

# Stagers' Spotlight

April 2025

## Betty Blue Eyes

A declaration of interest, I'm in the Ensemble of 'Betty Blue Eyes', the next show from the Grayshott Stagers. I had never heard of it and here it was purporting to be "Your new favourite musical", so I went along to the presentation. "Do you remember the film in the 80s about a pig? And it being fattened up for a Private Function?" "Do you mean the one with that bloke and that woman - Michael Palin and ..... Maggie Smith?" "Yes, that's the one." Well it got made into a musical called "Betty Blue Eyes" a few years back." So we joined the cast and got our 'books' with script and score and started learning and listening.

I have to say that the songs are absolutely **crackling** (sorry). Each one a mixture of hilarious class divides and the pain of not fitting in. Here's a few of the bits that I love already



### 'Fair Shares For All'

is about the rationing that is still in place 2 years after the war. Life isn't really quite what they had been expecting: "Wartime is over, those cliffs of Dover seem even whiter there's no doubt, but there are few words about the bluebirds that they made such a song and dance about."



### "A Place on the Parade"

Joyce and Gilbert (newcomers) want a shop, instead of him cycling round to do Chiropody in people's homes. Gilbert - because "Virulent Verrucas fall beneath the blade in my place on the Parade"; Joyce - because "We'll be the new people to know. We will break through- then watch us grow"

### "Magic Fingers"

Gilbert visits the ladies of the town to take care of their feet and three of them sing "And his touch is tender when he hits the spot, And he talks about conditions That I never knew I'd got". Later in the song we learn more about the lives of these women since the war and that stiff upper lip. 'My husband had magic fingers. Before he lost his arms. Macaroon?'



### "Painting by Heart"

The meat inspector is compelled to spoil any meat not within the law and considers it an art form. "I'll Keep illegal Pork from each immoral fork"



Considered by many to be the golden age of comedy, this much-loved British sitcom first hit our TV screens in December 1982 with a successful pilot episode "The British Are Coming". After being commissioned by the BBC, the first full series started in September 1984 with "The British 'ave Come" as the opening episode.

At this time, I was sixteen and it would be fair to say that my interest in the show was centred more around the flighty waitresses, Yvette and Mimi, and wanting to be in Rene's shoes for those indiscretions, rather than the actual plot. As the show grew in popularity, so did my interest in the overarching plot and it became a weekly viewing staple for all of the family.



The show was created by the comedy writing legends of David Croft and Jeremy Lloyd who had previously teamed up to write "Are you being served". Much like previous successful sitcoms created by Croft and Lloyd, they employed notable elements of memorable catchphrases, cultural cliches, physical humour and visual gags, along with a large slice of double entendres. There are, of course, the memorable and often parodied actors speaking English but with theatrical foreign accents to distinguish each character's nationality. Perhaps the most memorable of these being Officer Crabtree and lines such as "Good moaning, your new roodio is ruddy and will be delivered by Undergrind very shilly"



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### "Lionheart"

Joyce and her friend Kit are cutting a rug in the Primrose Ballroom. "She dreamed she'd meet her Lionheart, like all girls did back then"

### "Pig no Pig"

Through a series of plot lines, Gilbert and Joyce end up with a pig in the house that they share with Joyce's 'Mother Dear' and they have to explain to her that if anyone else asks "there's no pig in the house, just Gilbert, Joyce and you, but when no-one else is looking there's a little piggy too"

I'll leave out some songs that might spoil the surprises but by 'eck they're all great.

*Diana Lovelock*



### 'Allo 'Allo

**Listen carefully, I shall say this only once!**

To say that I am excited to be directing the Stager's production of 'Allo 'Allo would be a huge understatement. I am bursting at the seams to get started and the presentation evening on 25 June and auditions on 5 July cannot come soon enough.



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surprisingly, it is considered by many official polls to be one of the top 20 British sitcoms of all time.

The Stagers' production will be the original stage show that ran from 1986 to 1992, which included three London stage runs. This hilarious stage comedy regales the adventures of the hapless cafe owner, Rene, in occupied France. We all have our favourite characters from the TV series and many of these will be on show, from Rene's tone-deaf wife Edith, and the Gestapo Officer Herr Otto Flick, to Michelle "of the resistance" Dubois and Private Helga Geerhart.



We will be putting on a run of four evening performances from Wednesday 19 November to Saturday 22 November. The Thursday and Friday performances will be in a café style seating with French themed food.

