

Charlton Kings Community Players
present



FEVER

by Noel Coward

on 22nd-24th February 2001

at Balcarras School Hall

PROGRAMME

Welcome to our evening of Noel Coward.

After our *magnum opus* of a Millennium play we felt we should provide something a little lighter for 2001. *'Hay Fever'* has turned out to be an ideal choice, despite the number of people over the months who have told us how difficult it is to perform! Subtitled 'a light comedy', Coward wrote it in just three days in 1924 and it is meant to be taken lightly and enjoyed as a slightly crazy evening out.

Almost incredibly *'Hay Fever'* is based on real life! The idea for it came out of evenings Coward spent in the company of American actress Laurette Taylor, her husband, Hartley Manners, and their family in their New York home. Coward wrote, *'It was inevitable that someone should eventually utilise portions of this eccentricity in a play'*, and was grateful that no-one wrote the play before him!

Judith Bliss's larger-than-life theatricality permeates the whole family, and they live in their own eccentric self-centred world, acting out roles in conjunction with any unfortunate who happens to pass by. It is the arrival of four very different - and interesting - characters for the weekend that provides the opportunities for a series of highly amusing situations, borne along on Coward's witty and beautifully turned-out dialogue.

The play has been great fun to produce and we have been fortunate in being able to assemble a particularly talented cast, who have worked very hard at building their characters and relationships, as well as enjoying performing such an entertaining piece.

We were delighted to discover that our predecessors, The Kings Players, put on *'Hay Fever'* in 1968. We have found out that four of the cast still live in the area and they will be in the audience on Saturday. Our thanks to them for their support and to all who kindly lent us mementoes of the first *'Players'*.

We all hope you'll have a wonderful evening with 'the Master'.

Peter Grainger

Act I: Saturday afternoon in the Bliss's house at Cookham, in June.

Act II: Saturday evening. Act III: Sunday morning.

There will be one interval of 20 minutes between Acts 1 and 2.

CAST

<i>Judith Bliss</i>	Alison Luna
<i>David Bliss</i>	Barry Irvine
<i>Sorel Bliss</i>	Anna Mazonowicz
<i>Simon Bliss</i>	Andy Cleary
<i>Clara</i>	Karen Haden
<i>Sandy Tyrell</i>	Tim Blakey
<i>Myra Arundel</i>	Alison Talbot
<i>Richard Greatham</i>	Geoff Ramshaw
<i>Jackie Coryton</i>	Kayleigh Storey
Producer	Peter Grainger
Assistant Producer	Val Flippance
Production Manager	Tony Jeans
Stage Manager & Set Design	Andrea Wood
Lighting	Greg White and James Holland
Sound	David Cleaves
Pianist	Keith Mead
Prompt	Brenda Linney
Set Construction	Chris Flippance, Paul Fowler, David Harris, Richard Major, Alex Thomson, Ray and William Talbot
Curtains	Tricia Ratcliffe and Bea Oldman
Costumes	Val Flippance, Jenny Palmer and Maggie Scrivens
Props	Tricia Ratcliffe, Lucy Brown and Richard Major
Make-up	Jill Richell
Hair	Sue Travaskis

Front of House
Publicity
Displays
Photography
Treasurer

Malcolm Dunbar
Lynne Glover
Michelle Grainger
Barry Curl
Doreen Fry

Thank you...

Our thanks again to Chris Healy, the Governors and staff of Balcarras School for the use of their hall, not only for the week of the performance but for weekly rehearsals and last year's series of drama workshops. Special thanks go to Andrew McClelland, the Deputy Head, and to Garry Pargeter, the School Caretaker, for all their on-going help.

We have had considerable help this year from friends outside the community in building parts of our set, and we are very grateful to Paul Fowler, Alex Thompson and David Harris for their time and talents in building the staircase and doors and to Mike Wren for assisting with transport. And our thanks to *Jardinerie* for the loan of special plants and to Malcolm Hawkins at Lyefield DIY for providing the door fittings - without even being asked!

