

PROMPTINGS



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Welcome to the first edition of Promptings for the new 2013/2014 season! I hope that LADS members have had a great summer break and that you are all ready to get involved in what I am sure will be another fantastic season.

In this edition you will find an introduction from the Artistic Director, dates for your diary, the critique for Entertaining Angels and other information and articles.

The committee has decided to start sending Promptings in a PDF format to those members that have given us an email address. This means there will be no restriction on the number of pages that we can use and also allows us to put in colour photos! As a member of LADS I want to remind you that this is *your* newsletter and therefore if you have news that you want to tell us all then write something about it and email it to Howard, it doesn't need to be much but it would be great to have your contributions.

At the last AGM the society voted in Cathy Naylor as LADS first Artistic Director. This is an exciting new role which I think that Cathy will make every success of. I also would like to welcome Lisa Maule and Lynn Marsh to the committee. The general committee is there to co-ordinate the running of the society. However, it falls to every member of LADS to make a success of it. Members need to check when the LADS dates are and continue to try their utmost to be available.

Also it is important, where you can, to help get the little jobs done. Lastly, never forget that the most of our tickets are sold through word of mouth and therefore it is important that every member publicises our shows and gets those bottoms on seats!

But I know that we have a great team in LADS and that the society will continue to go from strength to strength in our 90th season. I am looking forward to a great first production and seeing you at a LADS event soon.

Dan Cooper

LADS DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 13th October	First play selection meeting for 2013/14 season
Sunday 20 October	Set up for <i>Playboy of the Western World</i> from 9.30am
Mon. 21-Weds. 23 October	Rehearsals, Tech and Dress <i>Playboy of the Western World</i>
Thurs.24-Sat. 26 October	Performances, <i>Playboy of the Western World</i>
Saturday 26 October	After show party, Garry and Jean Cooper's - 28 Woodland Way, Woodford
Sunday 27 October	Set down from 10.00am
Monday 28 October	Crit night and curry from 7.30pm
Thursday 31 October	Read through, <i>A Lie of the Mind</i> , 8pm Small Hall
Monday 4 November	Rehearsals start for <i>Why Me?</i>
Friday 8th November	"An Evening with Lads" at Lopping Hall

MEMBERS' NEWS

We are pleased to welcome new member, Jodie Seymour who will be playing one of the village girls, Susan, in *Playboy of the Western World* and also to welcome back Lindsay Swinson and Paul Caira, both returning to the boards in this production.

NODA AWARDS



LADS has been recognised in a number of NODA awards which were given out at their last AGM. Congratulations must go to Iain Howland who was runner up in the Charles Summers Award for Best Male in a Play for his role as Rudyard Kipling in *My Boy Jack*, Christine Eckley for winning the Shelley Lemesh Trophy for the Unsung Hero and everyone involved in *My Boy Jack* which won the prestigious Pat Redhead Drama Award.

AN EVENING WITH LADS

Epping Forest Arts are collaborating with a number of artists to celebrate Lopping Hall as part of the 'Our Lopping Festival', taking place at Lopping Hall from 1st – 9th November 2013.

As part of this Festival, they asked LADS to produce "An Evening with LADS" which will take place on 8th November at 8pm. We will be presenting some monologues and

duologues from plays produced by LADS over the last 90 years. If you are not performing a piece, please come along to support the festival and LADS, it will be a fun evening.

PLAY SELECTION CATHY NAYLOR

Hello LADS

Our 2013 – 2014 season is now well under way and rehearsals for *Playboy of the Western World* are going well. After some initial difficulties I am pleased to say that we now have a Director and a full cast and production team for *Why Me?* so for the moment at least, the casting committee can breathe again.

I have chatted at length to a number of members recently and some were unclear what the new Position of Artistic Director entailed and how it fitted in to the LADS structure so I thought it may be worth clarifying this.

Primarily, the role of The Artistic Director is to oversee the play selection and casting committees, leaving The Chairman to focus on the running of the society in general. Obviously, it's early days and we have plenty of time to fine tune wherever experience suggests it to be beneficial.

