

WIMBORNE
DRAMA PRODUCTIONS

WHEN WE ARE MARRIED

A farcical comedy by
J.B. Priestley

17 - 19 February 2022
Tivoli Theatre Wimborne

EVENINGS 7.30PM, £15. SAT MATINEE 2.30PM, £13
BOX OFFICE: 01202 885566 ONLINE: TivoliWimborne.co.uk
(Booking fees may apply)

This amateur production of "When We Are Married" is presented by
arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of
Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

WIMBORNE
DRAMA PRODUCTIONS

TOWARDS ZERO

by
Agatha Christie
and **Gerald Verner**

21 - 23 October 2021
Tivoli Theatre
Wimborne

Chairman's Reflections



Sam Moulton

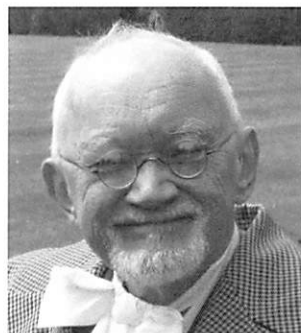
LITTLE did we know when the curtain came down at the end of *Barefoot in the Park* in February 2020, that it would be quite this long until we finally got back on the stage.

Like so many performing arts groups all over the world Wimborne Drama Productions has been profoundly challenged over the last 18 months. When your principle activity is all about connecting and interacting with one another in person, play readings by Zoom are a sadly inadequate replacement, to say the least. And of course even the occasional small scale get together we did manage still lacked our most important ingredient: an audience.

Whilst it was relatively straightforward for us to mothball our activities and sit out the lockdowns with little financial loss, it has of course been a difficult and stressful time for establishments like the Tivoli Theatre. We are delighted to be back here and contributing to the the revival of the performing arts in Wimborne.

But even without the difficulties of the pandemic, there have inevitably been changes and losses since we were last together. Some members have moved to pastures new. We have said a fond farewell to Phyllis Spencer, a very active member for the last 15 years. Phyllis was our most prolific stage manager and directed several successful productions of her own.

More tragically, we lost our dear friend and longtime member Michael Smith (pictured right) in April of 2020. Michael had been in poor health for some time, but never gave up his enthusiasm for all things theatrical. Over many years he played several leading roles with great flair and to much acclaim and was capable of stealing any scene he appeared in. He also directed a very successful open air production of *Twelfth Night*.



Also, very sadly, we have lost long-standing patrons Maureen Dickson, Pamela Wood, Michael Medwin and Roy Hudd, as well as long-serving former member Enid Davies who directed *Bedroom Farce* in 1994, our first Tivoli performance. We dedicate this production to the memory of all these dearly missed friends.

Sam Moulton - Chairman, Wimborne Drama Productions

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WHEN WE ARE MARRIED

A farcical comedy
by J.B. Priestley

17-19 February 2022

Tivoli Theatre

Directed by Richard Neal

~

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

By Jane Austen
Adapted by
Jessica Swale

14-17 July 2022

Open air production in
the grounds of
Deans Court

Directed by
Tracey Nicholls

President of
Wimborne Drama Productions
Malcolm Angel

Patrons of
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H signifies honorary

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RICHARD NEAL

(Superintendent Battle)

Place of birth: Born in Kidderminster, Worcs. Moved to Dorset nearly 30 years ago by way of Northants, Yorks, Lancs and Bucks. **Last role:** I played the very colourful Victor Valesco in *Barefoot in the Park* last year. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** *And Then There Were None*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, *The Unexpected Guest* and *The Hollow*. **Favourite roles:** Professor Marcus in *The Ladykillers*, Arthur Birling in *An Inspector Calls* and Anthony Blunt in *Single Spies*. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I love Agatha Christie's Poirot books (and the new Poirot mysteries by Sophie Hannah). David Suchet's interpretation of the role for TV was an acting masterclass. I enjoyed Rowan Atkinson in *Maigret* too. **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** calm, dependable, deadpan.

