

Southport Dramatic Club

A Romantic and Intriguing play by
Daphne du Maurier

The Years Between

Directed by
Margaret Mann

25th October –
2nd November 2013
7.45pm



LITTLE THEATRE
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Southport Dramatic Club

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Director's notes

The story of this play, written in 1943, is based on a true event. John Rathbone, M.P. for Bodmin, was reported missing on wartime service. His wife took over his role and was returned, unopposed, to take her husband's place in Parliament. Women in Parliament were even fewer, then, than they are nowadays! Subsequently, however, it was, rumoured that Rathbone was still alive!

In du Maurier's play, Diana Wentworth becomes an M.P., taking Colonel Wentworth's seat after his plane crashes into the sea. Diana relishes her newly found independence in her role as a politician and embraces social change in the new post-war world to come. She, also, begins a new relationship. Then news arrives that Michael, her husband, may not be dead and more secrets are revealed!



Margaret Mann
Director

The play has all the narrative skill, conflicting relationships and insightful wit which are the hallmarks of the playwright, Daphne du Maurier. This fascinating, enjoyable, but controversial play, was 'forgotten' after the war, until revived at the Orange Tree theatre in 2007. As we rehearsed the play, we found complexities that we hadn't realised existed. Each time we have run through a

scene, we have enjoyed discussing it more and more - the sign of a well-written script. Finding the appropriate music for the period has also been fun.

We have a very dedicated and talented cast, including a young boy, which is well-supported by the backstage team; prompt, stage manager, props, sound, lights, wardrobe and publicity. They have all worked diligently to present this play to you to-night, just as the F.O.H. teams have done in welcoming you to our comfortable theatre. I should like to thank everyone involved with this production for their commitment, co-operation and good humour! We hope you will have an interesting, entertaining evening and will enjoy "The Years Between"

Margaret Mann
Director

Daphne du Maurier

Daphne du Maurier was born in London in 1907 into an artistic and cultured family.

Her grandfather, George du Maurier, was a Punch caricaturist, her mother and father, actors, and her cousins, the inspiration for the children in *Peter Pan*.

J.M.Barrie was a frequent visitor to her home. Her books *Jamaica Inn*, *Frenchman's Creek*, *My Cousin Rachel*, *Rebecca* and others, are now regarded as modern classics.

Some have been adapted for the stage and screen. Daphne du Maurier admitted, later in life, that Diana's emotional

dilemma in *The Years Between* was drawn from her own experience - her ambivalent marriage to a secretive war hero, General 'Boy' Browning.

by Margaret Mann.

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Houghton Street, Southport PR9 0PA Telephone: 01704 530 521

This amateur production by arrangement with Music Scope and Stage Musicals Ltd of New York

www.maghullmtc.co.uk

Plays written by Daphne du Maurier

Several of Daphne du Maurier's plays are adaptations of her novels:

The Years Between was written in the Summer of 1943. In Margaret Forster's biography of du Maurier, the author says that the play was "autobiographical in inspiration," and adds it was also based on a real story. The work was first staged at Manchester Opera House and opened on November 20th, 1944. On January 10th, 1945 the play transferred to the Wyndham's Theatre in London's West End. The theatre had been managed by du Maurier's father, Gerald. Margaret Forster believes du Maurier had enjoyed writing *The Years Between*. The London production starred Nora Swinburne, as the wife (Diana Wentworth), and Clive Brook (Michael Wentworth), played the soldier-husband role. It was a hit and ran for 617 performances. The reviews



Daphne du Maurier

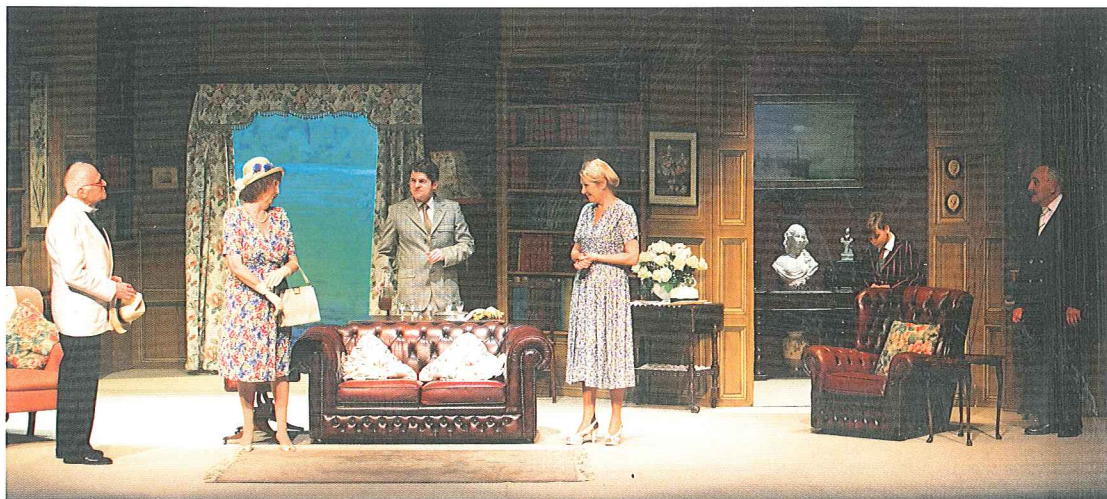
praised the 'quiet realism' but they were mixed. Du Maurier was also unsure about Nora's portrayal of the wife. In 1946 *The Years Between* was made into a film directed by Compton Bennett. It starred Michael Redgrave and Valerie Hobson.

Rebecca, the stage adaptation, starred Celia Johnson, Owen Nares played De Winters and Margaret Rutherford was Mrs

Danvers. *Rebecca* was staged at the Queen's Theatre, London, in 1940 and then moved to the Strand Theatre.

Perhaps du Maurier's best known play is *September Tide*. This tells the story of a woman who is attracted to her son-in-law. It was first shown at the Aldwych Theatre, London, in December 1948 and ran until 1949. *September Tide* has been revived occasionally. A production of the work opened at the Comedy Theatre in London 1994 starring Susannah York and Michael Praed. In 2005 an adaptation of *September Tide* was broadcast on BBC Radio 4.

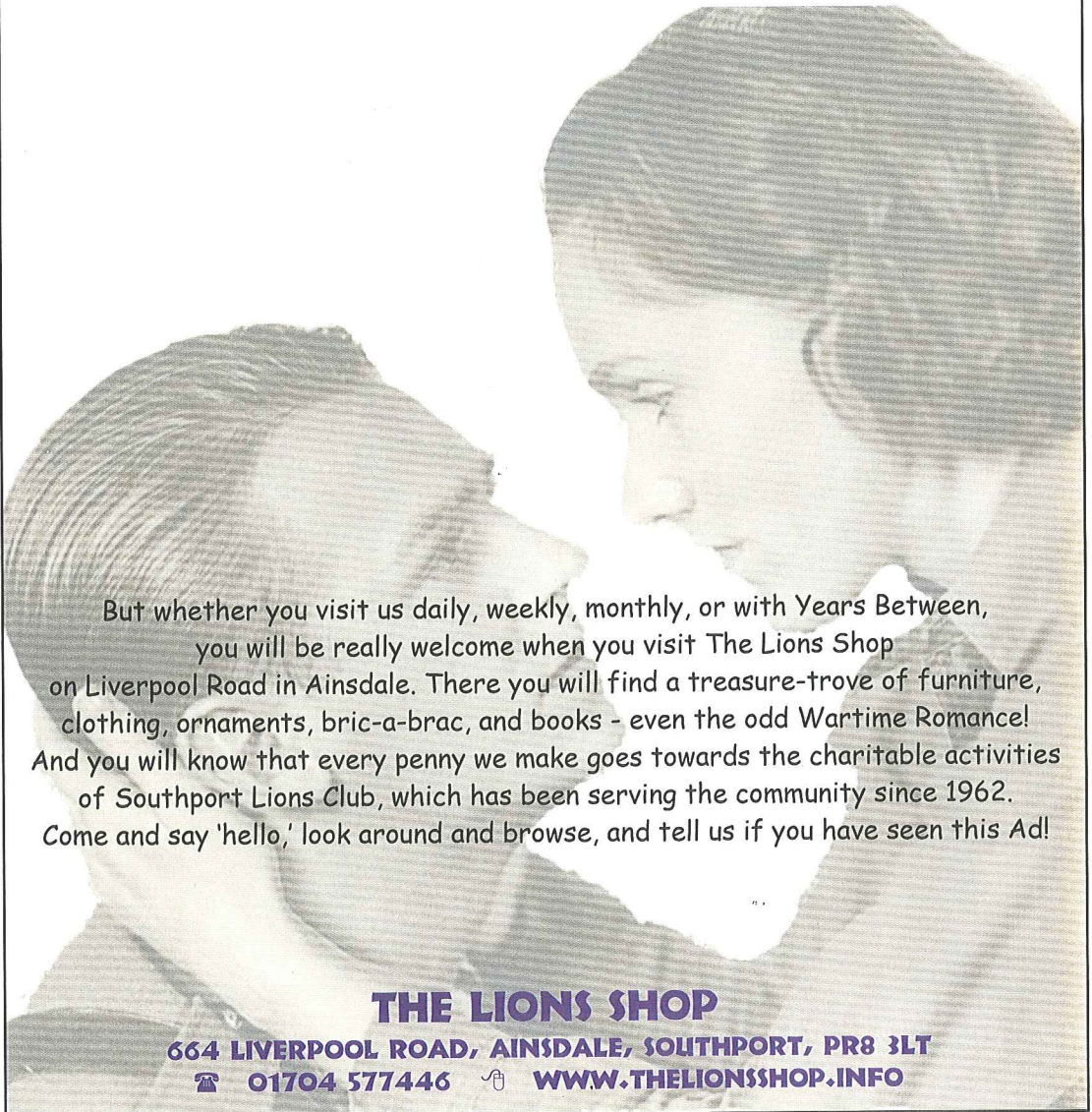
The Southport Dramatic Club has a history of producing Daphne du Maurier's plays: *Rebecca* in March 1963, *My Cousin Rachael* in March 1986, *Rebecca* (for the second time) in February 1992 and *September Tide* in October 2009.





