



# Edward Alderton Theatre

5 Brampton Road | Bexleyheath | Kent | DA7 4EZ

**Box Office 020 8301 5584**

[www.edwardalderton.org](http://www.edwardalderton.org)

*Newsletter: March 2008*

## Editorial

Without wishing to sound alarmist, it became apparent at our recent AGM on 13 February that the future of our beloved Edward Alderton Theatre is by no means assured.

The problem, put simply, is that there are just not enough people to run shows in as professional a way as we would all like. A falling membership is partly to blame, as is the unwillingness of some members to contribute to the backstage work that is so vital to maintaining a high standard of production.

Acting is obviously the 'glamorous' side of theatre life - but it is the unseen work of the backstage crew that allows the actors to tread the boards in the first place. Lighting (rigging and running), sound, prompting, stage managing, properties, costumes, directing - all these jobs are integral to the smooth running of the Alderton (as they are to any theatre) - but this is where we seem to have the most problem in recruiting volunteers.

We are also having problems finding people to help with Front of House jobs, such as running the bar.

If you are already a member and enjoy the friendly, intimate surrounding of the theatre, I would encourage you to think seriously about working behind the scenes on a future production, if you have not done so already. If you are a non-member and enjoy the productions we put on for you, please think seriously about joining the theatre - annual membership is a mere £15 - and helping in any way you can to keep the Alderton going well into the 21st century.

On a positive note, at the AGM I announced the six plays for our next season - 2008/2009 - which you will find detailed in the centre pages of this newsletter. I hope you will agree that it is a varied and interesting season, but again the success of these productions rests on having enough enthusiastic, committed people to steer them to fruition.

On an unrelated note, Matt Arnold has had to step down as director on **Justifying War**, our May play, and I have taken over from him. The subject of the piece - edited transcripts of Lord Hutton's enquiry into the death of Dr David Kelly in 2003 - has already polarised opinion (some hate the idea, others are rather excited about it), but I would encourage you to actually come along and see *it* before you make up your mind. If what I plan comes off, it should be an unusual and thought-provoking evening. It won't even have a...oh, but that would be telling!

Lastly, auditions for the first three plays of our next season will be taking place on *Sunday 20 April*. Full details, including cast lists and audition pieces, can be found on our website: [www.edwardalderton.org](http://www.edwardalderton.org).

Our next play, **Much Ado About Nothing** by William Shakespeare, runs from 2-12 April, an extended run which will hopefully allow school parties to take priority on the first three nights (it

is a set text for 11-14 year olds). Directed by Richard Banks, it looks like being an audience-friendly show with a great cast, some lovely touches of comedy, and another brilliant set by our resident miracle-workers John Vinnels and Ron Andrews

Best wishes,



Mark Campbell  
**Artistic Director**

## Auditions Notice

Open auditions for the first three plays of our next season will be held on **Sunday 20 April 2008** at the theatre.

12.00 (midday)

**The Graduate** by Terry Johnson

*Director: Phil Newton*

**Roles:** Benjamin (18-21), Mrs Robinson (40-45, some nudity), Mr Robinson (45-55), Elaine (18-21), Dad, Mom, Stripper, Desk Clerk, Two Men, Psychiatrist, Wedding Guests, Priest

*Please note: people will need to commit a text to memory, be it poem, prose or play extract, or an audition piece from The Graduate itself (available online). Diaries are also needed to check availability for rehearsal dates.*

13.30 (1.30pm)

**Classic Ghost Stories for Christmas** by various

*Director: Mark Campbell*

**Roles:** Narrator, Six Men, Two Women

*Audition pieces available online*

15.00 (3pm)

**Spider's Web** by Agatha Christie

*Director: Wendy Marsh*

**Roles:** Sir Rowland Delahaye (about 50), Hugo Birch (about 60), Jeremy Warrender (young), Clarissa Hailsham-Brown, Pippa Hailsham-Brown (12), Mildred Peake (big, jolly, 40ish), Elgin, Oliver Costello, Henry Hailsham-Brown (about 40), Inspector Lord, Constable Jones

*Audition pieces available online*

Audition pieces and full information about the various roles can be found on our website:

**[www.edwardalderton.org](http://www.edwardalderton.org)**

# Edward Alderton Theatre 2008-2009 Season

4-11 October 2008

## 1 | **The Graduate**

by Terry Johnson  
Directed by Phil Newton

*California in the 1960s. Benjamin's got excellent grades, very proud parents and, since he helped Mrs Robinson with her zipper, a fine future behind him...*

22-29 November 2008

## 2 | **Classic Ghost Stories for Christmas**

by Charles Dickens, M R James et al  
Adapted and directed by Mark Campbell

*A selection of spine-chilling ghost stories brought vividly to life on the Alderton stage...*

31 January-7 February 2009

## 3 | **Spider's Web**

by Agatha Christie  
Directed by Wendy Marsh

*"Supposing I were to come down one morning and find a dead body in the library, what should I do?" muses Clarissa. She soon has her answer when she discovers a body in her drawing room...*