TRACEY NICHOLLS

(Audrey Strange)

Place of birth: Born in Hammersmith but moved to Dorset when I was aged 3, so I consider myself an adopted Dorset Dumpling! **Last role:** I played Laura Jenson in *Still Life (Brief Encounter)* by Noel Coward at Bournemouth Little Theatre this summer. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** I appeared in WDP's production of *The Unexpected Guest* by Agatha Christie in 2010. It was great fun! **Favourite roles:** Elizabeth Bennett (*Pride & Prejudice*, WDP, 2015) and Joy Gresham (*Shadowlands*, WDP, 2016). **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I love *Endeavour* as a TV show and *The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* by Stuart Turton is a cracking murder mystery novel. **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Cool, Obliging, Damaged (C.O.D - there is also something very fishy about her!)

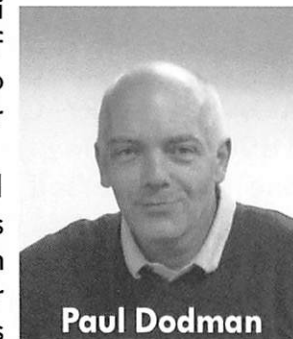
Director's Notes

HELLO and a very warm welcome to the Tivoli Theatre. I am delighted to have the honour of helping Wimborne Drama Productions' return to the venue after an enforced absence of, well, far too long.

We have in the past always enjoyed rehearsing and performing Agatha Christie's plays and looking back I can see this is the eighth time we have visited her work this century. Her plays, with their nostalgic, closed atmospheres and skilful blend of mystery and humour, have always proved popular with audiences and the theatre management. Here's hoping that *Towards Zero* delivers more of the same. Christie's enduring appeal is hard to define but on TV in the last month, *Endeavour* saw the young Morse trapped in a snow-bound hotel with an ever-diminishing group of suspects and even *Midsomer Murders* (now improbably in its 22nd season) saw the police and the suspects trapped by flood water as the bodies piled up. Both are of course directly related to Christie's masterpiece, *And Then There Were None*. If TV producers can see the merit in recycling her work, then interest amongst the public must remain high.

I think we would all admit having been a little rusty at the start of the process. From the auditions back in summer onwards it has taken a little while for the whole Wimborne Drama Productions team to find their feet and settle back into our routines of creating theatre. My very grateful thanks to all those who have offered their services in the less glamorous roles of properties, prompting, costume, set painting etc. I have been extremely lucky to work with a very talented cast and am delighted to have been able to welcome Jo and Lindsay to the cast, making their WDP Tivoli debuts amongst the more experienced players. They deserve special praise for working very hard to bring their characters to life, sometimes with little help from the script. My very grateful thanks to Shelly Barter for her unfailing good humour in her invaluable role of stage manager, as well as Kyle Best and the team here at the Tivoli. It's a real pleasure to be working with you all again.

Here's hoping you enjoy a return to theatre-going normality – and of course the show itself.



Paul Dodman

Paul Dodman - Director

Agatha Christie: Queen of Crime

AGATHA MARY CLARISSA MILLER was born on 15 September 1890 in Torquay, to an English mother and an American father. She taught herself to read at five years old, and began writing her own poems from a young age. Her education was a combination of informal tutoring at home (mainly by her parents) and then being sent to teaching establishments in Paris where she became an accomplished opera singer and pianist. By the age of 18 she was amusing herself with writing short stories – some of which were published in much revised form in the 1930s.

She spent a three month “coming out season” in Cairo which resulted in various marriage proposals, and then in 1912 she met Archie Christie, a qualified aviator who had applied to join the Royal Flying Corps. They married on Christmas Eve 1914, with Archie returning to the war in France on Boxing Day. Agatha became a nurse in the Voluntary Aid Detachment of the Red Cross Hospital in Torquay, and when the hospital opened a dispensary, she accepted an offer to work there and completed the examination of the Society of Apothecaries. This sparked a lifelong interest in the use of poisons, which made a huge contribution to her first novel *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*. The murderer’s use of poison was so well described that Christie received an unprecedented honour for a writer of fiction – a review in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

She was spurred on to write a detective story by her elder sister Madge, who set her the challenge. As there were Belgian refugees in most parts of the English countryside, Torquay being no exception, Christie thought that a Belgian refugee, perhaps a former great Belgian policeman, would make an excellent detective for her first novel. Hercule Poirot was born.

