

PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCER
STAGE MANAGER
PROMPT
SOUND & LIGHTING

LEN JACKSON
KATE THORNBURROW
VAL EARLAM
JEREMY ROWE &
ROBERT THORNBURROW
PETER SALTER & CO.

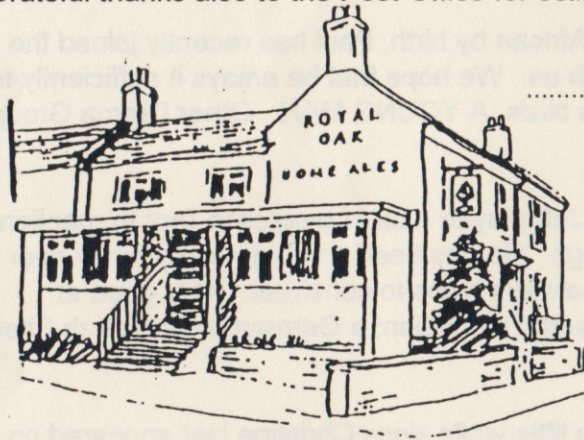
FRONT OF HOUSE

SET DESIGNED BY GEOFF MORGAN
BUILT AND DRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

We always welcome new members. If you are interested in becoming involved, in any capacity, please contact Christine Jackson (Secretary)
- 0115 9664088

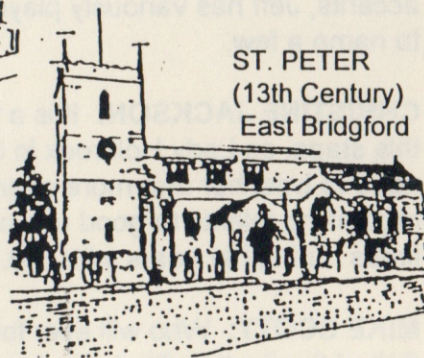
SPECIAL THANKS to friends of the Group who assisted with the stage and set building.

Grateful thanks also to the Post Office for selling tickets.



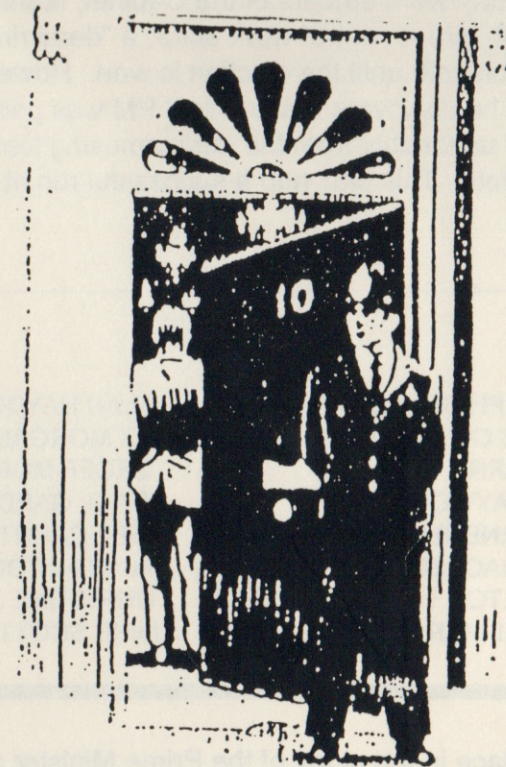
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**EAST BRIDGFORD DRAMA GROUP
PRESENTS**



**DEAD
RINGER**

NOVEMBER 1995

DEAD RINGER
by Charles Ross

When the Prime Minister drops dead from an apparent heart attack on the eve of a General Election, two members of the Cabinet, fearing defeat without the charisma of the PM, hire an out-of-work actor, a "dead ringer" for the deceased, to take his role until the election is won. However, the actor grows to like his role until he discovers that the real PM was poisoned. Thereafter this thriller plunges us forcibly from the early amusing fantasy world into murder and dark plots. This play had a successful run at the Duke of York's Theatre, London.