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Daphne du Maurier

Daphne du Maurier was born in London on May 13, 1907. She was the daughter of the famous actor-manager Sir Gerald du Maurier and the actress Muriel Beaumont.

The author and playwright was educated at home and also in Paris, and from her early years she was intrigued by imaginary worlds.

The Loving Spirit, du Maurier's first full length novel, was published in 1931.

A year later the author married Major Frederick Browning and they had three children together. During the 1930s she wrote extensively and with success and became famous.

Rebecca, which was first published in 1938, is considered to be du Maurier's masterpiece. It is an international bestseller and has never been out of print.



Daphne du Maurier

The opening lines of the book are famous in their own right and they are: "*Last night, I dreamt I went to Manderley again...*" *Rebecca* was made into a film directed by Alfred Hitchcock in 1940. Vivien Leigh, star of *Gone with the Wind*, auditioned for the part of the narrator, but it went to Joan Fontaine. Laurence Olivier played Maxim de Winter. The film took the Best

Picture Oscar in 1940. Hitchcock also made a film of du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn* and his film *The Birds* is based on one of her short stories.

Du Maurier spent a large part of her life in Cornwall at Menabilly near Fowey. She leased the house in 1943 and lived there until 1969. *Manderley*, the home of Maxim de Winter in *Rebecca*, is based on Menabilly. In later years she concentrated on writing travel guides, plays, biographies and her autobiography.

Du Maurier was made a Dame of the British Empire in 1969 and died in 1989 at the age of eighty-one in Par, Cornwall.



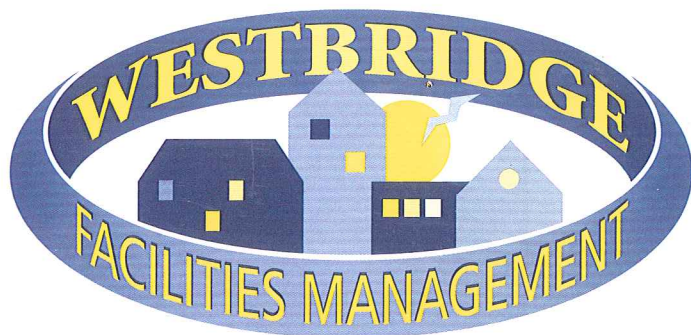
Gerald du Maurier



Alfred Hitchcock



Laurence Olivier



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Synopsis of Scenes

Act One

Scene 1. Autumn, 1942, afternoon.

