

WIMBORNE DRAMA PRESENT
CHARLES DICKENS'

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS

ADAPTED BY NEIL BARTLETT

www.wimbornedrama.co.uk

WIMBORNE DRAMA

2009 Productions at The Tivoli Theatre

Run For Your Wife by Ray Cooney

Thu 12th March - Sat 14th March 2009

The story of London cab driver John Smith, with two wives, two lives and a very precise schedule for juggling them both. With one wife at home in Streatham and another at home in Wimbledon, and with occupants of the flat upstairs at the latter location. Trouble brews when Smith is mugged and ends up in hospital, where both of his addresses surface, causing both the Streatham and Wimbledon police to investigate. Having upset his schedule, Smith becomes hopelessly entangled in his attempts with his lazy layabout neighbour upstairs in Wimbledon, to explain himself to his wives and two suspicious police officers.

Witness For The Prosecution

by Agatha Christie

Thu 4th June - Sat 6th June 2009

Leonard Vole is arrested for the murder of his elderly friend Emily French, a woman who depended on his advice in managing her money. Because Emily made him her principal heir, not aware that he was a married man, things look bad for Leonard's defence. But the final blow comes when his wife, Romaine, agrees to testify, not in Leonard's defence, but as a witness for the prosecution.

Why not become a Supporting Player or Patron of Wimborne Drama and receive complimentary tickets for all of our 2009 productions. For more information please contact Boo Feltham at communitymanager@wimbornedrama.co.uk or visit our website at www.wimbornedrama.co.uk

Director's Notes

Good evening, afternoon and welcome to the Tivoli Theatre for the final play of Wimborne Drama's 2008 season. Thank you so much for your support over the past year.

Like many people, I was forced, possibly reluctantly, to study "Great Expectations" at school. I remember finding the novel very long, although I enjoyed the central story and particularly liked watching David Lean's classic 1946 film version. The larger than life characters and the excitement of the story seemed to come alive much more effectively, for me, on film rather than in print. It seemed that the essence of the story was not lost by the necessary cuts from the original text, in fact, the story seemed much more relevant and dramatic.

I was therefore delighted to read, at the beginning of this year, Neil Bartlett's brand new stage adaptation of this much loved classic. As is discussed elsewhere in this programme, the 2007 production was designed for just eight actors, with only Pip not "doubling" at all. The notes in the text encouraged free adaptation of the script, so I have re-introduced a device we have used before in a Dickens play, the idea of two actors playing the lead role: essentially, Pip as a boy and as a young man. Of course, being a drama group with a large membership, the idea of doubling round was dropped pretty quickly! I have been delighted to work with such a large cast for the first time.

The whole cast have been working hard to bring some of literature's most famous characters to life and it would be wrong to single out anyone in particular. I would like to thank them all for their efforts. As the script is almost all culled from the original novel, it isn't always the easiest to learn.

Special thanks go to the whole of the Tivoli team, as helpful and practical as ever. I would like to thank Penny Scotford, who has been my right hand and sounding board since the first rehearsal, and Phyllis Spencer, whose invaluable backstage expertise has been much called upon. Both of them have been of an immense help to me since we began planning the show in August.

Finally, special thanks to Kevin Wilkins, who is responsible for everything "projected" on the screen. He has worked tirelessly to ensure all runs smoothly, as well as designing the poster.

Thanks to all of the above, and I hope you enjoy the show.

Paul Dodman

Adapting the Story

It would be almost impossible , or at least involve an enormous number of set changes, to accurately recreate the myriad settings in the story "Great Expectations". In order to "get right to the heart of Dickens", as the author Neil Bartlett has been complemented, many changes and simplifications need to take place.

One half of the stage represents the Gargery's home in the first act and, later, Herbert's lodgings in London. The other symbolises Satis House, "empty house" as Dickens describes it. By using a screen for the projected, 'atmosphere' inserts, we have created another area, used mainly for the older Pip's narration in the first act. The audience must use their imagination in order to fill in the bleak Kentish marchlands and the filthy squalor of London.

In order to keep the action moving, actors travel across and behind the central screen. Bartlett's adaptation is almost entirely lifted from the novel and any additions made by the director are also straight from the book.

The play was originally conceived as a piece for just eight actors when it premiered in Aberystwyth in March of last year. With a thriving group of over forty members, Wimborne Drama has gone to the other extreme, the roles of Pip, Herbert and Estella have been split into older and younger versions of the characters and many of Dicken's famous characters are reduced to momentary cameos. It is to the cast's credit that they have seized on the changes and worked hard to make the characterisations all their own.

