

# Southport Dramatic Club

A Satirical Comedy

# Yes, Prime Minister

By Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn

Directed by Robin Hirsch & Steve Pritchard

10th – 18th April 2015

7.45 pm



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# Director's notes



**Robin Hirsch**  
Director

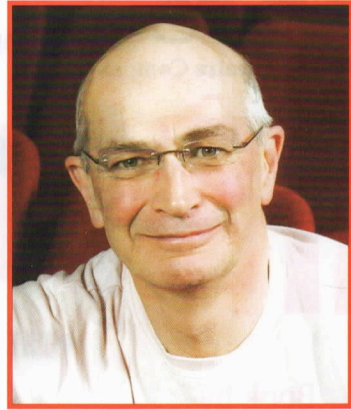
When asked to direct "Yes, Prime Minister" I was delighted. Having watched the television series avidly in the '80's' I couldn't wait to read the script of the play written for the stage in 2010 and wasn't disappointed.

The writers Antony Jay & Jonathan Lynn have managed to maintain the magic formula of Prime Minister Jim Hacker, Cabinet Secretary Sir Humphrey Appleby and Personal Secretary Bernard Woolley & colleagues in a very modern story line....which in view of the actual forthcoming General Election, adds even more pertinent humour to many of the lines!

It has been a great pleasure to direct such an enthusiastic and hard-working cast, alongside Steven Pritchard, as Assistant Director, who has given support, ideas and practical help to me throughout.

We all hope we have managed to bring you an enjoyable and fun-filled evening's entertainment.

*Robin Hirsch*



**Steve Pritchard**  
Assistant Director

When asked what tends to blow Governments off course, Harold Macmillan famously replied, "Events, dear boy, events". Jim Hacker and company are facing a veritable gale of events in this very sharp satire. Throughout our rehearsal period real politics have mimicked the action in the play, much to our cast's amusement. We hope you will enjoy watching the well-loved characters from the BBC series wrestling with their thoroughly up-to-date problems.

*Steve Pritchard*



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# The Authors

Sir Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn are the brains behind 'Yes, Prime Minister'.

## Sir Antony Jay

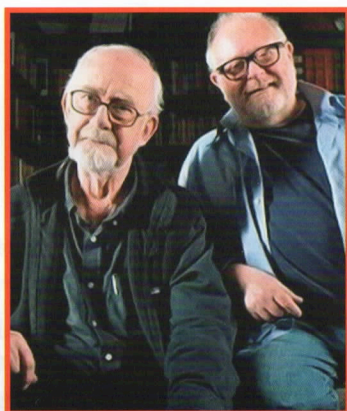
was born on April 20, 1930 and attended St Paul's School and Magdalene College, Cambridge. He graduated with a first-class honours degree in Classics and Comparative Philology.

In 1955, after National Service with the Royal Signals, he started work at BBC Television. He was a founding member of 'Tonight', a current affairs programme, and became its editor in 1962. A year later Sir Antony was appointed Head of Television Talk Features.

He wrote 'Householders Guide to Community Defence Against Bureaucratic Aggression' in 1972.

He is most famous for teaming up with Jonathan Lynn, between the years 1980 and 1988, to write the hit TV series 'Yes, Minister' and 'Yes, Prime Minister'. The programmes were watched by the Prime Minister at the time, Margaret Thatcher. Jay and Lynn worked together again when the show returned on Gold in 2013.

In 1988, he was given a Knight Bachelor for his



**Antony Jay & Jonathan Lynn**

broadcasting and public relations career. He has written BBC TV documentaries on the monarchy including, 'Elizabeth R: A Year in the Life of the Queen'. Following this work he was made a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO). He wrote a controversial report in 2008 for the Centre for Policy Studies saying that the BBC could be saved if it reduced its activities.

## Jonathan Lynn

was born on April 3, 1943 in Bath, Somerset. As well as being the co-writer of 'Yes Minister' and 'Yes, Prime Minister', he is also a director, producer and actor. He went to Bath's Kingswood School and Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he studied law. During his time at Cambridge, he was

involved in the University Footlights Club. Lynn was part of the 1963 revue called 'Cambridge Circus' which was shown on Broadway and *The Ed Sullivan Show*. It starred John Cleese and Graham Chapman.

He was shortlisted 'Most Promising New Actor' in the 'Plays and Players Awards' after starring in the West End production of 'Green Julia' in 1965.

