

# The Linford Luvvie

Newsletter of the Bradgate Drama Society  
Autumn 2008

## Editorial

*'The most entertaining thing to drop through the letterbox in years'*

*'Haven't laughed so much since my sister fell down the stairs'*

*'Just couldn't put it down; a magical literary experience'*

Are just some of the things we wish you'd said about the first issue of the Linford Luvvie.

Nevertheless, most people seemed to enjoy it so here we go again with the journalistic equivalent of 'that difficult second album' -

## In this issue

- El Presidente – a unique career opportunity
- Christmas Production – the birth of a dream
- A new stage extension – and we don't have to pay!
- Boules competition – the real story
- Upcoming social events – your opportunity to get out a bit more
- Member Survey – the results!

## El Presidente

Ever fancied strutting around in a military uniform exercising absolute power over a cowering peasantry? If so you could be just the person we're looking for to be Society President. The duties are a bit ill defined (apart from unfettered power over the peasantry etc.) but consist essentially of acting as a figurehead for the Society and offering advice and support to the Chairman as required. In practical terms it also gives us someone to chair committee meetings if the Chairman is away, sick or eloping with the Membership Secretary.

No formal appointment can be made until the next AGM but if anyone is interested we would propose to co-opt them onto the Committee so that they could carry out the duties in an unofficial capacity before being nominated for the post at the AGM. If you think you could carry out this important but not too taxing role please call the Chairman or Secretary for a chat.

Uniform and whip provided if required; megalomania an advantage

## Also

We currently have no Social Secretary on the Committee. At present we're managing OK with Committee members taking it in turns to organise activities. However, if you have an

outgoing personality and think you could contribute in this area, again just have a chat with the Chairman or Secretary to discuss terms and conditions – remember that that's how most of us got lumbered in the first place!.

## *Christmas Production*

Rehearsals are now in full swing for the Christmas production (although to avoid disturbing the yoga class in the adjoining room, all conversation has to be conducted in a hoarse whisper!). Despite earlier concerns about the amount of material available we have, by dint of theft and plagiarism of stuff found on the internet and elsewhere, along with a few home grown items, found enough to put a show together. It's early days yet but the indications are that it will be a quick moving production - a bit like the Fast Show. Seating will be in cafeteria style so you can sit round tables with your friends and graze on nibbles whilst partaking of drinks from the bar.

The production will be staged on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>., Friday 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Ticketing arrangements will be notified shortly with the usual opportunity for Society members to buy ticket before they go on general release.

## *Stage Extension*

Peering nervously round the door at my first audition for the Society I expected a rigorous examination of my thespian abilities – perhaps a passage from Shakespeare or Brecht to give me the opportunity to demonstrate the full depth of my emotional connection with the text and my complete empathy with the dramatic intent of the author.

Imagine my surprise when I was fitted out with a pair of pit boots and told to run twice round Bradgate Park carrying a railway sleeper.

The reason for this unusual initiation became clear a week or so before my first production when the ritual of erecting the stage extension was played out before my eyes. The extension, known as Brian Anderson's revenge after its fiendish creator, comprised a random heap of large timbers which slotted together in a secret combination known only to Brain, Des and a bloke from Anstey who died ten years ago.

The finished product was probably a fine piece of carpentry in its heyday but in recent years had caused a number of heart-in-the-mouth moments when a large cast moved forward for a finale and felt the earth move beneath its feet

This combination of physical exhaustion and the potential death or dismemberment of a large proportion of the Society's membership led the Committee to consider a replacement stage extension.

Quotes for a replacement were obtained following work by the Chairman and Brian Hooper with expert input from Dave Walton who, with his expertise in the industry, was in the unique position for the BDS of knowing what he was talking about. The selected option is a light aluminium structure which should prove both quicker and easier to erect than the present extension.

The really good news, however, is that following discussions with the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council, the Council have agreed to meet the cost of the work, BDS having to fund only the carpet surface to the extension and the curtain around the perimeter.