By 1919, at the end of the war, Archie had found a job in the City and they had just enough money to rent a flat in London. Later that year Agatha gave birth to their daughter, Rosalind. This was also the year that publisher John Lane contracted

I’ve been busy with my family. Most recently, I was a film extra in the remake of *Rebecca*, partly filmed at Cranborne Manor in July 2019. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** Whilst I love a whodunnit, I’ve never actually been in one until now and I’m hooked! **Favourite roles:** My most memorable role was playing Carrie in the musical *Carousel* in 2010 with Ferndown Musical Society. It was a challenge as there was lots of singing, dancing, acting and lightning speed costume changes! I also enjoyed playing Martha in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* in 2007. The group dances were very energetic. I’ve never been as fit before or since! **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** Book - *My Cousin Rachel* by Daphne Du Maurier. Film - I’m a Hitchcock fan so would have to say *Dial M For Murder*. More recently, I

enjoyed the psychological thriller, *Gone Girl*. And anything by Agatha Christie! **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Repressed, resentful, righteous.

SAM MOULTON

(Nevile Strange)

Place of birth: Sussex. Moved to Dorset in 2008. **Last role:** Charles Marlow in *She Stoops to Conquer* at Deans Court in 2019. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** I was in *Murder on the Nile*, playing Dr Bessner. **Favourite roles:** Thomas More, *A Man for All Seasons*, WDP, 2014; Frederic, *The Pirates of Penzance*, Leeds University, 1993. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** Anything by Agatha Christie, but more recently *Knives Out* (film) because it has a very satisfying plot and hilariously dreadful characters. **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Passionate, active, single-minded.

playing a police constable in *A Murder is Announced*. I played the murder victim Dr John Cristow in *The Hollow* in 2003. I got shot and had to fall down a set of stairs. **Favourite roles:** Lord Fancourt Babberly in *Charley's Aunt* and Trotter in *Journey's End* with WDP, Bill Snibson in *Me and My Girl* with BLOS. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I love the crime films *LA Confidential* and *Memento*. **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Unassuming, matter-of-fact, detached.

ANN McCOLGAN-CLARK

(Lady Camilla Tressilian)

Place of birth: Born in Lurgan, Co Armagh, Northern Ireland and moved to Dorset in 2013.

Last role: HMQ in Alan Bennett's *A Question of Attribution*, part of the *Single Spies* double bill, with WDP in

2018. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** I played Gerda in *The Hollow* with WDP in 2015. **Favourite roles:** Favourite roles have been Lynda in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* in 2007 and Her Ladyship in *The Dresser* by Ronald Harwood in 2009, both with The Tower Theatre, London. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I particularly like *Ordeal by Innocence* by Agatha Christie and I'm very fond of the BBC radio plays featuring Francis Durbridge's Paul Temple series. **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Doesn't suffer fools.

LINDSAY MCGOWAN

(Mary Aldin)

Place of birth: I was born in Southampton. I moved to Bournemouth in 2002 and moved to Wimborne in 2012.

Last role: I haven't been on stage for a number of years as



Agatha Christie on her Grand Tour in 1922, aged 32

Christie to produce five more books. She went on to be one of the first authors Penguin ever published in paperback, with fantastic results.

Following the war Agatha continued to write and to travel with Archie, including a Grand Tour of the Empire in 1922 during which she learned to surf in South Africa and Hawaii. Agatha and Archie divorced in 1928, and Agatha then fulfilled one of her lifelong ambitions: to travel on the Orient Express to the

Middle East. This and future trips are recognised in books such as *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Death on the Nile*, *Murder in Mesopotamia*, *Appointment With Death* and *They Came to Baghdad*, as well as many short stories.

