

Southport Dramatic Club

A Traditional Family Pantomime

Dick Whittington and His Cat

By Stephen Hughes-Alty
Directed by James Hughes-Alty

Musical Direction by Pete Scholes, Choreography by Pippa Morris

18th December 2014 –
4th January 2015

★★★★★
Trip Advisor Rating


LITTLE THEATRE
Home of the
Southport Dramatic Club



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Director's notes

Once again I am delighted to be directing the annual pantomime for the SDC. It is always a pleasure to work on a production full of colour and magic, and to be free to allow your imagination to run wild; nothing affords you that luxury like a traditional Christmas pantomime. This year we present 'Dick Whittington and His Cat', the tale of a young ambitious boy who through hard work and determination rises to become Lord Mayor of London. Of course it's not an easy journey, and although there are setbacks along the way, with the help of his friends, and his brave and loyal cat, he overcomes the machinations of the evil King Rat and wins the hand of his true love.

Just like our hero, I couldn't have done this alone, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have made this



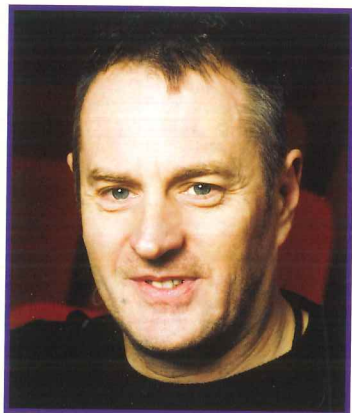
James Hughes-Alty
Director

production possible. Stephen Hughes-Alty has once again provided us with a fantastic script, full of drama, romance and comedy, as well as portraying a wonderfully nasty villain for us all to boo and hiss at!! Pippa Morris

has choreographed the exciting and energetic dance routines, which really help to bring this show to life and Pete Scholes has provided a rich and magical soundtrack to the whole show as our Musical Director.

Backstage, there are far too many people to thank individually, so I will give my thanks to everyone from wardrobe, props, sound, lighting and staging, who have given and continue to give so much of their time to bring the panto to our stage, not forgetting Lindsay our Stage Manager and her crew who keep everything moving as it should throughout the run.

Finally I would like to thank you, our loyal audience, who support our theatre throughout the year and allow us to create the magic that is live theatre.



Pete Scholes
Musical Director



Pippa Morris
Choreographer

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An Interview with the Author

Stephen Hughes-Alty has had a busy year, not only is he Chairman of the Southport Dramatic Club, he has also written our pantomime. His version of *'Dick Whittington and His Cat'* was put together over a period of eight weeks; it is the sixth pantomime in his repertoire.

He explained what audiences can expect: "Above all, I hope it is entertaining. I also hope that the story is strong because without a good story you have nothing. Most professional pantomimes shoehorn minor celebrities into their casts and it becomes a vehicle for them rather than serving the story. In the SDC pantomimes that I have written it is the story that is the star of the show. I hope it appeals to all age groups with comic routines, spectacular special effects and songs that people can sing along to."

Stephen was approached to script *'Dick Whittington and His Cat'* by the SDC after the success of last year's show (*Aladdin*), also written by Stephen. He commented: "I have researched the original story of Richard Whittington who actually did become Lord Mayor of London in 1397. He started off as a merchant and became mayor four times although there is no evidence he ever owned a cat. I have also read several retellings of the story for ideas. It is the first time this revised script has been performed. However, I have used the basic story twice before. Indeed, when we performed it in 1999/2000, Pippa Morris, our choreographer, was *Dick Whittington*. The script includes some of the older material in it but it has mostly been re-



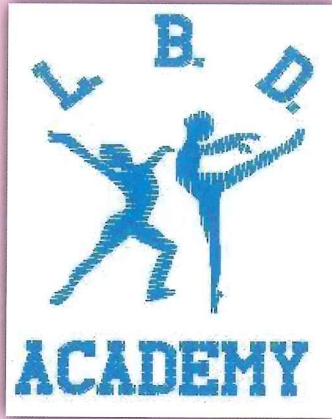
Stephen Hughes-Alty
Author

written to fit this particular cast and to include the usual contemporary cultural references: Darcey Bussell, Simon Cowell and Boris Johnson all get a mention."