Lynn was Motel the tailor when 'Fiddler on the Roof' first opened in the West End in 1967. He appeared in 'Doctor in the House' in 1969 and was involved in the following British television films: Jack Rosenthal's 'Bar Mitzvah Boy' (1976) and 'The Knowledge' in 1981. Lynn has also had cameo film appearances in 'Into the Night' (1985), '3 Men and a Little Lady' (1990) and 'Greedy' (1994). He wrote the screenplay for 'The Internecine Project' (1974) and the script for 'Clue' (1985) and 'Nuns On The Run' (1990). He and Jay were also behind the books 'The Complete Yes Minister' and 'The Complete Yes, Prime Minister'. In 1993 he wrote the novel 'Mayday'. His directing credits include 'My Cousin Vinny' (1992) and 'Nuns on the Run' (1990).

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# Yes, Prime Minister

'Yes, Prime Minister', written by Sir Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn, was first staged at the Chichester Festival Theatre from May 13 to June 5, 2010. The play then moved to the Gielgud Theatre in the West End where it ran from September 17, 2010 to January 15, 2011. David Haig played Jim Hacker and Henry Goodman was Sir Humphrey. Charles Spencer of The Daily Telegraph wrote a very favourable review of the production: "The show's writers, Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn, are as bang on the money as ever, while

those superb actors David Haig and Henry Goodman make the roles of the PM and his cabinet secretary, formerly played by the much missed Paul Eddington and Nigel Hawthorne, entirely their own."

After the play closed in London it toured the country, with Richard McCabe as Jim Hacker and Simon Williams as Sir Humphrey Appleby. McCabe and Williams then took the play back to the Apollo Theatre in London where it had a ten week run. It has since been back in the West End and also on tour.

The play keeps many of the much-loved aspects of the original TV production. When the curtain rises the country is in crisis as debt and unemployment are increasing. The Prime Minister, Jim Hacker, is leading a coalition cabinet.

Hacker believes that salvation will come if an agreement can be made with the country Kumranistan. If he can sign a deal, then England would be entitled to a multi-trillion pound loan. But first how do they solve the Kumranistan's foreign secretary's request?



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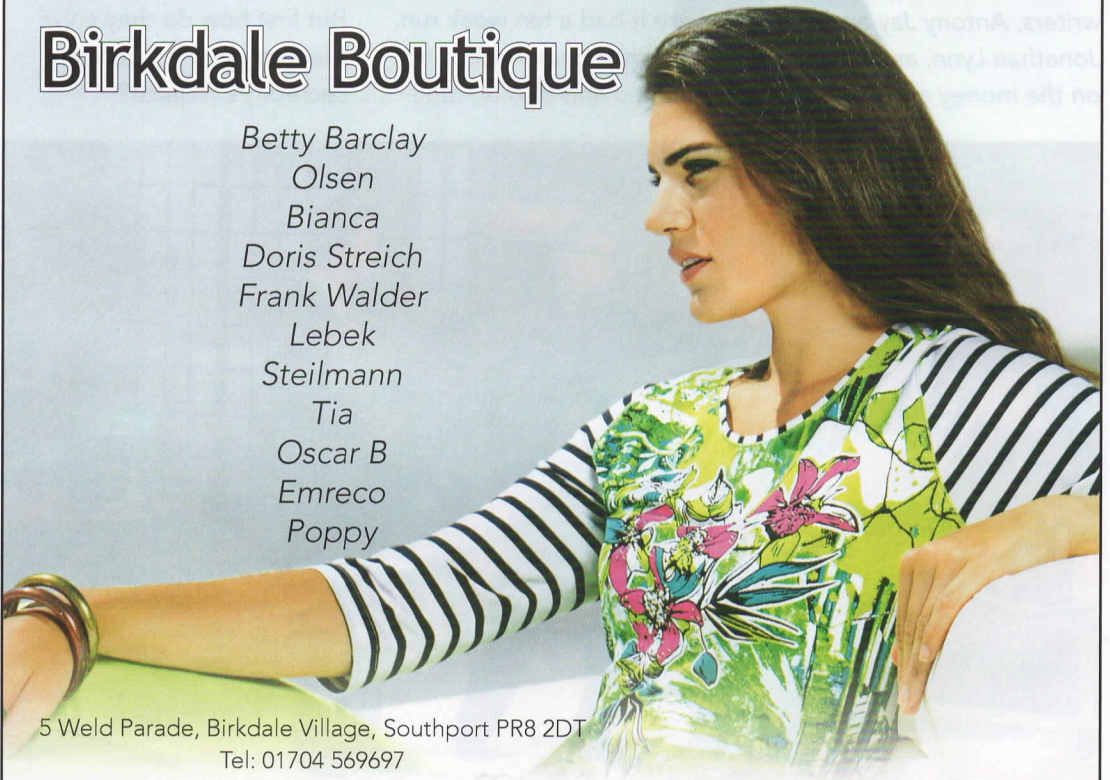
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# Synopsis of Scenes

The action of the play takes place in the Prime Minister's study at Chequers, an English Tudor country mansion.

