

# Southport Dramatic Club

## FAULTY TOWERS

A Comedy by  
John Cleese &  
Connie Booth

From the Classic  
TV Series

Directed by  
Les Gomersall

10th May -  
18th May 2013  
7.45pm



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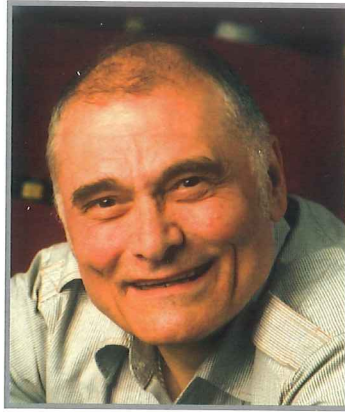
# Director's notes

"Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen and welcome to *Fawlty Towers*.

Where does one start when asked to write about half a page about such an iconic show like *Fawlty Towers*?

I was surprised to discover that the hotel, and its owner Basil Fawlty, are in fact based on John Cleese's real life experiences when he was in Torquay in 1971 filming with the Monty Python team. How lucky we are that Mr. Cleese had the foresight to see how his experiences might provide the basis for what has become one of the best situation comedies to be seen on the small screen.

Over the past few months the cast has worked tirelessly to bring to you tonight three episodes of *Fawlty Towers*:



## Les Gomersall

Director

'*A Touch of Class*', '*The Hotel Inspectors*' and '*Communication Problems*' all well known for various reasons. I need only say '2 house bricks', 'Fear not kind sir, it matters not one wit' and 'Herds of wildebeest sweeping majestically across....' and those of you who know *Fawlty Towers* will know what I mean.

I cannot miss the opportunity of thanking everyone who has helped to put this production together, far too many to mention individually but they know who they are.

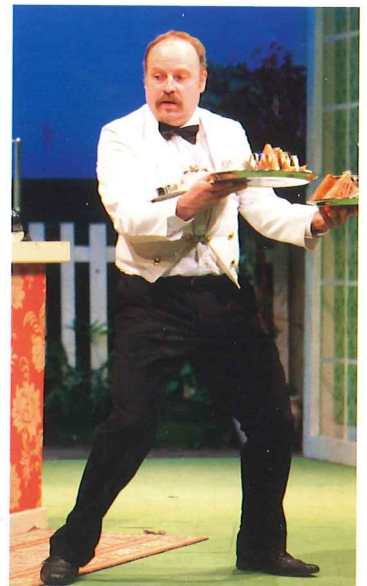
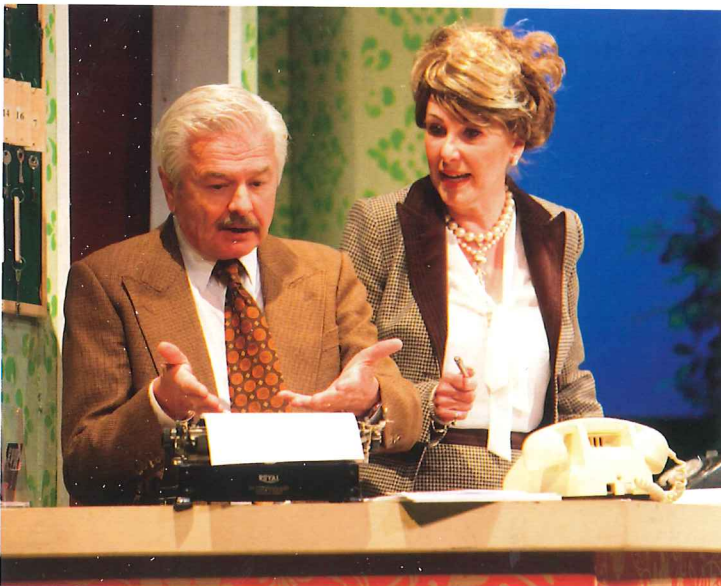
Also a big thank you to you our audience without whom all our hard work would be pointless.

So sit back, relax and laugh along with us at the antics you could only witness at a hotel called *Fawlty Towers*.

PS – If you should bump into a little man who speaks very little English try not to become too confused he's from Barcelona!!

Enjoy."

