

Taking Steps

by Alan Ayckbourn

6th – 15th October 2022

One day a young actor went to his boss Stephen Joseph to complain about the parts he was given. 'If you want better parts,' said Joseph, 'write yourself one.' That simple sentence launched one of the most glittering playwriting careers in modern times. The actor was of course Alan Ayckbourn, the author of tonight's play.

After leaving school at 17, his first job was as an actor/assistant stage manager at the Edinburgh Festival with Sir Donald Wolfit's company, but his career took off when working at Scarborough and Stoke theatres-in-the-round. His first notable play was *Mr Whatnot* (1964), written for a local mime artist, but it failed in the West End, when it was overburdened with star names.

Soon Ayckbourn found success with a more conventional comedy *Meet My Father*, first performed at Scarborough in 1965. With a new title, *Relatively Speaking*, and a cast led by film star Celia Johnson, classical actor Michael Hordern and the then little-known Richard Briers, Ayckbourn at last, in 1967, had his first West End hit.

The success was bittersweet, because his mentor Stephen Joseph died the same year. Ayckbourn bought Joseph's house, where he still lives today, took over the running of the theatre and managed to move it from the top floor of the library to a rejuvenated cinema, where he named it The Stephen Joseph Theatre in the Round. Most of Ayckbourn's plays, including tonight's, were premiered there.

His run of successes, often making innovative use of the stage, continued with *Bedroom Farce* (1975) which features four couples in three beds; *How the Other Half Loves* (1970), which features two bedrooms on top of each other, and *Way Upstream* (1981), set on a boat - with real water - which caused so many problems that the first night at the National had to be cancelled. His latest play *Family Album*, his 87th, opened a few days ago at Scarborough.

Michael Bath, Director

The play is set in a large house somewhere in the English countryside, sometime in the 20th century.

CAST

ELIZABETH, a former dancer	Francesca West
MARK, her brother	Brian Holmes
ROLAND, her husband	Del de Lorme
TRISTRAM a solicitor	Ian Sagar
LESLIE, a builder	Chris Loft
KITTY, Mark's girlfriend	Sophie Payne

CREW

Light & Sound	Menno Willemse Andrew Coulson
Set Design & Construction	Del de Lorme Melody de Lorme John Scoines John Kennefick Bernie Gallagher
Set Painting	Simon Mills
Properties	William Barnard
Poster Photography	Neil Thorne
Rehearsal Photography	Sophie Payne
Assistant Stage Manager	Ronnie Titley
Stage Manager	Peter Clark
Assistant Director	John Firman
Director	Michael Bath

Check out Sophie's rehearsal photos on our Facebook page:
facebook.com/medwaylittletheatrerochester

Coming Next

GOODNIGHT MR TOM

by David Wood

based on the novel by Michelle Magorian
8th - 10th and 15th - 17th December 2022

Set during the dangerous build up to the Second World War, *Goodnight Mister Tom* follows young William Beech, who is evacuated to the idyllic English countryside and forges a remarkable and heart-warming friendship with the elderly recluse Tom Oakley. All is perfect until William is suddenly summoned by his mother back to London.


Winner of the 2013 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Entertainment, *Goodnight Mister Tom* is a world-wide literary favourite that continues to inspire audiences and bring generations together.

This production of "Goodnight Mr Tom" is presented by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.
www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

Medway Little Theatre Needs You!

Our theatre produces several shows a year and we always welcome new members, whether they are interested in acting, stage managing, set building, working lights and sound, or any of the dozens of other jobs needed to produce live theatre. If you are interested in moving from seat to stage, please ask our front of house team or bar staff for information on how to join, or just turn up at 8pm to our social nights, held every Tuesday evening in between show runs.

This amateur production of *Taking Steps* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.



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CURIOUSER AND
CURIOUSER...

6th - 15th October
Doors 7pm
Show 7.30pm
Tickets £11 www.mlt.org.uk

Taking Steps
a farce by Alan Ayckbourn

256 High Street, Rochester www.mlt.org.uk
This production of "TAKING STEPS" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk