



# Stage Whispers

November 2015

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## Spring Production

There will be a casting meeting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December for 'Absurd Person Singular' an early comedy for 3 couples by Alan Ayckbourn. We last performed this in 1977 also directed by Jack Griffith. The production dates are Wed 20<sup>th</sup> – Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> April so please contact Jack if you are interested in a part or support.

Set in three kitchens over three Christmases, the play charts the relentless rise of the socially aspiring Hopcroft's at the expense of two other couples. Total 3 acts

Characters are,

Sydney Hopcroft, Grocer, younger than the others, ambitious ...on for 75%

Jane Hopcroft house proud subservient wife .....on for 65%

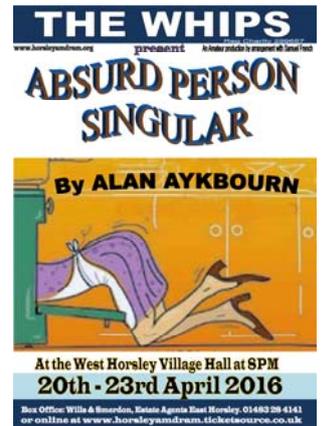
Ronald Brewster-Wright, Older bank manager, Vague. On for 66%

Marion Brewster Wright Snobby, Alcoholic,.....On for 33%

Geoffrey Jackson, smooth, suave Architect .....On for 40%

Eva Jackson, Undervalued, depressed.....on for 30% but another 25% non-speaking

We need also volunteers for Stage Manager & ASM, Producer, Props, Costumes etc So if you don't want an acting role but to be involved, -please feel free to take up one of these positions. I (Jack) have the scripts if anybody wants to read them but go on hols to NZ on 8-29 Nov



## PLAYREADINGS

The next playreading will be on Wed Nov 11<sup>th</sup> at Clare Punshon's house , Forest Lodge, Forest Rd E.H. KT245ES Tel 282746 and on Wed 16<sup>th</sup> Dec at again, June Bailey's house 'Foxcombe' Nightingale Rd EH KT245EW tel EH 283372. Well done these hosts!

## ADVERTISING

**Another call please** for anyone living on a main road, eg Ockham Road North/South, Forest Road, A246, East Lane, The Street who would be prepared to have a Wills & Smerdon board on their premises to advertise our shows? It would be for about 2/3 weeks before the show.

## LETTER OF THANKS

Dear Jack,

I want to thank The Whips for their kindness in contributing part of the proceeds from Friday, 16th October to Clandon Park. It was a very generous gesture and much appreciated. It was good to have an opportunity to thank everyone there and then, and say a little about the salvage work and plans for the future. The support and sympathy of the public has been overwhelming.

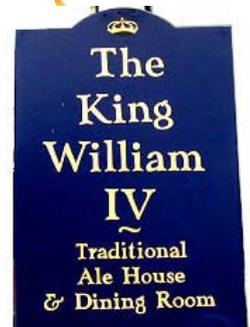
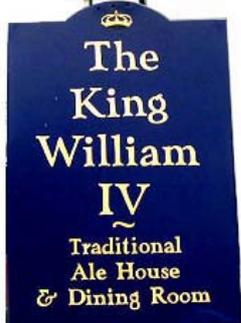
I came with a group of 12 friends and we thoroughly enjoyed the performance.

Yours gratefully,.....June (Davey)

# STAGE WHISPERS CHRISTMAS 'BILLY' BASH

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Dec

Contact Jackgriffith7@gmail.com  
with your meal choices. eg a,b,c  
= Soup,Cod,Gateau. ASAP.



## Starters

- A.** Parsnip, Chestnut & Apple Soup  
with locally baked bread & salted butter
- B.** Smoked Salmon & Baby Prawn Cocktail  
in a tangy marie-rose sauce, on crisp lettuce with granary bread
- C.** Pork, Pancetta & Apple Terrine  
with homemade tomato chutney & toasted ciabatta
- D.** Beetroot, Avocado & Goat's Cheese Salad (V)  
with dried cranberries & walnuts in a honey & balsamic vinegar dressing

## Mains

- A.** Succulent Turkey Crown Roasted With Lemon Thyme Butter  
with pigs in blankets, chestnut stuffing & white wine gravy
- B.** Oven Roasted Cod Loin  
on a bed of rustic ratatouille
- C.** Braised Beef & Root Vegetable Casserole  
slow cooked in red wine & rosemary
- D.** Mushroom, Brie & Spinach Wellington (V)  
with a cranberry gravy

*all of the above served with garlic & thyme roasted potatoes,  
honey roasted parsnip, sprouts, carrots & cauliflower*



## Puddings

- A.** Traditional Christmas Pudding  
with brandy sauce
- B.** Crème Brûlée  
with almond biscotti
- C.** Chocolate Orange Gateau  
with whipped cream & dark chocolate sauce
- D.** Cheese Board  
with homemade chutney, biscuits & apple

## Coffee

£27 PP. including Tip

## GILL BRAND

Gill Brand, sadly passed away recently. She had been suffering with cancer for a long time. Although not a member of Whips to date, she was a while back and her most memorable performance was probably in 'Stepping Out'. She leaves a husband, David and daughter, Helen. Pictured in 'An Ideal Husband 1991



# AUTUMN PRODUCTION-CRIT

## 'We'll Always Have Paris' by Jill Hyem



The Whips presented us this autumn, as the programme suggested, 'with a feel-good play with laughter and tears'.

The curtain opened on a spacious set designed by Peter Davis which together with background accordion music took us straight into the atmosphere of the flat in Paris rented by Nancy, a retired headmistress from Haslemere who told us that having turned the school round she now wanted to turn herself round.



