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Operatic & Dramatic Association
and Kent Drama Association

Codswallop!

December 2014



The Cranbrook Operatic & Dramatic Society Newsletter

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Codswallop has changed!

If you receive Codswallop via email you can navigate through the newsletter simply by clicking. For instance, clicking 'Chairman's Notes' above will take you directly to that article. Clicking our contact details below will open your default email program or the CODS Facebook page etc., clicking at the top of any page will bring you back here. Please let me know what you think, or if you have any ideas for Codswallop! Lee



[CODS Facebook Group](#)

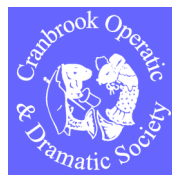
Contact [Rachel, Lee or Jackie](#)

Email: codsfacebook@gmail.com

[CODS Website](#)

Contact Matt Barker

Email: m.g.barker@talk21.com



"May your days be merry and bright, and may all your Christmases be white. MERRY CHRISTMAS!" - Bing Crosby

Notes From Your Chairman

Dear fellow members, season's greetings to you all! I hope you are well and looking forward to Christmas and the New Year.

Our recent production of "High Society" has recently ended, and oh what a swell party it was ! In addition to being a new production for the Society, we watched some excellent acting, heard some wonderful singing, and nearly found ourselves dancing along to the joyous choreography ! Congratulations to Annie and everyone else involved, in particular to Nigel Stimson, who made a tremendous debut by not only designing the stunning sets but also stage managing the production with precision and good humour. A good springboard for Nigel for many other productions with the Society, I hope.

The audience for the Saturday night performance were all treated to a unique finale in the form of Simon's musical proposal to Vicki, which was kept in complete confidence by all the team (Vicki excepted), and was quite simply a complete joy to watch. Within minutes of the great moment, Facebook and You Tube both nearly crashed ! A truly wonderful occasion and I am sure you will all join me in wishing Vicki and Simon every success for their future together.

Not that Vicki has had much time to recover from "High Society" as she has been very busy since bringing our forthcoming Pantomime of "Beauty and the Beast" to fruition. As before, the early singing rehearsals have paid dividends and from the rehearsals I have seen, this looks to be a truly wonderful Pantomime, and I would encourage you all to bring your friends and families and support this production and help us raise lots of money for charity!

Wind In The Willows has now been cast and rehearsals will be starting in the New Year. I hope you will travel with us along the river and support this ambitious production, where we hope to secure a few more nominations at the Kent Drama Festival. Between April and June, our river will flow all the way to the prestigious Smallhythe Place for our summer event, initial details of which you will find inside.

It only remains for me to thank everyone who has helped in any way to our productions this year; well done each and every one of you, without you we would be unable to perform live theatre for our audiences.

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas, and every success in the New Year.

See you all at the Pantomime.

Andrew Tel 01424 718328 E Mail supertr@mp7902.wanadoo.co.uk

Wind in the Willows

Thank you so much to everyone who came and along and auditioned for 'Wind in the Willows'. I am delighted that everyone who auditioned was cast in a role. In some cases two or three! This is going to be a really exciting production with some interesting challenges. Dennis has designed a fabulous revolving set. I am pleased to announce that Wind in the Willows has been entered in the KDA.

It is certainly going to be all hands on deck for this production on and off stage. If anyone would like to be involved back stage or behind the scenes there are many ways you can help. We need help painting the set. (Please see the message from Dennis). Also we will be looking for stage crew to help during the run of the show. I still need a Prompt and chaperones. If anyone would like to be involved please do get in touch. We would love to have you on board! As Ratty says "there is nothing, absolutely nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats".

Rehearsals start Monday 12th January.

Poop Poop!

Cast

1. Mole- Vicky Tinkler
2. Rat- Simon Tomlinson
3. Toad- Robin Harrison
4. Badger- Keith Hedley
5. Otter- Rachel Croft Golding
6. Albert the horse- James Hanaway
7. The Chief Weasel- Steve Saunders
8. Weasel Norman-Matt Barker
9. Weasel Wilfred- Vicky Bray
10. Stoaat Gerald- Matt Barker