## Act 1

Scene 1 Autumn, late afternoon on a Friday

Scene 2 The same day, after dinner

## Act 2

Scene 1 The action is continuous

Scene 2 The following Sunday morning



## 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

# Yes, Prime M



**Simon Armstrong**  
Jim Hacker



**Les Gomersall**  
Sir Humphrey Appleby



**Ray Mann**  
Kumranistan Ambassador



**Helen Pritchard**  
Simone Chester

# Minister



**Peter Forshaw**  
Sir Bernard Woolley



**Deborah Bloom**  
Claire Sutton

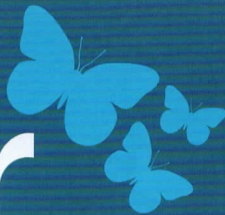


**Graeme Hunt**  
Jeremy Burnham



**Rikki Spofforth**  
Robin Simpson

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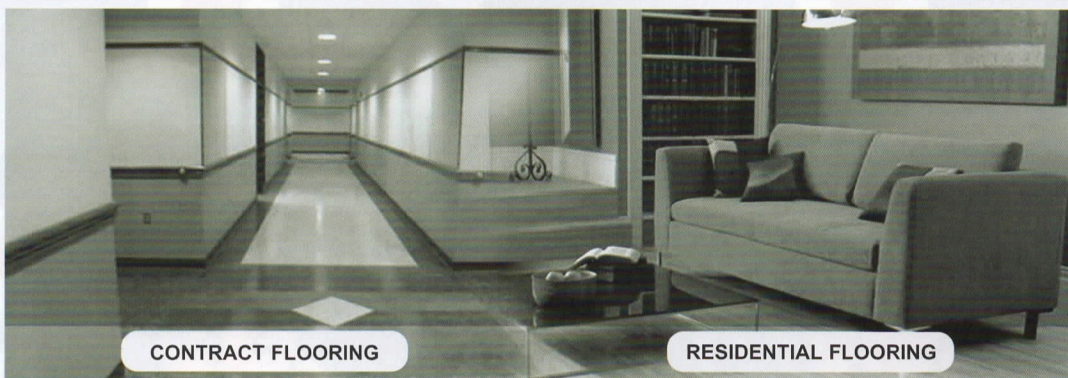
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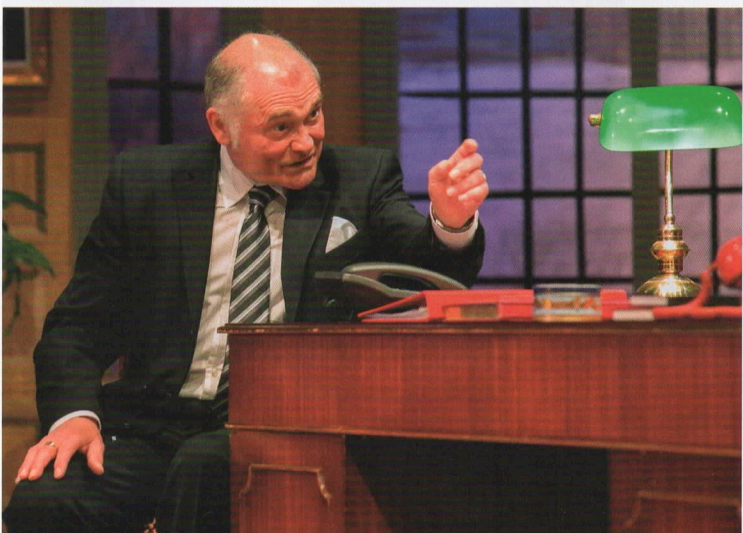
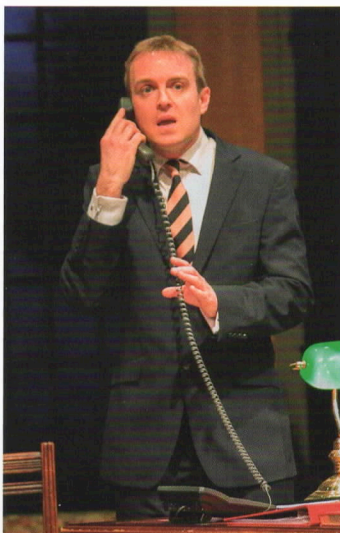
# Staging

