



Frayed Knot Theatre Company

In association with Warner Chappell Plays Ltd.
Presents an amateur production of ...

Arsenic and Old Lace

By
Joseph
Kesselring

23RD -
25TH
APRIL
1998



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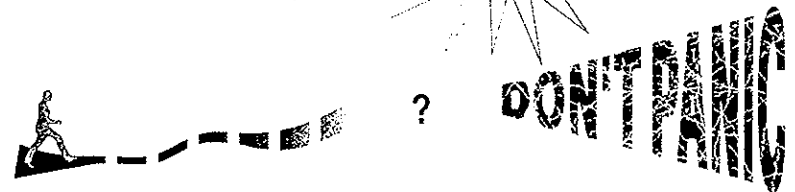
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Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Frayed Knot Theatre Company was established in 1991 and has gone from strength to strength ever since. Initially, lacking resources and a known name we had to be modest in our productions, performing to a few dozen people in village halls in Herts, Beds & Bucks.

With the reopening of Pendley Theatre (as the Court Theatre) we decided to take the quite bold move to this larger venue, and happily it paid off. We have been able to increase from one show a year to two and, for the last couple of years, three.

The general trend, with only slight setbacks, has been an increase in audience numbers with every show, and our membership has grown too, particularly attracting members from the Aylesbury area.

We have almost exclusively produced comedies, and have perhaps found a little niche in the busy Arts schedule in the area by doing so, though that is not to say that we might not surprise everyone at some future date by performing something from another genre.

So, now in our eighth year, we have become established as one the foremost companies in the area, with a dynamic approach and flexible attitude and are set to continue for many more years, hopefully gaining in experience and popularity all the time.

Recently our three shows have effectively been such that the Spring show is a well known play, our Autumn show of a new or more adventurous kind and the show near Christmas of something of a seasonal nature. This cocktail seems to have worked well, and may well continue.

Arsenic and Old Lace of course, falls into the first of the above categories - and I believe that anyone who remembers the film version - or has seen the play performed before, will be delighted with our rendition of it. I sincerely hope that I am right and that you enjoy this evenings (or afternoons, if you have come to our first ever matinee) performance, and that we will see you at many of our future productions.

Rob Farrow, Chairman

Future Productions

Unfortunately at the time of going to press we have not finalised what our next two productions for the year will be. However we do have the dates - they are :

Autumn : 23rd - 26th September

Winter : 2nd - 5th December



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Prices & Opening Times correct at time of publication. Please check before travelling.

Fraged Knot Theatre Company
presents

Arsenic and Old Lace

By Joseph Kesselring

Previous Productions

- 1991 Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman
- 1992 Marreau and the African Moon
- 1993 Marreau and the Curse of Cardiff
D.F.C. / Moby Dick : Double Bill
- 1994 Marreau and the Bloody Carpet
Blithe Spirit
- 1995 Marreau and the Sword of Carthage
Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber
- 1996 Farndale Avenue Macbeth
Marreau and the Clouds of Death
Party Piece
- 1997 The Importance of Being Earnest
Knightsbridge / Never the Twain / Pastiche : Treble Bill
Farndale Avenue Christmas Carol

Arsenic and Old Lace

The Cast

(in order of appearance)

Abby Brewster	Jenny Booth
Rev. Dr. Harper	Peter Cherry
Teddy Brewster	Rob Farrow
Officer Brophy	Dave Reece
Officer Klein	Mike Sane
Martha Brewster	Sue Tumelty
Elaine Harper	Jessica Harrison
Mortimer Brewster	Nigel Froment
Mr. Gibbs	Roy Sane
Jonathan Brewster	Matt Cox
Dr. Einstein	Gordon Bishop
Officer O'Hara	Matthew Barrett
Lieutenant Rooney	Ian Wells
Mr. Witherspoon	Stephen Gilson

Directed by **Ken Hayes**

Arsenic and Old Lace

The play takes place in the Brewsters' living room. It is 1939 late September.