During a trip to the excavations at Ur in 1930, Agatha met archaeologist Max Mallowan – the man who became her second husband, and who was fourteen years her junior. Their marriage would last forty-six years. Agatha accompanied Max on his annual archaeological expeditions over the next thirty years. The excursions did nothing to stem the flow of her writing and her book, *Come, Tell Me How You Live*, published in 1946, wittily describes her early days on digs in Syria with Max.

By 1930, having written several novels and short stories, Agatha had created a new character to act as detective. Miss Jane Marple was an amalgam of several old ladies she used to meet in villages she visited as a child. When she created Miss Marple, Agatha did not expect her to become Poirot's rival, but with *The Murder at the Vicarage*, Miss Marple's first outing in a full length novel, it appeared she had produced another popular and enduring character.

In 1971 Agatha was made a Dame of the British Empire. Her last public appearance was at the opening night of the 1974 film version of *Murder on the Orient Express* starring Albert Finney as Hercule Poirot. Her verdict? A good adaptation with the minor point that Poirot's moustaches weren't luxurious enough.

Agatha died peacefully on 12 January 1976. She is buried in the churchyard of St Mary's, Cholsey, near Wallingford, Oxfordshire, where she and Max lived for more than forty years.

Agatha Christie Limited has been managing the literary and media rights to Agatha Christie's works around the world since 1955, working with the best talents in film, television, publishing, stage and on digital platforms to ensure that Christie's work continues to reach new audiences in innovative ways and to the highest standard. The company is managed by Christie's great grandson James Prichard. Visit www.agathachristie.com for more information.

fi, such as Arthur C Clarke's books, *Babylon 5*, *Star Trek* and *The Expanse* on TV and the Star Wars films. **Describe your character in Towards Zero in three words:** Very shrewd observer.

JO EVA EDINGTON

(Kay Strange)

Place of birth: I was born in Cornwall and moved to Dorset in September 2019. **Last role:** The last proper role I played on stage to an audience was Nurse Ratched from *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* in 2016 for my college performance exam. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** Apart from Nurse Ratched I've mostly done panto and musicals before. I'm a thriller newbie! **Favourite roles:** Nurse Ratched was so fun to play, and challenged me to be more serious than I ever could be in reality! Fanny the Fishmonger in *Cinderella the Panto* was also

a hilarious part to play and I loved making the audience laugh - this was back in Cornwall at my local theatre. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I'm more of a horror movie buff but in terms of murder mystery, I love all of the Sherlock Holmes series! **Describe your character in Towards Zero in three words:** Unaccommodating, vivacious and wilful.

TONY FELTHAM

(Thomas Royde)

Place of birth: Dorset born and bred - growing up and living in Corfe Mullen - moving to Wimborne in 2000. **Last role:** I played Thomas and Dick Muggins in *She Stoops to Conquer* at Deans Court in 2019. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** My WDP debut was on 11th April 1984, two days before my 18th Birthday, on the Allendale Centre stage

to have directed my first play for WDP last year, Neil Simon's *Barefoot in the Park*, which was also our last production before the lockdown! **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** I've appeared in two of WDP's previous Agatha's – *The Unexpected Guest* in 2010 and *And Then There Were None* in 2011. I was also in *The Ghost Train* by Arnold Ridley back in 2017, again here at the Tivoli with WDP. **Favourite roles:** Simon Bliss in *Hay Fever*, Tom Ripley in *The Talented Mr Ripley* and Algernon Moncrieff in *The Importance of Being Earnest* are amongst my favourites for WDP. Playing Harry in *In Room Five Hundred and Four* for Broadstone Players was another favourite where I won the Best Actor award at the Dorset Drama League Festival. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** An excellent read recently was *The Guest List* by Lucy Foley – the cover says 'a remote island' and 'an

invitation to die for' – all the elements you need for a classic whodunnit! **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Idle, party-loving playboy.