Nancy was joined by the French handyman/actor Charlot whose flirting with the older Nancy gave us some amusing French/English banter. We learnt that Nancy had invited Anna, an old friend recently widowed, to stay with her. Colin Bailey playing Charlot managed with few slips to convince us that he was a charming French rogue, while

Lesley Young playing Nancy gave us a convincing evocation of a woman of a certain age set on enjoying the freedoms of retirement. When Veronica Keywood entered as Anna we had a fine contrast in her portrayal of a tired, unhappy widow defeated by years of dedicated caring to her sick husband. The trio of English women in Paris was completed when Pam Campbell entered as Raquel



unrecognisable in her blonde wig and seductive clothes telling us of the five husbands she had been through and telling Anna bluntly that she needed a haircut and new clothes!



An unfortunate hiatus between scenes was seemingly caused by Anna having to transform herself with shorter hair and smarter clothes. To go with her new appearance Anna gave us a completely new persona excellently portrayed by Veronica. None of the audience was surprised by Charlot's falling for the new form Anna. Their intimate discussion was broken by the entry of landlady Madame Boussiron whose hostility shattered the atmosphere as she harangued Charlot in French for neglecting his handyman duties. This was a fine feisty performance by Sharon Fredricksson The final scene of Act 1 gave us Nancy and Raquel continuing the rancorous atmosphere with exchanges of



'fat cow' and 'pompous tart'. Such was the bitchy tension generated that the audience were quite convinced that Nancy had indeed injured herself falling down the stairs chasing after Raquel at the end of the scene.

We were not surprised therefore when Act 2 opened with Nancy in a surgical boot and her arm in a sling being looked after by Anna. Charlot arrived to give flowers to Nancy and there was a nice mixture of laughter and pathos in his dialogue with Anna who eventually accepted an invitation to watch him perform in a cabaret.



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In the next scene we saw Charlot and Anna returning from the club with Charlot giving a relaxed performance on the guitar of the song he had written about "Les Dames Anglaises". The fun was ended by Madame Boussiron storming in to complain of the noise. The ensuing argument conducted in Franglais worked well and the audience were delighted when Charlot refused to leave with Madame Boussiron who retaliated by displaying that her English was good enough to inform the company that "Charlot cannot even get it up".

Anna now had finely played interactions with Charlot and then with Nancy. Her thanking Charlot for teaching her not to cover her mouth while smiling made us aware that she had indeed been doing just that in earlier scenes. We appreciated then the gradual evolution of Anna's character over the course of the play. She informed us now that she had hated her husband and was pleased to be set free by his death. She rejected Charlot's advances, however, and the play ended with Nancy and Anna deciding to share a house in England but also to rent a flat in Paris so that they could "always have Paris". (Raquel, meanwhile, had informed us that she had decided to quit her flirtatious ways and return to live with her first husband!)



Fran King is to be congratulated on directing a play that was more complex than it appeared, coaching some convincing French accents and keeping a pace that had the audience fully engaged. It was good also to welcome two new

members to the Whips, coming through with strong performances and to hear so little from Anna Price as prompt!



## **MEERKAT'S NOTES**

Meerkat's notes from the Committee:

**Are there any trained First Aiders** out there who would give up time during set building/performances?

OR is there anyone who would train as a First Aider, at the Whips expense, on the understanding they would attend at set building/performances?

The next Quiz Night is likely to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November 2016 subject to Hall bookings etc. The event in September made just over £700.

Another theatre outing is in the offing more details next Whispers but will be early next year.

The donations to the charities supported by West Horsley Fete will be £100 to each.

The **Whippets** production of '**Peter Pan**' has 46 children taking part.

The **Young Whips** have started their rehearsals of 2 one act plays to be performed on **26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016**. The plays are '**The Nightly News**' by Gerald P Murphy and '**Frankenstein's Last Chance**' by Geoff Bamber,

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

11<sup>th</sup> November Playreading at Clare Punshon's house  
3<sup>rd</sup> December Spring production casting meeting  
17<sup>th</sup> December Stage Whispers Christmas Bash  
16<sup>th</sup> December Playreading at June Bailey's house

### 2016

13<sup>th</sup> January Playreading at Jan Hudson's house  
17<sup>th</sup> February Playreading at June Bailey's house  
26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> February Young Whips 2 short plays The Nightly News and Frankenstein's Last Chance  
16<sup>th</sup> March Playreading at Pat Davis's house  
17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March Whippets Peter Pan by Piers Chater Robinson  
13<sup>th</sup> April playreading at Barbara Firth's house  
20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April Spring Production  
18<sup>th</sup> May AGM  
19<sup>th</sup> May Playreading at Clare Punshon's house  
19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October Whips Autumn Production  
12<sup>th</sup> November Quiz Night



## AND FINALLY

Gemma,

A very sad edition this, as my beloved dog, Gemma is no longer with us. I had to make the heart breaking decision to have her put down due to an enlarged tumour. She was 13 years old so not bad really for a Labrador. She had, I believe, a very happy life after being rescued from Battersea dogs home 12 years ago having up to three hours of walking per day. The reward being wet nosed greetings at any time, pleading eyes for more & wonderful devotion!

I'm sure many of you who have had a much loved pet that has been part of your family for years have gone through the same experience and know what a horrible thing it is to make that ultimate decision! Thank you all who knew, for your sympathetic messages

She will be greatly missed!

So no joke this edition, maybe next.

Jack



**This has been another 'Rush it out swiftly before we go to NZ' production!**