Scene 2. Early Summer, 1945, 6.00p.m.

Scene 3. The following Monday, early evening.

Act Two

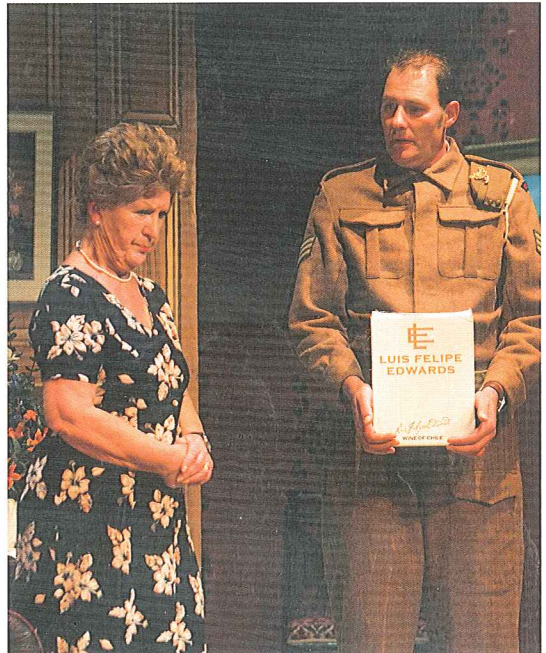
Scene 1. A month later, mid-day.

Scene 2. After lunch, the same day.

Scene 3. After dinner, the same evening.

The action takes place in the Library of Colonel Wentworth's old Manor House in the country.

We recommend that you beat the rush and pre-order your drinks in the bar prior to the performance.



The Years

by Daphne



Joe Evans Bloom
Robin Wentworth



Pat Simpkin
Nanny



John Sharp
Sir Ernest Foster



David Charters
The Vicar



Ann Richards
The Vicar's Wife

Between

lu Maurier



Helen Pickavance
Diana Wentworth



Greg Russell
Richard Llewellyn



Simon Armstrong
Colonel Michael Wentworth



Alice Burns
Miss Jameson



Jonathan Tatler
Venning

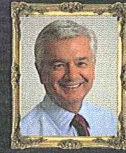
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Staging

Stage Manager	Alan Gosling
Assistant Stage Manager (Prompt)	Jean Watkinson
Properties	Julie Whelan, Gay Stowell, Muriel Leefe
Wardrobe	Kate Hargreaves, Suzanne Gray and Barbara Galvin
Lighting	Syd Coley
Sound	Brian Hodge
Set Design	Syd Coley
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


*There'll be bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover; I'll be seeing you;
Run rabbit, run; Coming home my darling; When they sound the last all clear;
Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition; Piano concerto in A minor - Grieg
There'll always be an England; We'll meet again.*

Acknowledgements

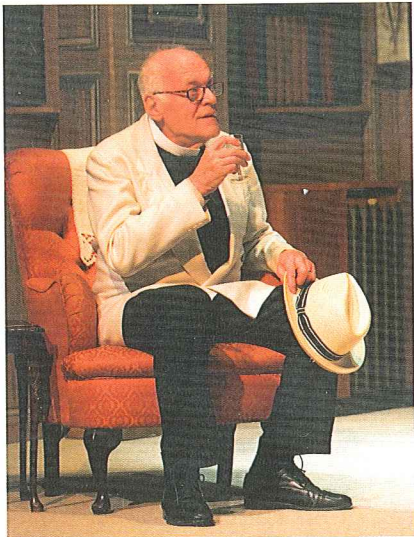
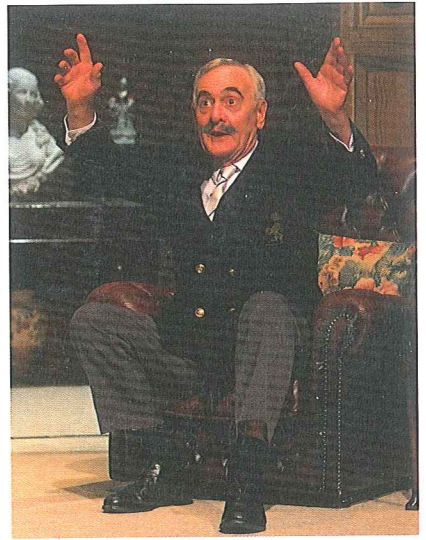
The Director would like to thank Phil Robson for the loan of his authentic split-cane fishing-rod and Peter Burroughs for being the voice of the wireless announcer.