We have long had a problem finding anywhere to store our sets after each production. At last we have been offered part of a nearby barn, and a special 'thank you' to Ken Bloxham for providing us with such an ideal facility - at least until demolition!

We have had a wonderful response from local people when we have asked for specific props or items of clothing - 'enough period suitcases for a Grand Tour'! Thank you to everyone who has contributed so much to the authenticity of this production; we are very grateful for all your continuing support.

Publicity is always very important to us, and we do appreciate the use of the Library, *'Secondwind'* and Post Office windows close to the production time, and to Margaret and Derrick Walker for the use of their window throughout the year. The cast photographs are particularly splendid this year, and we thank Barry Curl for the quality and generosity of his contribution - especially in spite of a badly cut hand that later required six stitches! Thank you also to Fiona Clayton for letting us invade her beautiful house and garden to provide superb locations for the photographs.

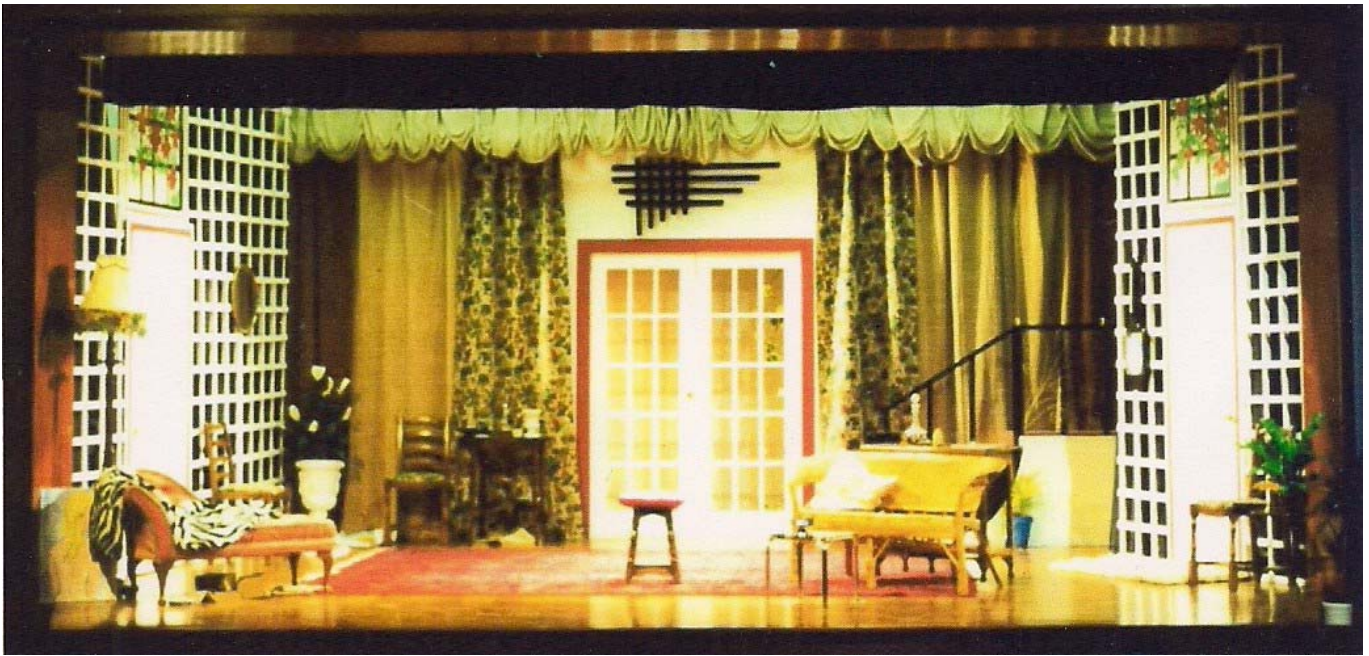
Many thanks too to *Charlton Kings Pharmacy*, *'Secondwind'*, and *'The Vine'* for their continuing kindness in selling tickets for us.











