

## **STARS - The Complete Works of Shakespeare** (Report by Pam Booth)

Director Geoff Walker

I was a little apprehensive about reporting on this play as I am a Shakespeare scholar, but I need not have worried. This was a delightful light hearted 'tongue-in-the-cheek' production and it had me laughing throughout. The three very talented actors portrayed a variety of characters and how they managed to remember lines and cope with the many costumes changes I cannot imagine. Looking round the audience it was good to see all ages enjoying the humour. I was pleased to see, from the programme, that STARS have toured with this production as such excellent performances should be seen by as many people as possible.

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## **Cosmopolitan Players - A Kick up the Baubles**

Director Pam Elsey

A peaceful Christmas in the Bailey family, with everyone at each other's throats and the neighbours descending with their new Karaoke machine. A good set, with appropriate furniture and properties, and a good hard working and talented cast thoroughly enjoying themselves with a script that had many comic lines and situations which they handled with great enthusiasm. The play was a little slow in the first few scenes but gathered pace as the humour and action took over. A most enjoyable production.

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## **Wetherby & Linton Drama Group - It Could Be Any One of Us**

Director Sheila Bower

A play by Alan Ayckbourn in which he sends up the Agatha Christie's type thriller but displays sympathy for the failures whose hopes exceed their abilities. It is perhaps not the best of his work but it does offer opportunities for all 6 members of the cast to show their talents. The cast worked very well together in a set that was used very effectively with the keyboard playing an integral part in the performance. Every member gave of their best and the whole was an intriguing 'who-dunnit'.

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## **STARS - Nasty Neighbours**

Director Luke Binns

This very black comedy, (not for the faint-hearted), was written by Debbie Isitt and tells of the arrival of new neighbours for Mr and Mrs Peach (Chris Binns and Jane Collins –both of whom gave outstanding performances) and their obsession of watching the coming and goings of the Chapmans (Matt Driver and Hannah Dolan – also outstanding performers). In the smaller roles of Hodges, now living in Australia (Ian Crampton and Judith Smith) had their moments. The set was excellent and was a credit to the designer who was also the Director. An outstanding directorial debut with a very difficult but absorbing play about the disintegration of relationships and the tragic results.

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## **The Baildon Players - Out of Sight, Out of Murder**

Director Thelma Fenn

An unusual and 'quirky' play written by Fred Carmichael, a prolific American playwright who has only this play available for UK productions. An author of murder mysteries finds that his characters come to life and take over the storyline. This was an ensemble piece, which was handled with great expertise by the Director and Cast. Each actor playing a stock character in murder mysteries had opportunities to display their talents and the audience appreciated not only the comic lines but the allusions to the writings of the leaders of the genre. An intriguing play, which held our attention throughout.

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## **Westgate Drama Group - Falling Off A Log**

Director Ken Skirros

The comedy, written by Georgina Reid, was very well directed and had a very good looking set. Gerald (Paul Dargan), an idle man where gardening is concerned, lies to his mother in America (Mary Carroll) that the garden she loved is absolutely delightful – when a jungle would be an apt description. His mother arrival prompts him to swap houses with the girl next door (Jill-Marie Craven) and his troubles and lies increase. Together with his sister (Jacqueline Scott) and a real Gardener (Andrew Illingworth) the cast of 5 handled the intricacies of the plot with aplomb and kept the pace going throughout. All gave excellent performances and were supported by a stage crew who changed a jungle into a delightful garden in 2 minutes. A most enjoyable production.

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## **Knaresborough Players - For Starters**

Director – John Westmancoat and Kathryn Leigh

Concerning the relationship established between a resident and a waitress at the hotel restaurant during a three week period. The setting of the restaurant was simple but effective and the 2 actors moved and handled the script with confidence. The Direction was a little static at times and required more attack and purpose.

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## **Knaresborough Players - Cat and Mouse**

By Bernie Crosthwaite

Director – Doreen Driffield and Kathryn Leigh

Again a two-hander, highlighting the differences in the behaviour of young girls, one a suffragette who lived and died at the beginning of the century and the other who had died in 2009. A simple, effective setting and the 2 young actors gave the play plenty of attack, with 'Tiffany' (Bethany Amelia Yates) managing the comic one-liners with great aplomb. The script was sometimes a little garbled but did not detract from the overall effect. Direction worked well, as did the lighting and sound for both plays. An evening of good entertainment which a full house thoroughly enjoyed.

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## **Knareborough Players - A Yuletide Variety**

Directors Pauline Bird and Kathryn Leigh

An entertaining evening at an 'Old Time Music-Hall', with a Master of Ceremonies and a programme of music, songs, dance and stories with the emphasis on Christmas time. The costumes were excellent and the content of the programme was varied, tuneful, amusing and well chosen to show off the talents of the company. All the songs were very well accompanied by Kay Albrecht at the piano. This was the first production since the official opening of the new facilities and promises a great future for the Players.