It's anticipated that the new extension will be available for the Christmas production in December when the male members of the Society will relax from their years of hard labour and sit sipping tea whilst the ladies get to work with allen key and spanner to erect the new lightweight structure

### *Boules tournament*

*(most of you will probably know that the Society's annual boules tournament was yet one more victim of the monsoon like 'Summer' of recent memory. Although the day itself dawned dry though cloudy, conditions underfoot meant that any attempt to go ahead would have resulted in an undignified cross between water polo and mud wrestling which, whilst possibly appealing to the more avant garde members of the Society, would have resulted in irreparable damage to the host's garden. Undaunted by this unfortunate cancellation and with an empty page to fill, the Linford Luvvie followed the sterling example of its more illustrious colleagues in the tabloid press and just made up this report of the event, filed by our Chief Sports Correspondent)*

A total of fourteen members gathered in the garden of 34 Groby Lane for what has become, following the 1983 abandonment of the annual bare knuckle boxing tournament, the sporting highlight of the Society's year.

The competitors were divided into five teams of three (I'm a writer not a mathematician OK), those veterans of previous tournaments flexing their muscles and warming up whilst the newcomers were given a copy of the rules of the game as set out by the Federation Internationale de Petanque et Jeu Provençal (Grenoble 2002 amendment) and an English/French dictionary.

It quickly became apparent that the old hands were likely to sweep the board once again with the newcomers competing only for the minor trophies - Number of Garden Gnomes written off; Boule nearest to next door's cat etc. Des Bates's team began to build up an early lead, threatened only by Barry Cook's squad and an all-female equipe captained by Tracey Hastie, whose 'O' level in French gave her a head start over those others still reading the rules. Des's classic style seemed to be winning the day over Barry's more agricultural approach until the ladies, having fully translated the rules, adopted the Bayonne backflip, a controversial but legal style of delivery rarely seen north of the Loire. From then onward there was only ever going to be one winner and the ladies soon emerged triumphant with chants of 'easy, easy' coming from the neighbours lining the garden fence.

Following the trophy presentation the winning team did a lap of honour round the flower beds whilst the other competitors tucked into a 'bring and share' supper, given a unexpected Gallic flavour by the discovery of two garden snails and a frog in the green salad.

## *Social events -*

You will have by now had notification of the visit to the Little Theatre on 15 November to see the matinee production of The Ghost Train followed by a meal at the nearby Las Iguanas restaurant. If you haven't already booked, you might just get tickets if you're quick by contacting Tracey Hastie on 0116 2601375 or [tracey.hastie@talktalk.net](mailto:tracey.hastie@talktalk.net)

The next event after the theatre visit will be a beer and skittles evening on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at the Coach and Horse at Field Head. Further details to follow but get the date in your diary now. Short of a blizzard we are reasonably confident that, unlike the boules, the evening will proceed regardless of the weather!

## *Membership survey feedback*

Thanks to all those who responded to the membership survey sent out with the last newsletter. Prize for the first return goes to Lesley Baker; booby prize to John Boyd whose response hit the doormat sometime in September – unless, of course, you haven't sent yours in yet!

Unsurprisingly perhaps, the survey confirmed a preponderance of luvvies over techies – lots of people want to be in the bright lights but not many want to put the lights up! The survey was also a disappointment for those harbouring ambitions of the Society staging a major musical production in the near future – our musical talent comprises two guitars, one dancer and a few reluctant singers!

There were quite a few members who wish to stay in the Society but not take part in productions. Contrary to the impression which may have been given by the survey form, this is fine so long as you keep paying the subscription!

One good piece of membership news is that Hannah and Paul Johnson have returned to Markfield from living in France, finally realising that balmy evenings sipping calvados and munching snails are no substitute for standing in the drizzle eating cod and chips washed down with a mug of lukewarm tea. Luckily, in view of the survey results, their talents lie backstage so they'll be a welcome reinforcement to the ranks of those who know that the term dimmer doesn't always apply to the cast.

## *The Next Newsletter*

Will be published early in the new year with brutally honest reviews of the Christmas production and a taster of what we'll be doing for the Spring production

As always, any views or comments you may have on the 'Luvvie' or on any other aspect of the Society's work are welcome, whether for publication or not! You can always contact me by phone or e-mail as below.

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