



LITTLE THEATRE
A
Southport Dramatic Club
Production



An intriguing tale of sibling-rivalry

Snake in the Grass

By Sir Alan Ayckbourn

Directed by Celia Pope

*23rd November - 1st
December 2007*

Box Office Tel: (01704) 530521/530460 Fax: (01704) 546782
Hoghton Street, Southport PR9 0PA. www.littletheatresouthport.co.uk

1937-2007 SEVENTY YEARS AT THE LITTLE



Supplying the complete
range of legal
services

Maxwell
SOLICITORS **Hodge**

Contact **Michael Yates** on
01704 872156

Home and out of hours visits by arrangement



West Lancashire
Flooring Limited

74 Ormskirk Business Park
New Court Way
Ormskirk
Lancashire L39 2YT
Tel: 01695 578369
Fax: 01695 570623

Email: admin@wlflooring.co.uk

**CONTRACT & DOMESTIC
FLOORING SPECIALISTS**

Decorative Vinyls/Linoleum
Carpets ~ Hardwood Flooring
Stripwood ~ Blockwood ~ Parquet

Ambico



 **Tarkett**



Celia Pope
Director

It has been my pleasure to direct a number of very interesting plays for the SDC, *Snake in the Grass* is the third one with a cast of three or as the pros' call it a 'three hander'.

These present unique challenges of their own. A full size stage is a huge place to fill interestingly with only three people. These three must be very capable of remembering a lot of words, thousands in fact and there is no big supporting cast to bounce from in a frozen moment.

It has been so rewarding to work with the cast you will see tonight. I have asked a lot of them and they have given unstintingly. The backstage crew have also been dedicated to the cause. I praise and thank them all.

My special thanks go to Syd Coley for designing & building the set (he has a little help - you know who you are), also to Tony Berry and Phil Hutchinson for lighting design & operation and to Chris Ratcliffe for sound, whose suggestions have been invaluable.

So after all that; what have we brought to the stage tonight? You are here to see not quite a ghost story. It doesn't involve figures in white sheets but it is powerfully influenced by the spirit of the dead and the phantoms that lie within us.

All our lives revolve around and within relationships. Here we have sisters who come together after a long period of time. Suppressed memories come to the surface. Then they..... no you will have to watch and see. If you are frightened, hold the hand of the person next to you.

Celia Pope

Snake in the Grass



 **mitchell&wright**

COLOUR in PRINT

For an outstanding
performance
...visit the experts

01704 535529
sales@mitchellwright.co.uk

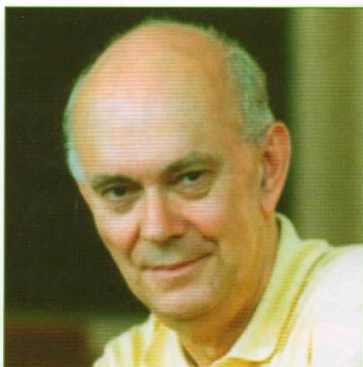


**NORTH WEST
CANCER RESEARCH
FUND**

HELP US FIND THE CAUSE

Funding Cancer Research for Over 50 Years

22 Oxford Street, Liverpool L7 7BL Tel: 0151 709 2919
Charity Reg. No. 223598



Sir Alan Ayckbourn

Alan Ayckbourn, Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough, was born in London in 1939. He has worked in theatre all his life as, variously, stage manager, sound technician, lighting technician, scene painter, prop maker, actor, writer and director. Most of these talents he developed (or abandoned) thanks to his mentor and founder of the Theatre in Scarborough, Stephen Joseph, who first encouraged him to write. Almost all of the 60-plus plays Alan Ayckbourn has written to date received their first performance at this theatre. More than 30 have subsequently been produced in the West End, at the Royal National Theatre or the RSC since his first hit, *Relatively Speaking*, opened at the Duke Of York's Theatre in 1967.

Major successes include *Absurd Person Singular*, *The Norman Conquests*, *Bedroom Farce*, *Just Between Ourselves*, *A Chorus Of Disapproval*, *Woman In Mind*, *A Small Family Business*, *Man Of The Moment* and *Things We Do For Love*. His plays have won numerous awards - including seven London Evening Standard Awards. They have been translated into 35 languages and are performed on stage and television throughout the world. They have also been filmed in French and English. Seven of his plays have been seen on Broadway attracting two Tony nominations. In 1991, he received a Dramalogue Critics Award for his play *Henceforward...* His plays now feature on the school curricula for study and examination. Nihon University, Tokyo houses a permanent collection of his work which is regularly updated.

He is an enthusiastic writer for children and Faber, in their Contemporary Classics series, have published a volume of five of these plays, amongst them the award winning *Mr. A's Amazing Maze Plays* and *Invisible Friends*, both staged at the Royal National Theatre.

Alan Ayckbourn is also an established director, not only of his own work (since 1978, he has directed all of his London productions) but other people's. In 1986, at Sir Peter Hall's invitation, he directed his own company of actors in four plays at the Royal National Theatre winning a Plays & Players Director Of The Year Award for his production of *A View From The Bridge* starring Michael Gambon. In 1995, his production of *Herb Gardner's Conversations With My Father*, starring Judd Hirsh transferred from Scarborough to London's Old Vic Theatre. In the States, he has twice worked at the Alley Theatre, Houston and in 1996 for the Goodspeed Opera House, Connecticut, the Geffen Playhouse, LA and the Kennedy Centre, Washington DC when he directed the US premiere of his and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *By Jeeves*. This was voted one of the 10 Best Productions of that year by Time Magazine. In February 2001 he restaged the musical at the Pittsburgh Public Theater, where it enjoyed a sell-out run, before transferring to Broadway in October of that year.

House and Garden, a 'double' play performed simultaneously in two auditoria, first seen at Scarborough in 1999 was staged at the Royal National Theatre in 2000. It played to packed houses in the Olivier and Lyttelton auditoria. There have been Dutch and German productions and four to date in the US, the most recent at New York's prestigious Manhattan Theatre Club.

He has been the Cameron Mackintosh Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Oxford University and is a fellow of the RSA. He holds honorary degrees from the Universities of Keele, Hull, Leeds, Bradford, York and the Open University and is an Honorary Fellow of Bretton Hall and Cardiff University of Wales. Other accolades include a Montblanc de la Culture Award for Europe for 'establishing a thriving theatrical tradition in Scarborough and for his dedication and commitment to it'; a Writer's Guild of Great Britain Lifetime Achievement Award and a Sunday Times Award for Literary Achievement. He was appointed a CBE in 1987 and in 1997 was knighted for his services to theatre. Alan Ayckbourn would perhaps regard his greatest achievement to be the establishment of a permanent home for the company of which he has been Artistic Director since 1971 - the Stephen Joseph Theatre. Six years of fundraising and hard work culminated in the opening on 30th April 1996 of a splendid two auditor complex. Fashioned from a former Odeon cinema, it stands in the centre of Scarborough and is the realisation of a 40 year dream.

Snake in the Grass



Christmas Celebrations at Tree Tops

Christmas Fayre Luncheon

£15.95 for two courses
£17.95 for three courses

Boxing Day Luncheon

£29.50 per person inc VAT
Children under 12 half price.

Christmas Fayre Dinner

£17.50 per person
£24.50 per person

New Year's Eve Dinner

£79.50 per person
Dancing to our resident DJ and fireworks at midnight.

Christmas Day Luncheon

£72.50 Two sittings 12.00pm and 3.00pm
Children under 12 half price first sitting only.



For bookings phone
01704 572430

www.treetopsformby.co.uk

Whether you are celebrating with family or friends, we guarantee you a magical time. Why not come and join us during the month of December to celebrate this happy festive time. We look forward to welcoming you at Tree Tops



Christmas Party Nights

Fri 7th Dec.	Resident DJ	SOLD OUT!
Sat 8th Dec.	Tina Turner tribute	£32.50
Fri 14th Dec.	Resident DJ	SOLD OUT!
Sat 15th Dec.	Tom Jones tribute	£32.50
Fri 21st Dec.	Blues Brothers night	£32.50
Sat 22nd Dec.	Resident DJ	£22.50

Dance the night away in our superb marquee. Five course banquet plus disco.