CHRIS DURHAM

(Mathew Treves)

Place of birth: I was born in London. I moved to Dorset in 1979 to do some IT courses at Blandford Camp and have lived here ever since. **Last role:** *Gaslight* in February 2019 at the Tivoli. I played Inspector Rough. **Previous thrillers you have acted in:** *Return of the Maniac*, by Mike Johnson, with Blandford Camp Drama Club in 1986. **Favourite roles:** Arthur Winslow in *The Winslow Boy*, in 2018, and also the butler, Crestwell, in *Relative Values*, in 2016, both with WDP at the Tivoli theatre. **Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller:** I don't really have one, as I much prefer Sci-

Agatha Christie: A Life in Numbers

3 days: The time it took to write her third Mary Westmacott novel, *Absent in the Spring*, a powerful story about a woman who finds herself alone on a journey back from Iraq.

2 weeks: At the suggestion of her mother, Agatha Christie took a 2-week holiday at the Moorland Hotel in Dartmoor to allow her to complete her first novel *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* without distractions.

6 weeks: *Endless Night*, a masterfully creepy novel revolving round an unlucky couple, was written by Christie in just six weeks, whilst the author was in her 70s.

3-4 months: Average time it took Agatha Christie to write a book. Her output was prolific, and she had an enviable writing speed.



3 years: Time spent working in a pharmacy during the First World War, where she gained her knowledge of poisons that proliferated so many of her best works. She also spent further time working in the dispensary at University College Hospital in London during World War II.

4 years: The time it took, after many rejections, to get her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, starring Hercule Poirot, published.

5 years: Agatha Christie taught herself to read by the age of five. She was home-schooled, but her mother didn't want to encourage her to learn to read until she was eight. So Christie took matters into her own hands!



6 years: The time it would take to read an Agatha Christie novel every single month.

11 years: The age when Agatha Christie's name first appeared in print. She wrote a poem about trams, which was published in a local London newspaper.

15 years: Despite being a fast writer, it took Agatha Christie 15 years to write her autobiography. The book was published posthumously.



18 years: The time spent accompanying her second husband Max Mallowan on his archaeological digs in Iraq and Syria (1932-38 and 1948-58). Agatha Christie used the time to write, and also to assist on the dig sites, cleaning artefacts that had been discovered.

19 years: Agatha Christie loved the freedom that writing under a pseudonym gave her, and Mary Westmacott would go on to write 4 novels before it was revealed, after 19 years, that this was in fact Agatha Christie writing under a pen-name.

42 years: As well as writing speedily, Christie also wrote consistently for decades. There are 42 years between publishing her first and last play, *Black Coffee* and *Fiddlers Three* respectively.

56 years: Even more impressive perhaps is the 56 year career she had as a novelist, beginning with the release of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* in 1920, and ending with the posthumous publication of *Sleeping Murder* in 1976.

69 years: The number of years *The Mousetrap* ran continuously in the West End until forced to close by the pandemic in 2020.

85 years: Agatha Christie lived for 85 years, and in that time she wrote 66 crime novels, 6 Mary Westmacott novels, over 150 short stories, 24 plays and 2 autobiographical works.

Source: www.agathachristie.com

Meet the Cast

DAVID BEDDARD-BANKS

(P.C. Benson)

Place of birth: High Wycombe. I moved to Dorset in 2013. **Last**

role: I played Paul Bratter in *Barefoot in the Park* for Wimborne Drama Productions, February 2020. **Previous**

thrillers you have acted in: Patrick Simmons, *A Murder is Announced*, 2014, and Geoffrey Curtis, *Deadly Nightcap*, 2011, both for P&P Players. **Favourite roles:** Mr Shanks, *Habeas Corpus*, WDP, 2016, and Maj. Gen. Stanley, *The Pirates of Penzance*, UoN G&S Society, 2011, Nottingham Arts Theatre.

Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller: *Clue* (1985), because who wouldn't love watching Tim Curry and Christopher Lloyd in a lethal farce?! **Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words:** Quiet shorthand maestro.

JAMES BOURNER

(Inspector Leach)

Place of birth: Born and bred in Poole and Bournemouth. **Last**

role: Stanley in *Still Life* for Bournemouth Little Theatre this summer. **Previous thrillers you**

have acted in: I played Smith in *Murder on the Nile* here at the Tivoli in 2018. **Favourite roles:** Smith in *Murder on the Nile*, Tony Lumpkin in *She Stoops to Conquer*, Stanley in *Still Life* and Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Favourite murder mystery or crime thriller: I am reading a lot of Lee Child's Jack Reacher thrillers at the moment.

Describe your character in *Towards Zero* in three words: Lovable. Tries hard.

ROB CORDING-COOK

(Ted Latimer)

Place of birth: Born in Poole Hospital, I have never ventured far! **Last role:** I was very proud

Towards Zero

AGATHA CHRISTIE revealed towards the end of her life, to a Japanese fan, that *Towards Zero* was one of her favourite books.

“I found it interesting to work on the idea of people from different places coming towards a murder, instead of starting with the murder and working from that,” she wrote.

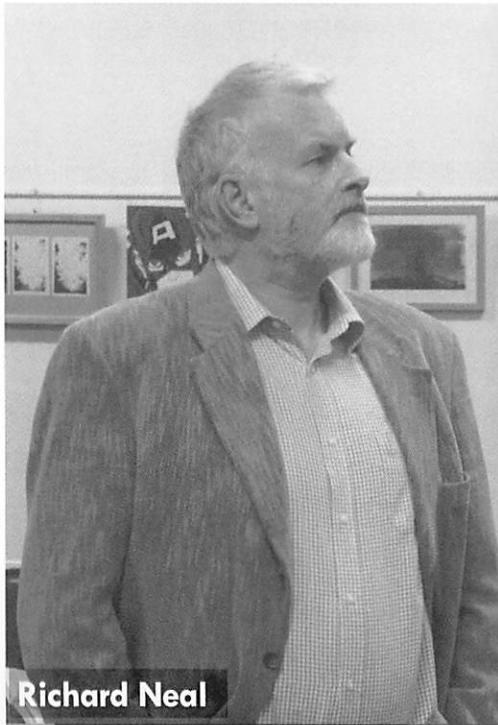
It is the last of five novels to feature Superintendent Battle. The story itself came together quickly and clearly, as can be seen from Christie’s notebooks. Her notes are detailed and closely resemble the published version – she even drew a map of the coastline around Gull’s Point, which plays an important part in the story, and which was inspired by Greenway, the holiday home of Agatha Christie and Max Mallowan on the River Dart in Devon.

Many of Christie’s novels were first serialised in magazines and *Towards Zero* was no exception. *Collier’s Magazine* with a circulation of over 2.5 million at the time published the novel in 3 parts in May 1944. Her American publishers Dodd Mead followed with the true first edition in June and Collins published their hardback in July 1944.

In 1956 the novel was dramatised by Agatha Christie with the considerable assistance of thriller writer Gerald Verner – famous for writing several Sexton Blake detective fiction stories. Produced by Peter Saunders, it opened at the St James’s Theatre in London’s West End on 4 September. Christie attended some of the rehearsals. When asked if she minded a line being altered, she replied that she did mind. “I want you to say, ‘I hate her. I hate her. I hate her.’”

Christie did make a solo stage adaptation that went unseen, after an American try-out in 1945, until its UK premier in 2019 in Norwich.