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.
- Please ensure that all mobile phones and electronic devices are switched off during the performance. 
- Photography and video recording are not allowed during the performance.

Designated Premises Supervisor, Alan Newport



How the SDC functions continued...

In the last programme we looked at how the Play Selection and Casting Committee (PSCC) operate. In this programme we oversee the functions of our Productions Committee.

The Productions Chair has to sanction ALL plays before the PSCC proceed with the selection of a director, cast etc. Even the most ambitious of plays usually get through this process as the team rise to challenges. They "yes" before "how"!

The Stage Director will discuss with the Director of the Play regarding layout and set design. Simple sets are constructed from stock flats which are kept at the Little Theatre Annex (situated on Scarisbrick Street) however, many sets need to be built from scratch and the preparation of these may take place off site. The set normally goes on stage from

the Monday prior to the week in which the show opens.

The Stage Director will then co-ordinate with the various departments of lighting, sound, wardrobe and properties in conjunction with the Director of the play and the Stage Manager. Roles are then defined for set preparation and the backstage crew for the show appointed.

The Stage Manager is in overall charge backstage throughout the run of the show and must know the show in detail as he/she provides both lighting and sound cues during the performance from their position at the Technical Console situated just off-stage.

These roles are both exciting and a challenge although not obvious to the audience but all are critical to the aimed perfection of a production.

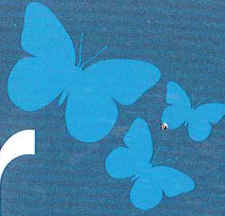
As soon as the audience leaves after the last performance the set is 'struck' (completely removed) and after one to two hours the stage is bare and awaiting the next production.

We currently have vacancies on the backstage team and if this is an area you feel you would like to be involved in please let us know and we will invite you to come and have a tour of the backstage and the backstage equipment. We are an amateur theatre but the majority of our equipment is to professional specification, indeed several of our members have gone on to pursue a career in this area as a result of the skills they have acquired with the Southport Dramatic Club.

Our articles about the functioning of this wonderful Little Theatre will continue in forthcoming programmes.



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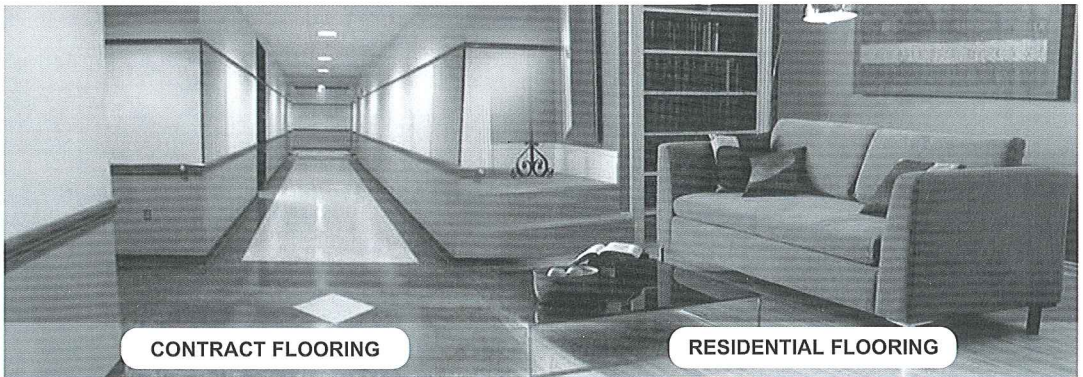
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WORDSEARCH

Hidden in the grid below are the names of plays and books written by Daphne du Maurier - see if you can find them.