CHURCHILL PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS...

Hobson's Choice

A Lancashire Comedy by Harold Brighouse

Directed by Anthony Boncza

Tivoli Theatre, Wimborne

On 26, 27, 28 & 29 March 2009

Box Office: 01202 885566

Themes of the Story

The main themes of the novel are gratitude, suffering and snobbery. Pip appreciates the gentle Joe Gargery, but treats him with indifference. Joe's selfless nature is contrasted with Mr. Pumblechook's constant criticism of Pip's ingratitude.

Suffering is depicted by many characters, including Miss Havisham and Pip himself. Miss Havisham was jilted on her wedding day and tricked out of a part of her money while Pip suffered by never gaining Estella's love.

Dickens used Pip to bring attention to the increasing social disparity in Victorian London. Estella criticises Pip for his working class features, and Pip in turn develops contempt for his own family's lack of wealth.

Pip constantly attempts to impress Estella by moving up the social ladder, yet it only leads to his demise. The wealthy class is represented by the indifference of Bentley Drummle and Mr Jaggers, and the waste and indolence of Miss Havisham. The working classes are often depicted in a constant state of oppression, despite the intelligence and honesty of many of the poor characters.

Neil Bartlett

Neil Bartlett was born in 1958. He grew up in Chichester, West Sussex. In 1994 he was controversially appointed Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith, with Simon Mellor as Chief Executive. Over a ten year period, they transformed the previously run-down venue into one of the most respected theatres in London, combining an eclectic and consistently challenging programme, a radical pricing policy and the work of a pioneering education department to slowly build a genuinely diverse audience.

In recognition of his work at the Lyric, he was awarded the O.B.E. in 2000. The transformation of the building was completed by a major rebuild of the front of house areas by architect Rick Mather in 2004.

Bartlett left the Lyric in November 2004, bringing the curtain down with a suitably theatrical staging of Moliere's Don Juan, the poster for which succinctly invited its audience to "Go to Hell"! His work includes adaptations of A Christmas Carol (2002), Camille, adapted and translated from Dumas in 2003 and his 2004 adaptation of Oliver Twist.

Charles Dickens



Charles Dickens (1812—1870) is much loved for his great contribution to classical English literature. He is the quintessential Victorian author. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable.

His own story is one of rags to riches. He was born in Portsmouth on 7th February, 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good fortune of being sent to school at the age of nine was short-lived because his father, inspiration for the character of Mr Micawber in *David Copperfield*, was imprisoned for bad debt.

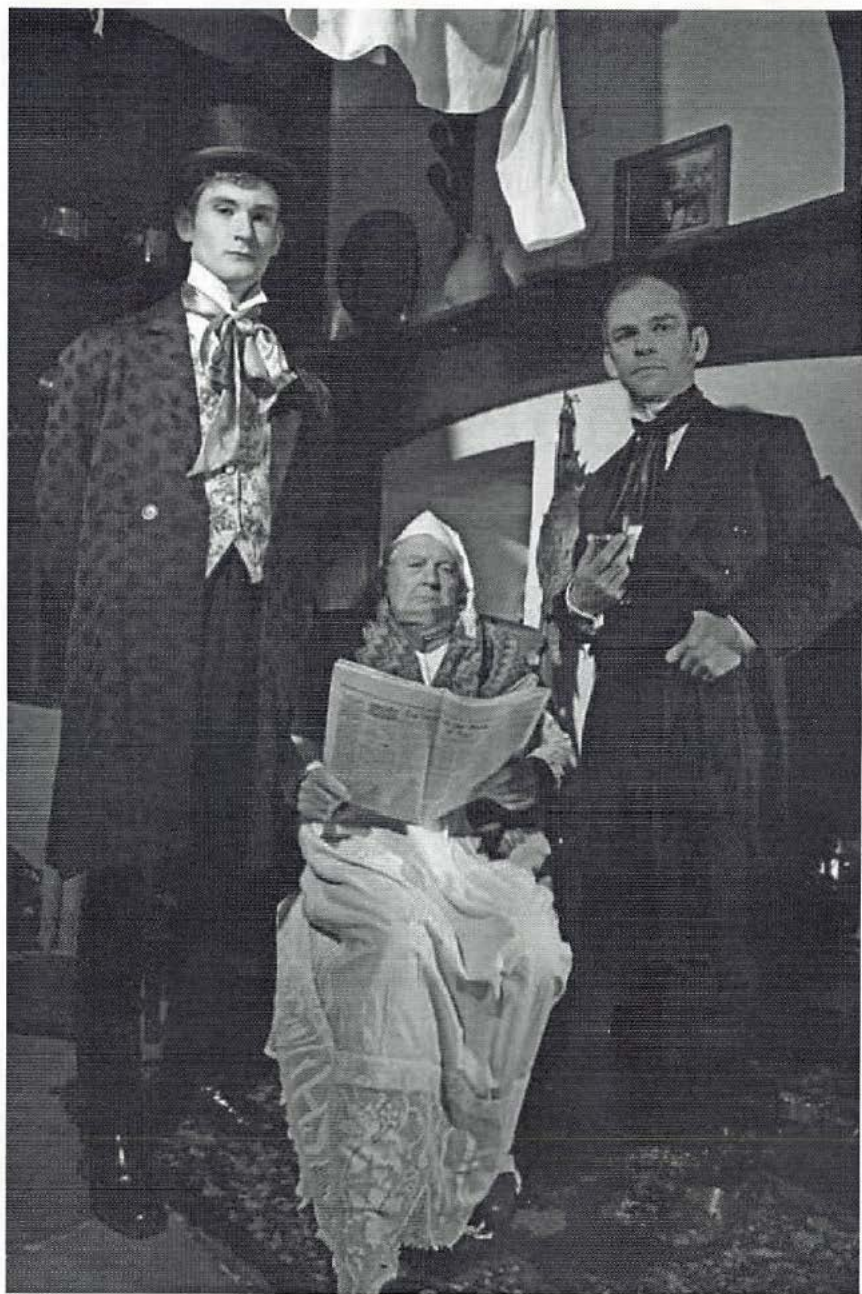
The entire family, apart from Charles, was sent to Marshalsea, the debtor's prison central to *Little Dorrit*.