*Les Gomersall, Director*



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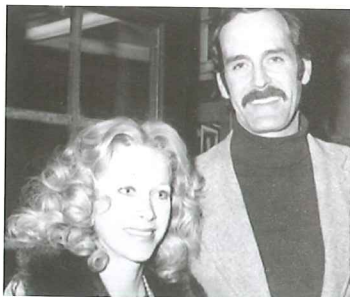


# John Cleese & Connie Booth

John Cleese wrote *Fawlty Towers* with his first wife Connie Booth. They both starred in the sitcom, John Cleese as Basil Fawlty and Connie Booth as the maid Polly.

Cleese was born in Weston-super-Mare on October 27, 1939. At school he was picked on because of his height, he was six foot at the age of twelve; he used humour to deal with the people teasing him. He studied at Cambridge University, where he read law and was involved with the University's Footlights group. Graham Chapman, who later worked with Cleese on *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, was also a Footlight's member.

After graduating Cleese was a writer and performer on *The Frost Report* (1966) and in 1969 he joined with Eric Idle, Terry



John Cleese & Connie Booth

Gilliam, Terry Jones, Chapman and Michael Palin to help write and appear in *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, which was an influential comedy series. The team were also responsible for a number of films including: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) and *Life of Brian* (1979). He has also appeared in the following movies: *Clockwise* (1986), *A Fish Called Wanda*

(1988), two James Bond films and Harry Potter films. He has been married four times and is best known for playing uptight or comic characters.

Connie Booth is an American writer and actress. She was born in Indianapolis in 1944. She played a number of roles in *Monty Python's Flying Circus* and starred in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. She often used her American accent in parts such as Mrs Errol in a BBC television production of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* in 1980. Connie Booth was married to John Cleese from 1968 to 1978 and they have a daughter, Cynthia.

Connie Booth retired from acting in 1995 to be a psychotherapist in London.

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**Evenings start at 7.30pm**

**Matinee: Sat 1st June 2013 at 2pm**

**Music by RICHARD RODGERS**

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# Fawlty Towers

John Cleese was inspired to write *Fawlty Towers* after staying at the Gleneagles Hotel in Torquay. He had been filming on location in May 1971 with the Monty Python team when he became intrigued with the hotel owner, Donald Sinclair. Cleese has described Sinclair as "the rudest man I've ever come across in my life." During the Python's visit, Sinclair put Eric Idle's briefcase in the garden because he was worried it might be a bomb. After filming stopped Cleese and his wife, Connie Booth, stayed on longer at the hotel to watch the unusual behaviour of Sinclair.

Cleese wrote *Fawlty Towers* with Booth after he had left Monty Python. There are only twelve episodes of *Fawlty Towers* as he

did not want to diminish its impact. The first series containing six shows was broadcast on BBC2 between September 19 and October 24, 1975. The second series was shown between February 19 and March 26, 1979. The final episode *Basil the Rat* was not screened until October 25, 1979 because a strike disrupted the making of it.

The main character in *Fawlty Towers*, who is based on Donald Sinclair, is Basil Fawlty and he is equally as rude with his guests. Other characters included Basil's wife Sybil, played by Prunella Scales, a chambermaid Polly (Connie Booth) and the waiter from Barcelona, Manuel (Andrew Sachs). The sitcom is set in the seaside town of Torquay.

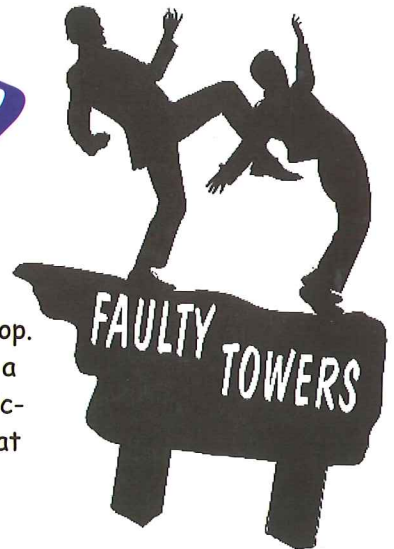
When the first series started the critics were not very impressed, but by the time it finished they were more appreciative. At the time the public could not mention waiters and Barcelona without sniggering. *Fawlty Towers* received recognition at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards (BAFTAs). Both series won Best Situation Comedy awards and in 1976 Cleese was nominated in the Best Light Entertainment Performance category. *Fawlty Towers* has now been sold to forty-five television stations in seventeen countries.

