

## Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves



Rehearsals began in October for the annual SHADDO Pantomime, to be staged at Shiplake Memorial Hall on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February. This year's show is Ali Baba, and the 40-strong cast includes some new faces as well as those familiar from previous shows.



Our previous three pantomimes have all come from the same script writers – this year we've chosen a script from a different source, but it still has all the traditional panto elements: a good story, colourful characters, lots of jokes, songs and plenty of audience participation! And, like last year, there will be three evening performances and a Saturday matinee specially adapted for younger children. Tickets will go on sale on 2nd January at The Corner Shop, Lower Shiplake and The Binfield Heath Stores. There's always strong demand, especially for the Saturday evening performance, so get there early!

As always, the cast is supported by a hard-working team of SHADDO members and supporters who are busy assembling costumes and props, designing the set, planning the lighting, sound effects and music, not to mention organising seating, publicity, ticket sales, programmes, licences and all the other stuff that has to be done. Any offers of help in any of these areas will be gratefully received!

Please contact Liz James, Liz Thomas or Gareth Jones if you'd like to be involved, or email [vice-chair@shaddo.uk](mailto:vice-chair@shaddo.uk).

## Kreepy Kenton Kapers



Passers-by at the Kenton Theatre on the evening of Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, stopped in their tracks as they heard wailing, howling, creaking and frenzied laughter emanating from the rear of the building- was this the latest production of 'The House of Commons', Neil George getting into his Dame costume or Liz James suddenly realising how many days were left until the first Panto performance?

No, it was the third performance of the Murder Mystery - The Curse of Castle Dracula - by SHADDO, at the HAODS (Henley Amateur Operatic and Drama Society) social evening.

An audience of c. 50 were regaled by the scary cast of Ivan Evenstitch (Nigel Piercey), Romany Gerimov (Hilary Tucker), Dr Frankenstein (Mark Manson), Baroness Bliexhardt (Lizzie Thomas), Fraulein Von Sternhandling (Angela Jones), Herr Munster (Neil George), Klina Kytzcinzinka (Liz James) and the host, Count Dracula (Neil McAdam).....oh, and the unexpected guest Dr. Jock McClew (Gareth Jones). The sound effects (e.g. screams of friendless lunatics) were controlled by 'mine's a pint' Hugh Steele and the very effective lighting by Tristan Jones.

HAODS generously gave us the freedom of their extensive wardrobe (although Herr Munster may regret having chosen the wig he did!) and we created a simple but effective set on a raised dais that transformed the Kenton's Green Room into Castle Dracula for the evening. The HAODS 'villagers' played a full part in the proceedings (you could tell that they were out to enjoy themselves) with a mixture of inventive questioning and good-natured heckling.

An excellent meal was provided by HAODS, who were very pleased with the event, which helped to raise some funds for the society. They are already looking to book us again for another murder mystery night - pasta anyone?

This has certainly helped to cement relations between HAODS and SHADDO, with beneficial spin-offs already materialising. Our thanks to Julie Huntington and all at HAODS for a very enjoyable evening and to Gareth and Angela for organising/scripting, as well as the cast for their excellent performance.

Anyone interested in taking part in a future murder mystery or ideas for a similar event, please contact any of the Committee.

### Playreading Evening

In October we held the first of what we hope will become regular play-reading evenings. Liz Thomas provided the venue and chose the play - Agatha Christie's "The Hollow" - from SHADDO's script library. There were enough parts for each of the eleven participants, with a bit of doubling-up of rôles here and there. No-one knew in advance what play we would be reading and it was a challenge for everyone to produce an instant characterisation, not least for the murderer, who had no idea that she'd done it until the final dénouement! Thanks to Liz for organising the evening and to all who came and threw themselves into their rôles, as well as bringing contributions of wine, beer and snacks!

If you'd like to organise or participate in future play-readings, please contact Liz Thomas or email [vice-chair@shaddo.org.uk](mailto:vice-chair@shaddo.org.uk).

### SHADDO Soundbite

It was an appropriately wet evening in November when a group of SHADDO members got together for a night out in Henley. We met at the Lagoon restaurant for an excellent curry before strolling around the corner to the Kenton Theatre for the last night of HAODS' 'Singing in the Rain'.

Early booking guaranteed us great seats in the second row of the stalls - just outside the 'wet-zone' and we all relished the fine performances of the principals and chorus alike. The production standard was extremely high with first class acting, singing and dancing throughout, on very credible and well-designed sets. The rain scene was amazing. All in all, a very professional show - somewhat daunting for those members of the murder mystery cast due to perform for HAODS the following week!

Thanks go to Gareth Jones for organising what was a very enjoyable evening. For those who missed out, we are considering a similar event next year, for Jesus Christ Superstar. Please let us know if you'd be interested. Contact [secretary@shaddo.uk](mailto:secretary@shaddo.uk) or phone Hilary or Gareth.

### Saturday night at the movies?

Mark Manson, Neil George and Gareth Jones have been investigating the possibility of hiring specialist projection equipment for screening films in the Memorial Hall. To move forwards, we want to get some idea of the market for a Shiplake Film Club. We could simply screen films, or run themed evenings around different movies - from Rocky Horror Show to the Sound of Music. We could provide a bar, light refreshments, an introduction giving information about the film etc. We'd like to get some feedback from as many people as possible before we go any further so please contact us with your views - the films you'd like to see, the kind of event you'd enjoy.

Please contact Mark, Neil or Gareth or email [vice-chair@shaddo.uk](mailto:vice-chair@shaddo.uk) with any comments or suggestions.

### Theatre Workshop

We are planning to run a theatre workshop in the New Year, in conjunction with The Wildcard Theatre Company, based at The Wycombe Swan. They work with groups of all ages, helping to develop a range of stage skills - even the exciting sounding 'Show in a Day'! We are greatly looking forward to working with them.

All the details, including date, venue and price will be circulated in the New Year. Priority for bookings will be given to SHADDO members.

### Can You Help?

We are looking for help in making costumes and props for the pantomime. If you are arty, crafty and have a little time to spare, please contact Liz Thomas! We also need:

Bright fabric remnants  
Round, covered basket  
Other assorted baskets  
Arab-type sandals or slippers  
Folding card-tables  
Folding chairs  
Plastic or rubber fish  
Colourful beads, chains, medallions etc  
Bangles  
Hessian sacks  
Brown leather/ette saddle-bags  
Fringed scarves in bright colours

Email [vice-chair@shaddo.uk](mailto:vice-chair@shaddo.uk) or ring 0118 940 3243 if you can help!

*Everyone on the SHADDO Committee send their best wishes to Fredric Lawson for a speedy recovery from his recent operation, and a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to one and all!*