THE CAST

RANDOLPH BOLTON	ALAN HAYDOCK
FRANCIS COWDRAY	LIZ MORGAN
DICK MARR	GEOFF MORGAN
NIGEL HAYWOOD	PAUL GARDENER
RAY TURNBULL	JEFF CAUNT
GERRY JACKSON	ALAN HAYDOCK
EVA BOLTON	CHRISTINE JACKSON
COLONEL HARDACRE	MIKE SCOTT

The action takes place in the study of the Prime Minister at Number 10 Downing Street, Westminster. The time is in the recent past.

ACT I	SCENE 1	Late at night
	SCENE 2	Three days later. Late afternoon
ACT II	SCENE 1	Immediately following
	SCENE 2	Three weeks later

DIRECTED BY JEAN STARBUCK

THE CAST

ALAN HAYDOCK: Our regular audiences need no introduction to Alan. This is his 16th year as a member of the drama group, playing umpteen roles in that time. The vicar of East Bridgford, Alan was definitely "typecast" in his last part, playing Canon Chasuble in *The Importance of Being Earnest!*

GEOFF MORGAN: At our last A.G.M. Geoff was voted in as Chairman. A member for only a few years, Geoff quickly made himself almost indispensable through his many talents; not only as actor but as a stage designer, stage construction organiser and director. Recently, he directed *Salt of the Earth* and performed in *the Curious Savage*.

LIZ MORGAN: Only three years ago Liz was on stage for the first time, playing the maid, Cecile in *the Dame of Sark*. She obviously found her forte, as she is now one of the leading actresses with E.B.D.G.. Her last role was as Annie in *Salt of the Earth*.

PAUL GARDENER: A South African by birth, Paul has recently joined the Group. This is his first part with us. We hope that he enjoys it sufficiently to stay, as he is one of those rare birds, *A YOUNG MAN*. Other Drama Groups eat your heart out!!

JEFF CAUNT: In his last role Jeff played a bit of a nutcase (not to mention the violin!) in *the Curious Savage*. He has been on stage many times over the last few years, a stage that he always helps to construct. Very good at accents, Jeff has variously played a Canadian, a German and an Arab Sheik, to name a few.

CHRISTINE JACKSON: It is a little while since Christine last appeared on this stage, as Lady Holbrook in *Shut Your Eyes and Think of England*. We need to twist her arm more often. Christine puts her not inconsiderable organising talents to good use as our Secretary a "role" she has fulfilled many times during her years with E.B.D.G..

MIKE SCOTT: Who will ever forget Mike's portrayal as the madcap Tosh in *Salt of the Earth*? That was his first part with us. This current role couldn't be more different. If nothing else, this shows his versatility. He is also an excellent artist.

NANDA ADJUDICATOR'S REPORT ON 'DEAD RINGER' by Charles Ross

Adjudicator - John Shooter Performance Tuesday 14 November 1995

First of all the play, try as I might I can find no record of the author having published any plays other than this one, if this is the case then it is a great pity, as the author knows a great deal about realistic dialogue and play construction. It is an unusual choice for an amateur company, unusual in that it needs 5 men & 2 women and most amateur companies prefer it the other way round. So, what we are faced with is a well written, well constructed play, offering interesting roles for the members of the company, roles which not only offer a challenge for the players, but easily understood roles which an audience can not only recognise, but with whom they can find an affinity. So, a well constructed play with highly varied roles, what about the staging.

A very, very effective set, representing the Prime Minister's study at 10 Downing Street. Painted in Wedgwood green & white, with real architraves, real dados & real doors all combined to provide a visually interesting stage picture. Set dressings and props had obviously been very carefully chosen not only with an eye to their visual appeal, but admirably reflecting the tastes of the people who use the room. A solid workable set on a pocket handkerchief sized stage, with a magnificent fireplace providing a strong focal point. One major criticism of the set is that the colour texture and style of the window curtains was completely at variance with and in fact alien to the high standard of the rest of the set. They really need to be some kind of velvet or heavy brocade, preferably green.

Costumes, excellent and worn with flare and style.

Lighting, very simple but highly effective.

Sound, effectively controlled, but I would suggest that unless you are aiming for a specific effect, it's best to avoid curtain music which is familiar. If an audience can think, now where have I heard that music before, then the very effect that you are trying to create ie mood, becomes negated.