Stage Manager	.....	Adrian Roberts
Assistant Stage Manager (Prompt)	.....	Fran Percival
Properties	.....	Helen Pritchard, Sandy Town & Lynn Gosling
Wardrobe	.....	Kate Hargreaves & Sherel Coley
Lighting	.....	Syd Coley & Team LX
Sound	.....	David Proffitt
Scenic Artist	.....	Bob Jessamine
Set Design	.....	Robin Hirsch & Steve Pritchard
Set Construction	.....	The SDC Construction Team
Photographs	.....	Fletcherhill Photography
Programme Editor	.....	Jacque Bolshaw
Programme Content & Research	.....	Henry James
Press Promotion	.....	Ron Ellis & Ellen Campbell
Programme Layout and Design	.....	Mitchell & Wright (Printers) Ltd

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to Messrs. Matthew Hughes and Alan Newport for the loan of special television and recording equipment used in the show.





# How the SDC Works...

## The Wardrobe Department

To step into our Wardrobe Department is an adventure, where you can become whomsoever you wish from King Rat in last year's Pantomime to a lady of the night in *Les Miserables*.

The first step is to meet with the director of the play who, hopefully, will know how they want the cast to come across to you our audience, what period is the play set in, the time of year, and time-span the play covers. Whatever the characters are in the play: old, young, staid or flirty - how you dress them is important. Some directors like to stretch our imagination and do things 'a little differently' - for me that's the challenge!!

We recently downsized our considerable stock of clothes and we now have a new home near the theatre in

Wright Street. Sifting through hundreds of items has been hard work but great fun. A lot of our stock is original and has, over the years, been donated by you our theatre audience for which we say "**THANK YOU**".

The next step is when the cast and the director come into the wardrobe and have a 'trying on session' and final decisions are made. In the recent production of *A Servant to Two Masters* which was directed by our present Chairman, Stephen Hughes-Alty, he was quite clear how he wanted the production to look - using a range of five



colours with five different fabrics and patterns to be used for each costume consequently all the costumes were made 'in house'. That for me is the magic of costume!! I do so hope that we make your visit to our theatre an exciting visual experience.

*Sherel Coley*



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The N.C.P. car park usually charges at an hourly rate. However, if you present your 'car parking' ticket at the Little Theatre Box Office, Bar or Foyer Servery you will be given a 'follow-on' ticket. When you return to the N.C.P. car park to pay before driving away you then insert firstly the 'car parking' ticket followed by your 'follow-on' ticket and the charge will be reduced to **£1.00**.

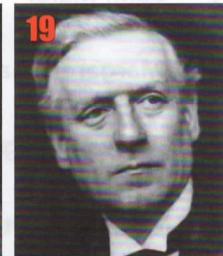
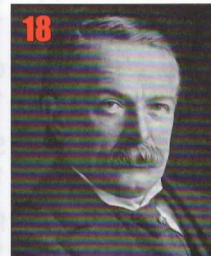
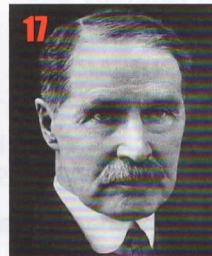
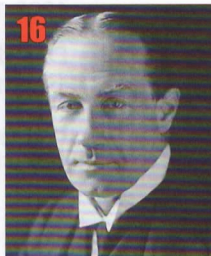
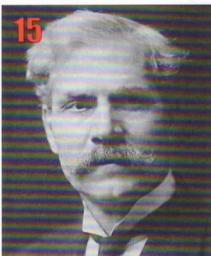
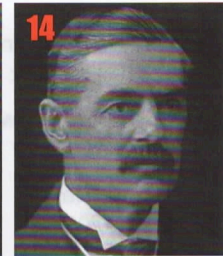
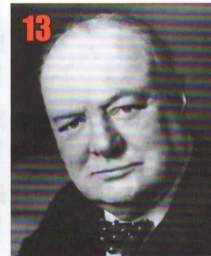
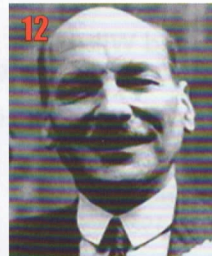
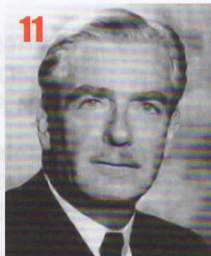
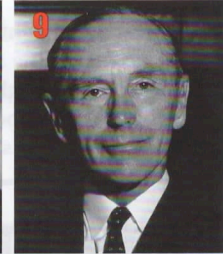
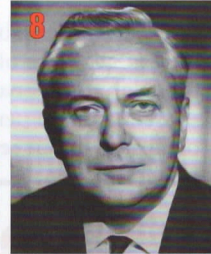
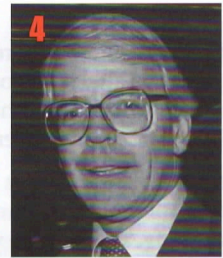
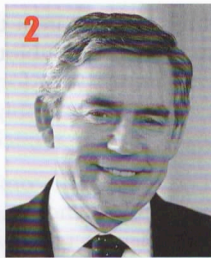
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# Can you names the Prime Ministers?



