

Whitefield Garrick Newsletter



DANDY DICK ROMPS HOME!

Putting on a play is no mean feat under normal circumstances. Many of you who saw our September production of '**Dandy Dick**' may not have realised that sadly, due to ill health, the original leading actor had to withdraw with just two weeks of rehearsal left before the opening night. We were very fortunate that anyone was prepared to take on such a gargantuan task, at such a late date, and can only express our immense gratitude to **Peter Scofield** who was the foolhardy actor who enthusiastically attacked this challenge with gusto. Here he takes up the story :

I know, I know – I do like to keep busy! In January this year, for example, I was simultaneously rehearsing for '*Absurd Person Singular*' at Bolton Little Theatre, '*Neighbourhood Watch*' at Farnworth Little Theatre and '*Breaking The Code*' at the Marco

Players. And – yes – I do tend to get itchy feet after two or three days without either rehearsing or performing in a show. But there are limits, aren't there?

So, when **Pat Hill** came to my home one afternoon in early September with a particular request, the answer had to be 'No', didn't it?

After all, I was deep into rehearsals for '*Nell Gwynn*' at Bolton Little Theatre, and that show ran until Saturday 22nd September. "*Perhaps, if the worst comes to the worst,*" Pat suggested, "*you could go on with the book as the Dean in 'Dandy Dick' on Sunday.*"



"*And what about the rest of the run?*", I enquired.

"*Well, that as well*" she replied – without (as the script says of Georgiana Tidman) 'even the semblance of a blush'!

After an extraordinary run of difficulties in the casting of '**Dandy Dick**' the latest calamity was the possibility of losing the leading actor playing the Dean, and – purely as a contingency, you understand – Pat was on a mission!

Now, I don't know about you, but seeing an actor struggling with script in hand, reading from the book and unfamiliar with the moves or even the fellow actors on the stage is something I feel audiences will accept for one, or possibly two performances, and only in the direst of emergencies.

So – as I said – the answer just had to be 'No'!

"*But,*" I found myself saying, to my own amazement, "*I would learn the part, rehearse when I can, and try my best to give a proper performance.*"

And the rest – as they say – is history!



With two weeks of rehearsals (and I'm reliably informed that the one dress rehearsal was the first and only occasion when all the cast got together!) it was time to go. Sadly the last night of '*Nell Gwynn*' forced the cancellation of the first night of '*Dandy Dick*', but otherwise the run was on! Looking back, I think I can say it proved to be a success!

For that, can I take the opportunity of thanking all the cast, crew – and even Garyk (the director)! – for their kindness, patience, understanding and support. It was a real pleasure (after an absence of two and a half years since '*Heroes*') to be back at the Garrick in my fourth appearance there.

Just one thing, though – let's hope the next time is a bit less stressful!

The Play's the Thing

Every season we receive feedback from our audiences regarding our play choices they come via email, Twitter, Tripadvisor, Instagram or even by 'snail mail' or word of mouth! Much of this is complimentary and encouraging but it is true to say, that despite our best efforts, we never please everyone.

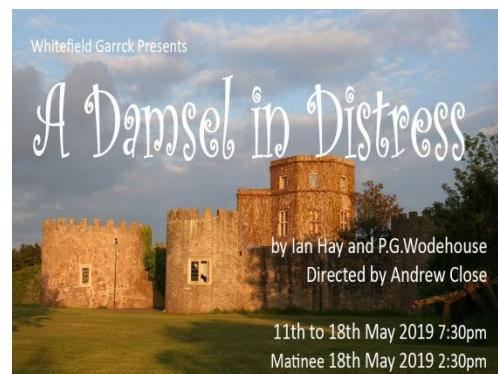
Selecting a season of plays is very complex and time consuming and is dealt with by a small committee some of whom are also on our executive committee.

As it is vital to provide a balanced season we aim to include Comedies, Dramas

with perhaps a Thriller, Murder/Mystery or Ghostly tale thrown into the mix. The play selection committee therefore, spend a good deal of time reading a large selection of plays. Many plays are considered, both classic and contemporary, though not all may be suitable. Some are dismissed for practical reasons; their staging may be too complex for our bijou theatre ;the cast size may be too large for us to accommodate; it may require a vital but particularly difficult prop to source or even involve an issue which we have covered recently and that we feel it is too soon to revisit. Equally, we may be very keen to present a particular play but the Performing Rights may be unavailable or we may feel that we are currently unable to cast it from our cohort of actors. The considerations are numerous but you can be certain that every effort is made by the dedicated committee to provide a breadth of plays from different eras, styles, genres and playwrights. We hope that, due to their immense efforts , there will always be something to appeal to each and every one of you within our season.

