



PRODUCED
BY Louise Burgess

DIRECTED
BY Martin Clare

The Great Mallard

WRITTEN
BY Martin Clare



22nd-25th - Nov 2017

**Dunham Massey Village Hall
7.45pm curtain**

A Word from the Chairman / Director

Another year, another Autumn production to warm the cockles of your heart.

"After repeated frustrating evenings searching in vain for a play suited to our cast, I found myself hammering away at my keyboard one night, as much out of desperation as anything else. With rehearsals upon us, I churned out a draft of the first Act, and to my genuine surprise the group decided to run with it (I suspect equally as much out of desperation!) That they were all prepared to commit their time and efforts when we had barely half a finished script to work with is a testament to the trust they placed in me, and something for which I shall ever be thankful."



Those were the words I wrote in the programme to 'The Mr Misty Mystery' back in April 2014. To be honest, I could have pretty much copied and pasted my entire diatribe from that programme, and it would have been every bit as relevant to this production. I'll hold my hands up and admit I'm normally a bit lazy when it comes to reading plays during the off-season, but knowing I was going to be in the Director's chair for the next production, this summer I really made the effort and was adamant I was going to find something suitable. The best laid plans and all that...

I'm not really sure how I feel about the finished play. As always, there are bits I'm not happy with and elements I would have loved to have spent more time on. But equally I'm proud of what we've done, especially given the time constraints, and I hope you'll find it both funny and intriguing. Much of the second act was written whilst on holiday, (several weeks after we'd started rehearsals), so even the cast were in the dark for a long time as to how it ends!

Tonight we welcome back to the stage two members of our cast from 'Jane Eyre'. Eleanor Cardoza gamely agreed to take on the sizable part of Ginny; and I was delighted to be able to offer a good part to Peter Mungovan who has been ever present at read-throughs and rehearsals for the last couple of productions. The 'gratitude list' as always is too long to fit here, but I'd like to say a special thank you to my friend Louise Burgess who bravely (or stupidly) agreed to be Producer. It's an otherwise thankless job that revolves around making lists and nagging people to do stuff, but I knew I'd be able to rely on her. A respectful cap doff as well to Trevor Wells for his mammoth efforts in helping clear out and repair the Thespians shed.

Outside of the group, I'd like to extend thanks to Susan Leigh - a popular local figure who has actively pushed the play on her radio magazine show, and even invited me on last month to discuss the writing process and generally publicise the production (hence the picture above). A few highlights from the broadcast are available on the Thespians Youtube channel. Thanks also to Peter Harrison, a regular patron of the Dunham Thespians and local published playwright, who kindly offered us his latest script for consideration over the summer. Although we liked the play we simply didn't have a suitable cast for it, but I've no doubt it has publication potential and will be well received wherever it plays.

All that remains is for me to thank you one and all for your continued patronage, and hope we can kick-start your festive season in at least some style with our comedy thriller 'The Great Mallard'.

Martin Clare



Announcements

In the highly unlikely event of a fire, emergency exits are located as follows:

- The main entrance where you came in
- Behind the curtain to your right (as you face the stage)
- Through the kitchen and out of the rear door
- Immediately behind the stage



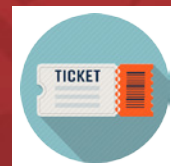
Please ensure you turn your mobile phone off (or onto silent or flight mode) for the duration of the performance. If you turn your phone on during the interval, please remember to switch it off again before the play resumes.

You are welcome to take photographs, but we kindly ask that you refrain from using flash photography.



Drinks are available both before the show and during the interval. You are welcome to bring drinks into the hall, but please exercise caution. Complimentary tea, coffee and biscuits will be served during the interval.

If you aren't already on our mailing list, please make sure you sign up to receive advance notification of our future productions. You can add yourself directly to our email list by visiting the www.dunhamthespians.org.uk home page. You can also complete a form available at the bar to receive our postal mail shot.



Raffle tickets are available both before the play and during the interval. We always have a healthy selection of prizes, so please make sure you get some tickets. The raffle will be drawn after Act 2, Scene 1.