Part 1

Act I : Late afternoon
Act II : Later that night

** Interval of twenty minutes **

Part 2

Act II : Continues from Part 1
Act III : Scene 1 : Still later that night
 : Scene 2 : Early the next morning

For the production

Director's Assistant / Rehearsal Prompt	Barbara Eggesfield
Technical Direction	Kate Harvey
Set Design	Ron Bull
Set Rigging / Scaffolding	Johann Meadows & crew
Stage Manager	Barbara Eggesfield
Lighting	Jacqui & Johann Meadows
Lighting & Sound Rigging	Norman Ward
Props Mistress	Maria Cook
Props Sourcing	Kate Harvey
	& Barbara Eggesfield
Costumes	Jean Byegate, Jean Bishop
	& Lee Marsh
Make-up & Wigs	Jayne Tardieu & Lyn Devonshire
Front-of-House Manager	Colin Hunt
Publicity	Matthew Barrett & Rob Farrow
Programme	Rob Farrow

Many thanks to all others, unnamed above who have helped in many ways especially with set construction, your efforts do not go unnoticed but lack of space precludes inclusion in the above list.

Thanks as always to **Michael Edmunds** Estate Agents for acting as our external Box Office.

Finally thanks to our sponsors, **Matthew Homes Limited** and **Vogon International**, whose support helps us to continue producing shows.

Arsenic and Old Lace

Why do we do it ? A question I and just about everyone involved in a production often asks themselves. In the nine weeks between auditions and performance, people from all walks of life gather together twice a week - to go through purgatory ! What a great bunch, my undying thanks.

It's all down to dedication, commitment and team spirit. A desire to give you a fine performance and to keep ~~Frayed Knot~~ *Frayed Knot* high on the "much wanted" list. And we don't all do it for the glory, quite apart from the actors and the director (who of course *do* do it for the glory) there are all the unsung heroes without whom it would be impossible to put on any performance. The set has to be designed and built - within budget; lighting has to be planned, installed and operated; costumes to source - hired, scrounged or made; the nightmare of collating period props, right down to authentic stationery and pen - lots of them ... and all scrounged or made; the stage crew ensuring the over-worked actors go on with the right props at the right time; the rehearsal prompt, with head in book for two hours solid during each rehearsal; and the front-of-house crew making you welcome even if you *don't* buy a programme.

As for the actors and director, well, judge for yourself. Eighteen two-hour rehearsals isn't a lot to put on a play like *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Not only do the actors have lines to remember, there's all the moves and changing moods to juggle with too - which are added to at each rehearsal by the director continually changing his mind - just making improvements to the overall picture as it progresses, moving emphasis, introducing light and shade, excitement and tranquility, trying to keep the audience enthralled. At least that's his excuse.

To bring a wonderful play to life and hear your sincere appreciation in laughter and applause - that's why we do it. By why did Dave Reece step in at the very last minute to take over the part of Brophy ? Whatever the reason Dave, you have my sincere thanks !

Ken Hayes, Director

Cast Synopsis (The Motley Crew !)

(alphabetical order)

Matthew Barrett : Matthew is one of our Aylesbury contingent, he debuted with F.K. in "Clouds of Death" and has been in every production since. He probably has the most notable beard in the company.

Gordon Bishop : A stalwart of dramatic productions in Tring, Aylesbury and the surrounding area, this is Gordon's second outing with our society, the first being as the eponymous anti-hero of "Sweeney Todd"

Jenny Booth : A founder member of the society, Jenny has only missed a couple of our productions to date. Her prodigious line-learning ability helps shame the rest of the cast into learning theirs !

The Motley Crew ... continued.

Peter Cherry : Butler, Professor, Duke and Vicar - just a few of the many rôles taken on by Peter for *Frayed Knot* alone - not to mention his dozens of appearances with other societies, many before F.K. was even thought of.

Matt Cox : Since joining the company for "Party Piece" Matt has been in every show, most notably as Algernon in "Earnest". Matt is relishing being evil in this play - which seems to come worryingly easily to him !

Rob Farrow : Author of a number of plays which F.K. have performed and one of the founder members, Rob is currently chairman of the company. It is possibly unfair to suggest that the part of Teddy came naturally to him !