It is usually a gradual process to put the script together and Stephen explained the stages: "I usually write audition pieces first enabling the director to decide what he needs to see at auditions. I then wait until it is cast before I complete the script. This is so I can write to people's strengths. If, for example, we have a particularly strong singer in a certain part I can write in songs for that character. If they are more of a comic performer then they will get more funny lines. It is a very organic process and I consult with the director, the cast and the MD as the script takes shape. I love watching a director take my words and interpret them in their own way. Similarly the cast can take something you have written and turn it into something much more than you ever anticipated."

A good pantomime can be enjoyed by young and old alike and Stephen hopes this is the case with his work. He commented: "There is lots of slapstick for the children, lots of spectacle, lots of dramatic action. *Dick Whittington* is one of my favourite tales as it really does have something for everyone. We have a love story, a shipwreck, a climactic battle between good and evil and lots of laughs along the way. Pantomime has been a **HUGE** part of my Christmas. Every year my parents would take me to see a pantomime – and I loved it. I remember seeing Cilla Black play *Dick Whittington* in Liverpool when I was about eight. It was truly magical. Pantomime allows us to remember our childhood, to reconnect with the child we were and see the wonder of Christmas through a child's eyes again. What could be more magical than that?"

So has Stephen enjoyed his year in office so far? He replied: "Enormously. I love new challenges and being Chairman is challenging but also very rewarding. It keeps me very busy. Above all I enjoy meeting our audiences. As I write this I am learning lines for pantomime, making minor alterations to the final scene, and planning the theatre's New Year's Eve celebrations. But as I said, ***I love a challenge!***"



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The Origin of Dick Whittington

Dick Whittington and His Cat is based on the life of Richard Whittington who lived from about 1350 to 1423. His father was Sir William Whittington, Lord of the Manor of Pauntley in Gloucestershire and Richard was his youngest son.

When Sir William died, the eldest son inherited the estate, so Richard went to London to search for employment and became a 'Mercer'. He sold valuable cloths from abroad – silk, velvet, and cloth of gold. Amongst his clients were King Richard II, who, it is said, owed £1,000 to Whittington when he was overthrown in 1399. Another client was King Henry IV. Whittington made so much money that after 1397 he was able to lend money to

the Crown and as part of the deal he did not have to pay custom's duty on wool he exported.

In 1393, he was made a City Alderman and four years later when the Mayor died in office Whittingham was chosen by the King to become the new Mayor. He was subsequently re-elected and became Mayor of London four times.

He married Alice the daughter of Sir Ivo Fitzwarren of Dorset in 1402. They had no children together and Alice died in 1411. Whittington died in 1423. In his will he left £7,000 to charity, the equivalent of £3m today. The money was used to carry out various public works such as repair work to St Bartholomew's

hospital and the establishment of almshouses (homes for poor people). Improvements were carried out to the water supply and a public lavatory was built (known as Whittington's longhouse).

After his death Whittington's name became well-known because his will had helped so many people. Stories evolved about his early life. It was said he was from a poor background and that he had acquired his wealth with the help of a cat, although there is no evidence he had a cat. Obviously there was little truth in these tales as he was the son of a Lord. In 1604 a play was produced about his life and the first pantomime about him is believed to have been in 1814.



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Synopsis of Scenes

Act One

- Scene 1 Outside Fitzwarren's store
- Scene 2 Carnaby Street
- Scene 3 Inside Fitzwarren's store
- Scene 4 A country lane
- Scene 5 Highgate Hill

Act Two

- Scene 1 'The Saucy Sal' in London docks
- Scene 2 The Hold
- Scene 3 'The Saucy Sal' at Sea
- Scene 4 The Shores of Morocco
- Scene 5 The Desert Oasis
- Scene 6 Back to London
- Scene 7 The Wedding at The Guild Hall



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



Dick Whittington



Cast

Dick Whittington.....	Robbie Fletcher-Hill
Alice Fitzwarren.....	Kerry Baratinisky
Tommy the Cat.....	Hayleigh Griffin
Sarah the Cook.....	Rob McGregor
Idle Jack.....	Peter Forshaw
Fairy Tinkle.....	Marilyn Fletcher-Hill
King Rat.....	Stephen Hughes-Alty
Alderman Fitzwarren.....	Barry Johnson
Captain Flotsam.....	Brendan Gillow
First Mate Jetsam.....	Zack Johnson
Sultan of Morocco.....	Georgina Gillen
Saffron.....	Mari Claire Malone
Cinnamon.....	Zoe Findlay