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Peter Grainger

© Peter Grainger photographs and montages

© Barry Curl photographs

Charlton Kings Community Players cast of 'Hay Fever' (2001)
meet up with Kings Players cast of 'Hay Fever' (1968)



© The Cheltenham Newspaper Co Ltd

The Kings Players (Local Drama Group 1960s/1970s)

The Kings Players was a non affiliated local drama group, and was formed early in 1967. It had two objects in mind. *'One was to satisfy the theatrical aspirations of interested Charlton Kings residents and the other to provide a modicum of entertainment for the remainder.'* Its productions were mostly staged in Charlton Kings Secondary Modern School Hall (now Balcarras School), with some use of other local venues. Rehearsals were mostly in the Charlton Kings Infants School Hall. The group raised money for charity. '

The 'Hay Fever' story in the Players newsletters

November 2000, January 2001 & May 2001

Newsletter editor Revd. Barry Irvine



Hay Fever 2001

You will probably all know that our next major production is going to be Noel Coward's 'Hay Fever', to be performed at Balcarras on 22-24 February 2000. After the very special experience of 'Whose Birthday' I was very keen to do something very different next year, a type of drama that I had never produced before - a comedy! Thanks to Barry Irvine, who had produced the play at university, the committee were introduced to *Hay Fever*, and bit by bit we have been completely won over by it.

It is sub-titled 'a light comedy' and that sums it up very well. It is rather like a soufflé - if cooked properly - delightful, insubstantial and easily digested, and I think this is what we would like to offer our audiences this time. And to me it offers another - enjoyable - challenge because everyone tells me that comedies are more difficult to produce than dramas. As far as the actors and the production is concerned I am sure that it is going to be great fun. All those who attended the two auditions were in stitches throughout the evening and

I know those who come to see it will enjoy the evening.

Barry and Val agreed to help with the auditioning process, and I have been very glad of their help. With all the talent we now have available to us it proved to be a much more difficult job than I expected - will I never learn? Alison Luna, who had warned us of the acting challenges of the play, takes the crazy part of the retired actress Judith - about as different from her other roles and from Stage Management as it is possible to get! Barry plays her husband and we are delighted to welcome back Anna Mazonowicz as her daughter and Andy Cleary (so memorable as the son, Eric, in 'An Inspector Calls').

We are fortunate that 'Hay Fever' has four parts for actors under 25, and for a week or two we thought we were going to have problems with the young guest, Sandy. Thanks to our brilliant procurement network we eventually ended up with two
(Continued on page 2)

Continued from page 1

young men, and we welcome Tim Blakey, a teacher at the Junior School, to the cast, and Stuart Hendy to less formal role(s) in *'Let Us Be Merry'* (see the article elsewhere). Kayleigh Storey -a sublime Miriam in *'Whose Birthday'*. Geoff Ramshaw (you know who!) Alison Talbot, unforgettable as Ratty all those years ago, and Karen Hayden (out of Temple commerce and into grumbling service) complete an exciting cast.

I am particularly grateful for all the offers of help backstage that Val and I have had. Tony Jeans has bravely agreed to take on the new role of Production Manager, dealing with all backstage planning and co-ordination. This role is not only enormously helpful to me this time, but will ease the role of Producer for all those who are going to take over as a result of the workshops in November! We shall be building a complete (single) set for the first time and are involving local artists through the stage design workshops in what I hope will be a spectacular 1920s creation. Andrea Wood is not only involved in this surge of creativity but has also agreed to be Stage Manager (as well as editing the Newsletter- wow!)

