



LITTLE THEATRE

A
SOUTHPORT DRAMATIC CLUB
PRODUCTION

Agatha Christie's



A Murder *is Announced*

Dramatised by
Leslie Darbon

Directed by David Parry

**25th November -
3rd December 2005**

at 7.45pm


LITTLE THEATRE
SOUTHPORT
HOME OF
THE SOUTHPORT DRAMATIC CLUB

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Director's Notes



When I was asked to direct an Agatha Christie play, I was asked by several people "Who is the detective?" The obvious reply was that it is Miss Marple on this occasion. However, Miss Marple is not the only detective is she?

Subject to the size of our audiences each night (being an Agatha Christie I would hope and expect that we have full houses) I would anticipate that there are approximately 400 detectives, i.e. each of you. Part of the appeal of attending a murder mystery is to see if one can come to the correct conclusion in determining the identity of the murderer.

I hope that whilst enjoying the production, you have fun establishing which are the genuine clues and which are the 'red herrings'. As I am a generous soul, I will give you an additional clue – the culprit was not Miss Marple.

In closing I would like to say that I am honoured to be given my first opportunity to direct a play within the Southport Dramatic Club's Season.

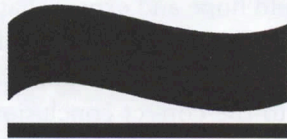
David Parry
Director

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Agatha Christie

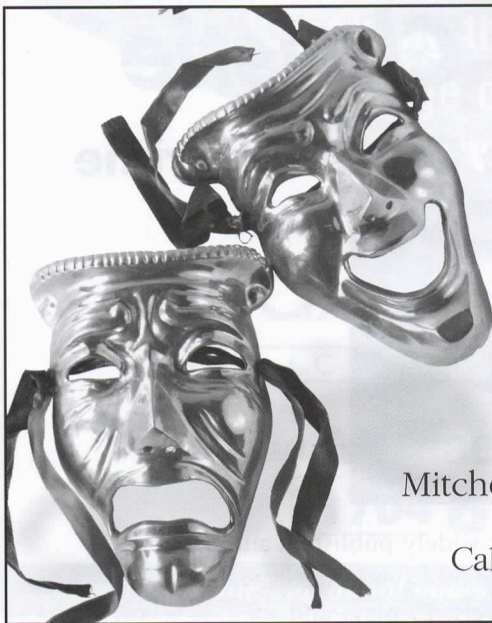
(1890-1976) The Queen of Crime



Agatha Christie is the most widely published author of all time, outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare. The author of 79 crime novels, 19 plays and six novels, written under the name of Mary Westmacott, Agatha Christie was born in Torquay the youngest of three children. She never went to school, being taught by a governess and tutors. A shy child, unable to adequately express her feelings, she turned, in later life, to writing as means of expression.

Among some of her most popular works were: *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Death on the Nile* and her most famous play of all, *The Mousetrap*, the longest running play in history.

Her work has been translated into more than 100 languages. In 1971 she was awarded the high honour of becoming a Dame of the British Empire, acknowledged Queen of the Golden Age.



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A Murder

is Announced





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What's On

Friday November 4th

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Saturday 3rd December

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Friday 9th December

Gary Anthony – Resident singer and Disco

Saturday 10th December

Tina Ballantino – Superb Tina Turner tribute and Disco

Thursday 15th December

Sally Anne Harmen – Brilliant vocalist and Disco

Friday 16th December

Gary Anthony – Resident singer and Disco

Saturday 17th December

Gary Anthony – Resident singer and Disco

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Thursday 22nd December

Gary Anthony – Resident singer and Disco

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Friday 6th January

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Southport Old Road, Formby

A Murder

is Announced



Agatha Christie's
A Murder
is Announced

Directed by David Parry

Dramatised by
Leslie Darbon

Cast

in order of appearance

Letitia Blacklock..... Pat Ball
Julia Simmons..... Sabrina Regazzoni
Dora Bunner..... Margaret Hill
Patrick Simmons..... Matthew Woodhams
Mitzi..... Susanne Denner
Miss Marple..... Sheila Furlong
Phillipa Haynes..... Trudi Hirsch
Mrs Swettenham..... Pat Simpkin
Edmund Swettenham..... Eric Chadwick
Rudi Scherz..... Brendan Gillow
Inspector Craddock..... Pete Slater
Sergeant Mellors..... Pete Beswick

The action of the play takes place in two drawing rooms in an early Victorian house in Chipping Cleghorn, which have been made into one room.

Act 1

Scene 1 Morning of Friday 13th.
Scene 2 6.10pm on same day.
Scene 3 Following Saturday morning.

Act 2

Scene 1 Following Sunday afternoon.
Scene 2 Following Monday morning.
Scene 3 6pm same day.

The time is Agatha Christie Time.

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

Staging

Stage Manager	Chris Ratcliffe
Assistant Stage Manager	Su Palmer
Assistant Stage Manager (book)	Fran Percival
Props	Brendan Gillow
	Pete Beswick
	Margaret Hill
Wardrobe	SDC and Cast
Lighting	Andrew Connard
Sound	Chris Ratcliffe
Armourer	Syd Coley
Set Design	Syd Coley
Set Constructed by	SDC Production Team
Scenic Artist	Bob Jessamine
Photography by	Neil Hickson

The management reserves the right to refuse admission to the auditorium after curtain up until a suitable opportunity occurs. First aid facilities are provided at this theatre by St John Ambulance Brigade, whose members give their services voluntarily.