For the first two productions we have had a real shortage of members who were available to take part and consequently, casting all of the roles and providing a production team has been very difficult but after much juggling and cajoling, we have succeeded in our mission. I appreciate that we all have very busy lives and can't be available for every production so the solution is to have a bigger 'pot' to choose from. The committee is very focused on attracting new members so I am hopeful that in the coming months this situation will be eased.

You can really help the committee not only by making yourselves available whenever possible but also by indicating availability in advance of the casting meetings, the dates of which are all on the website. It saves a lot of time if we know who is and who isn't available.

The play selection committee will soon be starting the task of reading and selecting the plays for next season and I would like to remind you that any member is welcome to submit a play for consideration, thank you to Eileen and Stephen who have already done just that. If you have seen or read a play that you think would be suitable for LADS, please let us know. All I ask is that you provide a copy of the script for the committee to read and I promise it will be returned to you. We would love to have your ideas of the plays that you would like to see LADS produce.

Babs, Jean and myself are continuing to work on 'An Evening with LADS' and hope to have the final format decided in the next week.

Finally, if you have any thoughts or ideas that fall into the 'artistic' domain of LADS, please let me know. It is your society and I would very much welcome your input.

Cathy

LADS 90TH - DINNER AND DANCE



Save the Date!

As you may know, next year LADS will be celebrating its 90th anniversary. We feel that this is an occasion of note, and in recognition, we'll be inviting the society to get together in their glad rags for a dinner/dance style soiree. Our current proposed date is the **8th of February 2014**, so mark it in your diary today! Further information will follow, and tickets will go on sale later in the year.

CRIT. FOR 'ENTERTAINING ANGELS' SYLVIA KEITH

What an impact when the curtains opened! It was a lovely set, very attractive and well constructed, with a beautiful arch at the centre back. The lower level set to one side was very pretty and with the arrangements of the seating, all the audience got a good view. There did seem to be a problem with entrances through the curtained entrance to pond area stage right. In a way it created a "mystery entrance" but some movement around it was awkward.



Sian Williams and Sylvia Zilesnick

The play has a difficult opening scene with the telephone conversations and the actors following different lines of thought. It is always interesting to see how a playwright tells the back story and it was a while before the audience settled down and relaxed, which was after the characters' relationships became established. There was also some speaking over the audience laughter from the jokes at the start and this needs to be avoided at all times.

So a bit of a tense and nervous opening but things soon settled down. Once into the play the conveying of information was well done, as the audience realised the various situations and characters.

The casting was generally very good. Grace (Sylvia Zilesnick) managed a long and

difficult part with expertise and created a good rapport with both her sister and daughter.



Camilla Steel

Ruth (Wendy Butler) was a good contrast to Grace in dress, manners and type – a believable and well managed relationship which all sisters will recognise

Jo (Sian Williams) was a bit young for the part. It was difficult to believe she was married, going through a divorce and a therapist but she had excellent diction and force of character.



Roger Barker and Sylvia Zilesnick

Bardy (Roger Barker) was excellent - the personification of the emollient vicar, smoothing over his emotions and coping with questions. His scenes with Grace well managed and exits and entrances carefully observed, very suitable for a spirit!

The outsider – Sarah, the new vicar – was beautifully performed (Camilla Steel). She acted with surety and conveyed both comedy and serious dilemma, questioning her vocation and later coping with her pregnancy extremely well. The “bump” seemed more 7 hours than 7 weeks from due date, however.

As to the play itself, despite being billed as a comedy, it was really a mixture of comedy and seriousness, with themes of forgiveness and reconciliation. Difficult to do but beautifully pulled off. The forgiveness scenes between both the sisters and Grace and Bardy were very moving.

I do realise the problems of an unfamiliar and complicated set, on which you would have had limited time to rehearse and which was not easy to negotiate, but the technical problems were well overcome and the audience thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Speaking of the set, I felt the lighting was spot on.