Nigel Froment : Another founder member and regular "appearer" with the company, this is probably his largest ever rôle. It will be a nice change for him not to die in horrible circumstances, his usual fate in the *Marreau* plays.

Stephen Gilson : Sadly this will probably be Stephen's last appearance with F.K., as he is moving to pastures new. His genial presence will be missed by the members of F.K. and of Vale G&S Soc., both of which societies have gained greatly from his active participation over the years.

Jessica Harrison : As Cecily Cardew in "Earnest", Jessica made an impressive debut with the company. Her last appearance with F.K. saw her grappling with the problem of having eaten a friend's pet fish

Dave Reece : Stepping into the breech like the trooper he is, it is excellent to see Dave in another of our productions after a long absence. I wonder if he realises this means he'll have to pay his membership this year !

Mike Sane : From ducking and diving in *Sweeney Todd*, through his two notable performances in our "Farndale" plays, to this cameo appearance, Mike has become one our most regular and reliable actors.

Roy Sane : Mike's dad ! Roy has appeared in one of our earlier shows, namely "Sweeney Todd". He has however been in many other companies' shows, particularly with Vale G&S and Tring Festival Company.

Sue Tumelty : Since coming to this neck-of-the-woods, Sue has thrown herself into *Frayed Knot* with a vengeance, most notably as Lady Bracknell in "Earnest" and as Secretary, then Social Secretary of the company.

Ian Wells : Ian, a regular of Vale G&S, has performed virtually every major function in the production of F.K. shows, directing, acting, stage managing, operating lights and set constructing ... a useful person to know !

Arzenic and Old Lace

Interesting facts

"Fascinating element, Arsenic !" - so said Dr. Protheroe
And indeed it is, though in fact it is not elemental arsenic that is used as a poison, but its trioxide.

Fly paper used to contain Arsenic (trioxide)

Strychnine is obtained from a nut - Nux Vomica ... sounds fairly unpleasant really !

Mole poison used to contain strychnine. In small quantities it can be a tonic !

Cyanide - probably the most famous poison of the lot but which cyanide ? There are dozens of them. The most commonly used as poisons are those of Sodium and Potassium - but the most famous is probably Hydrogen Cyanide - known as Prussic Acid.

The dye Prussian Blue contains Cyanide.

Lily of the Valley flowers give off Hydrogen Cyanide, as do crushed laurel leaves - used to kill butterflies before "pinning"

Hydrogen Sulphide - known as bad egg gas - is actually more poisonous than Hydrogen Cyanide - and causes more deaths per annum.

Intentionally poisoning humans with any of the above three "classic poisons" is exceedingly rare - most poisonings these days are by administering fatal doses of prescribed drugs.

Finally - if you're wondering who Judith Anderson is (mentioned in the play) - she is an Australian actress who was made a Dame by Queen Elizabeth in 1961.

Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Why not join us ?

We're on the look out for

Actors

Actresses

Those technically minded

Back-stage crew

A warm welcome awaits anybody who fancies getting involved

We have lots of interesting ideas for the future, but would like more members

Previous experience in Theatre is not required

Why not give one of us a ring

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Jacque Hildreth (01296) 662732 {Home}

Sue Tumelty (01442) 822212 {Work}

Kate Harvey (01442) 826600 {Home}

Rob & Jackie Farrow (01442) 381739 {Home} (01707) 655550 {Work}

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Frayed Knot Theatre Company

every success with their production of

Arsenic and Old Lace

(Will the old dears be called to account ?)

Vale Gilbert & Sullivan Society

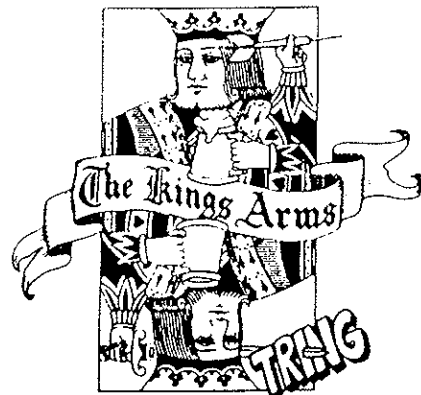
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