

Theatre Review

A Picnic in the Poplars?

Alice Burns directed The Wychwood Players very professional production of *Heroes*, a play of only three characters written originally in French, but translated into English by Tom



Stoppard. Examples of the sardonic Stoppard humour are sprinkled liberally throughout the script. Although escaping from the veterans' home was the only thing these three old soldiers could contemplate, even getting as far at the poplars just beyond the cemetery was beyond their abilities.

The play was a marvellous vehicle for the three very talented men who must be considered to be the backbone of our thespian community. The synergy between the three men was very close, and they all gave most impressive performances.

John Drew was an excellent straight man, and presented a very sympathetic view of the survivors of the First World War, with his gammy leg and admission that

he is a 'sorry crusader'. Mark Jessey's crackpot, amongst the other 'crocks', achieved the impossible by being both funny and sad at the same time. Dudley Thompson's performance was

sublime, and his comic timing superb.

The scene in which all three men attempt to tie themselves together with a fire hose is a marvellous metaphor for the shambolic lives they have all ended up living.

Whilst the play was very amusing, it also highlighted the wasted lives and wasted effort that was the legacy of the First World War.

The thrust stage on the floor of the auditorium increased the intimacy of the performance, and added greatly to the power of each man's character. As always the set design, music, costumes and other technical aspects combined to make this play another wonderful triumph for the Wychwood Players.

Peggy Walmsley

Humble Boy

The Wychwood Players once again bring theatre to life in their May production of *Humble Boy* at the New Beaconsfield Hall on **May 14th, 15th and 16th**.

The story is about a young academic struggling to come to terms with the death of his Father and arriving home for the funeral to discover strange turmoil. Of course David Trollope's set will be amazing and the hard working cast involves, Richard Hartley, Amanda

Henriques, Charles Keighley, Joanna McKerlie, John Trevers and Emily Lewis.

Mandyrae Large is directing the show. She fell in love with it a couple of years ago and has wanted to bring it to the Wychwoods ever since. Read our blog to see what goes on behind the scenes! Tickets go on sale a month before the show from Beryl Collins: 07776 029 871.

John Drew