

Coming up next...



19th - 27th October

An articulate, poetic and poignant drama about the family circle

As beautifully touching as it is funny and bold, *Things I Know to be True* tells the story of a family and marriage through the eyes of four grown siblings struggling to define themselves beyond their parents' love and expectations.



16th - 24th November

Houses may change, but memories live on.

Our House is the story of May, a widowed grandmother who is packing her belongings for a move to an apartment in Spain. She's leaving the council house that she and her late husband bought for their retirement, in a West Yorkshire pit village. May's memories live again through the play – the good, the sad and the quite spiky, and we see how their lives change through the ages (1958 to 2001).



14th - 31st December

An ugly duckling's tale of good versus evil in the farmyard.

Based on Hans Christian Andersen's beloved story, *The Ugly Duckling*, the award-winning musical *Honk!* tells the story of an odd-looking baby duck, Ugly, and his quest to find his mother. Soon after he's born, Ugly is seduced away by a wily Cat who wants to eat him for dinner. After escaping, Ugly sets out to find his home, and finds love, friends and many adventures on the way to his happy fairytale ending!

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A HILARIOUS AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING COMEDY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

By Alan Ayckbourn



 **BARN THEATRE**.co.uk

28th September - 6th October 2018



From the Chairman

Welcome to the first play of the Barn Theatre's 18/19 season – Alan Ayckbourn's *Neighbourhood Watch*. Whether you're an old Barn hand, or a new audience member you're very welcome. I know you're going to enjoy a play described by Michael Billington from The Guardian as 'highly ambitious' and 'biliously funny'.



Not one of Ayckbourn's best known plays, this is a relatively recent one. Written in 2011 it is reckoned to be his 75th play as a professional author, although he is reported to have written his first play as a ten-year-old at school! It is, however a typical Ayckbourn comedy with fabulously observed characters, and clever, witty dialogue. It reflects his move over time away from plays that dealt with (I pick my words carefully here...) the intricacies and challenges of marriage into more contemporary themes. He has often said that, while not exactly autobiographical, his male characters all contain elements he recognises as part of his personality – I wonder who is closest to him in this cast of characters? With a cast full of Barn favourites, and a new face too, I know you're going to have great fun.

Ayckbourn has a local connection that was news to me: he went to school at Haileybury College in Hertford Heath and as a teenager he toured Europe and the USA with the school's Shakespeare Society.

Having started the season with the much loved Ayckbourn, our next two plays are very different – but also 'must-sees'. Directed by Simon Wallace, *Things I Know to be True* is described as being as beautifully touching as it is funny and bold. The play tells the story of a family and marriage through the eyes of four grown siblings struggling to define themselves beyond their parents' love and expectations. With secrets, surprises and strong emotions, this will grip you from the start. The cast of six has a number of Barn regulars, but also some new faces which is great to see.

After that comes *Our House*, by John Godber. Directed by Hannah Sayer, this play tells the story of May who is moving out after 45 years in the same house. As her son helps move boxes out to the van, we see memories playing out – snapshots of life shown against the backdrop of the changing social profile of the area, from working pit village to northern sink estate. Touching, funny and thought-provoking, this is another one to savour.

As a community of volunteers we are always looking for new faces to get involved, even if it's only in a small way. If acting is not for you there are lots of backstage roles where you can become part of the team and enjoy putting together a production for everyone. We don't expect anyone to walk straight in as a stage manager – we will ease you in, with lots of opportunities to learn the ropes and try a few things out and see what you enjoy. If the idea appeals to you, have a chat to one of the Barn members helping out this evening, and they'll put you in touch with someone to have a chat.

In the meantime, sit back, turn off the security lights and enjoy this production, safe in the knowledge that the local Neighbourhood Watch has your safety at heart!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon".

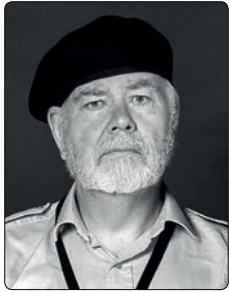
Simon Parr
Chairman, Barn Theatre Club

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to our local business supporters.**

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Cast



Godfrey Marriott | Martin Massie

Godfrey has been appearing before paying audiences for almost half a century, and regularly on the Barn stage since 2004. To his shame, he pretty much agrees with Hilda about Mozart and Percy Grainger. His wife Agnes is a Hungarian chemistry technician and they live in Harlow New Town with three cockatiels.



Linda Vincent | Hilda Massie

Linda first joined the Barn in 1997, mainly involved in acting, although she was also bar manager for many years. During a ten-year acting break from 2006-2016, Linda focused on being a single mum and becoming a teacher. Linda has very much enjoyed the opportunity to act again at the Barn over the last couple of years, most recently in the role of Helene Hanff in *84 Charing Cross Road*.



Christopher Wallace | Luther Bradley

Chris has been a member of the Barn for several years after being entranced by playing 23rd citizen on the left in *Julius Caesar*. When not acting he enjoys scuba diving and cooking.