Wind in the Willows

- 11.Sergeant Fred- Alan Hodge
- 12.Stoat Stuart- Tilly Dawes
- 13.Ferret Fred/Stoat Cyril- Max Chesters
- 14.The Gaoler's Daughter- Sharon Pickles
- 15.Washer Woman-TBC
- 16.Train Driver- Alan Hodge
17. Ticket Clerk-Vicky Bray
- 18.Barge woman- Lucy Stephenson
- 19.Magistrate- Maurice Wilkins
- 20.Clerk- Vicky Bray
21. Gypsy- Maurice Wilkins
- 22.SalesmanParkinson- Maurice Wilkins
- 23.Rupert- TBC
- 24.Monica- Sharon Pickles
- 25.Rabbit Robert- Lucy Stephenson
- 26.Rabbit Rose- Vicky Bray
- 27.Rabbit Ronald- Ruth Roberts
- 28.Hedgehog Herbert- Glyn Roberts
- 29.Hedgehog Harold &Harry- Henry Fillmore
- 30.Squirrel Shirley- Arwen Withey-Harrison
- 31.Squirrel Raymond- Gabriella de Reynal
- 32.Squirrel Samuel- Sophie Grimes
- 33.Fox-Alan

Wind in the Willows

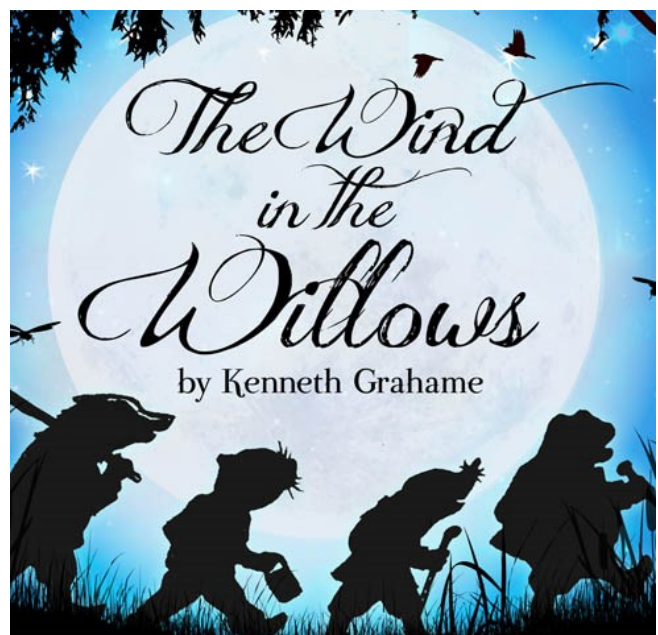
Children

1. Portly- Willow Golding
 2. Hedgehog Tommy- Henry Fillmore
 3. Hedgehog Billy- Ruby Milham
 4. Mouse Mark-Gabriella de Reynal
 5. Mouse Maureen-Arwen Withey-Harrison
 6. Mouse Malcolm- Henry Fillmore
 7. Mouse Martin-Sophie Grimes
 8. Mouse Margaret-Tilly Dawes
 9. Mouse Mary-Willow Golding
 10. Mouse Martha-Ruby Milham
 11. A Rabbit- Poppy Porter
 12. Another Rabbit/The Same Rabbit- Rosie Barker
 13. A Different Rabbit- Freya Hunter
 14. Small woodland creatures-Raife Withey-Harrison/Aurelia Davies
- (All children play mice and at least one other creature eg hedgehog/rabbit/squirrel)

Alison Withey-Harrison (Director)

01580 753811

awh@thompsons.co.uk



Notices

Wind in the Willows

I have been delighted to come out of retirement and design the set for our forthcoming production of Wind in the Willows. All the designs, in full colour, have been completed, including the use of our 22 feet diameter revolving stage which I doubt if only a handful of our members have seen. I agreed to design the set on the understanding that I would need the assistance of as many members as possible, whatever their abilities, to complete the finished product.

I will be at Flishinghurst every Friday and Saturday morning between 9.30am and 1pm starting on Friday 9th January 2015. Please join me, whatever your ability, and I will welcome you with open arms. Arrive when you choose and leave when you choose and I will find something suitable for you to do. Without your help there cannot be a set for toad and his friends to live on! **Dennis**

Appointment of Interim Secretary and Chaperone Officer

It is with great regret that we have to announce that Jackie Barker has had to stand down, due to ongoing health issues. Jackie has carried out her duties as Secretary with considerable diligence since appointment to these posts in March 2013 and we will miss her input at our monthly Committee Meetings. We all wish Jackie a safe recovery.

In the meantime, two Committee members have stepped forward to carry out the roles of the Secretary between now and the Annual General Meeting next March. The principal point of contact will now be Alison Withey-Harrison (telephone 01580 753811 or e-mail awh@thompsons.co.uk).