Please continue to let us know your opinions and if you have any proposals for plays we welcome your suggestions but do bear in mind that we have a lot of things to take into consideration whilst making our selection for the season.

In the meantime, we have a lovely selection of plays, still to come this season , which we hope you will enjoy.



The talented cast of our November play, '*The Weir*', caught in action. We hope you enjoyed the production as much as those who were involved.



Whitefield Garrick



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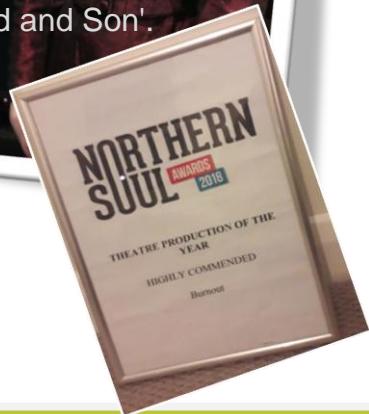
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Award Winners

Our congratulations go to **Selina Halliwell**, who many of you will remember from last season's production of '**Rutherford and Son**'. She is a talented scriptwriter and we are thrilled to hear that she has just been awarded a highly commended **Northern Soul Award** for her production of '**Burnout**' a play she wrote and performed in. Well done Selina!



Selina Halliwell in last season's production of 'Rutherford and Son'.



Many congratulations also to our Greater Manchester Drama Federation award winners. This year **John O'Connell** and **Daniel Clynes** were both the worthy recipients of awards.

John O'Connell won a best actor award for '**A Different Way Home**' and Daniel Clynes also won a best actor award for '**Shadowlands**'.

'Shadowlands' also picked up a win for best production. A huge well done to all involved.

The Gallery

For the duration of each play we make our gallery space available to local creative people. We hope that you enjoy their artistic endeavours whatever form they take. We have been lucky to see some lovely work exhibited so far this season. We hope you have enjoyed seeing their work as much as we have.

Local artist **Mac Rich** and our committee member **Janet Leather** with some of their art work.



Be sure to follow us on all of our social media.

#WhitefieldGarrick



Facilities upgraded



Over the summer we made a number of upgrades to the theatre. Many of you will have already experienced the fabulous **new seating** which we hope you have found much more comfortable. We love the teal colour and think it suits the ambience of our theatre well. We also spent a good deal of money upgrading our **lighting rig** and although you may not have noticed a difference, in the standard of lighting that we can achieve, I can assure you that our 'techies' have! They are thrilled with the results. Do feel free to review our facilities on '**tripadvisor**' and spread the word about our fantastic '**hidden gem**' of a theatre.

From the Archives

If you have any anecdotes or archive materials about our theatre from on stage, behind the scenes or even as an audience member please let us know and we may be able to include them in future newsletters.

To start us off we have a rather entertaining newspaper review of the last time '**The Winslow Boy**' was produced at the theatre in 1973. It seems the audience were a little unruly!

We would love to hear from you. Please email whitefieldgarrickmail@gmail.com with any of your stories.

The Winslow Boy

The Whitefield Garrick Society worked hard to capture the emotions and atmosphere of this stirring play about a battle for a principle.

But they were hindered a little by some inaccurate casting and a lot by a **noisy and restless audience** comprising many **inattentive schoolchildren** and a few **inattentive senior citizens**.

Surprisingly, the actors improved as the play progressed, albeit from sheer contrary determination but the small section of genuinely interested spectators had a hard time maintaining concentration amid the commotion.

The cast suffered from the usual amateur dramatic hang-up of having too few men to cast from.

Society chairman **Ian Rayner** as the determined head of the Winslow household, and **Brian Barnes** as his daughter's fiance, were blatantly the wrong ages for their roles, even though their good performances increasingly detracted from the fact. Nevertheless, the cast combination of society stalwarts and total newcomers worked extremely well together. Excellent first ever stage performances were contributed by **Graham Griffiths**, the elder of the two sons, **Lilian Sutton**, the female reporter and **Philip Barnes** the younger of the sons, around whom the action revolves.

Society newcomer **Lilian Johnson** gave a fine portrayal of the strong-minded daughter, and well cast parts were taken by stalwarts **June Bowers**, wife and mother, **Rod Gillett**, the solicitor, **Arthur Acton**, the barrister, and **Wynn Longbotham**, who as the maid delivered an amusing and well acted account of the important outcome of the family's efforts.

Direction, by guest producer **Eunice Edge**, scenery, costume and props were all first class.

*Season's
Greetings*



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