The Madness of George III*, *No Room for Love*, *David Copperfield* and *On the Razzle*; and for St Peters Players, *Ring Round the Moon*.

Jan Stevenson
(Lady Lucy)



Jan joined Wimborne Drama in 1979 and her first appearances were as the bumbling maid in *George and Margaret* and as Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*. Since then she has appeared in many plays including *Dear Octopus*, *Dangerous Corner*, *Bedroom Farce*, *One for the Road*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Lord Arthur Saville's Crime*, our 1999 revival of *Blithe Spirit*, *The Crucible*, *Arms and the Man*, *On the Razzle* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

PROGRAMME DESIGN Richard Neal

**Mark
Ellen**
(Edward
Angkatell)



This is Mark's fifth major stage role with Wimborne Drama following Sheridan in *The Madness of George III*, Ray in *Ten Times Table*, Weinberl in *On the Razzle* and Henry II in *The Lion in Winter*. For Swan Theatre he has appeared in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Hedda Gabler*. Other roles before moving to this area include: Henry Baskerville in *Hound of the Baskervilles*, Pontius Pilate in *The Vigil*, Mr Manningham in *Gaslight*, Norman in *Round and Round the Garden* and

Humphrey Devize
in *The Lady's Not for
Burning*.

**Boo
Feltham**
(Henrietta
Angkatell)



This is Boo's fourth play with Wimborne Drama although she has performed in several musicals, including *Fiddler on the Roof* in which she took the part of Chava. Previous dramatic roles include Alais in *The Lion in Winter*, Sheila Birling in *An Inspector Calls* and Rosa Dartle in *David Copperfield*.

**Tony
Feltham**
(Dr John
Cristow)



This is Tony's twenty-ninth production with Wimborne Drama. In May he made his debut as a director with *Far from the Madding Crowd*. His most recent acting roles were Steerforth in *David Copperfield*, Gerald Croft in *An Inspector Calls* and Richard the Lion Heart in *The Lion in Winter*. Away from Wimborne Drama, Tony has performed in several musicals with the highlight being the lead in *Me and My Girl*.

**Russ
Guillaume**
(Sergeant Penny)



Russ was an active member of Wimborne Drama in the 1960s. His last major role before moving away from the area was in *The Ghost Train*. He appeared in *Time and the Conways* 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 has recently appeared in *David Copperfield*, *An Inspector Calls* and *On the Razzle*.

WIMBORNE DRAMA

presents

AGATHA CHRISTIE THE HOLLOW

**DIRECTED BY
PAUL DODMAN**

**OCTOBER 15-18, 2003
TIVOLI THEATRE WIMBORNE**



Can you spot the murderer?

Good evening and welcome to Wimborne Drama's production of *The Hollow*. Agatha Christie has long been regarded as one of the staples of dramatic groups; indeed Wimborne Drama has tackled this play before, in 1973 when we were performing at the Allendale Centre. However, since becoming the resident theatrical group at the Tivoli Theatre in 1994

we have not performed any of her works and we thought that a classic "whodunit" would be a great way to start our tenth anniversary season here at the Tivoli.

I selected *The Hollow* because it is a play without either of Christie's classic detectives, Hercule Poirot or Miss Marple. This may sound strange, but this pair is now so firmly identified in the public mind with actors who have portrayed them that I felt it would be impossible to emulate their successes, and this play in many ways is the stronger work without the overpowering presence of Christie's most famous creations.

Hercule Poirot was originally the detective in the 1946 novel of *The Hollow* but by the 1951 play he had been replaced by the more conventional "man from Scotland Yard" we have here. Christie, in addition to writing several original scripts (*Spider's Web* for Margaret Lockwood and *The Mousetrap* being obvious examples), became adept at the adaptation of her own works for the stage and *The Hollow* is one of the most enduring and popular examples.

The play itself can be described as classic Christie. A country house, a dysfunctional family, suspicious servants and motives galore create an enjoyable and entertaining setting which will hopefully allow the audience a chance to let their own imaginations take flight and solve the crime before our own intrepid Inspector Colquhoun! The interval is conveniently situated to allow you all ample opportunity to compare notes!