The Cast



Eleanor Cardoza
Virginia Fenn (Ginny)



Peter Mungovan
Godfrey Shuttleworth



Joan Jones
Barbara Shuttleworth



Chris Matthews
Percival (Percy)



Rachael Gallagher
Sofia Egerton-Smyth



Richard Hankinson
Rufus P. Valentine



Rebecca Buckley
Daisy Fairclough

The Great Mallard



ACT 1

Scene 1	An afternoon in late Autumn
Scene 2	Later that evening
Scene 3	Later that night

ACT 2

Scene 1	The following day, late morning
Scene 2	The same day, mid-afternoon

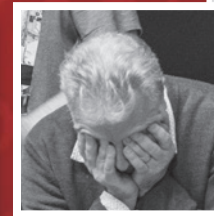
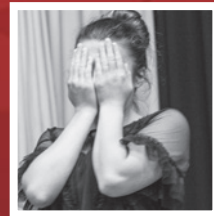
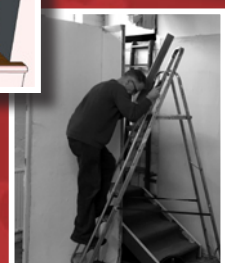
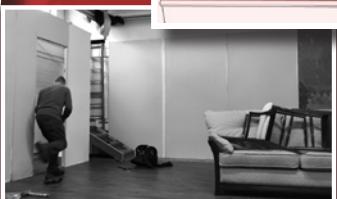
The action of the play takes place in The Great Mallard hotel
somewhere on a failing British seaside resort

Time - present day

The interval will take place at the end of Act 1
The raffle will be drawn after Act 2, Scene 1

Behind The Scenes

The Great Mallard



A Word from the Producer

During summer this year we read so many plays, and as usual we struggled to find something we all liked and which fit the available cast. To the rescue came Martin with his third brand new play, 'The Great Mallard'. After a read through of just Act 1 there was a very loud and emphatic yes from the society, so we decided this was the play for us.

I honestly do not know how he does it. It's one thing to write a story, it's another thing completely to write good dialogue and include rhymes as well (you'll understand that comment later).

Back in early September we started rehearsals (with just Act 1) and Martin asked me to help out and be the producer for the play. I haven't ever produced before so this was going to be a new experience for me. He did start the conversation with "It's a pretty thankless task" and ended it with "Are you regretting agreeing to it yet?"

I can honestly say this has been a wonderful experience for me, and I thank Martin for putting his trust in me. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the cast making the characters their own, which I can tell you from first hand experience is a lot of fun with an original production. No-one has ever played that part before you!

The rehearsals have been so much fun, the cast are all wonderful - they have worked so hard; we have had lots of laughs, and seeing the cast's excitement as we all found out the ending to the play was a highlight for me.

I really hope you all enjoy your evening watching this brand new production.

Louise Burgess



Cast (in order of appearance)

Virginia Fenn (Ginny)
Percival (Percy)
Godfrey Shuttleworth
Barbara Shuttleworth
Rufus P. Valentine
Sofia Egerton-Smyth
Daisy Fairclough

Eleanor Cardoza
Chris Matthews
Peter Mungovan
Joan Jones
Richard Hankinson
Rachael Gallagher
Rebecca Buckley

The Great Mallard



Credits

Writer
Producer
Director
Stage Building

Prompts

Props

Lighting / Sound
Principal Photography
Raffle & Refreshments

Programmes / Publicity
Set Dressing

Front of House / Bar

Ticket Manager

Martin Clare
Louise Burgess
Martin Clare
Trevor Wells
Martin Clare
Lindsay Park
Bill Craig
Kath Phillips
Louise Burgess
Louise Burgess
Martin Clare
Kath Phillips
Bella Pratten
Martin Clare
Vanessa Lozano
Elizabeth Craig
Bill Craig
Martin Clare
Martin Clare
Chris Matthews
Laura Kinsella
Elizabeth Craig
Bill Craig
Laura Kinsella
Martin Clare
Martin Clare

With Thanks To

The Rope & Anchor Public House
Andrew Bushell & Peter White (The Village Hall)
Joan Pendlebury (The Village Shop)
Susan Leigh (Trafford Sound Radio)
Peter Harrison (Playwright)
Julia Taylor (Sale & Altrincham Messenger)
Red House Farm

A Bit of Background



I had planned to include a section on where some of the inspiration for tonight's play came from, but it occurred to me it represented a bit of a spoiler for the first Act. So for those with the technology to do so, you can check out the following webpage. (It's safe to do so during the interval. Just remember to turn your phone off again before the play resumes!)

Use the QR Code or go to www.dunhamthespians.org.uk/greatmallard

The Rope
&
Anchor.
Dunham Massey



Tucked away in the country lanes near Dunham Massey, the Rope and Anchor is in the perfect location for you to enjoy a family meal after exploring the surrounding countryside, or the ideal venue for a romantic dinner, away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

We have a relaxing bar area where you can enjoy our selection of JW Lees ales, fine wine, spirits and soft drinks. Enjoy our comfortable surroundings, whatever the weather with a modern fire place where you can cosy up for a chat, or you can relax and dine al fresco in our fully waited, extensive, comfortable outdoor seating area in beautiful surroundings.

