

*East
Bridgford
Drama Group*

Present

**HABEAS
CORPUS**

A Play By

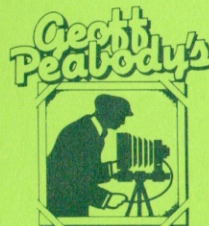
ALAN BENNETT

CAST

Arthur Wicksteed	Mike Geisow
Muriel Wicksteed	Jean Starbuck
Dennis Wicksteed	Mark Pilgrim
Constance Wicksteed	Kate Thornburrow
Mrs Swabb	Jean Preston
Canon Throbbing	Malcolm Cope
Lady Rumpers	Diane Wilkinson
Felicity Rumpers	Julie Tomlinson
Mr Shanks	Steve Bentley
Sir Percy Shorter	Kerry Dracott
Mr Purdue	Peter Salter

The action takes place in and around the Wicksteeds' house in Hove.

The play is divided into two acts, the action being continuous.



**Audio
Visual
Services**

Commercial and Advertising Photographers

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Thornfield Estate, Hooton Street, Off Carlton Road
Nottingham NG5 2NJ

FEB 1988

PRODUCTION TEAM

Producer	Geoff Peabody
Assistant to Producer	Christine Jackson
Stage Manager	Michael Clarke
Props	Vicki Rees
Sound	Mark Wilkinson Kim Levis
Lights	Dick Wood
Follow Spot	Kim Levis
Costumes	Jane Gibson
Set Building Director	Bob Flower
Prompt	Amanda Hill
Front of House	Alan Haydock John Preston Tony Beresford
Programmes	Alison Challand

Anyone wishing to join the Group in any capacity would be welcome and could contact the Secretary by telephone on Nottingham 664088.



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Telephone: Nottingham 0602 584942

SPECIAL THANKS



The Royal Oak

thanks to the Post Office for selling the tickets

Lodders General Store



Rehearsal Room
courtesy of the Anchor, Gunthorpe

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

White Liars
Heaven on Earth
Plaza Suite
The Taxpayers Waltz
Flowering Cherry
Relatively Speaking
Blithe Spirit
Gaslight
Chester Miracle Play
See How They Run
A Resounding Tinkle
Black Comedy
Table Manners
I'll Get My Man
Bell, Book & Candle
The Unexpected Guest
The Happy Apple
Outside Edge
A Letter From The General
Move Over Mrs Markham
Semi-Detached
When We Are Married
Just Between Ourselves
Who Killed Santa Claus
She's Done It Again
Breath of Spring
Hobsons Choice
Friends and Neighbours
Under Milkwood
How The Other Half Loves
and Several Poetry Evenings

The Rogue's Gallery (*in order of appearance*)

Mike Geisow: From third shepherd in nativity in 1953 to some rather 'serious' acting in the 60's, Mike has been 'resting' since until appearing as Captain Cat in Under Milkwood for EBDG in 1987.

Jean Starbuck: Joined Bingham Operatic in 1966 – tried to live it down ever since. Won LAMDA Gold Medals for acting and speech in 1978/9 but still can't say her R's. Joined EBDG in 1981 and after nine roles is fed up with playing older women. Next year is to audition for the part of Juliet.

Mark Pilgrim: 'O' level drama was followed by two years at Clarendon College. Mark performed 'on the fringe' of the Edinburgh Festival. A natural progression to this was to join EBDG where his first performance was in Under Milkwood.

Kate Thornburrow: Having survived roles in productions as versatile as Twelfth Night and pantomime, Kate has appeared mainly backstage until appearing for EBDG as a Russian in Friends and Neighbours. Produced Under Milkwood.

Jean Preston: A founder member of the group, Jean has appeared in many plays and produced on many occasions. Has moved from the village but is staying in the group until being offered a juvenile romantic lead.

Malcolm Cope: A busy acting career between 1967 and 1971 was followed by a rather 'bleak' period until being rediscovered by EBDG in 1986 since when Malcolm has appeared in three previous productions.

Diane Wilkinson: By popular demand (and in sheer desperation) dragged from a quarter of a century of retirement after performing in several plays, some for the West Bridgford Drama Society.