With Lynne Glover, Ray Talbot and David Cleaves in their familiar vital roles, *'Hay Fever'* should prove to be a delight to everyone on both sides of the apron. But please remember - we still have to sell all those tickets! Peter Grainger

DRAMA AWARD

page 2



Congratulations to **Tim Richards** on being awarded the Elizabeth Webster Award for Drama in 'Recognition of outstanding contributions to the arts in Cheltenham during 1999', at the recent Arts Council meeting. We understand that the nomination came from Balcarras School, but those of us who have seen the results of his (and Emma Cleveland's) hard work with the youngsters at the Playhouse in the last two summer holidays will understand why he has been recognised in this way. We also wish him all the best in his new drama course.

CURTAIN CALL FOR DRESSER

After many years of creating memorable costumes for the Community Players productions, Maggie Scrivens is now going to hang up her scissors and needle. She will be greatly missed. Our thanks and good wishes go with her for the future.

LET US BE MERRY

Charlton Kings Junior School
13th December 7.30 p.m.

An evening of sketches and songs with
Puzzlejug

Refreshments: Mince pies and Punch
Tickets £3.00

available from Lynne Glover Tel: 524715



CHARLTON KINGS COMMUNITY PLAYERS

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2001



We have just had
our first
rehearsal since the

Christmas break and all is in place for a very successful production. The play itself is continuing to delight us all - I just hope it continues to do so after members of the cast have learnt their lines. The characters are developing very well and they are all making the most of the numerous comic opportunities. Unfortunately work commitments have prevented Ray Talbot from building us a complete set as originally planned. Instead we are using ready-made trellises and curtains to link up with modular units of access which are being built by a number of volunteers, including Ray himself. Tony Jeans has beavered away to get this talented team together and Andrea Wood has created beautiful designs to integrate the final effect. Ray's splendid model of the Balcarras stage is being used in conjunction with a detailed model set made by Karen Haden's family. I am very grateful to all those who are contributing to this co-operative enterprise, the results of which will either be separately or together for future productions.

Tricia Ratcliffe has kindly agreed to oversee the props and furniture to ensure the staging looks authentic, and

HAY FEVER UPDATE

a list of items that you may be able to supply appears elsewhere in the *Newsletter* - please help if you can. Val Flippance, in addition to her role as assistant producer, and Jenny Palmer will be working with Andrea to make the costumes as exotic and appropriate to the period as possible - and Maggie Scrivens will be our costume consultant from Bourton!

Lynne Glover now has tickets and leaflets available, with posters appearing shortly. Although 'Hay Fever' is only on for three nights this time, we have to sell over 750 tickets with a cast of 9 instead of 100. So we do ask you all to do your best to come and bring your family and friends. The play is genuinely funny and will be very well acted and presented.

We already know that it is a real favourite of the older members of our community, but I believe that, for all its pseudo-sophistication, it is sufficiently anarchic on occasions for the young people - and the young-at-heart - to enjoy a fun evening of live entertainment!

Peter Grainger





Great efforts are being made to create a memorable 1920's set for 'Hay Fever'. We are therefore looking for items for the set which will enhance the period atmosphere. If you have - or know somebody who has - any of these items we would be grateful if you would telephone Tricia Ratcliffe (529831), Tony Jeans (820409) or Andrea Wood (521975)

FURNITURE

Old 2-3 seater settee, which could be adapted with temporary coverings
Gate-leg, preferably oval, dining room table (part hidden by covered table cloth) capable of seating four characters facing the stage
4 (or more) dining room chairs which could be of the period (or before)
Trolley (to serve a breakfast of haddock and scrambled egg)

SMALLER ITEMS

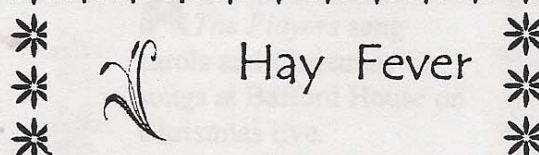
Wall mirror (preferably art deco style)
Stool suitable for adults to perch on (briefly)
Soda Syphon
2 cigarette holders, cigarette case and one desk lighter of the period
Tennis racquet (old fashioned)
Small and medium sized (overnight) suitcases
Large (exotic) vase for flowers, artificial flowers (suitable for month of June)
Garden Trug