Not forgetting our younger visitors, we offer an excellent children's menu & a great play area. So, whether you're celebrating an event or just taking a relaxing break, we look forward to welcoming you soon.



If you would like to book a table or enquire about hiring out our amazing function spaces we have provided all the contact details below:

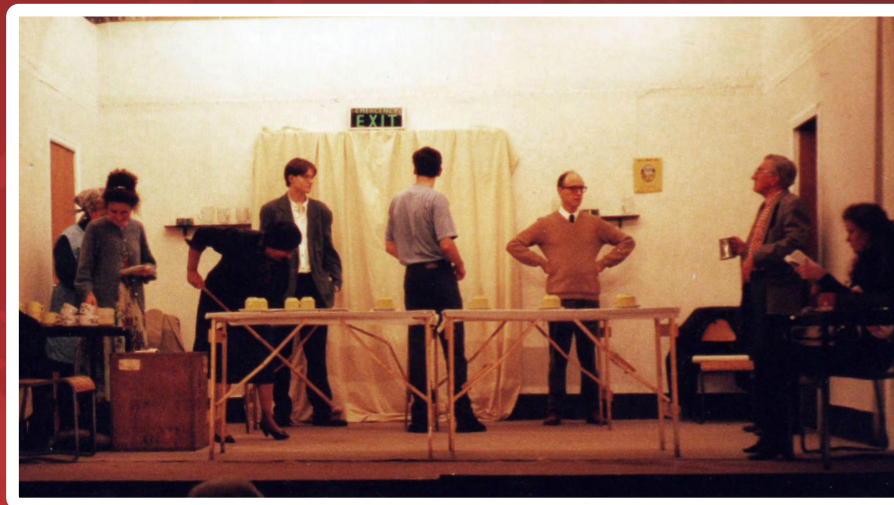
www.theropeandanchor.co.uk

Tel: 0161 927 7901

Twitter : @Rope_Anchor

From The Archives

'The Wedding' (1997)



20 years ago, 'The Wedding' by Keith Waterhouse & Willis Hall was one of three one-act plays performed in November 1997, alongside 'Mantrap' by Paul Reakes and 'At The Changing Of The Year' by Malcolm Young. This production was notable for a number of reasons. It represented the 75th anniversary of the foundation of The Dunham Thespians, and it was the final swan-song production for the late Esmé Duckworth.

Also, although not in the picture above, a shy teenager with a bad stammer and the torso of a hat-stand made his debut performance for the society. He ended up sticking around longer than he expected.

(Pictured above from left to right are Madeleine White, Diane Hutchinson, Shelagh Whitehead, Mark Horne, Mark Hutchinson, Clive Alford, Ron Hutchinson and Julie Morton)

Joining The Society



We are always keen to recruit new members to the society, both on stage and behind the scenes. If you have ever fancied trying your hand at being on stage, or feel like you have something to contribute behind the curtain (as it were), then get in touch. We're a friendly bunch!

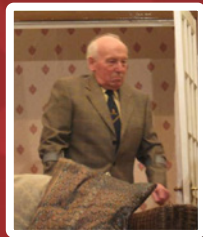
(Rachael's favourite picture 📷)

Contact Martin on 07789 171 337, or email info@dunhamthespians.org.uk

Brian Capper

We were saddened to hear news of the passing of former Thespian Brian Capper last month. Although Brian left the society some years ago, along with his wife Sandra he was a prominent member for many years as both actor and producer, as well as serving a lengthy stint as Treasurer.

We send Sandra and family our deepest sympathies and best wishes.



*We'd like to thank all our patrons for your continued support.
The next Thespians production will be:*

Wed 25th - Sat 28th April 2018

Although we have a couple of ideas in mind, we are yet to make a final decision on the April production, so please make sure you are signed up to our mailing list to receive notification as soon as tickets go on sale.

Committee Officials

Chairman
Vice Chairlady
Treasurer
Secretary
Assistant Secretary
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager

Martin Clare
Sylvia Rose
Bill Craig
Philippa Cameron
Laura Kinsella
Lindsay Park
Trevor Wells



The Dunham Thespians

Dunham Massey Village Hall, School Lane, Dunham Massey, Cheshire. WA14 4SE.

Martin Clare - Chairman
07789 171 337

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