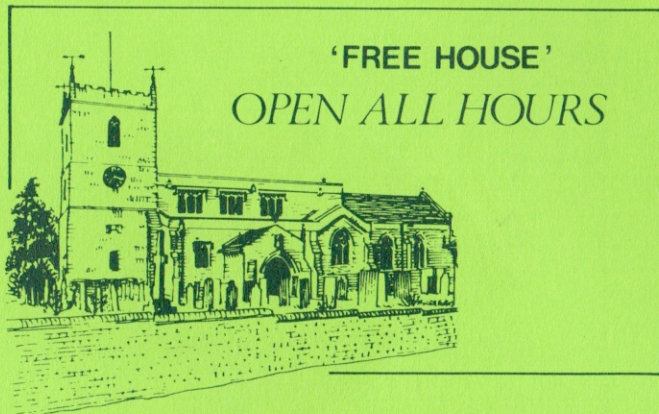
Julie Tomlinson: Our 'professional' actress, Julie attended Clarendon College and gained a Diploma in acting at Mountfield Theatre School, London. Narrowly beat Jean Preston for this juvenile romantic part.

Steve Bentley: Steve first appeared in our Course Acting festival, and last year appeared as Sebastian in Friends and Neighbours for which he won the NANDA award for best actor. Steve's dedication is such that he has been travelling for rehearsals from RAF Brampton where he is now based.

Kerry Dracott: No known acting experience prior to joining EBDG eight years ago. Has progressed from 'nearly' juvenile roles to the present part which is closer to his real age.

Peter Salter: An appearance as a 'woodland creature' in 1953 was quickly followed by pantomime appearances as Dopey and an Ugly Sister in 1985-6. Joined EBDG in 1986 looking for more stimulating roles, and has previously appeared in Under Milkwood.

Geoff Peabody: From a walk-on part as a policeman Geoff's acting career 'peaked' when he played a German in Black Comedy. His skills as a producer led to his winning last years NANDA award for best producer so, hopefully, he won't go back to acting.



REDMOND

TYPESETTING FINISHEDARTWORK

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NOTTINGHAM NG1 5JD TELEPHONE 0602 410648

Tony Beresford

Painter & Decorator
The White House Main Street East Bridgford
Tel East Bridgford 20855



ANDY BONE

FIVE STAR
HONDA
MAIN
DEALER

5, HUNTINGDON ST.
NOTTINGHAM

501727 & 587878

Adjudication - Robert Wildgust

To be successful you need a good play performed by a talented and committed company. East Bridgford was fortunate in that they had both. The play is outstanding and also a play of our times. It is brilliantly written and conceived. It relates uproariously to the audience, it provides a vehicle for presenting the bizarre, the witty, the affectionate, the sad. It also uses as its expression drama, music, poetry deliciously interwoven. After early introductions we go into an overdrive of mayhem.

PRODUCTION

Such is the scoring of this play that the Producer has ample scope for invention. This could prove a triumph or disaster. The fact that GEOFF PEABODY assembled such a talented group and mapped them so engagingly meant that he had a winner on his hands.

To begin with the positive. All his interpretations were suitably bizarre, embellished with suggestive gesture and costumes. Particularly successful was the unrobing of the packaged breasts, Felicity's chastity chain and inspired moments like the war scene and the wedding finale. The blocking was inventive but greater use of upstage and downstage left and right was required. The problem appears to be lighting but frankly having solved major logistical problems in staging presentations at this venue it is hard to accept that this problem could not be solved (Telephone Fred Hayward N.C.C. Leisure Services Dept. Lighting Division for advice or hire of lights).

As it was, blocking when all the cast were assembled was cumbersome with ragged groups or straight lines. The scene showed little invention and the impulsive slap scenes did not work. Some of the embraces lacked conviction and the attack and timing of entrances and exits needed more attention, particularly during the earlier part of the play. Also the marriage between the poetry, musical and drama lacked sparkle and the pace of the difficult second act sometimes faltered.

Admiration is expressed at the conviction of the production. One quarrelled with certain tactics but this was a Director's statement and he was right to stay loyal to his aims. The result was a thoroughly enjoyable and engaging production.

ACTING

This was solid and in some cases outstanding. There was teamwork and strength in depth so often a weakness with amateur companies. Brief notes are given on individual performances.

ARTHUR WICKSTEED - MIKE GEISOW

Attractive speaking voice, rich tone and an awareness of stage presence. A little more pace was needed especially in picking up cues and overall a little more attack. Also there was a need for greater variety of inflection. Watch overuse of the rising inflection and the drop or whine of line ends. A little more vitality, colour and pace would have enhanced a commendable performance.

MURIEL WIKSTEED - JEAN STARBUCK

Colourful flamboyant performance with a fine sense of comedy. In many ways she drives the show. Using considerable talents of voice, gesture and movement she became a rich comedienne, the confessed failing for R's this time added to her eccentricity. A truly "well endowed" performance.