Hazel Halliday | Magda Bradley

Hazel has been involved front and back stage with the Barn since 1981. *Neighbourhood Watch* is her 35th main stage appearance and she is delighted to be back after recent roles with CoPs, HDOS and The Hertfordshire Players. Hazel is also Secretary of the WGC Youth Drama Festival held at the Barn annually in March. Off stage, she is most likely to be found buried in the undergrowth of her garden or plotting how to win at modern board games.



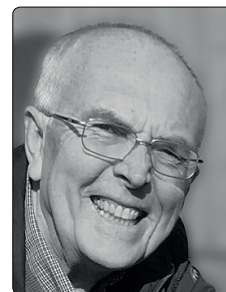
Chris White | Gareth Janner

Chris has been a Barn member for most of this century and was last seen as a sweetshop-owner in *Let the Right One In*. Chris has a job in the Civil Service and is also a keen non-league football groundhopper, recently chalking up his 600th ground. The rumour that Chris took on this role to study torture techniques cannot be denied.



Ruth Heppelthwaite | Amy Janner

After a brief introduction to the Barn playing Desdemona in *Potted Cinderella* last December, Ruth is happy to be removing the ugly warts and replacing with pink scarves and handbags! She has worked professionally in TV, film, cabaret and stage for over 25 years and is part owner of Limitless Academy Arts, a drama academy based in Stevenage.



Dick Breeze | Rod Trusser

Dick has been a member of the Barn for 35 years during which time he has directed or acted in over 80 productions from Shakespeare to Cooney and back again. In 1985 he auditioned for the title role in *King Lear* but only succeeded in landing the role of his brother Chandel. Not many lines but a lot of hanging about. He once stood next to Frances Lee in a Maine Road urinal and he's very fond of lager. Dick that is.



Mary Goodfellow | Dorothy Doggett

After an earlier professional career working in cabaret and theatre for schools, Mary has directed, choreographed and acted for Digsweil Players for seven years. At the Barn she has appeared in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Steel Magnolias*, as part of the ensemble in *Lilies on the Land* and as Old Nell in *The Matchgirls*.

Creative Team

Director	Bob Thomson
Assistant Director	Belinda Gee
Stage Manager	Andy Barker
Assistant Stage Managers	Annette Leishman, Sophie Taylor
Set Design	Bob Thomson, Andy Barker
Set Dressing	Kris and Pete Moore
Lighting	Nick Mogg
Sound	Tim Lee
Properties	Linda Miles, Pam Wallis
Wardrobe	Sue Owen, Anne Mawer
Fight Co-ordinator	Belinda Gee
Production Photography	John Davies
Poster & Programme	Bob Thomson, John Cook Clive Weatherley
Prompter	Anne Woolmington
Production Manager	Keith Thompson
Assistant Production Manager	Eleanor White
Set Construction	Ian Bage, Bob Cameron David Fairhurst, Eric Farlie, Robert Gill Keith Lambert, Norman Merry, John Sear Eddie Washington

Martin and Hilda’s sitting room at number three,
the Bluebell Hill Development.

Running time 2 hours 15 minutes with a 15-minute interval.

From the Director



A word about: The Team

Theatre is very much a team sport: what you see on the stage is the tip of a very large iceberg and I have been delighted and occasionally amazed by the level of support by many unseen and unsung heroes. I went away for ten days on holiday and came back to find sofas had been sourced and the set was being constructed. In addition to the production staff there are all the other functions that work to help promote, finance and simply enable this production to take place in what is, I believe, a wonderful theatre with an incredible history and exciting future. Indeed the Barn has never looked better than it does in 2018.

To all who have in any way helped with this production, my sincere thanks.

A word about: The Play

Alan Ayckbourn is the UK’s most performed living playwright and indeed has a local connection, having been educated at Haileybury College. I believe his success is due to an ability to create thoughtful, intelligent, humorous and most of all accessible plays. He writes about situations and characters we can relate to. *Neighbourhood Watch* is one of his more recent productions and really looks at society and how good people can do very bad things, often with the best of motives. Ayckbourn is clearly warning us about the danger of well-meaning volunteers going well beyond their original remit and creating chaos.

A word about: The Set

Although the play is very traditional in structure with all the action taking place in the Massies’ living room, the author Alan Ayckbourn calls for a set design that is ‘by no means realistic’. Most productions shy away from that and go for a very traditional design: we have opted for a more radical approach. The set, which is basically functional (the actors need room to act after all), seeks to help reflect what’s going on outside and the changing moods within the play. We see a light, open set transform over the next couple of hours to something very different indeed. I would like to give a very special thanks to Andy Barker who took my very rough, totally impractical PowerPoint designs and helped with the team to create something rather special.

A word about: The Audience

Without an audience there would be no play, no theatre and the Barn probably by now would be a small housing development. Thank you for coming along tonight: if you had fun, tell your friends and maybe even get involved.