21-28 March 2009

## 4 | **Oedipus the King**

by Sophocles  
Translated and directed by Clive Mader

*Part murder story, political thriller and psychological drama, this is the classic Greek tragedy about a man who seems unable to escape his own destiny...*

9-16 May 2009

## 5 | **Glengarry Glen Ross**

by David Mamet

Directed by Peter Griffin

*A powerful Pulitzer Prize-winning play about the wheelings and dealings of a small Chicago real estate office where the name of the game is to close the deal and stay on top...*

**Warning: Contains extremely strong language throughout**

2-11 July 2009

## 6 | It Ain't Half Hot Mum

by Jimmy Perry and David Croft

Directed by Roz Betts

*Fall in for a feast of fun as Gloria and the boys of the Royal Artillery Concert Party provide their special brand of army camp in this stage version of the hilarious 1970s sitcom...*

Our next production...

## Much Ado About Nothing

by William Shakespeare

2 – 12 April 2008

### A few words from director Richard Banks...

**Much Ado About Nothing** is our first Shakespearian play for over twenty years, since the 1985 production of **Twelfth Night**. It was not one of the plays I had studied at University, or was even particularly familiar with, save for the Kenneth Brannagh film, until I started to teach it as part of my job as an English teacher. I immediately thought it was funny and one of Shakespeare's better comedies, if less well known than **Twelfth Night** and **A Midsummer's Night Dream**.

Set in Messina, which is on the island of Sicily, I love the bickering and banter between Beatrice and Benedick, which is probably the plotline that the play is most well known for, but it is in reality the subplot to the main action which is the romance between Hero and Claudio.

Rehearsals so far have been a blast, with the cast working very hard, but also making the play a joy to direct. The cast sees a blend of familiar faces, some newer faces and some that are completely new to the EAT stage. Sarah Hills and Mark Campbell are paired up again from **Keyboard Skills** (2006) to play the bickering Beatrice and Benedick, while Rachel De Silva returns for her second play this season, as Hero; meanwhile we welcome Steve Padgham to the EAT to play Claudio. EAT regulars Tony Donnelly and Horry Stapleton are the brothers Leonato and Antonio, with Roger Gollop making a welcome return as Don Pedro, and Viv Stapleton plays Ursula.

Richard Gooderson takes on the role of the bumbling Dogberry, with David Hampton as the leader of the Watch. If we were playing *Happy Families*, I would be in a strong position as I have a complete set of Friett family members: Paul is the Friar, Karen is the worldly-wise Margaret, Matt is Balthasar and part of the Watch, and Jacob completes the set to make his debut as part of the Watch. Other newcomers are Nick Sibley, Nicola Clark, Craig Dowding and Ella Banks (yes she is a relation!).

**Much Ado About Nothing** is a highly entertaining and amusing comedy, with a variety of humour, from the wit and sarcasm of Beatrice and Benedick, to the bumbling comedy of Dogberry and his Malapropisms (although of course Mrs Malaprop came long after Dogberry). Also there are the bawdier parts of the play – ‘nothing’ was pronounced the same as ‘noting’, which was a term also used for women’s private parts! There are many such innuendos in **Much Ado**, and combined with these is the visual humour of the Watch.

As well as the humour there is the romance between Hero and Claudio, undermined by the scheming and plotting of Don John and Borachio. Will true love stand the test? Will Beatrice and Benedick ever get over their squabbling? Will evil triumph? Well, the answers are all contained in the last scene and I’m not going to spoil it for you.

Do come along and enjoy the humour and action, it really does have something for everyone.

Richard Banks  
**Director**

#### Front of House Notice

We desperately need people to help out at front of House, Box office and Bar for all our performances. You do not need to be a member to volunteer for Box Office and Bar. One or two people can work at the Box Office and this includes doing the coffees at the interval. Two people are needed at the bar each night. Don't worry, we will show you what to do. If you can help, please ring **Shirley Andrews** on **01322 528996**.

#### Season Booking Form

I would like to book \_\_\_ seats for each remaining show of the 2007/8 season:

##### Production

Much Ado About Nothing (2-12 April 2008) \_\_\_\_\_

Justifying War (24-31 May 2008) \_\_\_\_\_

Abigail's Party (12-19 July 2008) \_\_\_\_\_

Tickets cost £6.50.

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ payable to **Edward Alderton Theatre**. (If you wish to have tickets forwarded to you, please enclose a SAE.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please send completed form to **Edward Alderton Theatre, c/o 28a Belvedere Road, Bexleyheath, DA7 4NX**. Any queries should be referred to the Box Office on **020 8301 5584** (6-8pm only, Mon to Fri).

*Newsletters will now be emailed to people where possible in order to reduce postal costs. If you would prefer to still receive yours in paper form, please let us know.*