Like many others, he began his literary career as a journalist. In 1833 he became parliamentary journalist for *The Morning Chronicle*. With new contracts in the press he was able to publish a series of sketches under the pseudonym 'Boz'. In April 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth who edited *Sketches by Boz*. Within the same month came the publication of the highly successful *Pickwick Papers*, and from that point on there was no looking back.

As well as a celebrated canon of novels, Charles Dickens published autobiographies, edited weekly periodicals including *Household Words* and *All Year Round*, wrote travel books and administered charitable organisations. He was also a theatre enthusiast, wrote plays and performed before Queen Victoria in 1851.

His energy was inexhaustible and he spent much time abroad, for example, lecturing against slavery in the United States and touring Italy with his contemporary Wilkie Collins, who inspired Dickens' final unfinished novel *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

Charles Dickens was estranged from his wife in 1858 after the birth of their ten children, maintained relations with his mistress, the actress Ellen Ternan and died of a stroke in 1870. He is buried at Westminster Abbey.



Pip visits Wemmick and the Aged P

WIMBORNE DRAMA

Presents

Great Expectations

THE CAST

PIP.....ROB CORDING
PIP as a boy.....CONOR FELTHAM
JOE GARGERY.....MARK ELLEN
MRS JOE.....CAROLYN HEWITT
ABEL MAGWITCH.....JEREMY AUSTIN
UNCLE PUMBLEHOOK.....MICHAEL SMITH
MR WOPSLE.....BARRY BAYNTON
SERGEANT.....CHRIS BROWN
MISS HAVISHAM.....PENNY PEARSON
ESTELLA.....MICHAELA SLATFORD
ESTELLA as a girl..... HANNAH ADENEY
SARAH POCKET.....JAN STEVENSON
CAMILLA POCKET.....JACKSON ELLEN
GEORGIANA POCKET.....CHRISSIE NEAL
HERBERT POCKET.....NICK GRAY
HERBERT as a boy..... EDDIE TYSON-BROWN
BIDDY.....TRACEY NICHOLLS
JAGGERS.....RICHARD NEAL
WEMMICK.....STUART GLOSSOP
BENTLEY DRUMMLE.....COLIN PILE
and THE AGED PARENT.....JOE BROOKS

BACKSTAGE

DIRECTORPAUL DODMAN
STAGE MANAGER.....PHYLLIS SPENCER
SET DESIGN.....JACKSON ELLEN
PROPERTIES.....CATHERINE RUSSELL
DIALOGUE ASSISTANT..... PENNY SCOTFORD
FILM AND GRAPHIC SEQUENCES....KEVIN WILKINS
SOUND EFFECTS.....COLIN PILE
SOUND DESK.....PAUL HEWITT
PROGRAMME.....MICHAELA SLATFORD
SPECIALIST PROPERTIES.....JEREMY AUSTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY.....TONY FELTHAM
TRANSPORT.....MEZ TYSON-BROWN
WARDROBE.....VERENA SMITH
POSTER DESIGN.....KEVIN WILKINS