Answers overleaf



**Stephen Hughes-Alty**  
Director

# NOW IN REHEARSAL

# Glorious

## by Peter Quilter

'Glorious' tells the tale of Florence Foster Jenkins, (July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1868 – November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1944) an American amateur operatic soprano who was known – and ridiculed – for her lack of rhythm, pitch, and tone and her generally poor singing ability. When her father died in 1909 Jenkins inherited sufficient funds to begin her singing career. She took voice lessons and became involved in the musical social circles of Philadelphia and, later, New York City.

From her recordings it is apparent that Jenkins had little sense of pitch and rhythm, and was barely capable of sustaining a note. Her dubious diction, especially in foreign language songs, is also noteworthy. Nonetheless, she became popular for the amusement she provided. Critics sometimes described her performances in an intentionally ambiguous way that only served to pique public curiosity, e.g. "Her singing at its finest suggests the untrammelled swoop of some great bird".

Despite her critics, Jenkins was firmly convinced of her greatness. She compared herself favourable to the renowned sopranos of the time, and dismissed the abundant audience laughter during her performances as 'professional jealousy'. She was aware of her critics, but never let them stand in her way: "People may say I can't sing" she said, "but no-one can ever say I didn't sing".

My extremely talented cast are working incredibly hard to bring Florence's story to the SDC stage; and what an incredible story it is. The tale of this incredibly strong-willed woman is, in turn comical, sad, uplifting and thought provoking and serves to remind us all that we should follow our dreams. With live singing, a contemporary set, sublime period costumes and great performances we hope this will be a fitting and 'glorious' conclusion to our season.

## Name the Prime Ministers

- |   |  |    |   |    |   |
|---|--|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | <b>David Cameron</b><br>2010 - Present | 8  | <b>Harold Wilson</b><br>1964-1970 & 1974-1976         | 15 | <b>James Ramsey MacDonald</b><br>1924 & 1931-1935           |
| 2 | <b>Gordon Brown</b><br>2007-2010       | 9  | <b>Sir Alec Douglas Home</b><br>1963-1964             | 16 | <b>Stanley Baldwin</b><br>1923-1924 & 1924-1929 & 1935-1937 |
| 3 | <b>Tony Blair</b><br>1997-2007         | 10 | <b>Harold McMillan</b><br>1957-1963                   | 17 | <b>Andrew Bonar Law</b><br>1922-1923                        |
| 4 | <b>John Major</b><br>1990-1997         | 11 | <b>Sir Anthony Eden</b><br>1955-1957                  | 18 | <b>David Lloyd George</b><br>1916-1922                      |
| 5 | <b>Margaret Thatcher</b><br>1979-1990  | 12 | <b>Clement Attlee</b><br>1945-1951                    | 19 | <b>Henry H Asquith</b><br>1908-1916                         |
| 6 | <b>James Callaghan</b><br>1976-1979    | 13 | <b>Sir Winston Churchill</b><br>1940-1945 & 1951-1955 |    |   |
| 7 | <b>Edward Heath</b><br>1970-1974       | 14 | <b>Neville Chamberlain</b><br>1937-1940               |    |   |

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Directed by Stephen Hughes-Alty

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# Southport Dramatic Club

A Heart-Warming Finale

# GLORIOUS

A Hilarious True Story by Peter Quilter  
Directed by Stephen Hughes-Alty

8th - 16th May 2015

7.45pm



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