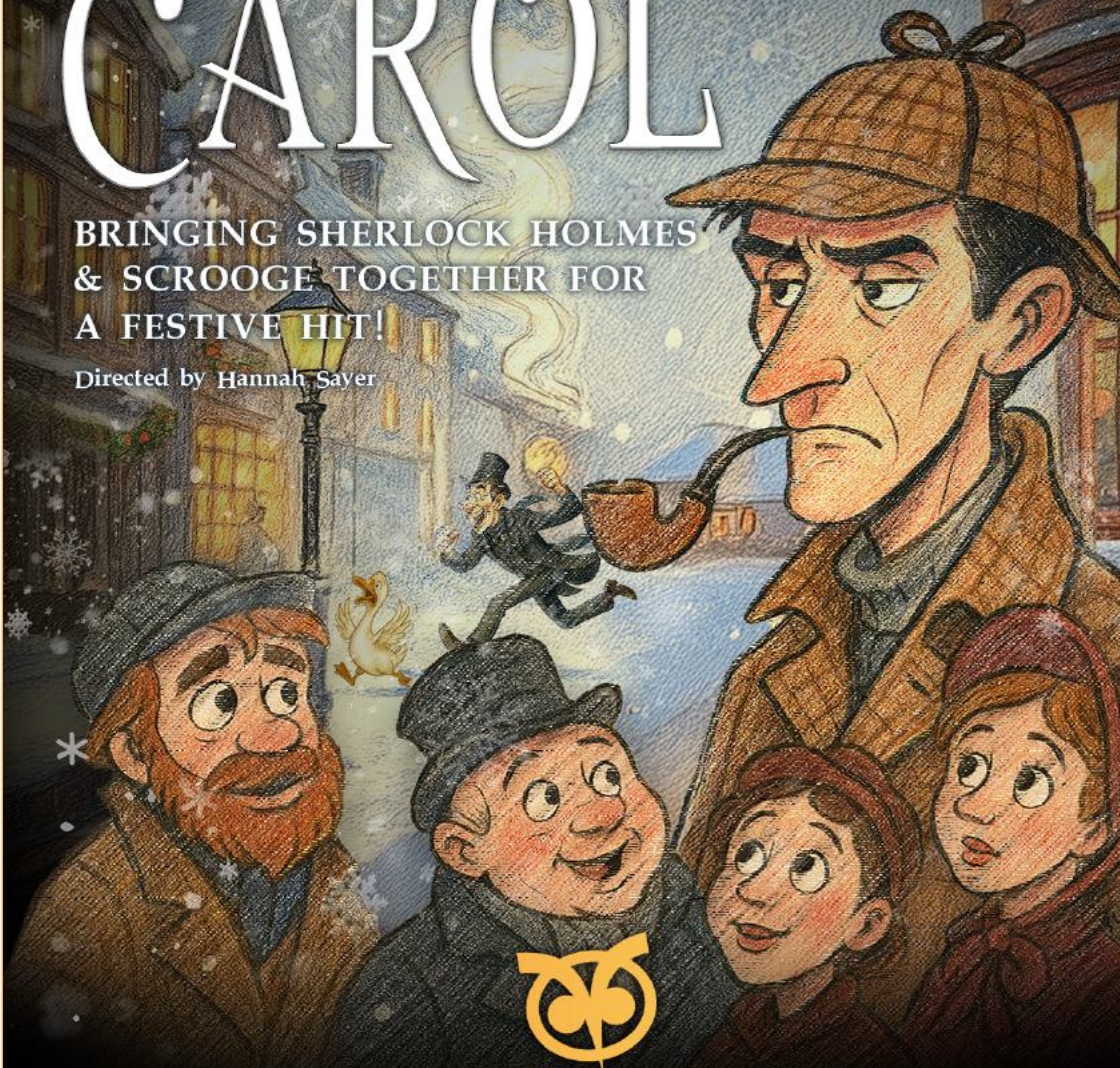


MARK SHANAHAN'S

# A SHERLOCK CAROL

BRINGING SHERLOCK HOLMES  
& SCROOGE TOGETHER FOR  
A FESTIVE HIT!