Thanks to:

- ♦ The Tivoli Theatre production team for lighting and technical assistance
- ♦ Anne Ponting, Eclectia Costumes (Tel: 01425 277149) for all costumes
- ♦ Emma and the staff at the Priest's House Museum, Wimborne, for allowing us to film
- ♦ Giles and Annabel Stuart at Abbott Street Forge, Pamphill for the loan of an anvil and blacksmith's tools
- ♦ Members of Wimborne Drama for help with properties, programmes etc.
- ♦ All good wishes go to Steve Symonds, our missing Compeyson

Cast Notes...

ROB CORDING: I enjoy playing Pip as he is a diverse character and has given me a chance to show more emotion than that of the murderous psychopath, Tom Ripley. I do feel sorry for Pip because at the pinnacle of his life, he discovers that his hopes and dreams were nothing but Great Expectations.

CONOR FELTHAM: This is Conor's third part with Wimborne Drama and the largest role so far. Conor is the third generation of his family to tread the boards with the club and long may he and his siblings continue.

CAROLYN HEWITT: Mrs Joe is not a happy soul. The ignominy of marrying the blacksmith, she is top of the "bitter & twisted" charts, I get into character by sucking lemons!

MARK ELLEN: Joe the blacksmith, under the thumb of Mrs Joe and with a "Pip" on his shoulder, doesn't grumble he just gets on with life. I get into character by picking up the lemons that Carolyn throws at me!

JEREMY AUSTIN: Poor old Magwich, hopelessly irredeemable, exploiting as eagerly as the rest the youth and innocence of tender Pip's childhood, and with repercussions that echo as long into the adult Pip's life as any created by formidable Miss Havisham. Who better than me, with my long history on stage at the Tivoli, for the job of portraying such a hardened recidivist? Happily though, Magwich eventually achieves redemption and shows his worth. I'm still working on mine.

MICHAEL SMITH: Uncle Pumblechook is a typically rich and colourful Dickensian character, sometimes rather overbearing and small minded but with a soft centre. 'Great Expectations is my favourite Dickens novel and I am enjoying bringing him to life.'

BARRY BAYNTON: Wopsle appears as a side kick to Pumblechook, though much younger. Keen to keep an eye on the affairs of the church. Amen!

CHRIS BROWN: The Sargeant, dipsomaniac, I love this role, it is so me!

PENNY PEARSON: I've had some lovely parts with Wimborne Dram and Miss Havisham is a dream part for me. I have always loved the book and I get to wear a wedding dress on stage! It's a shame about the cobwebs and decay though. Miss Havisham is a fascinating character, bitter and vengeful but she does see the error of her ways eventually.

MICHAELA SLATFORD: I love playing Estella and was delighted when asked to do so. She is mean, curt and cold hearted. With Miss Havisham as her guardian, poor Estella did not really stand a chance to be anything else. I do feel some sympathy towards her as ultimately she ends up unhappy and unfulfilled. The final scene in the play shows her trying to make amends for the way she has behaved towards Pip. Unfortunately, it is too little, too late!

HANNAH ADENEY: I love the performing arts and attends Big Little Theatre School and Stage Door School of Dance. I have performed in various pantomimes and played the roles of Mary Poppins and Sleeping Beauty in school productions. I would like to thank Wimborne Drama for giving me the opportunity to play Estella and my family for always being there.

JAN STEVENSON: I am one of the terrible 'Pockets' who hang around Miss Havisham hoping to inherit her money, very smarmy!

JACKSON ELLEN: I suppose Camilla is a cross between a Macbeth Hag and a vulture. Miss Havisham is taking an age to shuffle off the mortal coil and my fingers are itching to get my share of her dosh! A fun vignette to do.

CHRISSIE NEAL: Chrissie is playing Georgiana, the middle Pocket! The "very idea" of being reunited with Jan Stevenson, her comedy partner from Badger's Green, was too good an opportunity to turn down.

Cast Notes...

NICK GRAY: What a lovely part!!! A far cry from Stanhope, but being a Pocket has been excellent. It's been nice looking after Pip.

EDDIE TYSON-BROWN: This is Eddie's second role with Wimborne Drama and he loves being a part of the group.

