



Summer End

By Eric Chappell

Cast

Emily Baines : Ann Hartland
May Brewer : Anne Godfrey
Sally : Louise Kerr
Mrs Lang : Ginny Blakey
Alan Baines : Tony Wells



Produced & Directed by Jim Newcomb
Designed by David Evans

The action of the play takes place in the room shared by Emily Baines and May Brewer in the Summer End retirement home.

Time - the present

ACT 1 Scene 1 A Sunday evening in late November
Scene 2 Early evening a few days before Christmas

ACT 2 Two hours later

There will be an interval of 15 minutes after Act 1.



Stage Manager	Terry Cane
Stage Crew	Adam Wells
Lighting	David Wells
Properties	Elaine Andrews
	Jenny Weston
	David Andrews
Sound	Charles Wintour
Prompt	Jim Newcomb
Construction	Terry Cane, David Wells, Cliff Smith, Adam Wells, Cedric Gibbons
Transport Manager	Richard Wadley
Poster Design	Jim Newcomb
Banner	Thérèse Casemore
Programme & Publicity	Cedric Gibbons
Original Artwork	David Evans
Marketing	David Andrews
	Front of House Coordinator Barbara Spence
	Ticket Sales The Nelson Museum; Brian Williams



Thanks to

The Headmistress and Bursar of H.M.S.G; Monmouthshire Beacon; Andy Sherwill of the Free Press; Des Pugh; Chris Jones; The Curator & Staff of the Nelson Museum; Brian Williams Watch Repairs; St John Ambulance; Brian Phillips and Pastorprint; St Mary's Parish Church in Wales; Monmouth Library; Marsden House Care Home, Whitchurch; Cliff Smith; Newcomb's Dado Rails of Whitchurch; the many local shops, Companies and individuals too numerous to mention who have helped and advised in many ways.





Message from the Chairman

Welcome to Off Centre Theatre's autumn production. I hope you enjoy the performance. This is the fourth show in 2006. The first was two one act plays *The Virtuous Burglar* by Dario Fo and *The Dumb Waiter* by Harold Pinter. In the summer the audience was entertained by a cast of various woodland creatures in *Wind in the Willows* and in September by a supper evening with extracts from *Round the Horne*. The play this evening, written by Eric Chappell of *Rising Damp* fame, is very different to all the above and demonstrates the range of productions that Off Centre is able to successfully undertake.

As well as our productions we also have a range of social activities throughout the year including monthly club nights in our rooms above Barclays Bank in town, theatre trips, quiz nights, play readings. New members are always welcomed whether they want to act, direct, help backstage or just enjoy theatre and socialising. If you are interested in joining there are membership forms available in the foyer or speak to any of the front of house staff who will be happy to help you.

I hope you enjoy Summer End and hope that the fact that you not only have to read my programme notes but also watch me on stage doesn't detract from the evening. You should recognise me, as the rest of the cast is female!

A final note for your diary is Off Centre's January 2007 production of *The Odd Couple*, Neil Simon's famous comedy. This was revived on Broadway last year with Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick.

Thank you for your valued support.

Tony Wells

Chairman



The Residents of the Summer End Retirement Home

Ann Hartland (Emily Baines). In 1986 Ann played 'The Old Woman' in *Mixed Doubles* for OCT. Now, twenty years on she returns to the character having been a consistent Performer/Director/Producer for the Society. Amongst many roles, she played **Angela** in *Abigail's Party*, **Letitia** in *A Murder is Announced* and **Madame Arcati** in *Blithe Spirit*.



Anne Godfrey (May Brewer) joined the Society in 1992. She played **Mrs Prentice** in *What The Butler Saw*, **Mrs Northrop** in *When We Are Married*, **Nyanya** in *Uncle Vanya* and **Lady Bracknell** in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She has appeared in *Pantos* and *Reviews*.



Ginny Blakey (Mrs Lang). Ginny joined in 1996 - her fine singing voice and talent for comedy made her a favourite in *Summer Shows* and *Cabaret* - her **Madame Gazaza** is regularly reprised. She played **Yelena Andreyevna** in *Uncle Vanya* and also **Calamity Jane** for Monmouth Operatic Society.



Louise Kerr (Sally). Louise joined in 2003 to play **Joyce Harper** in *The Happiest Days of Your Life*. She was **Cecily** in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.



Tony Wells (Alan Baines) has been part of the backstage team for many years. Since converting to frontstage he has appeared as **Edgar Sowter** in *The Happiest Days of Your Life*, the **German** in *See How They Run*, **Featherstone** in *How The Other Half Loves* and **Lord Arthur Savile** in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*. Tony is Chairman of Off Centre Theatre.