*Come and experience
a traditional Christmas
at Tree Tops*

Southport Old Road, Formby.
sales@treetopsformby.fsnet.co.uk

1937-2007 SEVENTY YEARS AT THE LITTLE



Snake in the Grass



EMERSON MENSWEAR

16 Cambridge Walks, Southport PR8 1EN
Telephone 01704 500636 • Fax 01704 545327
email: emersonmenswear@amserve.com

*Leading
designers
including...*

BARUTTI SUITS MILENA SHIRTS PETER ENGLAND
SEIDEN STICKER MEYER TROUSERS GARDEUR TROUSERS
HAGGAR ODERMARK PURE SHIRTS
SOPRANO TIES & CUFFLINKS
BROOK TAVERNER SUITS/JACKETS/BLAZERS
HOM/SLOGGI SWIM WEAR
DOUGLAS GRAHAME

EVENING WEAR
WEDDING AND HIGHLAND - HIRE AVAILABLE
(Also to purchase)

Partners: Stephen & David Emerson



STOKERS[®]
FINE FURNISHINGS

61 Houghton Street, Southport PR9 0PG

Tel: 01704 500300 Fax: 01704 500121

email: sales-southport@stokers.co.uk

www.stokers.co.uk





Snake in the Grass



Snake in the Grass

By Sir Alan Ayckbourn

Directed by Celia Pope

Cast

Annabel Chester Helen Bennett

Alice Moody Samantha Roberts

Miriam Jacquie Wade

Time - the present

Act I

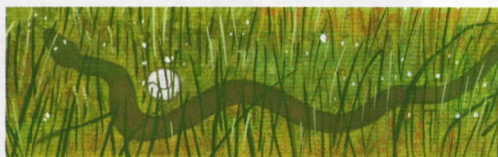
Scene 1 One day in early autumn - late afternoon

Scene 2 The next day - mid afternoon

Act II

The same day - after midnight

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



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

Staging

Stage Manager Peter Heslin

Assistant Stage
Manager (Book) Shiela Furlong
..... Jenny Parker

Props Muriel Leefe
..... Robert Jones
..... Brendan Gillow

Wardrobe SDC Wardrobe & Cast

Set Design Syd Coley

Lighting Phil Hutchinson
..... Tony Berry

Sound Chris Ratcliffe

Stage Crew Christian Barisio
(Guest)

Special Effects Roy Godfrey

Scenic Artist Bob Jessamine

Photographs Neil Hickson

Acknowledgments

The director would like to thank:
Lady Green Garden Centre & Restaurant
for dressing the stage.

Maghull A.T.C. (Air Training Corps)
for loan of the camouflage scrim nets.

The Little Theatre - Home of the Southport Dramatic Club.

The SDC wishes to ensure that all our patrons enjoy a comfortable, enjoyable and safe visit to our theatre. We should be grateful for your cooperation in helping us to achieve this. Please note the following:

- Should you arrive after the performance has started, you will be guided to your seats when a suitable opportunity occurs.
- At the end of the performance, exits will be open at both the front and back of the auditorium.
- First Aid assistance is regularly provided by volunteers from the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. Should you require help, please advise our stewards on duty in the Foyer.
- Patrons with hearing impairments should note that the auditorium has an Induction Loop System for your assistance. Hearing wands are also available from our stewards.
- Cameras and recording equipment may not be operated during performances
- **KINDLY ENSURE THAT YOUR MOBILE PHONE IS SWITCHED OFF.**

Thank you.

DESIGNATED PREMISES
SUPERVISOR, ALAN
NEWPORT



Late Night Opening 'til 7.30pm Tue, Wed & Thurs throughout December

The Magic of Christmas *at Lady Green*

Mesmerising array of wonderful gifts

Spectacular themed displays in our
Christmas Wonderland

Finest collection of Christmas decorations

Premium quality hand picked
Fresh Christmas trees & wreaths

'Best Garden Centre in the North West'
Awarded by the Garden Centre Association

... more inspiring than the High Street

Lady Green
Garden Centre
& Restaurant

Situated just off the A565 between Formby and Crosby • 0151 929 3635



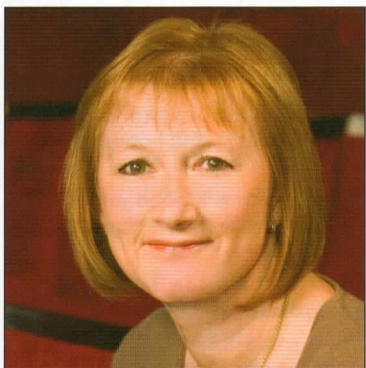
Celia Pope

Director

If given the choice of the serious plays to direct, Celia would have chosen *Snake in the Grass* by Sir Alan Ayckbourn. This is the third, three-hander as they are called in the theatre, meaning only three cast characters that Celia has directed. *Tilting Ground* was the first and *Inside Job* was the second. They demand a different skill in direction and production, which is challenging, interesting and complicated sets seem to be Celia's forte. Tonight is no exception.