•
Why not beat the rush and pre-order your interval drinks in the bar?

•
A new induction loop has been installed in this theatre for the benefit of hearing impaired patrons. Please turn your hearing aid to 'T'.

•
Please ensure that all mobile telephones are switched off

•
At the end of tonight's performance you may leave by any of the exits, all of which will be open. In an emergency, this theatre can be emptied in three minutes or less if everyone leaves in an orderly manner.

•
Smoking is prohibited in the auditorium.

DESIGNATED PREMISES SUPERVISOR, ALAN NEWPORT

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Cast in order of appearance

David Parry *Director*

David is directing a full main season production for the first time, having directed the one act play, *Wild Mink* last year.

David has been a club member since 1979, and has played many parts, including Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger*, and Uncle Louie in *Lost in Yonkers*, along with, of course, his appearance in our 1983 production of *A Murder is Announced*.

(See Photograph and cast list on page 17.) Ed.



Pat Ball *Letitia Blacklock*

After her incarnation as H.M. Queen Mary last year, Pat was rather disappointed not to be greeted by curtsies at the first rehearsal of this play.

She is glad, however, that her royal son and daughter – Matthew and Trudi, are still at hand to ply her with sherry!



Sabrina Regazzoni *Julia Simmons*

A murder is announced in the Chipping Cleghorn Gazette and what is the first thing that springs to the mind of Julia?

It might turn into a party – and what a party it was – delicious death!



A Murder *is Announced*

Cast in order of appearance

Margaret Hill *Dora Bunner*



Margaret first played Bunny 22 years ago and is delighted to be Bunny now for the third time. In the last programme she was described as being nearly as potty in real life. She says this now applies here to.

Matthew Woodhams *Patrick Simmons*



It is a positive delight for Matthew to play a 26-year-old sex symbol. Unfortunately he has got to that stage of his life when to do so, he has to dye his hair (to hide the grey) and grow facial hair (to hide the wrinkles).

If this doesn't work, he asks you to be kind and use your imagination (he finds thinking of Brad Pitt helpful).

Susanne Denner *Mitzi*



In previous years the Play Selection and Casting Committee has cast Susanne in two one act only plays. She wonders what moment of insanity led them to entrust her with three whole acts on one night! First she played someone who was Italian, then Welsh and now her tour of Europe has reached Hungary – where next?

To Zack the Quack she would like to extend a big 'Thank You' and say... "Mindig en vagyok a hiba's" - with brass knobs on!

A Murder *is Announced*

Cast in order of appearance

Sheila Furlong *Miss Marple*

Quite a contrast from her last part, of the Hon. Margaret Wyndham in *Crown Matrimonial*.

Sheila is now tackling the well known character of Miss Marple. She only hopes it works



Trudi Hirsch *Phillipa Haynes*

Trudi is thrilled to have joined the cast and is dying to play the role of Phillipa, a trained horticulturalist, in her first Agatha Christie play. She was last seen as Princess Mary in *Crown Matrimonial* in October 2004 - A year later she is working in the flowerbeds - ah well that's show business!



Pat Simpkin *Mrs Swettenham*

Pat is beginning to think she lives in Midsomer something or other as it was at this time last year that she was involved in another murder here – what next, will she survive to tell the tale!

Whatever happens she has enjoyed working with David and having a son at home again!



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Cast in order of appearance



Eric Chadwick *Edmund Swettenham*

After surviving the trials of wartime France in *'Allo 'Allo* and membership of a very bizarre film making society in *Two Bowls of Jaffa Cakes*, Eric is enjoying the peace and tranquility of Chipping Cleghorn where he plans to write his masterwork.



Brendan Gillow *Rudi Scherz*

Brendan's last performance was in last season's production of *Fatal Encounter*.

Previous stage experience includes plate spinning in the *Boyle Variety Show*.



Pete Slater *Inspector Craddock*

They say that you are getting old when policemen start looking younger. Pete's portrayal of a policeman should make you all feel young!

He has also made a formal proposal that future cast lists be in reverse order of appearance.



Pete Beswick *Sergeant Mellors*

This role marks the return to the stage for Pete after a break of a few years.

His last part was as *King Lear* for a group of travelling players in the hostleries of Southern Ireland. Pete is a very keen Morris Dancer.

4th to 12th
March, 1983

A Murder Is Announced

by **Agatha Christie**

Adapted for the stage by **Leslie Darbon**

Directed by Robin Hirsch

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

LETITIA BLACKLOCK	Thelma Falls-Hand
JULIA SIMMONS	Sandra Threlfall
DORA BUNNER	Margaret Hill
PATRICK SIMMONS	David Parry
MITZI	Maria D'Alessandro
MISS MARPLE	Betty Rawlinson
PHILIPPA HAYNES	Margaret Tarpey
MRS. SWETTENHAM	Sue Emslie
EDMUND SWETTENHAM	Robert Stevenson
RUDI SCHERZ	Mike Rogerson
INSPECTOR CRADDOCK.....	John Evans
SERGEANT MELLORS.....	Andrew Gregson



From Left to Right: Thelma Falls-Hand, Margaret Hill, David Parry and Sandra Threlfall



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An SDC Production

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by Michael Frayn, directed by Margaret Mann
An SDC Production

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