Production, bags of drive and attack to keep the play constantly on the boil. The vocal qualities of the main characters blended in very well together with each player picking up cues slickly and sending the dialogue bouncing backwards and forwards like a ping-pong ball.

The size of the acting area forced some players, particularly Dick Marr into using the un-natural and un-convincing stage move from down-left to down-right and vice-versa. This problem can be overcome by devising business for players to move up-stage and round the desk and then end up either down-right or down-left. Again because of the stage restriction there is a repeated move from between the two chairs left of the fireplace to down-left and back again, giving the impression that it is a producer's move rather than a move motivated by emotion or thought process. If there is no reason for a move then either cut it or devise a reason for doing it. Any fussy, unmotivated movement should be cut to a minimum. The row in the second scene of the first act involving Dick Marr, Ray Turnbull and Frances needs a little bit of discipline both vocally and movement wise to make it more realistic rather than, as was noticeable in the performance, becoming a slanging match with each player trying to out-do the other. The three players fell into the common trap of each picking up the other's tone, speed of delivery and amount of volume, so that the impact became less effective than I'm certain the director intended. With the exception of the few points mentioned earlier

the moves were generally well thought out to cope with the tiny acting area. One move which should be cut is allowing Dick Marr to take off his glasses and put them on the mantelpiece in the final scene, it tells the audience in letters of fire that he is shortly going to fall. Generally though, a well thought out, well rehearsed example of production technique.

On now to acting, first of all Dick Marr, the Home Secretary, a player with an acute awareness of the vital importance of pace. Vocally very powerful, with obvious experience in his performance but on occasions he is allowed to embroider what is already quite skillful embroidery, he never stops acting and this is a criticism, because on occasions when he isn't the dominant character, your eyes stray to him because of his over reaction to other players speeches. These should be toned down to make the characterization that much more effective. The greatest asset any actor can use in performance is economy and this is needed in this part to minimise the extravagant gestures and over reaction to other characters' speeches. It's an extremely good performance, but, it's in the wrong style for this play.

Frances Cowdray. Vocally very powerful and a player of style and attack. She employs very fluid movements and her hand gestures are highly effective.

Nigel Haywood, the Secretary, his interpretation of the character as elegant and sophisticated, worked extremely well with the almost non overt suggestion of camp being very effective. He has a flare for timing a line to achieve the maximum impact and his youth acts in sharp contrast to the more mature characters of the rest of the cast.

Ray Turnbull. A thoroughly effective character, conceived with realism and played with style. Vocally very powerful, it's a highly effective performance which carries almost a suggestion of the late George Brown in it.

And Randolph Bolton and Gerry Jackson an actor of style, of attack, whose performance acts as a kind of sounding board for the others to bounce their performances off. Vocally highly flexible, he was in complete control and always remained totally in character whether as the Prime Minister or as the out of work actor. This is such an effective performance that within a very short time we forgot that we were watching an actor impersonating an actor who in turn was impersonating the Prime Minister.

Eva Bolton, the Prime Minister's wife. A performance of style, of simplicity by a player who had the ability to melt into the background when required.

Colonel Hardacre. An extremely effective performance which relied for it's impact on generally being quietly spoken, this allowed the authority to come through. It was the kind of interpretation which forces the audience to come to the character rather than bolting between the eye with it. A realistic and totally convincing characterisation.

On generally summing up, the task of the first team in any Drama Festival is a difficult one, because they set the standard against which all the others have to be measured and a very commendable standard it is too. I mentioned earlier how well constructed the play is and when you choose a well constructed play as this you are half way there. The critical factor and the one with which the adjudicator is primarily concerned is the other half, not how well the play is constructed, but how well it has weathered the journey from the barrenness of the printed page to the immediacy of a live performance. Well, in the case of East Bridgford, it's weathered the journey with remarkable ease. This company have taken this highly unusual and intriguing play and brought it to life to start the festival off on a highly commendable standard.

Many thanks for inviting me to see the play and for a very enjoyable evening in the theatre.