Summer End

By Eric Chappell

Cast

Emily Baines : Ann Hartland
May Brewer : Anne Godfrey
Sally : Louise Kerr
Mrs Lang : Ginny Blakey
Alan Baines : Tony Wells



Produced & Directed by Jim Newcomb
 Designed by David Evans

The action of the play takes place in the room shared by Emily Baines and May Brewer in the Summer End retirement home.

Time - the present

ACT 1 Scene 1 A Sunday evening in late November
Scene 2 Early evening a few days before Christmas

ACT 2 Two hours later

There will be an interval of 15 minutes after Act 1.



Stage Manager	Terry Cane
Stage Crew	Adam Wells
Lighting	David Wells
Properties	Elaine Andrews
	Jenny Weston
	David Andrews
Sound	Charles Wintour
Prompt	Jim Newcomb
Construction	Terry Cane, David Wells, Cliff Smith, Adam Wells, Cedric Gibbons
Transport Manager	Richard Wadley
Poster Design	Jim Newcomb
Banner	Thérèse Casemore
Programme & Publicity	Cedric Gibbons
Original Artwork	David Evans
Marketing	David Andrews
	Front of House Coordinator Barbara Spence
	Ticket Sales The Nelson Museum; Brian Williams



Thanks to

The Headmistress and Bursar of H.M.S.G; Monmouthshire Beacon; Andy Sherwill of the Free Press; Des Pugh; Chris Jones; The Curator & Staff of the Nelson Museum; Brian Williams Watch Repairs; St John Ambulance; Brian Phillips and Pastorprint; St Mary's Parish Church in Wales; Monmouth Library; Marsden House Care Home, Whitchurch; Cliff Smith; Newcomb's Dado Rails of Whitchurch; the many local shops, Companies and individuals too numerous to mention who have helped and advised in many ways.



Eric Chappell & Rising Damp



In his Introduction to the complete Rising Damp scripts, Eric Chappell wrote, "We didn't know that Rising Damp would become a little part of TV history". But history it is. One of the most fondly-remembered, thankfully never-imitated, most often-repeated situation comedies on British television. What made it so successful? The actors, certainly. But the actors are only the puppets in a fictional performance. It is the writing - the character profiles, the storylines, the setting, the dialogue, the comedy, the timelessness, the believability - all of these things can come from only one source: the writer.

Eric Chappell was born into a working-class family in the town of Grantham in Lincolnshire, in 1933. His talent for story telling was evident from as early as elementary school. After secondary school he went on to study accountancy at college and although failing his final exams landed a job as an auditor with the East Midlands Electricity Board in Leicester. But away from his day job, Eric penned rough drafts of several novels on his typewriter, but admits they were never good enough for publication. At a low ebb after continued rejections, Eric decided to try another genre - a play. He remembers the idea came to him in the bath: "Why don't I write a play?!", he exclaimed, in an Archimedes-type Eureka! moment. "For one thing it's only 20,000 words instead of 70,000".

The *Banana Box* was only his second attempt at being a playwright and the first public performance of what became *Rising Damp* was on 25th May 1971 at The Phoenix Theatre in Leicester (with Wilfrid Brambell as the landlord Rooksby). By the Spring of 1973, *The Banana Box* had received such good reviews, that Eric, now married, left the Electricity Board relying on his writing for income (plus his wife's job at Oxfam). He gave himself two years to make a success. Then, in the summer of 1973, *The Banana Box* was performed at the pinnacle of any playwright's aspirations - London's West End. Of course, by this time, its previous performances gave Eric the chance to hone the play and improve certain scenes. Its gathering momentum in critics' circles also enabled more established actors to come on board. By the time it opened at the Apollo Theatre, Leonard Rossiter, Frances de la Tour and Paul Jones were in the cast. The huge success of *The Banana Box* in the West End brought it to the attention of Yorkshire Television, who commissioned the play as a thirty minute sitcom pilot, one of six to be shown in the Autumn of 1974. Entitled *Rising Damp*, the pilot was one of two that made it into a full series.

After the phenomenal success of *Rising Damp*, Eric was awarded a BAFTA for Best Situation Comedy in 1978.

AN OARSOME VENUE



Monmouth Rowing Club

Available for hire for private functions

Why are you waiting? Ring 01600 712089/713489 or 07810 483466 for details



Off Centre Theatre Presents

The Odd Couple

Neil Simon's famous Comedy

In this Theatre

January 4th to 6th

Watch out for details in the local Press!

Two divorced men try sharing an apartment but their ideas of housekeeping and lifestyles are as different as night and day.