ck ington and His Cat



Ensemble

Joe Gillen
Astrid Travis
Emily Blinkhorn
Harry Gascoigne
Eleanor Morris

Georgia Daly
Sophie Wright
Bethany Griffin
Sophie Jones

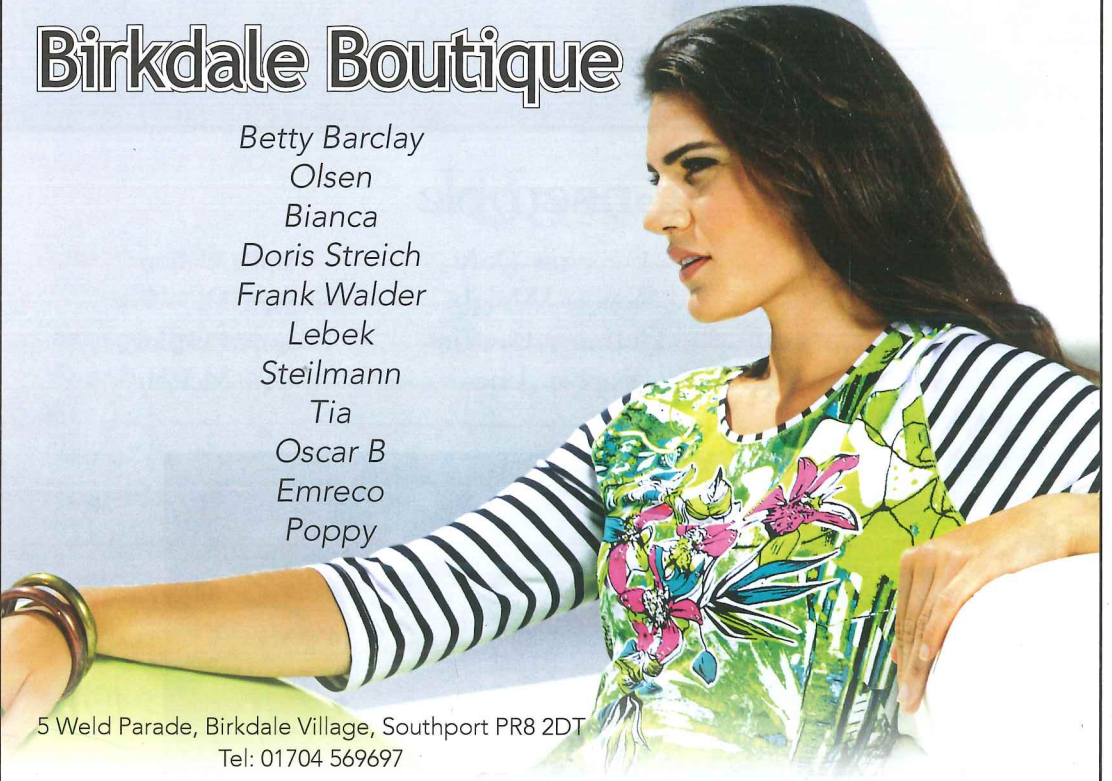
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Emma Dingsdale
Eleanor Gillow
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Staging

Production Team

Director	James Hughes-Alty
Musical Director	Pete Scholes
Choreographer	.....	Pippa Morris

Crew

Stage Manager	.....	Lindsay Haywood
Deputy Stage Manager	.....	Chris Ratcliffe
Properties	.....	Lynn Gosling and Joanne Johnson
Matron/Rehearsal Prompt	.....	Sue Palmer
Wardrobe	.....	Kate Hargreaves, Ceri Watkins and Michelle Ball
Lighting Design	.....	Team LX
Sound	.....	Bernie Howat and David Proffitt
Scenic Artist	.....	Bob Jessamine
Backstage and Technical Crew	.....	Alan Morris, Sarah Viali, Nicola Kewley, Steven Taylor, Jan Hale, Lewis Scutt, Paul Wilkinson, Peter Bamford, Mark Howarth, Jeremy Myers, Adrian Roberts, Dave Ballinger, Philip Hutchinson, Jennie Hale, Mike Yates and Michèle Martin
Set Construction	.....	The SDC Construction Team
Photographs	.....	Fletcherhill Photography
Programme Editor	.....	Jacquie Bolshaw
Programme Sub Editor	.....	Nathan Colman
Programme Content & Research	.....	Henry James
Press Promotion	.....	Ron Ellis & Ellen Campbell
Programme Layout and Design	.....	Mitchell & Wright (Printers) Ltd