The three episodes chosen for tonight's production by the director, Les Gomersall, are: *A Touch of Class*, *The Hotel Inspectors* and *Communication Problems*.



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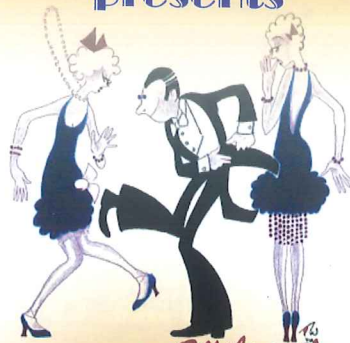
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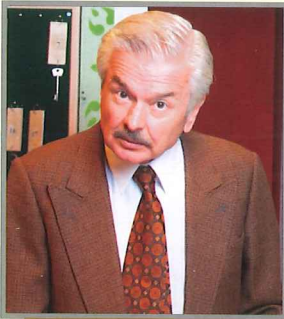
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# FAMILY TOWERS



**Basil**  
Mike Yates



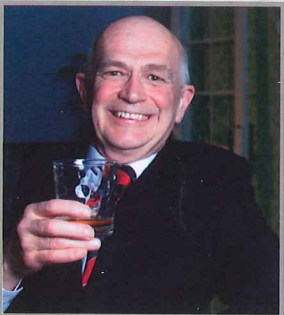
**Sybil**  
Helen Pickavance



**Manuel**  
Adrian Roberts



**Polly**  
Kate Hargreaves



**Major**  
Steve Pritchard



**Miss Tibbs**  
Hilary Thomson



**Miss Gatsby**  
Georgina Gillen



# Also taking part in this production:

## 'A TOUCH OF CLASS'

Lord Melbury .... Ray Mann  
Sir Richard Morris .... Nathan Colman  
Mr. Watson .... Ed Robinson  
Mr. Wareing .... Peter Slater  
Young Wareing .... Ceri Powell  
Mrs. MacKenzie .... Alice Burns  
Policewoman .... Sabrina Regazzoni

Danny Brown .... Greg Russell  
Lady Morris .... Jacquie Wade  
Mrs Watson .... Nikki Ritchie  
Mrs. Wareing .... Sue Palmer  
Mr. MacKenzie .... Eric Chadwick  
Newspaper Boy .... Ceri Powell

## 'THE HOTEL INSPECTORS'

Mr. Hutchinson .... Eric Chadwick  
1<sup>st</sup> Hotel Inspector .... Ed Robinson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Hotel Inspector .... Greg Russell

Mr. Walt .... Nathan Colman  
3<sup>rd</sup> Hotel Inspector .... Peter Slater

## 'COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS'

Mr. Yardley .... Ed Robinson  
Mrs. Richards .... Jacquie Wade  
Mr. Kerr .... Peter Slater  
Terrie .... Nathan Colman

Mr. Thurlston .... Eric Chadwick  
Mr. Firkins .... Greg Russell  
Taxi Driver .... Peter Slater

There will be a 5 minute comfort break between the first and second episodes  
There will be a 20 minute interval between the second and third episode.

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# Staging

Stage Manager .....	Ceri Powell
Assistant Stage Manager (Prompt) .....	Sue Palmer
Properties .....	Lynn Gosling, Sandy Town & Lindsay Haywood
Wardrobe .....	The Cast & The Wardrobe Department
Lighting Design .....	Alan Gosling
Lighting Operators .....	Team LX
Sound Design .....	Bernie Howat
Set Design .....	Syd Coley
Set Construction .....	SDC Construction Team
Scenic Artist .....	Bob Jessamine
Photographs .....	Fletcherhill Photography
Programme Editor .....	Jacquie Bolshaw
Programme Sub Editor .....	Barry King
Programme Content & Research .....	Henry James
Programme Layout and Design .....	Mitchell & Wright (Printers) Ltd

## Music in this production

Status Quo - Rockin' All Over The World  
Brahms - Symphony No.3 in F iii poco allegretto - kopie  
Fawltly Towers - Theme (BBC)

## Acknowledgements

The Director would like to thank: Torquay Visitor Information Centre, Vaughan Parade, Torquay, for their help providing posters and props for the show. The Director would also like to thank: Andrea Spruce for the loan of costumes and The Office Restaurant for the loan of the ice bucket.

### 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 co-operation 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 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.