In view of Alison's commitment to our forthcoming production of Wind In the Willows next April, our previous Secretary, Victoria King, will provide support to Alison should the need arise. Victoria can be contacted via telephone on 07720 843772 or e-mail vixytrixy@gmail.com

We would like to thank these two Committee members for providing such support at short notice. The vacancy of Secretary will form part of the new Committee, to be elected at the next Annual General Meeting. We hope that a suitable volunteer will step forward and be elected to this important and rewarding position within the Society.

Notices

We also need a Chaperone Officer to come forward and ensure our chaperoning duties are carried out in accordance with the law, this will be particularly important for our forthcoming production of Wind In The Willows. If you are able to help, please contact Alison as soon as possible.

Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 17th March 2015

The next Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place on Tuesday 17th March 2015, hopefully at the Lecture Theatre, Cranbrook School. Full details of the meeting, including nomination forms for elections onto the new Committee will follow in the next Codswallop.

A number of vacancies will become available within the new Committee, and it is hoped that several members will step forward to fill these posts and actively contribute to the ongoing success of the Society.

We need more Front of House Managers and Stewards - please can YOU help ?

It is with some concern that we need to alert you to the diminishing number of members willing to be Front of House Managers or Stewards for our performances. These roles are extremely important to the Society, as they are the initial point of contact for the Society for each member of our audience, and in turn ensure that our audiences are made welcome and seated comfortably prior to each performance. Without any Front of House Managers and Stewards, we would not be able to perform !

The reduction in numbers of such Managers and Stewards has now reached a level where several long-standing volunteers are seriously considering stepping down from such roles within the very near future. Should this happen, the number of our performances will reduce, as we will not have enough Managers and Stewards to sustain our average - sized audiences.

The Committee are therefore appealing to all members to seriously consider helping with Front of House activities, when such members are not involved either performing or helping backstage on any of its productions. Anyone helping with Front of House duties will be entitled to watch the performance free of charge, and be entitled to a complimentary drink of their choice.

Anyone interested in helping with this essential activity should contact Marian in the first instance, telephone 01580 715580. We look forward to hearing from you.

Beauty and the Beast

The scenery for the Pantomime is looking wonderful and nearing completion, now we need to get it to Queens Hall and built in time for the Dress Rehearsals.

The trailers for the Get In for the Panto scenery and props will be arriving at Flishinghurst from 5pm onwards on Thursday 18th December. If you are able to assist, please can you gather at Flishinghurst from 430pm onwards, we will need several people up there and at Queens Hall to load scenery and props onto the trailers and then off the trailers into Queens Hall, and anticipate this will take 1-2 trips.

We shall be building the set in Queens Hall on Friday 19th and Saturday 20th December, if you can spare any time on any or both of these two days, we shall be pleased to see you. We anticipate starting our set building sessions circa. 930am, everyone is welcome.

We hope to see YOU at either of these two events, and at the Pantomime itself !

If you need any further information, please contact Andrew on 07736 406504.



Productions for 2016 and 2017

The Executive Committee have decided to plan our production programme for 2016 and 2017. We are therefore looking for the following:-

Christmas production 2015

Spring Play 2016

Summer Event 2016

Autumn Musical 2016

Christmas production 2016

Spring Play 2017

Summer Event 2017

Autumn Musical 2017

Christmas production 2017

With regard to the Christmas productions, these are dependent upon enough off-stage resources being found, and it may transpire that some or all of these productions are substituted for an alternative event to take place during the following February half-term week.

Anyone who is interested in directing any productions for any of the above slots should register their interest with Angela Woodcock, our Show Selection Chairman, within the near future.

The Show Selection Sub - Committee are hosting an open meeting at the George Hotel, Cranbrook, on 14th January at 730pm. Anyone who wishes to discuss any proposals or initial ideas with the Committee should make their way to the meeting, where a warm welcome and (possibly) a free drink will be made !

We hope to announce our programme for 2016 and 2017 in Spring 2015

Memories of Geoffrey Grinstead

On moving from Maidenhead in Berkshire in 1984 I was keen to continue my involvement in local theatre so joined CODS for their production of South Pacific, in which Geoffrey was playing the part of Stewpot. As rehearsals progressed his enthusiasm and comedic talent shone through and this was the start of a friendship that lasted for 30 years. As his nephew said at his funeral, CODS was his life. The society meant a great deal to him and he served on the committee helping to build up the finances, directing many successful plays and musicals, as well as working behind the scenes. Ask Geoffrey to take on the advertising for a production and you knew you were in safe hands. After a persuasive chat very few people would say 'no' to any fresh and innovative ideas he had to get good audiences.