As an actor Celia has appeared in numerous plays *Cider with Rosie*, *Waiting in the Wings*, *Lock up your Daughters*, *Prime Suspect*, *Ladies who Lunch*, *Kingfisher* and *Quartet* being among them. Also musicals *My Fair Lady*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Half a Sixpence*, *Kings Rhapsody*, *Showboat*, *Meet me in St. Louis*, *Stepping Out* and *Anne*.

Celia hopes to give another director the job of directing her again before too long.



Helen Bennett

Annabel Chester

Helen is delighted to have been asked to play Annabel as it reunites her with two friends from previous SDC productions. She has appeared with Jacquie recently in the Ray Cooney farces *Run to your Wife* and *Caught in the Net* in which they both played the long-suffering and put-upon 'wives' of a bigamous taxi driver. Now they are playing sisters which has prompted one member of the SDC to ask if they can bear to take to the stage without each other. They would like to make it perfectly clear that they are 'just good friends'.

Helen last appeared in a play with Sam quite a few years ago, namely *Breezeblock Park*. She would have liked to have worked with her again before now, but Sam has only just come out of counselling after the last time.

Helen's last appearance for the SDC (amazingly without Jacquie) was just over a year ago in *Gaslight*, in which she played a wife slowly being driven out of her mind by an evil and calculating husband. No men to worry about in this play. Girlpower reigns supreme, although perhaps danger still lurks...

In spite of all the hard work necessary for everybody involved in this production, not just the three masochists on stage, she says rehearsals have been fun under the expert guidance of Celia, and Helen is now very much looking forward to performing in this funny, sad and scary play.

Snake in the Grass





Jacquie Wade

Miriam

Jacquie is thrilled to be playing Miriam in this dark and emotional but at times very funny play, and also to be working with Celia and Helen again. She first met Celia in 1996 when they appeared together in *Lock up your Daughters*. Celia played the lascivious Mrs. Squeezem and Jacquie played Hilaret a 19 year old virgin!

Then Celia directed her in *Tilting Ground*, which like *Snake in the Grass* was an emotional 3-hander and one of Jacquie's favourite roles to date. Jacquie and Helen had lots of fun (as well as hard work) in two Ray Cooney farces *Run for your Wife* and the sequel *Caught in the Net*, directed by Alistair Hewitt and in both plays they shared the same husband!

However, this play couldn't be more different than the farces but then that's what acting is all about! Although this is the first time Jacquie has worked with Sam she hopes it won't be the last as they have become very friendly as you will see as the play progresses! Jacquie has found this play a real challenge both in the learning of the vast number of lines and the complexities of the 'business' on set and the depths of the character of Miriam. However with such a talented and inspirational director and actors to work with she has found rehearsals to be both rewarding and enjoyable. Hopefully the audience will enjoy their efforts tonight.



Samantha Roberts

Alice Moody

Samantha is delighted to be appearing in a production at the SDC again after a break of six years, and hopes she can still remember how to do it!

She says she likes a challenge which is a good job as she can't really draw on her own experience for the character of Alice.

Sam hopes that audiences won't be too scared when watching this play. The cast have certainly been scared quite a lot of the time.

There are a few 'surprises' in the story but she is sure you will enjoy this thrilling and unusual play just don't look behind you!

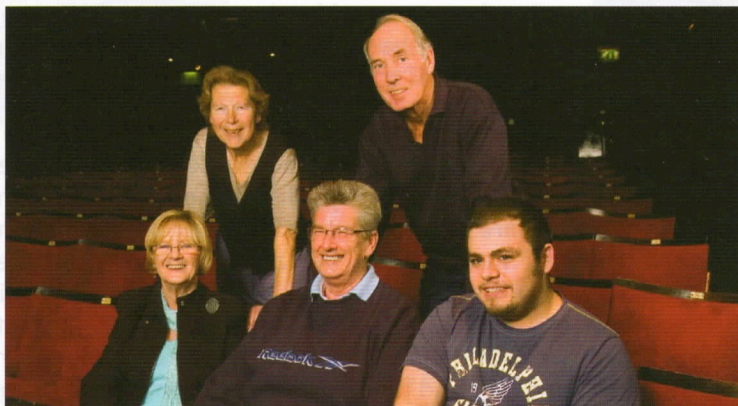
Snake in the Grass



Snake in the Grass

What is the link between the cast and the stage crew?

