



Derek Benfield (1926 – 2009)

Derek Benfield was a British playwright and actor who enjoyed a long and varied career in theatre, television and film. Several of his plays, particularly his farces, enjoyed considerable success both on the amateur and professional stage and have proved popular around the world. He was well-known particularly to British TV audiences, especially in *Hetty Wainthropp Investigates* where he played Robert, the patient husband to Patricia Routledge's Hetty.

He was born in Bradford on 11 March 1926 and was educated at Bingley Grammar school. He acquired his taste for theatre by appearing as an amateur actor at the Bradford Civic Playhouse and following wartime service became a student at RADA where he won the Gertrude Lawrence Award for his performance in Rattigan's *French Without Tears*. His first professional appearance was with Brian Rix's company at the King's Hall, Ilkley, and he further worked with Rix in Bridlington before spending many years honing his craft in various repertory theatres including those in Hull, Salisbury, Worthing, Hornchurch, Croydon and Richmond.

A long and varied acting career followed with his television appearances in particular making him a well-known face. These included roles in *Z Cars*, *Dixon of Dock Green* and an early appearance in *Coronation Street*. He appeared as Albert Handyside, the clerk of chambers, in *Rumpole of the Bailey* and *Rumpole's Return* and made many memorable one-off appearances in dramas such as *Peak Practice*, *Emergency Ward 10* and *Only Fools and Horses*. He also appeared regularly in BBC One's *The Brothers* which attracted weekly audiences of more than 11 million every Sunday evening in the early 1970s.

The action takes place in the baronial hall of Elrood Castle, the home of Lord and Lady Elrood. It is one of the last remaining inhabited castles in England.

ACT ONE

Morning on a day in summer

ACT TWO

Afternoon, the same day

ACT THREE

Evening, the same day

Crew

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|---------------------------|--|
| Director | Cazz Wrate |
| Stage Manager | Dawn Jones |
| Prompt | Margaret Winson |
| Properties | Jade Boxall John Winson |
| Lighting and Effects | Andrew Coulson Paul Cumming-Benson |
| Set Design & Construction | Jane Cumming-Benson Del de Lorme Luke Taylor |

Mark Erwin as Lord Elrood

Mark first trod the boards in our production of *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* and there discovered a love of acting, subsequently appearing in *Return to the Forbidden Planet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After a three-year hiatus he's back doing what he loves and, hopefully, keeping him out of trouble!

Nan Morran as Lady Elrood

Nan has been a member of MLT for about six years and until recently was our membership secretary. Her first role was as Aunt Donna Lucia in *Charley's Aunt* followed by a brief appearance as a dotty old lady in *The Ladykillers*. She appeared in *Oliver Twist* and *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* and more recently played Miss Blacklock in *A Murder is Announced* and Sylvia in *Sitting Pretty*.

Jessica Hayhow Johnson as Ada

Jess has been acting for many years and particularly enjoys appearing in comedies and farces. Some of her past roles include Gretchen in *Boeing-Boeing*, Brooke in *Noises Off* and Geraldine in Orton's *What the Butler Saw*. She has also played Mrs White in the classic ghost story *The Monkey's Paw* and Miranda in the Blissful Theatre Company's production of *The Tempest*, a company of which she was a founder member.

Hayley Bullivant as Patricia

Hayley joined MLT in 2015 and this is her fifth production, having last appeared as Julia in *A Murder Is Announced*. Previous appearances include roles in *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* and as Sybil, Arthur's hapless fiancée, in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*. She has previously acted with Young Actors Studio and the NOYB Players and hopes that *Wild Goose Chase* will bring a smile to your face at this cold and grey time of year!

Joe Marr-Phillips as Wedgwood

Joe is appearing in his second production at Medway Little Theatre having previously played Edmund Swettenham in Christie's *A Murder is Announced* last January. Joe is looking forward to bringing the silent character of Wedgwood to life through movement and body language.

Ian Sagar as Chester Dreadnought

Ian has been acting since childhood and appeared with the Hazlitt Youth Theatre in Maidstone. He graduated in 2013 with a degree in Theatre and Professional Practice. Here at MLT he has appeared as Patrick Simmons in *A Murder is Announced* and also in a one-act play he wrote himself, *One Light in the Dark*, which was entered into our Duncan Rand One-Act Play Festival last summer.

James Roots as PC Hilary Pond

James has always enjoyed performing in front of people and as a youngster visited a holiday park on the Isle of Wight. There he discovered karaoke and realised he enjoyed the smile on people's faces when they saw him perform. He studied performing arts at MidKent College and has really enjoyed being involved in his first production at Medway Little Theatre.

Charlotte Simpson as Jenny Stewart

Charlotte has been a member of Medway Little Theatre's youth group for two years. Her first production was *The Chronicles of Narnia* where she was part of the ensemble and last year she had lead roles in both *The Railway Children* and *Some Treasure Island!*, our recent Youth Extravaganza. She is very much enjoying being in *Wild Goose Chase*.

Elaine Thomas as Miss Partridge

Elaine joined MLT in 2012 and has appeared in a variety of productions including *The Diary of Anne Frank*, as the irascible housekeeper Berthe in *Boeing-Boeing*, and as Lady Windermere in *Lord Arthur's Savile's Crime*! In 2016 she played Mrs Corney in *Oliver Twist*. Of her latest incarnation she says, 'Miss Partridge is a true eccentric, out of touch with reality. She is one of those odd women who never actually grow up.'

Chris Loft as Capone

A member of MLT for over 35 years, Chris has appeared in far too many plays to mention but more recently they include Max in *Sitting Pretty*, David in *Hay Fever*, and in 2016 a memorable Fagin in *Oliver Twist*. Earlier appearances include parts in *Can't Pay? Won't Pay!* by Dario Fo, Laurence in *Abigail's Party* and the titular character in *Richard II*. Chris directed last season's *Relatively Speaking* and *Blithe Spirit*, which opened this season and is currently Chairman of Medway Little Theatre.