Jeremy Austin
(Inspector Colquhoun)



Jeremy played Inspector Goole in our sell-out production of *An Inspector Calls* in 2002. Other roles include DS Troughton in *Run For Your Wife*, 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*, Danforth in *The Crucible* and Nicola in *Arms and the Man*.

Joe Brooks
(Sir Henry)



Joe has 'done' about 50 plays with Wimborne Drama over more years than he cares to remember. His recent credits include the title role in *A Voyage Round My Father*, Marshall Howe in *The Roses of Eyam*, the Dean of Paddington in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Warren in *The Madness of George III*, Mr Creakle in *David Copperfield* and Joseph Poorgrass in *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

Jean Dishington
(Midge Harvey)



Jean studied drama at college and has worked in theatre-in-education and performed with many drama and musical theatre societies. She joined Wimborne Drama in 1998 after moving to the area from Nottingham. She has played Nellie in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Catherine Mompesson in *The Roses of Eyam*, Mary Warren in *The Crucible*, Mrs Armistead in *The Madness of George III* and Mama in *David Copperfield*.

Clare Downs
(Doris)



Clare started off studying ballet at Bristol prior to being asked to take part in various ballet, tap and modern dance performances at Bristol's Victoria Rooms. Since moving to Dorset nearly ten years ago she has helped with the design and costumes for a production of *Lysistrata* for Bournemouth Youth Theatre, and for Wimborne Drama has appeared in *Habeas Corpus*, *No Room for Love* and *The Madness of George III*.



Front page of the Daily Sketch, December 15, 1926, after Christie was found

the notoriety made Agatha Christie famous, she never recovered from the intense press scrutiny and the private anguish that surrounded the episode ensured that she made no reference to it in her published memoirs.

There has been endless speculation as to what motives this lady might have had in vanishing. However the definitive account was apparently unearthed in the 1990s when writer Jared Cade claimed to have found Agatha Christie's own explanation in the obituary box on her life held at the British Library. Cade's theory, propounded in his book *Agatha Christie and the Eleven Missing Days* and the basis of a BBC documentary,

was that it was a calculated exercise in humiliating the husband who had scorned her for another woman.

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Agatha Christie: The Queen of Crime

Agatha Christie is the world's best-known mystery writer. Her books have sold over a billion copies in the English language and another billion in over 45 foreign languages. She is outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare.

Agatha Miller was born in Torquay on September 15, 1890. She was the youngest child of an American father and an English mother. Her father's death when she was 11 reduced the family's comfortable financial circumstances and shattered her idyllic childhood. Keenly interested in

religion, philosophy, and other spiritual realms, she had some

As usual when directing a play, there are many people to thank but I will limit myself to a general "thank you" to the entire cast and crew, all involved at Wimborne Drama and the Tivoli Theatre who continue to be so helpful and encouraging. It is four years since I last directed for the group and I had forgotten what hard work it is - thank you again to all involved.

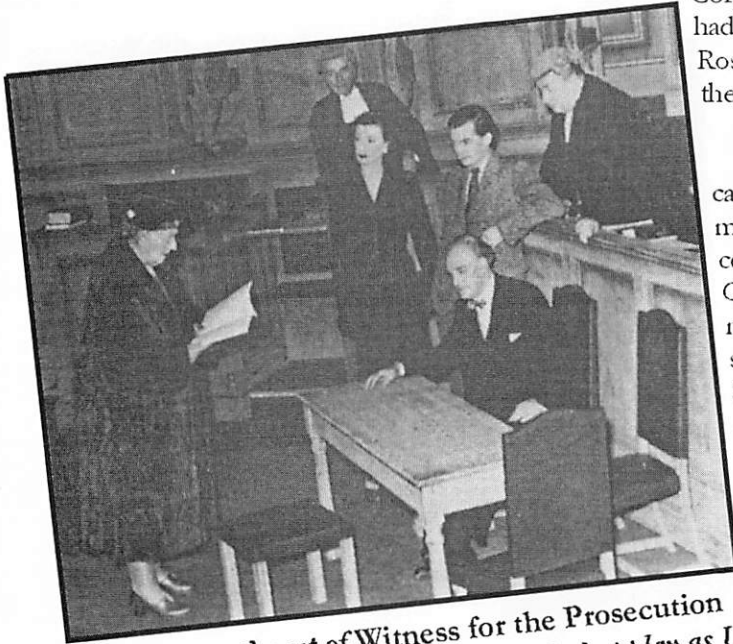
Can you spot the murderer? Or even, in the early stages, the victim?! Sit back on the newly comfortable seats (!) and allow your deductive powers to take control - and thank you for your support.