Directed by Hannah Sayer



SEASON 2025/2026 | PRICE £1.50

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

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Well, hasn't this been fun to do?! I initially worried that I wouldn't be able to make *A Sherlock Carol* fun enough for a Barn Christmas show, however I needn't have worried. When you have a cast and crew like I have for this, it's been so easy to lark it all up. We've stuck to the text (mostly) but have added in several treats for you all. Little nods here and there, to both the Barn and the wider world. If we found a bit of silliness, we added it.



As I mentioned in *Barn News*, while this is set in Victorian times, you'll have to give us a century or two leeway with some elements. Some audience participation is welcome, and you'll generally be given a nod as to when. I did actually consider doing a Dickens and Doyle bingo card for the programme to see if you notice how many quotes from both there are, however I ran out of time. I want now to take an opportunity to say a few thank-yous, to:

- My incredible cast who've not just accepted my insanity but run with it and added some of their own spice. You've made this a real cracking show.
- My ever-patient crew for me changing ideas and adding things, and for reining me in when I get a bit... overly creative – as well as their being great sports in my insisting on them being on stage. Props and Costume have worked so hard over the past couple of months and it's really made a difference: you may not realise how many of the props are made out of cardboard for us: really quite magical in itself and a team effort. Annie for, as always, being the best deaf prompt in the business. Sarah for keeping me straight with all the admin and for the endless pots of tea.
- Pete for his amazing music. I approached him with an idea and he took it, improved upon it and gave us the lovely music we have, including a very

difficult concept of ‘indignant musician noise’. How he managed to get exactly what I was talking about, I’ll never know.

- Christine and the incredible set-builders for making my two revolve ideas a reality that actually works (although as I’m writing this, we’ve not yet tested the revolving action in rehearsal but I have all the faith).

The problem with listing thank-yous is that you inevitably forget someone – so if that’s you, know that I do still love you and what you’ve done for this show: it’s just my brain is a bag of squirrels.

I really hope you enjoy the show as much as I’ve enjoyed directing it. Let’s get into the Christmas spirit (literally and figuratively) and crack on with the show.

Hannah S

Thanks you for coming to watch our Christmas show, and we hope that there is no mystery involved with your festive celebrations. I want to wish all our Club and audience members a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

You can dispel any January blues with our next show, the comedy, *The Unfriend*.

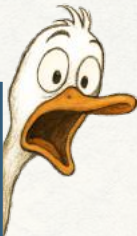
Ian Major

**Barn Theatre Chair**



# REHEARSAL PHOTOS

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# VOLUNTEERING AT THE BARN

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I've been a member of the Barn for many years – first appearing as Martine, in the play of that name, in 1957. I married and moved away but returned in the 70s and joined the newly formed Barn Theatre Club. I've been involved with many productions, my favourite roles being Madge in *The Dresser* and Jean in *Quartet*. Now, as the years move on and learning lines has become less easy, I've moved backstage. I helped for a time on the wardrobe team and more recently as rehearsal prompt. This is a very rewarding task in that one is part of the crew from the read-through to the final result. One is able to watch the play and the characters in that play develop, during rehearsals, in the capable hands of the director. Occasionally I've had the pleasure of playing small, non-speaking character roles.

We're so lucky to have the Barn: long may it last.

| *Annie Woolmington*

I started volunteering about a year ago, once my children were grown and I decided it was time to do something for myself. The Barn seemed like a great place to invest some of my free time, so I joined. After applying, I got a tour of the theatre and discussed which roles interested me most. I signed up for stewarding and, more importantly, the props department – which had always fascinated me. Since then, I've worked on props for four plays. It's amazing to watch a production grow from its first read-through, with everyone gathered around a table, to the final performance on stage. There are so many parts to putting on a play – directing, lighting, sound, wardrobe – and it's truly inspiring to work alongside such passionate, talented people. I've learned a lot, especially from the fantastic women in the props team. Everyone at the Barn has been so welcoming: it really feels like one big family. I'm proud to be part of such a wonderful group and, as I help with the props for *A Sherlock Carol*, I think about how, together, we're helping bring joy to our audiences.