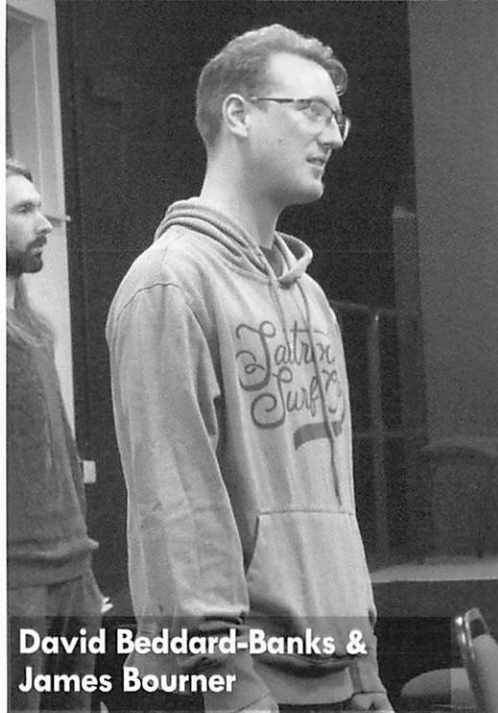
Towards Zero was adapted for TV in 2007 with the addition of Miss Marple, played by Geraldine McEwan.



Richard Neal



Jo Eva Edington



David Beddard-Banks & James Bourner



Sam Moulton & Tracey Nicholls

TOWARDS ZERO

By Agatha Christie
and Gerald Verner

The Cast in order of appearance

Thomas Royde

Kay Strange

Mary Aldin

Mathew Treves

Nevile Strange

Lady Camilla Tressilian

Audrey Strange

Ted Latimer

Superintendent Battle of Scotland Yard

Inspector Leach of the local Police

P.C. Benson

TONY FELTHAM

JO EVA EDINGTON

LINDSAY MCGOWAN

CHRIS DURHAM

SAM MOULTON

ANN MCCOLGAN-CLARK

TRACEY NICHOLLS

ROB CORDING-COOK

RICHARD NEAL

JAMES BOURNER

DAVID BEDDARD-BANKS

Period, Setting & List of Scenes

The action takes place at Gull's Point, Lady Tressilian's house, Saltcreek, Cornwall. Time – the late 1950s