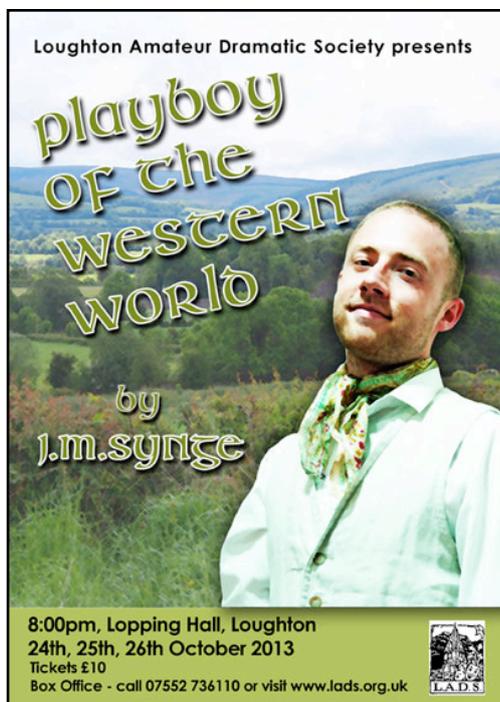


Wendy Butler and Sylvia Zilesnick

Two pieces of advice: Firstly, you must learn to wait for laughs from the audience before continuing. I do appreciate different audiences laugh at different things, or not at all, but speaking over laughter detracts from the performances. Secondly, have extra rehearsal time for openings of plays. In that way the performers can come on stage more confidently, particularly the opening night. Setting these thoughts aside though, the play was an enormous success, greatly appreciated by your audience.

Sylvia Keith

PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD



It will be grand, so it will!!

At the time of writing, we are in the 4th week of rehearsals for *Playboy of the Western World*, and scripts are beginning to be put down. As a result of this, characters are forming, proper reactions are being made and a real treat of a play is beginning to take form!

We have had nightmares with regard to the casting, but (dare I say it) I think we now have a full complement of people on-stage. Backstage is another matter, but that is slowly being dealt with ... I would like to nominate Liz for the award for "stepping up to the mark" as she has agreed to not only be my PA, but also take over the role of Stage Manager – thank you Liz! We could do with someone to take over "props", so if anyone is available show week and for a few rehearsals beforehand, I would love to hear from you.

Talking about props, we need to dress the stage as a 1907 West coast Irish shebeen.

We need old bottles, tankards, glasses, ceramic jars (please see photographs), and also old paraphernalia such as: a riddle, gardening implements, kitchen implements, bowls etc... Please have a look around and see what you have (or parents or grandparents have) that might be useful. Let me know (with photos) if possible and either bring them along on set-up Sunday or let me have them in advance. Also need a quilt that looks old and handmade and fire implements.

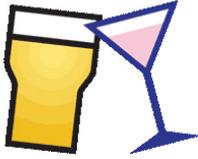
Finally, I am still looking for someone to play a fiddle on stage for us. They will need to be available for the evenings of show week (Monday 21st to Saturday 26th Oct) and also for a few rehearsals beforehand (but I will work around their availability). There is no payment, but we can ensure them a warm welcome, cake and comradeship ... and laughter!

I am confident that *Playboy* will be a colourful, exuberant and funny production, and I urge you to bring hordes of people to come and see it!!!

Jean.



SOCIAL EVENTS



As you may be aware (especially if you attended), over the summer there were a couple of fairly relaxed social pub evenings arranged that proved to be hugely popular.

These have made us realise what a great thing it could be if we made these kind of social gatherings a regular monthly event. After all, getting together outside of the pressure and hard work of rehearsing or set ups etc. can only aid our enjoyment of the society and help to bond the group. It's a great chance to catch up with people we don't otherwise see outside of a production.

Obviously people lead busy lives with work, family and most importantly LADs commitments, but that doesn't mean we can't get together informally now and again

We'll draw up a schedule of pub dates and circulate this by e-mail shortly - if you are in touch with those LADS members who are not online, please let them know the dates. We will of course try and avoid any clashes with rehearsal nights etc.

Of course our social events don't have to be restricted to pub evenings – in the past we have gone bowling and had meals out, for example.

Please don't wait for someone else to organise a social event - if you have a good idea, let Dan and/or Cathy know and we'll publicise it, but then it's up to everyone to link up and make it happen.

Look out for more social news in the next issue.

Many thanks, Dave Stelfox