COSTUMES ALSO NEEDED

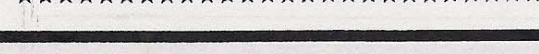
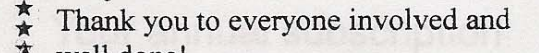
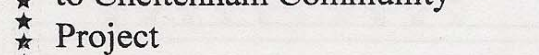
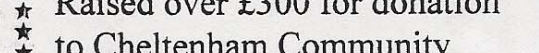
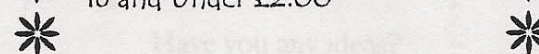
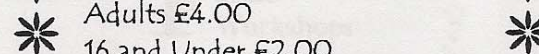
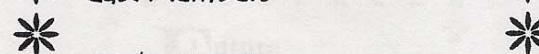
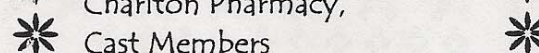
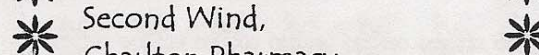
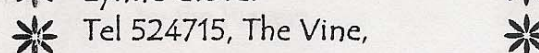
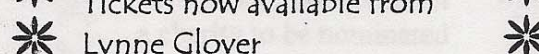
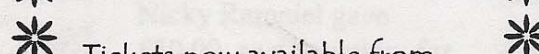
Smart male or female costumes or hats of the period especially, blazers, suits or plus-fours for the men.



page 2



Hay Fever



'LET US BE MERRY'

Raised over £300 for donation to Cheltenham Community Project
Thank you to everyone involved and well done!



THE CHAIRMAN WRITES

May I take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all our members, friends and supporters who made 'Hay Fever' such a great success. It was such a fine play to perform. From the profits made on the production the committee have chosen to support three, very worthwhile, causes.

We are giving the local squadron of the AIR TRAINING CORPS, which meet at the Grange Playing Fields, £100 towards essential equipment which they need in their works with young people. One of their aims is to develop the quality of leadership and good citizenship in young people.

We are also giving £200 to NETWORK CRAFTS who helped build the library door for 'Hay Fever' and other aspects of our set construction. They are supported by 'Cluster Together' in Cheltenham and aim to help the unwaged, retired and handicapped share and exercise their craft skills and develop new ones.

Our third donation, of £500, goes to Sue Stanley. She is the Lay Chaplain at Sue Ryder Care in Leckhampton which offers palliative care to those with a life-threatening illness and their families. Sue wants to develop her work in providing for the spiritual needs of the patients and wishes to furnish a suitable prayer and quiet room. She plans to have a water feature, prayer stools, candles and pictures.

We shall be making our presentations of the cheques on Sunday 3rd June at the Pentecost Party in the precinct in the

village as part of Charlton Kings Churches' Pentecost celebrations. There will be some sketches performed by members of the Players during the afternoon. So come along and support us.

A second series of Drama Workshops will begin in September, with follow-up sessions on Improvisation, Stage Singing and Producing. New topics are planned to include Creative dance, Publicity and Stage Lighting. So.... keep a look out for starting dates!

Finally, I will be directing a One-Act play in February 2002 and if anyone has seen or knows of any good One-Act plays, then please let me know.

Barry Irvine

Special Offer For Directors

To encourage new directors the committee has agreed to our having a Double Bill as our production next February, with our tenth anniversary musical production moving to October half-term. Barry Irvine has agreed to direct one play, so we are looking for someone to look after the other. Barry still has French's book of One-Act plays, which should give you some ideas, so why not get the book from Barry and give it some thought - it's how I started!

Peter Grainger