Enjoy!

Paul Dodman, Director

training as an apothecary and worked in a hospital dispensary. These oddly disparate elements in her background helped form her unique brand of mystery writing.

In 1914 she married Colonel Archibald Christie, an aviator in the Royal Flying Corps. The couple had one daughter, Rosalind, before their divorce in 1928.



Christie on the set of Witness for the Prosecution (1953). "I was as nearly satisfied with that play as I have been with any," she wrote

In a writing career that spanned more than half a century, Agatha Christie wrote 79 novels and short story collections. She also wrote over a dozen plays including *The Mousetrap*, which opened in London on November 25, 1952, and is now the longest continuously running play in theatre history.

Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920), was also the first to feature her eccentric Belgian detective Hercule Poirot. Poirot's "little grey cells" triumphed over devious criminals in 33 novels and many dozens of short stories. Christie's last published novel, *Sleeping Murder* (1976), featured her other world-famous sleuth, the shrewdly inquisitive Miss Jane Marple of St. Mary Mead. Miss Marple appeared in twelve novels, beginning with *The Murder at the Vicarage* in 1930.

Both Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple have been widely dramatised in feature films and made-for-TV movies. *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974), *Witness for the Prosecution* (1957), *And Then There Were None* (1945), and *Death on the Nile* (1978) are a few of the successful films based on her works.

As the years passed, and her husband directed his own digs in Iraq and Syria, Christie became an integral part of the team, discovering a talent for piecing together broken pots. Alongside this she wrote some of her best books, all inspired by the Middle East and archaeology - *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Murder in Mesopotamia*, *Death on the Nile*, *Appointment with Death*, *They Came to Baghdad*, and *Death Comes as the End*, a real Ancient Egyptian murder mystery, based on the Heqanakht papyrus.

In 1949 the couple acquired an old Turkish house on the west bank of the Tigris in Baghdad.

"Our house was cool and delightful, with its courtyard and the palm trees coming up to the balcony rail. Behind us were irrigated palm gardens, and a tiny squatter's house, made of petrol tins. Children played there happily. The women came in and out and went down to the river to wash their pots and pans. The rich and the poor live cheek by jowl in Baghdad."

"How much I have loved that part of the world. I love it still and always shall," she wrote in her autobiography.

Christie's vanishing act of 11 days



Berkshire Constabulary missing persons poster, December 9, 1926

Arguably the most famous fact about Agatha Christie's life is her disappearance in 1926, when for many days she was feared to have met, like so many of her characters, death by misadventure. The celebrated mystery writer, however, was discovered living comfortably in a hotel in the Yorkshire spa town of Harrogate, where she was registered under the name of her husband's mistress and was claiming to be a victim of amnesia.

Christie's marriage to Colonel Archibald Christie broke up shortly after the episode. Although

“One is left with the horrible feeling now that war settles nothing; that to win a war is as disastrous as to lose one”

These were Christie's thoughts on the Second World War. As a lover of the city and people of Baghdad, one wonders what she would say today, if she were still alive, about the recent conflict in Iraq.

In 1928, still traumatised by her divorce from her first husband, Christie embarked on the Orient Express en route for Baghdad, where she was to stay with friends. In those days Baghdad was an exotic holiday destination for the wealthy.