Simply,
that neither could put on the play without the other!



From left to right: Muriel Leefe, Sheila Furlong, Chris Ratcliffe, Peter Heslin and guest Christian Barisio.

This group of people are collectively known as "The Backstage Crew" and they are, together, responsible for every aspect of the work that goes on behind the scenes, in order that the play is presented to you in an authentic and believable a manner as possible. Without them you would merely witness dialogue on a bare, unlit stage without the bonus of atmosphere, effects and a furnished set to act within.

These members all have their individual roles to play, a potted description of which, we hope you will find of interest.

Peter Heslin is Stage Manager. The Stage Manager is the person, male or female, to whom the Director hands over the entire responsibility of the running of the play, once rehearsals are over. Peter is the one in charge now and his word goes! He says when the curtain goes up and comes down after consulting with the Front of House Manager if it is safe to do so, i.e. all the fire doors closed and stewards in place. He is in touch with the sound and lighting box, and cues in all effects. Scene changes are masterminded by him and in the case of Peter, he will also have spent time in rehearsal and also been involved in the actual building of the set.

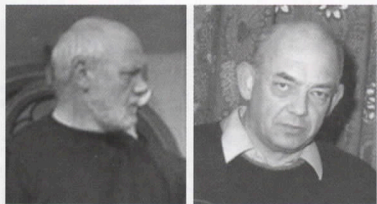


Syd Coley

The set itself was designed by **Syd Coley** from an original idea provided by the Director, Celia Pope. Syd has been a member for as long as we can all remember, a man of extreme artistic ability and was Lighting Director for the club for many years.



Chris Ratcliffe is Sound Operator and has been responsible for correlating all music and sound effects required within the play. This can be very challenging especially, as she will be operating all the sound cues during each performance.



Phil Hutchinson Tony Berry

The varied and artistic lighting effects have been cleverly designed by our resident Lighting Directors, **Tony Berry** and **Phil Hutchinson**. The combined effects of lighting and sound can make or break the atmosphere created by the actors on the stage and we are more than grateful for the many unrecorded hours of work that go into achieving the final result.

The properties necessary to create the picture you see before you, are gathered from far and wide, for each play. Although we have a well-stocked Property Department on the premises, every play (and every Director) requires something different and relevant on the particular period or place they are interpreting. We are extremely appreciative towards any suppliers in the town or local area, who allow us to borrow furniture and furnishings to dress our sets. Lady Green Nurseries have been more than generous in their support of this production and we extend to them our most grateful thanks for the loan of furniture and plants. The lady in charge of props for the run is **Muriel Leefe**. Hers is the unenviable job of making sure that every prop is in the correct place for the actors to sit on, write with, eat off, or whatever, throughout the play, ably assisted by **Robert Jones** and **Brendan Gillow**.

Finally, the post of Assistant Stage Manager (On the Book) - i.e. the Prompt! This is one of the unsung jobs back stage, during performance and indeed, all through the rehearsal period, which involves the person in question keeping their eye firmly on the script, line, page by page, in case a member of cast forgets a line and needs quietly, but clearly reminding! **Jenny Parker** and **Sheila Furlong**, both of them act and understand well, the reassurance that a good prompt can give a cast. Ironically, in an ideal situation, they should never be heard! All that dedication for nothing - it is just nice to know that they are there, along with the rest of the team.



Jenny Parker

We would like to add that these photographs only include the people involved in the running of this particular play, there are many other members of the club who have been an integral part of the backstage planning and organisation of the season, not mentioned here. Perhaps next time, it will be their turn to get their name in print!

Also not forgetting all those volunteer members who are also present in the theatre during a performance, for your safety and enjoyment such as Front of House Manager and stewards, servery staff, bar staff and box office staff.



Memories of the Little Theatre



My father, Edward Hill, was sent from his home in Leeds to work for his uncle in Wigan. My mother, Barbara, lived in Standish. They first met each other at Wigan Dramatic Club, and after their marriage they made their home in Southport and of course joined the Southport Dramatic Club. My father stage-managed and my mother acted. My father's sister, who didn't approve of Barbara, told me how frantic Barbara was when expecting my younger sister in case the baby arrived late so Barbara couldn't be in a particular play. Diana (Donally), now a Country Member arrived on time and Barbara was in the play. However, because Barbara was feeding Diana herself and dashing out to rehearsals and performances, the baby became undernourished and had to be wheeled to the chemist every day to be weighed!