He was always happy to turn out on those horrible cold or wet nights for rehearsal and so encouraging to his actors. Probably he was at his best when directing comedies. For me Noises Off showed off his talent brilliantly. His eye for casting this particular production could not have been bettered and friends who joined us as audience members on the final Saturday often say it was the best amateur comedy production they have seen.

Geoffrey had a deep belief in the importance of the family so when, in 1987, the Vicar of St Dunstons asked him if he could put on some entertainment for Christmas, Geoffrey agreed to produce a pantomime with all the proceedings going to the Church Fund. The Vicar was delighted and so enthused by the idea that he was persuaded by Geoffrey to take part in it, which he duly did, as the Baron Hardup!

The show, which was supposed to be a one-off, was such a success raising £3000, that the people of Cranbrook, just like Oliver Twist, asked for more. So, in 1988, Geoffrey persuaded a group of people to form a

Memories of Geoffrey Grinstead



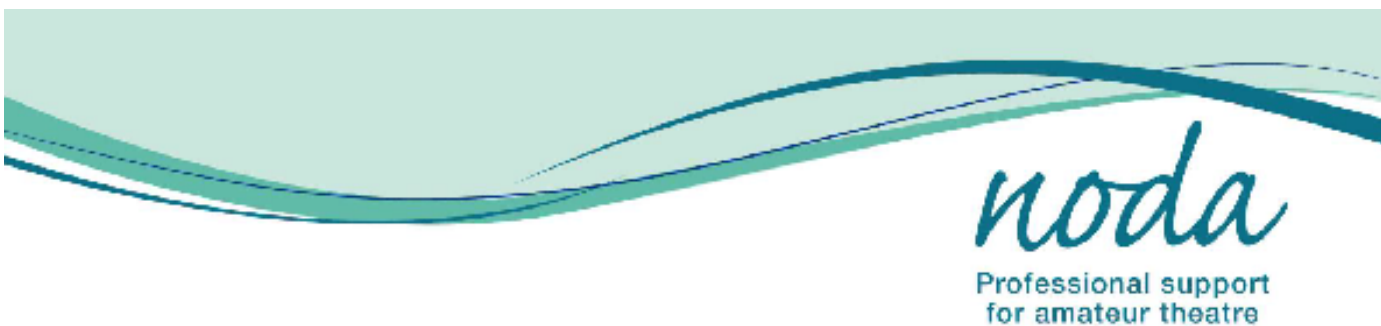
committee and The Cranbrook Showtimers, a group dedicated to putting on traditional family pantomime every Christmas, was born. What Geoffrey started went on for 23 years until 2010 when The Showtimers performed their last production, Jack and The Beanstalk. His desire was that any money raised should go to local charities and thanks to his enormous enthusiasm and determination The Showtimers raised over £50,000 during its existence.

Although Geoffrey and Barbara moved from Cranbrook to Broadoak some years ago, and latterly he was unable to appreciate the foundation he had built, his legacy lives on and I know he would be so pleased to know that, in 2011, CODS took over and continue Geoffrey's wish that there should be family entertainment in the Queen's Hall at Christmas time. Without him many local charities would have been a lot worse off and many young and aspiring performers would have been robbed of the benefit of his kindness, inspiration and advice. I know Mike and I are richer for the experience of having known and working with him.

There are some people you meet in life that you never forget - for us Geoffrey is one of those.

Jenny Caridia

High Society



Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society
Cole Porter's High Society
Queen's Hall Theatre, Cranbrook
Friday 31st October 2014
Director: Annie Chesters
MD: Sue Wightman
Choreographer: Lisa Ferris

High Society is wonderful 50's musical comedy, with the superb music of Cole Porter based on the Philadelphia Story. It's the tale of socialite Tracy Samantha Lord, who is preparing for her lavish summer wedding to George Kitteridge – really rather a bore, when her ex millionaire husband C K Dexter Haven turns up and announces that unless she agrees for the wedding to be reported by hacks Mike and Liz, revelations about her Father Seth Lord and a liaison with an exotic dancer will be revealed in a society magazine. Mayhem ensues with bizarre behaviour, with relatives being introduced as others appearing to be a totally dysfunctional family. Dexter reminisces their honeymoon on the yacht the True Love. M & D patch up with the interference of little sister Dinah, George leaves in disgust. Liz and Mike become an item finding true happiness, and Dexter and Tracy find true love.