Expect a fabulously funny, nostalgic trip down memory lane, complemented with some imaginative staging and lighting, hilarious costume adaptations and some atmospheric twists that will draw in the audience and make them want to visit Rene's café again and again.

*Buff Cooper*  
*Director*

## **BBQ - Save The Date**

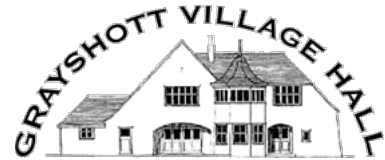
**21st June 2025**  
**12:30pm**



We are very grateful to Susie and David Gow for agreeing to host this year's BBQ. More details to follow...

## **Friends of Grayshott Village Hall**

*A message from Jennifer Charters.*



As Stagers, we are so fortunate to have the use of the Grayshott Village Hall. Last year we gave the following quote to help advertise the Hall: "GVH provides us with fantastic facilities to stage productions; from early rehearsals, with a variety of rooms available, to the performances which benefit from the technical stage facilities, recent improvements to the backstage space and a lovely ambience for audience members. The hall is maintained well with regular, thoughtful improvements."

As a large group using the hall, we appoint one of our members each year to the Grayshott Village Hall Management Committee as a Trustee. I have been the Stagers' appointed member for several years and have been involved in the re-launch of the Friends Scheme, recently helping to distribute leaflets to all the Hall's regular user groups, inviting their members to join the scheme. I now quote the invitation on these leaflets and hope that you may feel able to support the Hall in this way.

### **"An Invitation:**

Grayshott Village Hall, which was founded in 1902, is a registered charity overseen by a volunteer committee that is partly elected from the local community and partly appointed by organisations using the Hall.

Its object is to improve the conditions of life for local inhabitants by providing facilities for recreation, leisure-time and other activities.

The Hall does not receive any regular funding from central or local government and is reliant on the charges made to our users to cover its day-to-day running costs.

The Friends Scheme was set-up over 20 years ago to help fund a programme of redecoration and improvement to ensure that the Hall is an attractive and up-to-date venue. Over the years thousands of pounds have been donated by the

Friends contributing significantly to the quality of the facilities available today.

If you value your Village Hall, please consider joining the Friends Scheme either as an Annual Friend (minimum donation £30) or a Lifetime Friend (minimum donation £300).

An application form is available on our website [www.grayshottvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.grayshottvillagehall.co.uk).

Friends will be acknowledged in the Hall's Annual report, will be invited to each Annual General Meeting to hear about the work of the Hall and their names will be displayed within the Hall.

Donations made by Friends will be added to a dedicated fund reserved for the regular redecoration of the Hall and provision of improved facilities.

We very much look forward to receiving your support."

*Jennifer Charters*



## What Our Friends Are Doing

### Headley Theatre Club

[www.johnowensmith.co.uk](http://www.johnowensmith.co.uk)

"The School Reunion" a murder mystery, 25 & 26 April, Headley Village Hall

### Imagine That Productions

[www.imaginethatproductions.co.uk](http://www.imaginethatproductions.co.uk)

Excerpts from "The Boyfriend" & Musical Theatre, 11 May, Hardman Hoyle Memorial Hall, Haslemere

Haslemere Players [www.haslemereplayers.com](http://www.haslemereplayers.com)

"The 24-Hour Musical" fundraiser, 31 May, Haslemere Hall

Tickets from [www.haslemerehall.co.uk](http://www.haslemerehall.co.uk)

**FAOS Musical Theatre Group** [www.faos.org.uk](http://www.faos.org.uk)

"Annie", 18-21 June, Farnham Maltings

Tickets from [www.farnhammaltings.com](http://www.farnhammaltings.com)

### Haslemere Thespians

[www.haslemerethespians.co.uk](http://www.haslemerethespians.co.uk)

"A Midsummer Night's Dream", 19-21 June, Haslemere Museum

Tickets from

<https://www.haslemereuseum.co.uk/whatson/>

*Barry Levy*

## Dates For Your Diary

**21st to 24th May 2025:** Betty Blue Eyes Musical, Grayshott Village Hall

**21st June:** BBQ Social

**25th June:** 'Allo 'Allo Launch Evening, 7:30pm Studio, Grayshott Village Hall

**5th July:** 'Allo 'Allo Auditions, Grayshott Village Hall

**10th September:** Read through and auditions for One Act Supper Evenings..

**24th September:** **AGM** - The Studio, Grayshott Village Hall.

**19th - 22nd November:** 'Allo 'Allo Performances, Grayshott Village Hall

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This edition of Spotlight was compiled by Kate Buxton.