Rebecca, Jamaica Inn, Frenchman's Creek, The Scapegoat, Hungry Hill, Mary Anne, Rule Britannia, The Birds, The House on The Strand, The Years Between, September Tide

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E R T H Y E N U N T I E W S H A A E E



NOW IN REHEARSAL

"OLD ACTORS NEVER DIE"

BY LYNN BRITNEY

OLD ACTORS NEVER DIE...

...They simply lose the plot

POPPY FLANAGAN
Director

Rehearsals began on Monday 30th September so by the time you are reading this, they will be well underway.

Our "Old" actors are furiously learning lines, bumping into the furniture and pouring copious cups of tea and coffee, and not just in the coffee breaks. The props team are certainly going to be kept busy making brews and washing up!

The title of the play sort of gives the game away. You will already have assumed that 'chaos' is on the agenda. We are hopeful that the 'chaos' will be organised but it's early days as far as rehearsals go, so anything could happen!

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15th November 2013
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22nd - 30th November 2013
Old Actors Never Die

An hilarious comedy
by Lynne Brittney
Directed by Poppy Flanagan

**SDC
Production**



Box Office Opens:
21st October 2013
at 11.00am

18th December 2013 - 5th January 2014

Aladdin

SDC's Family Friendly Pantomime
by Stephen Hughes-Alty
Directed by James Hughes-Alty

Party Bookings NOW
on 01704 504800

**SDC
Production**



Box Office Opens:
17th January 2014
at 11.00am

24th January - 1st February 2014
Murdered to Death

A 'whodunnit'
by Peter Gordon
Directed by Adrian Roberts

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited

**SDC
Production**



Box Office Opens:
14th February 2014
at 11.00am

21st February - 1st March 2014
Lettice & Lovage

A Comedy
by Peter Shaffer
Directed by Michèle Martin

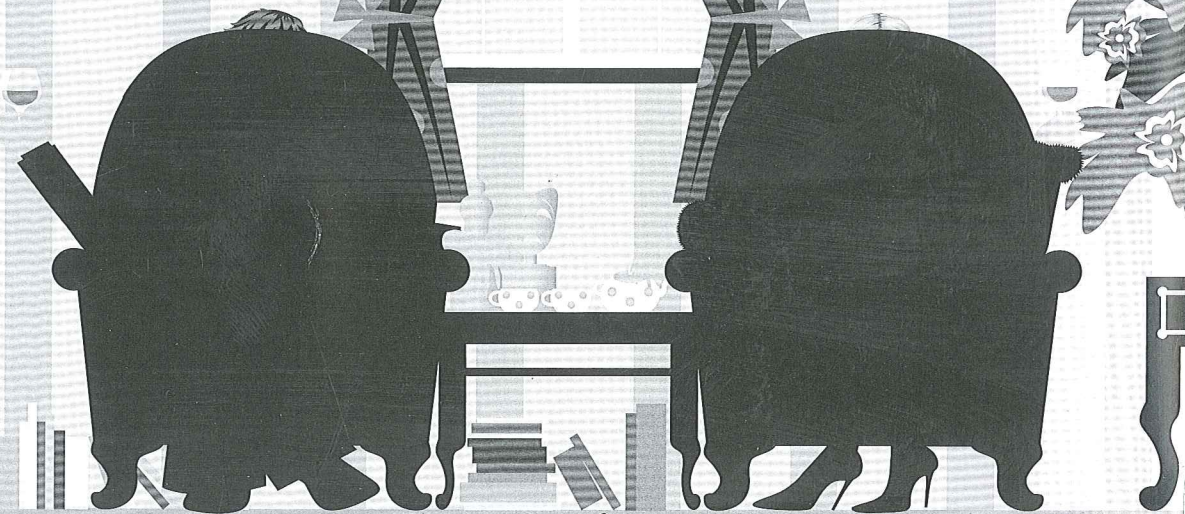
Southport Dramatic Club

OLD ACTORS NEVER DIE

A COMEDY BY
LYNN BRITNEY

DIRECTED BY
POPPY FLANAGAN

22ND - 30TH
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7.45PM



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