TRACEY NICHOLLS: Bidy has a lot in common with Pip in that she is an orphan and a good-hearted, honest soul. However, unlike Pip, she has no great expectations but is happy to lead a simple life looking after Pip and his Uncle Joe. I can't help thinking that she might have held a candle for Pip once but in the end she marries Joe, a much more suitable match really. This production has been great fun to do. "What larks" we've had!

RICHARD NEAL: Richard is delighted to be growing his Dickensian whiskers once again after playing David Copperfield in 2001. He has tackled with relish the bullying, disdainful, and generally hard-hearted lawyer Jaggars, who tries to dissociate himself from his evil surroundings with frequent washing of his hands. Well the law's a dirty business! Preferred brand of soap: Wrights Coal Tar.

STUART GLOSSOP: Wemmick is Mr Jaggars clerk. I've found in rehearsals that Wemmick is becoming ferret like in character. Like Wemmick, I am not married (in a manner of speaking), unlike Wemmick, I haven't got a cannon firing mad 'Aged P' festering at home.

COLIN PILE: Bentley Drummle is a pompous brute. A typical upper class bore, often drunk and overbearing and condescending to all around him.

JOE BROOKS: As the "father" (a la Dorit Father of Winchelsea) of Wimborne Drama I like to keep a watchful eye upon the affairs of the young 'uns. Now where is that Gladstone bag?

Join Us...



Wimborne Drama stages three productions each year.

We always welcome new members, with or without previous experience.

As well as those with a liking for acting or directing, people with a keen interest in the less glamorous, but equally valuable backstage roles (set construction, properties, make-up etc) are warmly welcomed into the group.

The group meets the last Thursday of the month to discuss forthcoming productions, events and other business matters. When in rehearsal, we meet on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

Membership to Wimborne Drama Group costs £30 per year or £15 for juniors (under 16).

If you prefer to sit front of house and enjoy a good night out you might like to become a Patron. For a minimum donation of only £30 per year, patrons of Wimborne Drama enjoy a number of privileges including:

- ◆ A free ticket to each Wimborne Drama production
- ◆ Notification of plays and priority booking service
- ◆ A quarterly newsletter to keep you up-to-date with Wimborne Drama news
- ◆ A free theatre programme for each production
- ◆ An invitation to join the cast and crew for drinks and nibbles after Friday night performances
- ◆ Invitations to other events throughout the year

If you would like further information, please contact Boo our Community Manager on Tel: 01202 885659

Email: communitymanager@wimbornedrama.co.uk

Or visit the website at: www.wimbornedrama.co.uk

About Us...

Wimborne Drama was formed in November 1928 by a group of enthusiasts, led by Leonard 'Motty' Mottram who was an English teacher at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School. The group called themselves 'The Wimborne Dramatic Society'. The society's original purpose was to be a social club for theatre goers. In 1932 the group took the bold step of actually staging a production. Picking an ambitious first project, *Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure* which had a cast of over forty people and the few remaining photographs show that it was a rather stylish affair.

After the war the group merged with the Wimborne Operatic Society. This relationship was short lived due to the high-cost of staging operatic productions and a sad but amiable parting took place. The dramatic society re-emerged as Wimborne Drama Club. Early plays were staged at the Women's Institute Hall until it was demolished, and then at Church House. When the Allendale Centre opened in 1970, the club at last had a permanent home and remained there for the next 24 years.

In 1994 came a major step forward when the Tivoli Theatre re-opened and Wimborne Drama was invited to become the resident amateur group. We haven't looked back since and earlier this year celebrated our 80th anniversary with a fantastic evening of fun and frolics with many old and current supporters and members. Wimborne Drama holds many wider social activities, true to our founders aims. Another fantastic reason to join Wimborne Drama and join in with the fun!

President of Wimborne Drama: Councillor Anthony Oliver MBE

Patrons of Wimborne Drama: (H) = Honorary Members

Rod Allison	June Allison	Francis Alton
Anne Angel	Malcolm Angel	Lynda Bellingham (H)
Beverley Blehs	Lottie Brown	Laura Butler
Darren Butler	Edward Childe	Robin Cook (H)
Elizabeth Corbin	Joyce Curry	Margaret Denslow
John Dickson	Maureen Dickson	Dorothy Dodman
Pam Feltham	Bob Feltham	Roy Hudd (H)
Roy Joseph (H)	Diann March	Lynn Marshall
Brian Marshall	Michael Medwin (H)	Tom Melia
Shelia Morrell	Peter Neal	Tina Nicholls
Christine Oliver	Anthony Oliver	Anthony Pawley
Linda Pawley	Patricia Pile	Peter Scaife
Anne Tyson-Brown	Pamela Wood	Audrey Wright

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