



President ~ Sir Derek Jacobi

Newsletter—January 2025

Happy New Year, dear Marlborough members—we hope you have had a joyous festive season. Now 2025 is here and the Club is looking back at a 2024 that saw us back to normal with two full productions as well as a few social events. And in looking towards the year ahead we are excited to bring you two more full productions, including ‘The Ladykillers’ this April! Read on for reviews and previews...

REVIEW: Annual quiz night, September 2024

Thank you to everyone who came to the Autumn Quiz - we really appreciate your support at these events which help to raise money that the club can put towards the cost of our plays.



Thank you also to Reg and Rita Wheeler for expertly hosting the quiz again for us and for running a fun 'Who wants to be a millionaire' game at the end. With a raffle too, the whole evening **raised £242** for the club's coffers! Here are some photos from the night—more can be seen on the club website. (Shows > Events—link at newsletter's end.)



Photos by Karol Patten

2024 AGM—A couple of changes

We held our annual general meeting on 25 November. Thanks to those members who attended. We had already emailed members about a couple of proposed changes to the club rules regarding min/maximum committee member numbers and roles that better fit the club in the 21st century.



These were accepted by those present. The **updated rules** can be reviewed on the website ‘Members Information’ section.

In addition, a couple of existing committee members have **new roles**: Karol Patten has taken over the minutes from Juliette Bird, who now becomes club secretary. Bill Wells and Mark Watson-Lee retain their roles of Chair and Treasurer respectively. We thank all of the committee for their dedication to the running of the Marlborough.

A fond farewell (but see you soon) to committee stalwarts

The club are very sad that Brenda Le-Surf and George Churchill have **elected to resign** from the committee as of 2025. They have worked very hard and provided great support over the years and we wish them well in their MDC retirement. However, they are not going far and



Photo by Juliette Bird **George and Brenda**

will be helping out at social events, productions and the barn —thank goodness!

Brenda Le-Surf—our new VP

Brenda was happy to accept the role of Club Vice-President on leaving the committee and thanked them profusely for the nomination.

Turn over for a review of the Autumn 2024 show and a request for your subs for 2025!



2025—Please renew your membership

Thank you to all members for your support in 2024. We hope you enjoyed the first full season of productions since 2019 and social events which included a 120th anniversary celebration dinner as well! It is now **time to renew** your membership for the 2025 season and **your support is gratefully received**. Your subscriptions help fund our productions and there has been no increase to the fees since 2022. You should have received an email or letter with details of how to renew and there is also information on our website homepage. Please renew **by 31 January**. For any questions, please contact the secretary on the email address at the end of this newsletter.

REVIEW: Ten Times Table by Alan Ayckbourn

October 24-26 saw us back at Brentwood School to perform this chaotic comedy, under the capable direction of Graham Poulteney. Set in the 1970s, a group of villagers hold a series of meetings to arrange a pageant, commemorating a 300 year old skirmish between the landowners and the workers, which ends up being almost as violent as the original uprising!



A fabulous group of actors, all Marlborough veterans, brought the show to life to great response from the audiences. **Thank you to everyone who came** along to see us. Our review from NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association), of which we are members, stated the club provided “a charmingly unpredictable evening filled with memorable performances” and **“one of the highlights of the production was the ensemble’s cohesive and believable acting.”**

Graham made great use of all of the Memorial Hall’s many doors with some of the action happening amongst the audience, and the minimal set conveyed to the audience that they were witnessing ordinary committee meetings that just happened to be occurring in front of them. With much required of the sound and lighting crew, with lights flickering and hammering offstage, it really was a production that included the experienced backstage crew as key parts of the action. You can see **more about the play on our website** where an article titled “...a look back...” includes links to more photos, the NODA review, cast profile images and the programme.



Photos by Karol Patten, Louise Richardson



On the next page you will find news from the barn and what to expect from us in 2025!



Changes at the barn—the opening of Pat’s Pavilion

As we mentioned in our August 2024 newsletter, we have been busy at the barn cleaning and tidying, and creating space for a new shed in which to store costumes and more delicate props safely. Buying this shed was made

*Photo by
Steve Bearpark*

possible through donations to the Marlborough in memory of the late Patricia Staley—a long-term member of club,

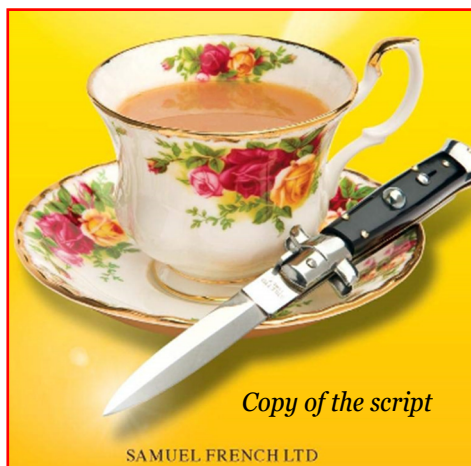
Patricia Staley



acting, directing and on the committee as well as latterly a Vice President. The shed was built at the end of October and officially opened by the committee with members of Pat’s family present on 2 November, who affectionately name it ‘Pat’s Pavilion’. They also **provided a blue plaque** which was affixed to the outside of the shed (see left). The Marlborough is very grateful to have this fabulous resource. The committee will return to the barn in 2025 to begin filling the shed up as well as carrying on with cleaning and tidying AND preparing for...

Spring 2025—The Ladykillers

On 20 January, director Bill Wells will begin rehearsing our next show - Graham Linehan’s stage version of the classic Ealing Film comedy. With a **set already designed and built by the late Kevin Wright**, this play will be produced in his memory. **Check out the show article on the website** which links to an old set of pictures of Kevin working on the set at the barn. Save the dates—**10-12**



April 2025, Thursday and Friday at 7:30pm and Saturday at 2:30pm back at **Brentwood School Memorial Hall**. Keep an eye on the website article for news from rehearsals, cast updates and a booking link nearer the time.

Autumn 2025—

Variation on a Theme

The Marlborough are pleased to announce that our Autumn show will be on **23-25 October**. Director June Fitzgerald and the club will whisk you to a villa in south France for **Terence Rattigan’s** emotionally charged story of desire and disillusionment, ‘**Variation on a Theme**’.

Spring audition dates will be publicised in due course.



Contact us:

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Our website: marlboroughdramaticclub.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/marlboroughdrama

Contacting you: If you received this newsletter by post and would prefer to receive it by email (or vice versa) or would prefer not to receive it at all – please let us know using the contact details above.