DENNIS WICKSTEED - MARK PILGRIM

An outstanding performance with inspired inflection and facial play, He was an instant success with make up and costume adding to the bizarre. There were moments when one feared it would go "over the top" but thankfully Mark resisted this and lived within the character and not out of it cheaply playing for laughs.

CONSTANCE WICKSTEED - KATE THORNBURROW

Another polished performance. Again voice, costume, gesture, movement all conveyed a comic despair that had us roaring with laughter. Her appearances as spinster, lover bride all had a refreshing quality. A well placed and contrasted performance.

MRS SWABB - JEAN PRESTON

Handled the director's declared accent well. Always engaging and interesting. Slightly more attack and coarseness would have helped. She was at her best when angry whilst the narrative passages required more energy and attack.

CANON THROBBING - MALCOLM COPE

This was a performance which grew. At first it was flat and somewhat constrained. There needed to be greater variety and attack. Literally his performance gathered strength until in the later scenes he was driving the laughter. This is a lesson here, performances like plays need good beginnings and ends.

LADY RUMPERS - DIANE WILKINSON

Another performance that took a while to sustain but once established it blossomed. The war remembrance was very good but marginally there needed a little more attack, variety, inuendo.

MR SHANKS - STEVE BENTLEY

By any standards this was a truly outstanding performance. His scenes were electric garnished with an accent that had me and the audience limping with laughter. It was a brilliant interpretation and my only advice is to explore every opportunity to advance your theatrical talent be it amateur or professional.

SIR PERCY SHORTER - KERRY DRACOTT

Fine natural talent that embraced this part with conviction. He drove the action well and kept it always on the move. Watch line endings and the dragging of words, "let me offer you an apolgeee". Such scoring works well but don't overuse or you lose impact. Well rendered performance overall.

MR PURDUE - PETER SALTER

"You did look ill". You dragged yourself on pathetically and made the most of a small but compelling part. Again costume, gesture and facial play added the right tragic dimension. Hope you feel better now.

PRESENTATION

This was highly effective. The piece does not make compelling demands of staging but what was required was handled with care and attention. Lighting was particularly effective with good use of single spots and special cover like the war scene.

The costumes were particularly successful. Again not demanding but care and attention was paid to enhancing the rich characterisations. The colours and adornments such as sweaters, hats, chains, underpants etc. also showed a style that was in keeping with the play.

Programme was attractive and the rouge's gallery enabled audience to get to know the players and established an early rapport.

Prompt was brilliant I never heard her.

Front of House was especially welcoming and their duties at the interval greatly appreciated.

FELICITY RUMPERS - JULIE TOMLINSON

Difficult bitty part, a laughter foil for the other characters. In order to get in on the action there was a need for much more attack rather than the subdued inflection. Long periods were spent watching the action and antics of the others and this part could have been enlivened by appropriate facial play and reactions. Bitty parts often require more work than leads to get the most out of them.

In summary, an excellent production with some fine performances. Keep playing to your strengths and keep your audience and adjudicators happy.

Best Wishes

Bob Wildgust.

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MARIEL WINSTON - JANE STANBURY

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LEISURE LINE-UP**Best
play
of the
year**

EAST Bridgford Drama Group has won the Advertiser's 1987 Play of the Year award presented by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Drama Association.

The award was announced at the association's 40th anniversary dinner and dance last week.

The drama group won with its November production of Alan Bennett's *Habeas Corpus*, which nearly didn't reach the stage at all.

Secretary Mrs Christine Jackson said the group had to apply for special permission from the play's publishers to go ahead because it was due to start a national tour from Nottingham Playhouse two weeks later.

"At first they refused to grant it, but we persisted and eventually they gave in," she said.

Steve Bentley was named best actor for the second year running for his portrayal of Mr Shanks in *Habeas Corpus*, and best newcomer award went to Mark Pilgrim who played Dennis Wicksteed, his first major part with the East Bridgford group.

The play was produced by Geoff Peabody.

**Sexy
comedy**

East Bridgford Drama Group's presentation of Alan Bennett's comedy of mistaken identities and sexual encounters, *Habeas Corpus*, opens in the village hall on Tuesday for a five-night run, two weeks before a national tour opens at Nottingham Playhouse.

Pictured in a scene from the East Bridgford presentation are, left to right, standing, Diana Wilkinson as Lady Delia Rumpers, Julie Tomlinson (Felicity Rumpers) and Jean Preston (Mrs Swabby) seated, Malcolm Coppen (Canon Throbbing), Mark Pilgrim (Dennis Wicksteed) and Kate Thornburrow (Connie Wicksteed).

The show is produced by Geoff Peabody, assisted by Christine Jackson.

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WE'RE NO. 1**