I could read at an early age and used to hear my mother's lines. I also remember going with my father to the Mornington Road rooms on Sunday afternoons. Regarding those rooms, there is a framed photograph in the Clubroom. My parents are the young couple at the left end of the back row. Arthur Pedlar's father and grandparents are also there.

My first memory of the Little Theatre is the laying of the Foundation Stones on the 26th October 1936. There is a stone each side of the main entrance door. Actually I don't recollect the laying of the stones, but I remember that in the Theatre car park there was a dais which backed on to the wall of the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society and I presented a bouquet to Mrs. Harman, the wife of the Society's Treasurer. I was extremely miffed because Kathryn née Purser, (Jean Wright's sister) John Todd and another boy after presenting bouquets and buttonholes were allowed to stand at the front of the staging, whereas Mrs. Harman wanted me to sit on her knee! The newspaper write-up refers to inclement weather, so there were no speeches and everybody went off to the Prince of Wales Hotel.

Margaret Hill

Snake in the Grass





LITTLE THEATRE

25th Jan -
2nd Feb
2008



Sponsored by
 **mitchell&wright**
printers

Habeas Corpus

by Alan Bennet
directed by Ray Mann
box office opens 18th Jan 2008

22 Feb -
1st Mar
2008



The Memory of Water

by Sheelagh Stephenson
directed by Margaret Mann
box office opens 15th Feb 2008

12th Mar -
15th Mar
2008



Blood Brothers

by Willy Russell
directed by Hilary Thomson
box office opens 5th Mar 2008

4th Apr -
12th Apr
2008



A Party to Murder

by Maria Cash & Douglas E Hughes
directed by David Charters
box office opens 28th Mar 2008

2nd May -
10th May
2008



Sponsored by



The Full Monty The Musical

by Terence McNally
Lyrics by David Yazbek, directed by Alistair Hewitt
box office opens 25th Apr 2008

17th May -
24th May
2008

**Birkdale
Orpheus
Society
Production**

Thoroughly Modern Millie

by Richard Morris & Dick Scanlan
by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.
box office opens 10th May Advanced booking 01704 564042

27th May -
31st May
2008



SDC Bar Production

TBA
box office opens 20th May 2008



4th Jun -
7th Jun
2008

**Maghull
Musical
Theatre
Production**

Oklahoma!

*by Rodgers & Hammerstein
by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.
box office opens 28th May 2008*

11th Jun -
14th Jun
2008

**Too Friendly
Theatre
Company
Production**

TBA

*Advanced booking
Tel 01704 541306*

18th Jun -
21st Jun
2008

**Waterloo
Society
Production**

Return to the Forbidden Planet

*by Bob Carlton
by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.
box office opens 9th Jun 2008
Advanced booking Tel: 0151 924 0231*

27th Jun -
28th Jun
2008

**Lorreto
Bamber
School of
Dance
Production**

Lorreto Bamber School of Dance

Advanced booking Tel: 01704 538351

29th Jun
2008

**Old Hall
Brass Wigan
in Concert**

Old Hall Brass Wigan in Concert

Advanced booking Tel: 01942 715684

9th Jul -
12th Jul
2008

**Southport
Operatic
Society
Production**

TBA

*box office opens 30th June
Advanced booking Tel: 01704 228936*

Box Office

Tel: (01704) 530521/530460

Fax: (01704) 546782

Houghton Street, Southport PR9 0PA. www.littletheatresouthport.co.uk



LITTLE THEATRE

A
Southport Dramatic Club
Production

The SDC's spectacular family pantomime

Jack and the Beanstalk

Directed by Les Gomersall

Musical Direction by Paul Williams

Choreography by Nicky Dennis

21st Dec 07
- 6th Jan 08

Sponsored by



NatWest

Booking from 24th November 2007



**Party
Bookings**

Tel: (01704)
530521/530460

1937-2007 SEVENTY YEARS AT THE LITTLE

Box Office Tel: (01704) 530521/530460 Fax: (01704) 546782
Hoghton Street, Southport PR9 0PA. www.littletheatresouthport.co.uk