Breakfast in Baghdad overlooking the Tigris

During that first visit to Baghdad Christie was taken to Ur, then being excavated by Leonard Woolley. At this ancient city, dating from the third millennium BC, Woolley had uncovered huge royal burials containing many exquisite artefacts, and the unmistakable evidence of sacrificed royal retainers had sent a frisson of excitement through London society. Christie made an excellent impression on Leonard Woolley and his wife Katherine, who loved her books. They invited her to return to the site in 1930.

It was during this second visit that Christie met Max Mallowan, who was working with Woolley on the site. He was fifteen years her junior, but she was instantly attracted to the "thin, dark young man" who was "very quiet - he seldom spoke, but was perceptive to everything that was required of him." When Katherine Woolley suggested Mallowan should accompany Christie on a trip round the surrounding countryside, the romance quickly took off. They were married later the same year.

Agatha Christie also wrote six romantic novels under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott. She wrote non-fiction as well - four books including an autobiography and an entertaining account of the many archaeological expeditions she shared with her second husband, Sir Max Mallowan. In 1971, she received the Order of Dame Commander of the British Empire. Agatha Christie died on January 12, 1976.

“The Hollow was ruined by Poirot”

The Hollow was the second of Christie's books that she adapted for the stage herself. She had become annoyed at how people had previously adapted her books in a way she disliked and so in 1942 she adapted *Ten Little Niggers* with one modification to the original story. The play was a great success and Christie was evidently delighted. She wrote in her autobiography:

I suppose it was *Ten Little Niggers* that set me on the path of being a playwright as well as a writer of books. It was then I decided that in future no one was going to adapt my books except myself. I would choose what books should be adapted, and only those books that were suitable for adapting.

The next one that I tried my hand on, though several years later, was *The Hollow*. It came to me suddenly one day that *The Hollow* would make a good play. I said so to Rosalind [Christie's daughter], who has had the valuable role in life of eternally trying to discourage me without success.

“Making a play of *The Hollow*, Mother!” said Rosalind in horror. “It's a good book, and I like it, but you can't possibly make it into a play.”

“Yes, I can,” I said, stimulated by opposition.

“Oh, I wish you wouldn't,” said Rosalind, sighing.

Anyway, I enjoyed myself scribbling down ideas for *The Hollow*. It was, of course, in some ways rather more of a novel than a detective story. *The Hollow* was a book I always thought I had ruined by the introduction of Poirot. I had got used to having Poirot in my books, and so naturally he had come into this one, but he was all wrong there. He did his stuff all right, but how much better, I kept thinking, would the book have been without him. So when I came to sketch out the play, out went Poirot.

The Hollow got written, in spite of opposition from others beside Rosalind. Peter Saunders, who has produced so many of my plays since then, was the man who liked it.

When *The Hollow* proved a success, I had the bit between my teeth.

THE HOLLOW

by Agatha Christie

Cast:

Sir Henry Angkatell JOE BROOKS

Lady Lucy Angkatell JAN STEVENSON

Henrietta Angkatell BOO FELTHAM

Midge Harvey JEAN DISHINGTON

Edward Angkatell MARK ELLEN

Dr John Cristow TONY FELTHAM

Gerda Cristow CAROLYN HEWITT

Veronica Craye YVONNE HENLEY

Gudgeon, the butler SIMON JACKSON

Doris, the maid CLARE DOWNS

Inspector Colquhoun JEREMY AUSTIN

Sergeant Penny RUSS GUILLAUME

*There is one
interval of
20 minutes*

For the Company:

Director PAUL DODMAN

Designer JACKSON KINGHAM

ASM MEREDITH TYSON-BROWN

Properties CAROLINE UWINS

Make-up CLARE DOWNS

On the Book DAVID PILE

For the Theatre:

Stage Manager ASHLEY THORNE

ASM STEVE CHARTERS

Lighting RUSSELL PARKER

Sound DON SHERRY

Production Credits:

Costumes by

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Furniture supplied by

Michael's Cane