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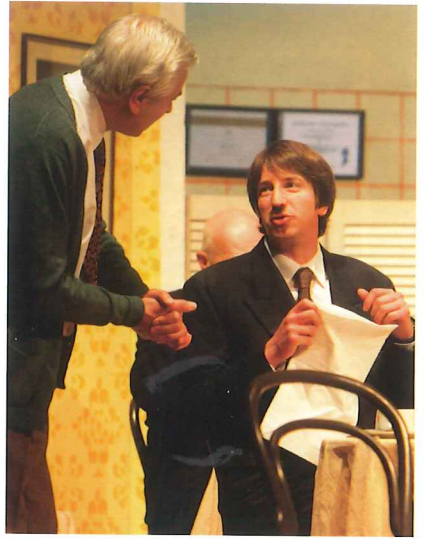
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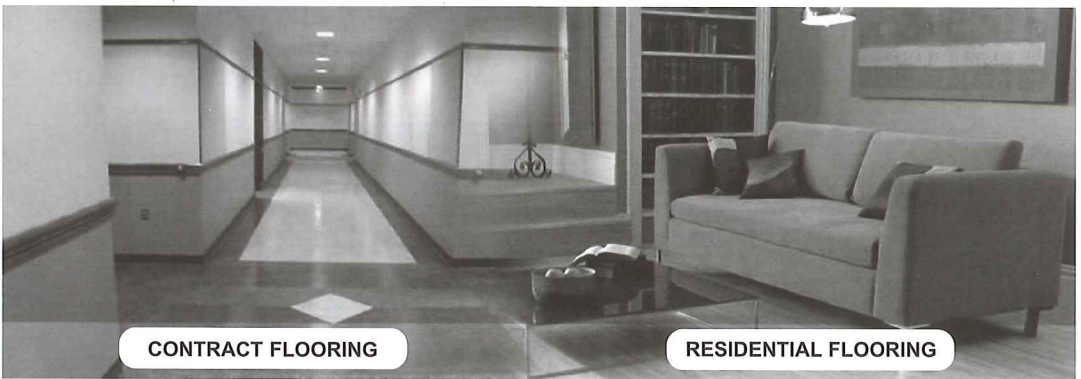
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**Stephen Hughes-Alty**  
Director

# NOW IN REHEARSAL **DAMAGES**

by Steve Thompson

I was lucky enough to meet Steve Thompson at last year's LTG conference. Famous now for writing episodes of 'Doctor Who' and 'Sherlock' I jumped at the chance to direct 'Damages', his award winning first play, which premiered at the Bush Theatre in 2004.

Deep in the bowels of a tabloid newspaper office, the clock is ticking with only an hour left before the presses have to roll. A controversial photo of a topless children's TV star has mysteriously turned up. Who sent it? Why? And is it really all it seems? This sensational photo poses a moral conundrum, exposing deceit, lies and a darker secret that mustn't be revealed at any cost.

I am incredibly lucky to be working with an incredibly talented cast. Mike Stowell plays Howard, "the Guardian of Style" who still demands 1950s values today. Alistair Hewitt is Lister, the hard-nosed Scot with a working-class chip on his shoulder. Inevitably, he jousts with ineffectual, university-educated temporary Night Editor Bas, played by John Delahunty. Laura Ellis completes the cast, playing Abigail, the attractive young night lawyer. She is the outside expert who has been called in to ensure that the libel laws are only breached to the level where the paper will not get sued. With Gay Stowell prompting, I really do have a fantastic team. Please come and support them but be warned the play does contain VERY strong language and one of the best twists in contemporary theatre!

"Damages" is a witty and contemporary (im)morality tale of power-hungry hacks, suicidal sub editors and razor-sharp lawyers, trying to put the past and the paper to bed.

*Stephen Hughes-Alty, Director*

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**SDC Bar/Studio  
Production**



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28th May 2013  
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**4th - 8th June 2013**  
**Damages**

by Steve Thompson

Directed by Stephen Hughes-Alty

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.

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**12th - 15th June 2013**

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**The Musical**

**Music, Lyrics & Script by Victoria Wood**

**Matinee - Saturday 6th July 2013**

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# Southport Dramatic Club

# NEWS

A Bar/Studio Production

# DAMAGES

By Steve Thompson

Directed by Stephen Hughes-Alty

4th - 8th June 2013

7.45pm

Contains  
Strong  
Language

No booking  
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Cynical &  
Howlingly  
Funny



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