

## Wychwood Players Review Toad of Toad Hall

On an absolutely foul rainy night in late November, when the Evenlode was bursting its banks and threatening to engulf us all in floods, and the police were insisting on whisking away



The complicated sets including the boat, caravan, and motor car were fantastic, and owed much to the genius of David Trollope and Geoff Collins with assistance from Katja

the human residents of the riverbank across the road from the New Beaconsfield Hall, Ratty (Philip Croxson), carefree and remarkably human, was peacefully rowing down the lazy river on stage in the opening scene of *Toad of Toad Hall*.

### Animal Magic

It was a superb production headed by Dudley Thompson in the lead role of Toad. He was perfect, and carried the whole production as only the Chairman of the Wychwood Players could! He was ably supported by Ratty, Badger (Mark Jessey) and Mole (Anne Hilling). The costumes and headdresses were all wonderful, particularly Toad's overcoat with the fur collar and the multi-coloured jacket. He was a picture in his 'disguise' bonnet and shawl. Anne's Mole was well researched, and a very realistic 'animal,' her paws were constantly out front and in action, and she was nervous, uncertain and uncomfortable, much as a real mole would have been. Mark's Badger was in perfect voice and he gives a memorable performance every time.

Horvath, a new member of the Wychwood Players backstage team. Mandy's miraculous work with the Wychwood Saplings showed, and they were a great addition to the cast. They sang, gesticulated and foot-tapped their way to entertain us all. We have a budding troupe of young talent in our midst and can look forward to seeing them more often in productions of the future. Mandy's great pride and abundant love and support for the Saplings will encourage them all to show us their best efforts in times to come.

### What Rain?

This was a very ambitious undertaking demanding nothing less than perfection from everyone involved; direction, stage crew, costumes, make-up, props, lighting, sound, music and choreography. None of these areas gave less than their best, and it came together as a cohesive evening of memorable entertainment.

Thanks again to the Wychwood Players for taking our minds off the atrocious weather, momentarily!

**Peggy Walmsley**