FRONT OF HOUSE: A busy foyer with tickets waiting for collection, sashed programme and raffle tickets sellers, with refreshments available and the opportunity of chatting to old friends. Regretfully, no winning numbers today. An excellent display of production photographs especially the Spy magazine front covers and the old film edges which were beautifully produced.

PROGRAMME: An A5, very comprehensive sparkling booklet from **Lee Hatcher**, with a good colour cover containing interesting information, Director's Notes, plenty of sponsorship and good advertising. The NODA crest and wording appeared and I was pleased to see future productions projects as well as past productions listed.

MUSIC: A good ten piece orchestra in the pit, with multi talented **Sue Wightman** returning from Oxfordshire to conduct the lively complex score, with **Ruth Roberts** rehearsal pianist as well as juggling cello and keyboard. I struggled to hear the opening chorus of stenographers in the Spy Magazine Office and at times the musical numbers were too loud. Some very well rehearsed numbers with some quality harmony, and of course Cole Porter's melodies are so very well known and memorable.

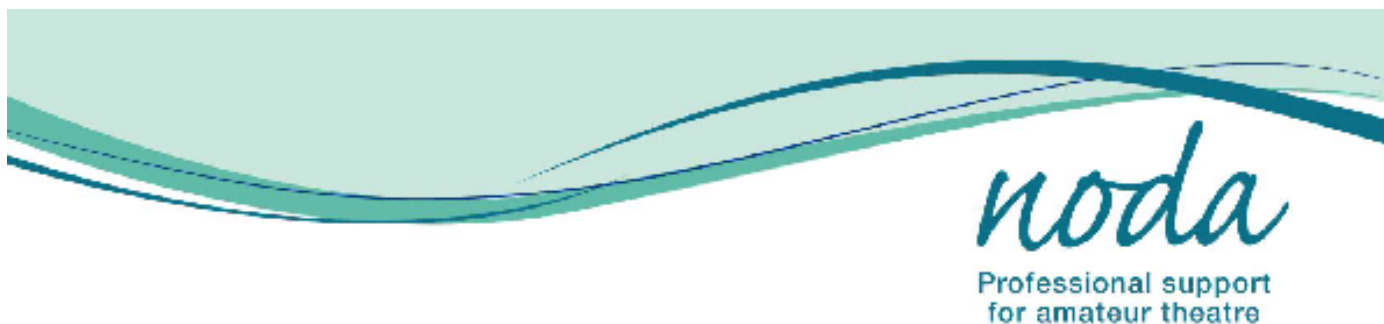
SCENERY: **Nigel Stimson** designed and together with members built a first class set and he also acted as SM. Shifting of pieces was well timed, with the minimum of interruption and noise. The stage was used to advantage with the busy Spy Mag Office well furnished with attention to detail on one side, Dexter's Dressing Room on the other both remaining in position. There was the Lord's Drawing Room or the South Parlour, a terrace with arbour

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Patron: The Lord Lloyd Webber

High Society



loaned from Bumbles, the swimming pool with spring board into the Orchestra Pit worked well with good changing room, the ballroom with it's pillars and more pillars and then Joey's Diner. Good selection of props throughout including numerous wedding gifts in the drawing room.

COSTUMES: The three wardrobe ladies did a great job producing such excellent outfits - elegant and in keeping throughout, with matching shoes and accessories, hair styling and make-up well finished. I particularly liked the choice of frocks for Tracy who looked stunning in her blue/lime frock, pale yellow evening gown and swimsuit.

SOUND/LIGHTING: I wasn't completely happy with the shrillness of sound I experienced throughout the performance. With a fairly large orchestra as well - possibly the performers needed personal mikes but I feel the audience might have been more comfortable with a more natural projection. David Beeken's lighting plot was good throughout changing from interiors and exteriors, from day into night.