Music in this Production

Act 1

London is London	.....	Chorus
Let's All Go Down The Strand	.....	Sarah, Jack and Chorus
It's Not Where You Start It's Where You Finish	.....	Dick
In The Navy	.....	Sarah, Jack, Flotsam, Jetsam, Alderman Fitzwarren & Chorus
Love Is An Open Door	.....	Alice and Dick
The Twelve Days of Christmas	.....	Sarah, Jack, Flotsam and Jetsam
Goodbye to Love	.....	Alice
Anything Can Happen	.....	Fairy Tinkle and Chorus

Act 2

Step in Time	.....	Jack and Chorus
Can't Take My Eyes Off You	.....	Alice and Dick
I'm All Alone	.....	Sarah and Jack
It's All About That Bass	Sultana and Chorus
Reach For The Stars	Entire Cast

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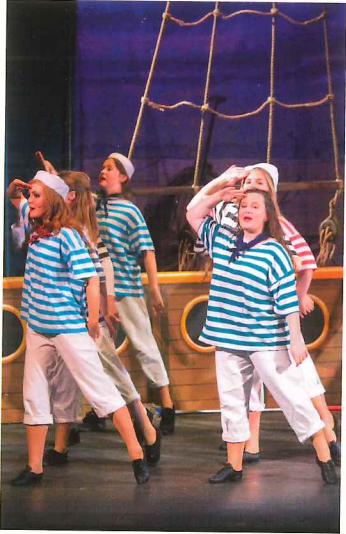
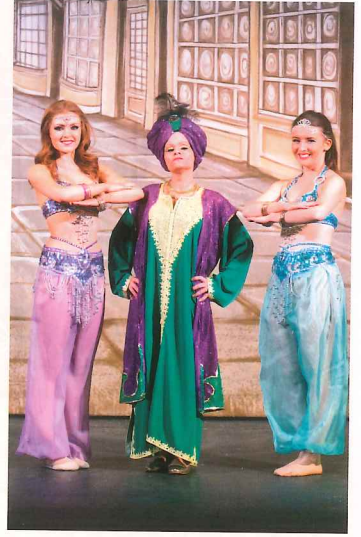
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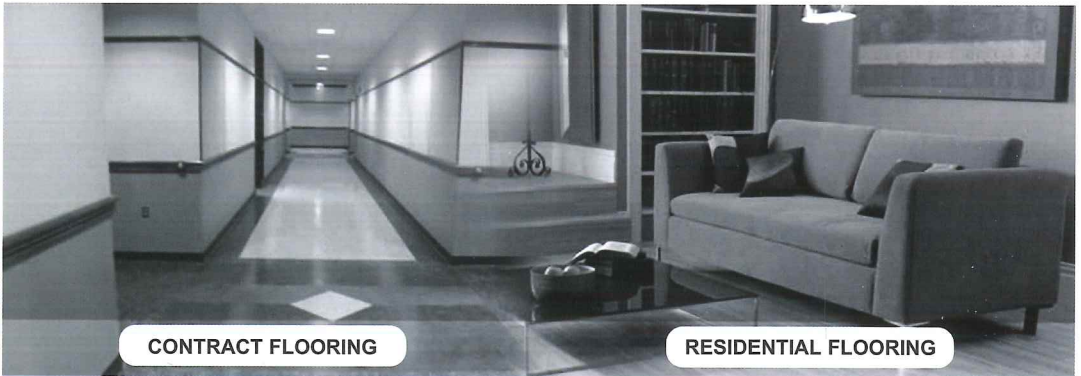
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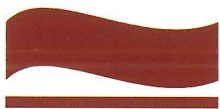
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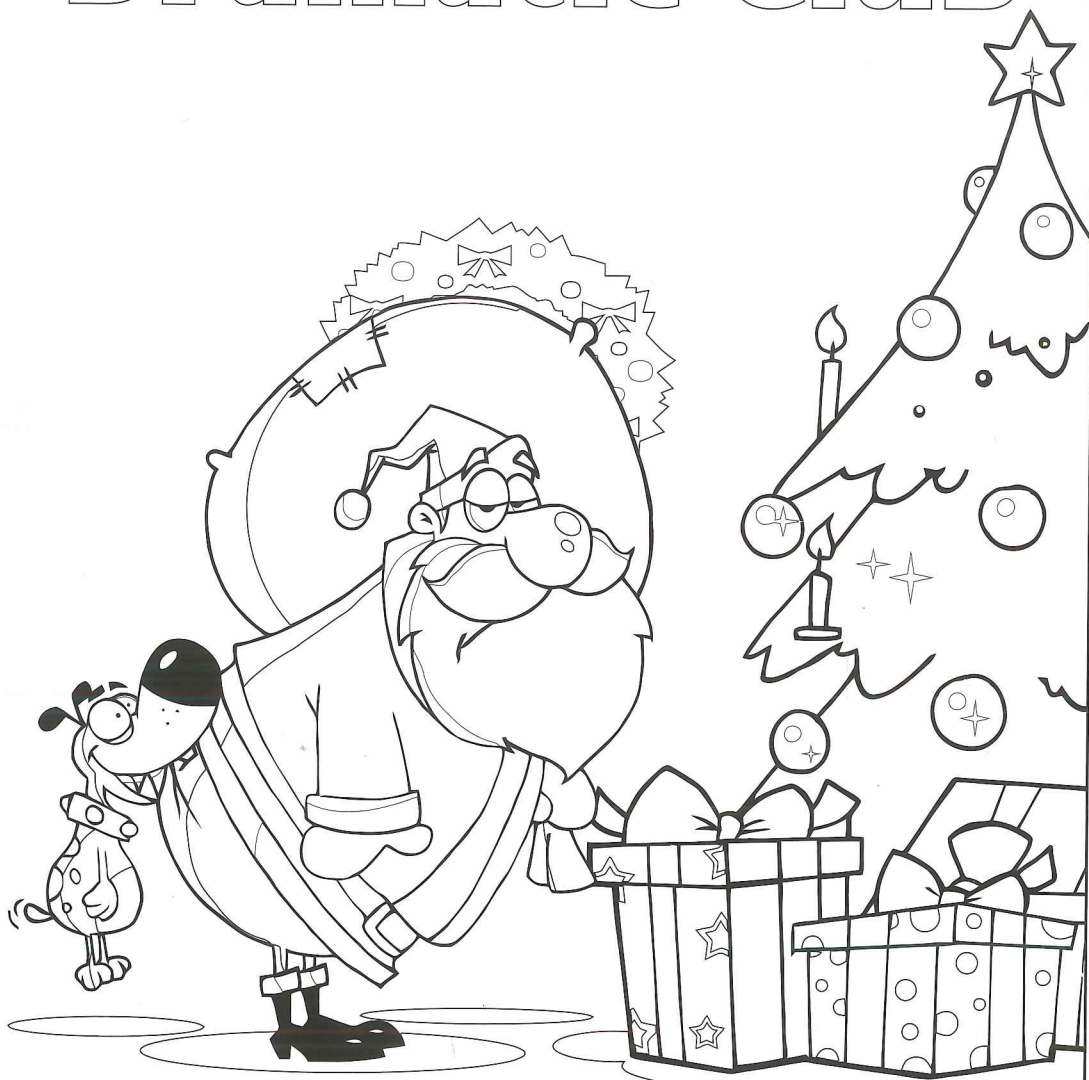
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Merry Christmas
from us all at
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Dramatic Club



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David Davies
Director

NOW IN REHEARSAL

The Constant Wife

By W. Somerset Maugham

I hope you are all enjoying our traditional Christmas pantomime 'Dick Whittington' and revelling in the joyous seasonal atmosphere! Our January play will, I am sure, also tickle your theatre palates with Somerset Maugham's deliciously witty comedy 'The Constant Wife', a wronged upper-class wife who fulfils her revenge in a most original and amusing way. With glorious 1920s' costumes, mostly provided by the Royal Exchange theatre, in an Art Deco setting, we plan some visual delights. Moreover, the play abounds with the types of 'upstairs' characters found in the recent TV series of *Downton Abbey* which was a 'must' for Sunday evening viewing. Rehearsals are already well-advanced and I am delighted to be directing the play, working with our highly talented cast of mostly familiar faces. If you like a traditional 'well-made play' with interesting and well-developed characters, cleverly plotted and with splendid dialogue you will not be disappointed in 'The Constant Wife'. Please come and support us.



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Southport Dramatic Club

The Constant Wife

A sparkling social comedy of manners

By W. Somerset Maugham

Directed by David Davies



23rd - 31st January 2015

7.45pm

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