



Newsletter – February 2018

I Love Terence Rattigan

Terence Rattigan has been the author of my life and his plays are my biography

I think the first serious play I ever saw (not counting Shakespeare) was 'The Deep Blue Sea' by Terence Rattigan. The play begins and ends with the attempted suicide of Hester Collyer, Rattigan's great tragic heroine. Still a teenager, living at home, watching on TV, Hester's passion was something quite unknown to me. Happiest days of my life? But I was fascinated by the way these people constantly 'missed' each other. Miscommunication was the norm. There was love but nobody was ever loved back in the same way. And nobody ever really 'talked'. They always talked about something else. Not their true feelings. Everything was restrained, hidden and very 'English'.

In my family, we didn't talk about a lot of things either. But anything sexual on TV, my mother would lean towards me and remark, sagely, "that's not love, you know, that's lust". I was a teenage boy. What did I know of either? Of course, there'd never been a time when I wasn't besotted with some girl or other. Even at primary school. In fact, particularly at primary school. The innocent, unwitting object of my passion would never be spoken to, just adored from afar. And that was about it. Not much to go on. Yet I already knew that my mother's neat divide was an error. In time, I would find out how wrong she was and how right Rattigan was about...all of this...emotional stuff...everything.



...Even at primary school.
In fact, particularly at primary school.

My teenage years were nearly half a century ago. But Terence Rattigan has been the author of my life and his plays are my biography. From 'Separate Tables' alone, I've known the pathological shyness of Sibyl,



"To love with one's eyes open sometimes makes life very difficult"
Helen McCrory as Hester Collyer
'The Deep Blue Sea' National Theatre 2016

the awkward self-loathing of the Major, the ungovernable passion of John Malcolm. Like Miss Cooper, I've loved, lost and made the most of it. And there's more. Is there anything Rattigan didn't understand about the human heart? I've been austere and unapproachable, like Sir Robert in 'The Winslow Boy', seeing emotion as a sign of weakness. I've been Joan in 'After the Dance', hiding my true feelings for self-protection. I've been dogmatic and insensitive, like Michael in 'Love in Idleness', torn between love and loyalty, like Patricia in 'Flare Path', hidden myself behind jokes and mockery, like Sebastian in 'In Praise of Love'. On and on. And Hester, of course. Dear, dear Hester. What about her? I'm holding her hand. No words. No sage advice. No comfort. But this will pass. Time will heal. Eventually. Some scars will remain. And I remember another woman. One day. Long ago. Not like me. To speak my heart. She said she'd thought my feelings were spiritual not sexual. I had to tell her, sadly, that there is no such distinction.

29th July 2016 and I'm sitting in the front row of the Circle in the Lyttelton waiting for the start of "The Deep Blue Sea", Rattigan's greatest play being revived by the National. And I've got the tissues ready because I know all the danger points. Helen McCrory makes a fine Hester but the production is overblown, this most intimate and domestic of tragedies overwhelmed by a gigantic set. And it occurs to me that this is the first time I've actually seen this on a stage although every beat of it is written on my heart. Hester speaks for me. Then and now. And always.

Hester: ...It's all far too big and confusing to be tied up in a neat little parcel and labelled lust.

My mother wouldn't agree.

Paul Cockcroft (January 2018)

**"Separate Tables" by Terence Rattigan runs at Kilmardinny House Arts Centre
from 22nd to 24th March 2018.**

Tickets from <http://www.kilmardinnyplayers.org/> or Tel: 0781 332 6318

Rehearsal schedule for February

Thursday 1 February

Monday 5 February in Milngavie Main Town Hall

Thursday 8 February

Monday 12 February

Thursday 15 February

Monday 19 February in Bearsden Hub Lesser Hall

Thursday 22 February in Bearsden Hub Main Hall

Monday 26 February

All rehearsals take place in Milngavie Lower Lesser Town hall unless otherwise specified and begin at 7.30 pm. All members and potential new members are welcome to attend.

Bookings are now live on our website - please go to www.kilmardinnyplayers.org and reserve your tickets now.



PROPS

I am currently sourcing the props and furniture we require and would ask members to help with anything we are finding difficult to find such as a moses basket or a small 1950s pram.

With regards to props that various members are storing for us, could I remind you to let me know exactly what you have if you haven't already told me. As you know, it seems more and more unlikely that the Trust will allow us to store props now at the House and so the group relies on the goodwill of the members to keep storing what they have.

We would like members to volunteer to help with front of house duties during the run of the show from 22 to 24 March and would ask you to let me know which night(s) you are available.



Other dates for your diaries: Here is a list of other activities that the committee has arranged for members.

Our 2018 AGM: This will take place on Monday 14 May in Bearsden Hub Lesser Hall at 7.30 pm followed by some light entertainment. If you fancy organising some light entertainment please let the committee know as soon as possible.



AGM

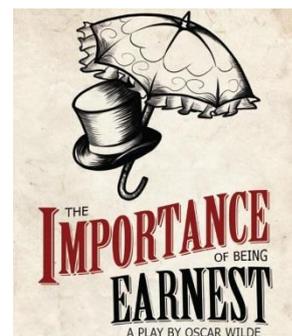


Play reading nights: We enjoyed reading some good plays last year and so have booked rooms for another 3 nights this year. I am leading one and Paul will do the first one so there is one space left – ie you choose a play, bring it along on the night, give a short introduction about the play and the author and we read it through. So let me know if you want to lead a play reading on 24 May.

Monday 21 May in Milngavie Lower Lesser Town Hall at 7.30 pm – **“The Chalk Garden”** by Enid Bagnold lead by Paul Cockcroft.

Thursday 24 May in Milngavie Lower Lesser Town Hall at 7.30 pm – title to be confirmed.

Thursday 31 May in Bearsden Hub Lesser Hall at 7.30 pm – **“The Importance of Being Earnest”** by Oscar Wilde lead by Christina Dowers.



Audition nights: Our Autumn production dates are the week beginning Monday 29 October 2018. Interested directors should inform the committee of plays they wish to propose for this production. It is my intention to offer to direct Oscar Wilde’s “The Importance of being Earnest” by aging up many of the main characters as the professionals did in a Bunbury Players version in 2014 but I shall be using the original script. It would be good though if other directors would put forward their suggestions so that the committee has a choice. However, whatever the production the audition dates will be:

Monday 4 June and Thursday 7 June in Milngavie Lower Lesser Town Hall at 7.30 pm.

Other possible events may include another SCDA drama workshop sometime during the second half of April and perhaps instead of a meal out we could organise a “Bring a Dish” night and have some light entertainment between mouthfuls. More details when we have them.

Please also put forward your own ideas of events you would like the committee to organise – all ideas welcome.

A note from our acting chair person – Jane: *I'm happy to confirm that that trust have now sent us the agreement to review and sign off. The committee will be looking at this with a view to signing this as soon as possible. Hopefully this will bring us peace of mind in securing performance space when required. We hope to update you soon in this.*

Rehearsals for Separate Tables are now underway and it would be great to see members at the occasional rehearsal to support the cast and crew! Please also let Paul and Christina know if there's anything you can do to help in any way.

Here's to a happy and fulfilled 2018!