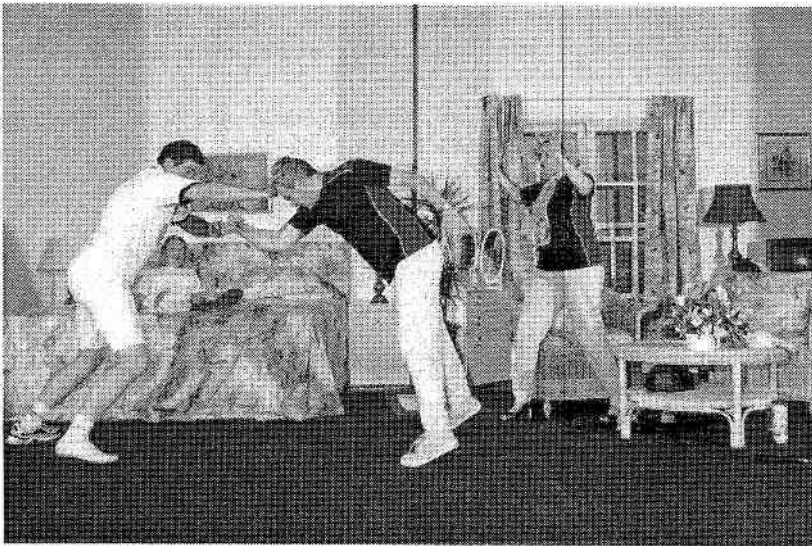


California Suite - a *sweet* evening from the Wychwood Players

Arriving at the New Beaconsfield Hall for the Wychwood Players production of two acts from Neil Simon's 'California Suite' we were treated with the sort of courtesy more associated with a first class hotel than amateur night at the village hall. We were checked in at the Reception Desk and shown to our 'suite' (table) by a smartly dressed young man who later doubled as wine waiter. Our table was beautifully laid with flowers, candles and an accompanying card giving amusing and informative facts on the American State from which our 'suite' derived its name. I don't know upon which hotel the evening was modelled but I'm willing to bet that it never achieved the same high standards of service and civility that we enjoyed.

The play is set in a Beverly Hills Hotel Suite and provides us with a glimpse of the lives of its various guests. A bright and cheerful set represented the two rooms of the suite. The colours and clear lighting gave the actors a wonderful background to show off their skills, and what a good job they made of it!

Visitors from New York featured Emily Lewis and Robert Gorton in a sophisticated verbal duel for the custody of their teenage daughter. The dialogue was quick, witty and rattled along at a rapid pace. Hardly had we recovered from one laugh than we were onto the next. Director Trudy Yates had obviously worked hard with her two young talents and helped them bring out all the comedy and pathos from the script. Though neither character was particularly likeable, so well were they portrayed that we loved them both and wanted to see much more of them.



If you have ever taken a holiday with your best friends you will know the stress and strains that can arise, but I doubt that you have reached the point of fighting with each other on the floor of the hotel room, which is what happened with Charles Marshall and Mark Jessey in the second act, 'Visitors from Chicago'. If the first act was funny this was a riot!

The two female characters played by Zoe Humphrey and Christine Dodds were less physically aggressive but just as funny. This was ensemble playing at its best and Phillip Crosson, taking a break from acting to make his directorial debut, ensured that it was very much a team effort. Oh how the audience enjoyed this hilarious romp.

The delightful evening was made complete by the wonderful piano playing of Mervyn Cawley who struck a perfect mood as he serenaded us through our excellent meal. Our thanks to the Wychwood Players for a most congenial and refreshing occasion..

Anon.



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The Wychwood Players present

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS PUSS IN BOOTS

at

The New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton-under-Wychwood

**Performances at 7.30 pm on Thursday 13 December,
Friday 14 December and Saturday 15 December 2001**

with a matinee on Saturday afternoon at 2.30pm.

Reserved seats for the evening performances are £6 and £4.

Unreserved seats for the Saturday matinee are £3.

Tickets are available from Gill Drew at 830398