| *Helen van Hek*

# CAST

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Neil Harrison

SCROOGE

Christopher Wallace

ACTOR 1

Stephanie Cotter, Eliot Swain

ACTOR 2

Lorna Thompson

ACTOR 3

Lou Wallace

ACTOR 4

Laura Eddy

CONSTABLE BRADSTREET

Tristan Cameron

OLD JOE BRACKENRIDGE

Pete Dawson

ELDERLY WOMAN

Annie Woolmington

ORCHESTRA

Pete Dawson

## SINGERS AT THE BARN

Come along and perform or just listen to live music  
and songs from the shows and more...

**FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH**

[singers@barntheatre.co.uk](mailto:singers@barntheatre.co.uk)

**THANKS TO OUR LOCAL SUPPORTERS**

  
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Society  
[www.wgcsociety.org](http://www.wgcsociety.org)

  
together  
for Welwyn Garden City

  
Sainsbury's

# CREATIVE TEAM

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Hannah Sayer
<b>PRODUCTION MANAGER</b>	Sarah Kerr
<b>ASS. PRODUCTION MANAGER</b>	Jacqueline Clayton
<b>STAGE MANAGER</b>	Madeleine Evans
<b>ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS</b>	Tallan Cameron, Devi Smart Ed Buckley
<b>SET DESIGN</b>	Christine Neal
<b>SET BUILDING</b>	Ian Bage, Bob Cameron, Steve Dringer David Fairhurst, David House, John Sear Ian Major, Nigel Rive, John Sparrow Marc Sturman, Nigel Ward
<b>SET PAINTING</b>	Colin Hickey, Christine Neal
<b>LIGHTING</b>	Tristan Cameron
<b>SOUND</b>	Michael Merry
<b>MUSICAL DIRECTOR</b>	Pete Dawson
<b>PROPS</b>	Sarah Kerr, Barbara Foster, Helen van Hek
<b>WARDROBE</b>	Lesley Bilton, Andrea Adlam, Anna-Marie Kreiss
<b>PROMPT</b>	Annie Woolmington
<b>PHOTOGRAPHY</b>	Ollie Cheng, Hannah Sayer, Simon Wallace
<b>POSTER &amp; PROGRAMME</b>	Sarah Kerr, Ian Major John Cook, Clive Weatherley

The play is set in Victorian London-ish

The play runs for approximately 2 hours,  
with one interval.



# MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS

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## NEIL HARRISON

Mine are from childhood when there was a packed table and I was surrounded by family. The double issue of the *Radio Times* was always a must-have (it still is today) and the year I excitedly unwrapped the *Complete Sherlock Holmes* book-set has been thrust to the front of my mind in recent weeks for some reason!

## LOU WALLACE

I've always loved Christmas. I remember playing Mary in the church nativity (three times!). My mum had made the costume and (oddly) my brother was Joseph. Having my Grandma and Nana watching and then going home for mince pies and ginger wine (yes that's what we were given to fall asleep on Christmas Eve!) is a lovely memory of Christmas as a child.

## ELIOT SWAIN

Christmas, long ago. My extended family are round and we're all having a merry time. Then, the Disney Trivial Pursuit came out. All it took was half of one game to tear the entire family apart. Some of us still aren't on speaking terms. That Christmas haunts us all.

## STEPH COTTER

Visiting Vienna's beautiful Christmas markets. There was snow while we were there, so everything looked really festive. After dark, the wonderful lights everywhere were magical, and I loved picking gifts for people from the little stalls. The glühwein was pretty good too!

## LAURA EDDY

Singing along with my father to his favourite Al Jolson songs and drinking port.

## LORNA THOMPSON

Staying up until 3am, unboxing various Happyland toys to put the



batteries in, re-boxing and wrapping them so that the kids could unwrap them all two hours later. Such joy...

## CHRISTOPHER WALLACE

As a child, coming downstairs with my cousins and seeing all those Christmas presents that had magically appeared under the tree.