Act 1

Scene 1 – A morning in September

Scene 2 – After dinner, four days later

Scene 3 – Early the following morning

Act 2

Scene 1 – Two hours later

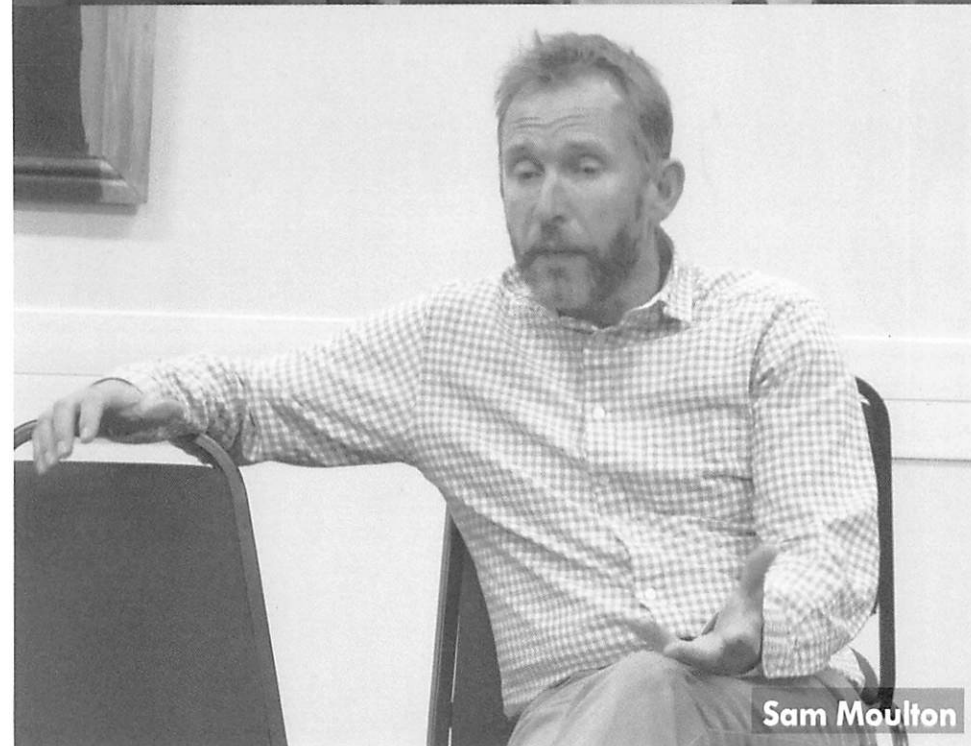
Scene 2 – The next morning

Scene 3 – The same evening

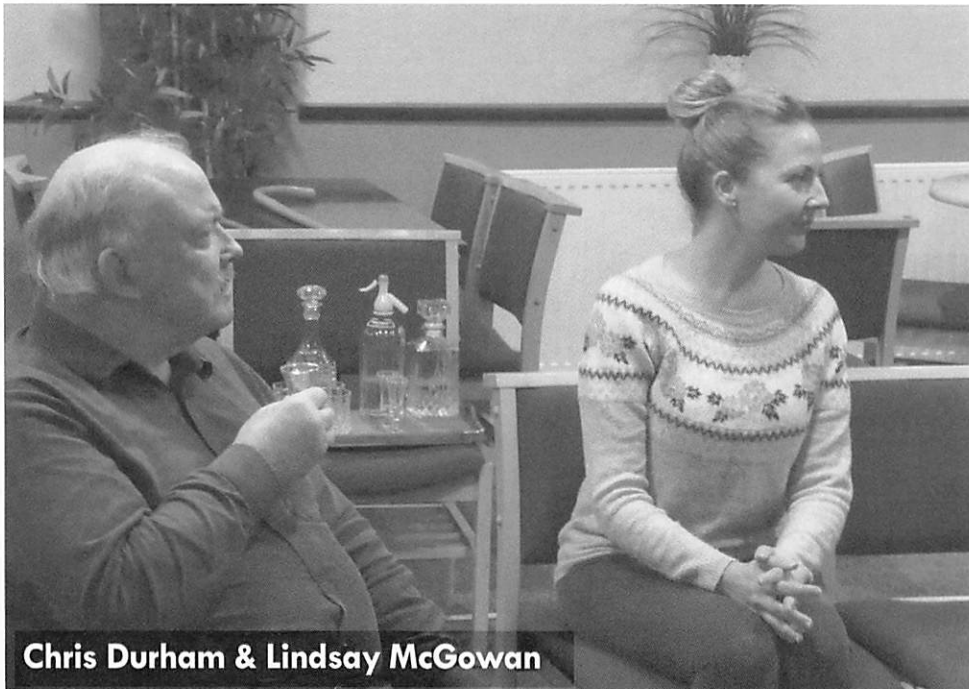
Running time approximately 2 hours 20 minutes, including a 20 minute interval



Tony Feltham & Ann McColgan-Clark



Sam Moulton



Chris Durham & Lindsay McGowan



Rob Cording-Cook & Jo Eva Edington

The Creative Team

Director

PAUL DODMAN

Stage Manager

MICHELLE BARTER

Set Realisation

CHRIS DURHAM

COLIN PILE

NICK CLARK

ASMs & Properties

JUDY GARRETT

DEE HAWES

AMANDA SMITH

Costume Supervisor

CHRISSIE NEAL

Book Cover

JAN STEVENSON

Sound

GARY PAINE

Publicity & Programme

RICHARD NEAL

For the Tivoli Theatre:

Technical & Production Manager

KYLE BEST

Head of Sound

CHANDLER WHITELOCK

Lighting Programmer

KIERAN RAY

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Sam Moulton & Jo Eva Edington



Ann McColgan-Clark



Lindsay McGowan



Tracey Nicholls & Rob Cording-Cook

Chris Durham



Tracey Nicholls & Tony Feltham