THE PRODUCTION: Annie Chesters had a huge challenge with this musical and a committed cast and production team worked exceedingly hard. As the song said it was delightful - Not a huge cast, but all so very versatile, with Choreographer Lisa putting them through there paces resulted in some slick movement particularly effective during full lively ensemble numbers and forming really interesting shapes. One huge part Tracy Lord was portrayed so very well by Victoria Tinkler and her champagne did wonders for her! Simon Tomlinson was a relaxed Dexter enjoying his rendition of 'I Love You Samatha, with perfect pairing from Jo Levett as Liz and Jez Druce, Mike (the hacks) making up a good quartet in 'Well Did You Ever' and 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire'. Robin Harrison as Uncle Willie gave a polished performance with a first class 'Hey Good Looking'. Natasha Pope danced delightfully through her Friday appearance as Dinah throwing in some lovely comedy moments 'Giving Him the Ooh-a-la' with a lovely Mother portrayed by Val King and Geoff King boulder husband Seth. Supporting characters were well cast, worked hard and provided a good feel entertainment, including Joey's Girls. Nice production idea sailing the 'True Love' into the hands of the MD imagining the pit to be the pool.

Thank you CODS for your kind invitation. A précis will appear on the NODA website shortly.

Anne Lawson
Regional Representative
NODA South East District 3

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

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Summer Event 2015 at Smallhythe Place

As announced during the presentations following "High Society", we will be performing next year at the prestigious Smallhythe Place at the end of June !

Our event will comprise two one-act plays, with several short musical events in-between. The choice of the two one act plays are as follows:

"The Dumb Waiter" - a drama, where two hit men wait anxiously in a basement for their instructions for their dastardly deeds, though their target is not who they initially suspect it to be.....

"An Actor's Nightmare" - a comedy, in which a stranger wanders by accident onto stage, to find himself amongst four other renowned actors and having to portray many differing parts within many different styles of theatre. His final performance stands head above his many adventures en route.

James Hanaway will be producing this event, and anyone who is interested in directing any part of this event or assisting in any way should contact James direct. Further details of this exciting event will be in the February Codswallop, and Auditions will be taking place in mid-late March, with a view to rehearsals starting as soon as Wind In The Willows has finished.

We hope you will be able to assist with this exciting production!

Congratulations Vicki and Simon!

The image is a wedding-themed magazine cover. At the top left, the text 'NEW REVIEW' is in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'combined with' in a smaller, italicized font below it. To the right, the word 'spy' is written in a large, elegant, cursive script. The central image shows a smiling groom in a grey suit and top hat walking arm-in-arm with a smiling bride in a white wedding dress, holding a bouquet of pink and white roses. The background is a soft pink gradient. On the left side, there is a red circular badge with the word 'Priceless' in white. Below it, the text 'SPECIAL 'ADDITION' to show' is written. Further down, the headline 'BOYFRIEND GRASPS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO POP THE QUESTION' is displayed in a white, serif font. On the right side, there are three small red hearts with the words 'love', 'love', and 'LOVE !' inside them. At the bottom right, a large red heart contains the text 'Knowing families gather in audience in anticipation of the final 'song'...'. In the bottom left corner, the text 'Secret 'proposal' rehearsal with orchestra executed with panache and flair' is written. At the very bottom, a red banner contains the quote: 'Friends explained, "We've never had to keep a secret for so long! None of us were sure whether we could keep a dry eye as Simon sang his proclamation!"'

The Back Page

Any questions about what you have read? Please contact your
Codswallop Editor Lee Hatcher: tel: 07539 460571
or email: leedavehatcher@gmail.com

If you have any news, views, or ideas as to what YOU want to see in
Codswallop, let me know!

Beauty and the Beast

Buy your tickets now!

From Lambert & Foster on Cranbrook High Street

Or from

<http://cods.ticketsource.co.uk/>

Wind in the Willows - Props

If anyone has Staffordshire flat back type figures, which would pass as Queen Victoria and Garibaldi, please

contact Annie on annie.chesters33@gmail.com or 01580 388716

The Executive Editor Ponders....

Another Christmas lad, another year of mince pies, chocolates, and those lovely, lovely sausages wrapped in bacon! What's that? Yes boy, another year of you working all over Christmas. Well, who else is going to supply the pigs in blankets!

I hear the pantomime this time is Beauty and the Beast? I could have made a good beast of course, except for the dancing.... And the being tall..... But I can do being hairy and having pointy teeth..... And scratching.

You don't look impressed, don't like panto then? Are you mad? It's what theatre at Christmas time is all about! The comedy and the love story. The audience participation. The custard pies and the sweets!

Merry Christmas lad, Merry Christmas to all of you.

CHARLIE KNIGHT (SIR) B.A. DO.G. AR.F. G.RR.