### Scrooge's favourite carol (last verse)

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On the twelfth day of Christmas  
My true love gave to me  
Twelve drummers drumming,  
Eleven pipers piping,  
Ten lords a-leaping,  
Nine ladies dancing,  
Eight maids a-milking,  
Seven swans a-swimming,  
Six geese a-laying,  
Five gold rings,  
Four calling birds,  
Three French hens,  
Two turtle doves  
And a partridge in a pear tree.

*The 12 Days of Christmas* is a cumulative song, meaning each verse is built on top of the previous one. It adds up to a lot of gifts: 12 partridges in pear trees, 22 turtle doves, 30 French hens, 36 calling birds, 40 gold rings, 42 geese, 42 swans, 40 maids, 36 ladies, 30 lords, 22 pipers and 12 drummers. Add that all together, and we find that the singer receives 364 gifts. Since 1984, PNC Bank has tracked the price of each gift mentioned in the song. The cost of the 364 gifts in 2025 is approximately £38,900.

# NOTES FROM OUR MUSICAL MAESTRO

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Good evening, everyone, or good afternoon, if you're reading this during the matinee. At the height of the summer, I received a message from Hannah, our fantastic director, and the conversation went something like this:

**Hannah:** Can I have a chat with you about our Christmas production?

**Me:** Of course.

**Hannah:** Do you know the music of singer-songwriter and cellist, Kevin Olusola?

**Me:** No.

**Hannah:** Do you watch *Bridgerton*?

**Me:** No.

Hannah was looking for the Christmas carols, specified in the script, to be arranged and played in a hybrid style of those two genres of music: namely, well-known tunes disguised at first within a cello /string quartet arrangement, with the famous melody becoming evident later in the piece.

**Hannah:** Oh! And I'd like the music to be jazzy too!

**Me:** Right... I like a challenge. And I love to play cello karaoke.

**Hannah:** Please explain.

**Me:** Pieces where I have pre-recorded accompanying backing tracks, on top of which I'll play the melody live on my cello. Leave it with me, Hannah.



Here we are, six months later, in the bleak midwinter. Many of the carols, traditionally composed in a happy major key, I have transposed into a cold, sad, sinister or haunting minor key. These are sometimes further influenced by the music of Bernard Hermann (a pint to the first person who names the film whose theme I've borrowed!) and Bela Bartok. But don't worry: there are many moments of happy, traditional music too. Moreover, to keep you in the festive spirit (not the liquid variety!), I'll be playing jolly yuletide fare, both before curtain-up and during the interval. I hope you enjoy the show.



Finally, two big thank-yous: to my good friend Brian Hardy for lending me some of his string quartet arrangements; and to Michael Merry, for happily accommodating my musical requests into his sound design.

A merry Christmas to you, one and all, and a ho ho ho!

*Pete Dawson*

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# COMING UP AT THE BARN

**16th – 24th January 2026**

**A killer comedy where manners might be your last mistake.**

Peter and Debbie, a seemingly typical middle-class British couple, befriend Elsa, an eccentric American woman, during a holiday. In the spirit of polite conversation, they exchange contact details, expecting never to hear from her again. However, Elsa soon announces that she's coming to visit them in their home, and they realise that Elsa is not quite the harmless tourist they thought she was...



**6th – 14th February 2026**

**A summer of joy and heartbreak as five sisters dance on the brink of change.**

Brian Friel's much loved play. The Celtic harvest festival brings a brief break from the realities of the hard life of five sisters in Donegal in the 1930s. But celebrations and possible romance soon give way to the realisation that their life is about to be torn apart...

**27th March – 4th April 2026**

**One voice of courage in a world of silence.**

Set in a German clinic in 1941, Dr Victor Franz oversees the selection of young patients who are deemed unworthy of life. Into his uneasy world comes Bishop von Galen, the real-life cleric who publicly condemned the killings from his pulpit, risking his life to speak out against the Nazi regime's policy. Their confrontation forces the doctor to face the gulf between obedience and humanity.



**9th January 2026**

**Comedy at the Barn**

WARNING: May contain strong language and adult themes...obvs! Probably not suitable for children we'd say!

