



# WHEN WE ARE MARRIED

BY J.B.PRIESTLEY



TUE 17TH - SAT 21ST MAY 2022

PROGRAMME £2



**TEDDINGTON**  
THEATRE CLUB

The action takes place in the sitting-room of Alderman Helliwell's house in Cleckleywyke, a town in the West Riding, on a September evening early in the twentieth century

Act One

A brief five-minute 'pause'

Act Two – about half an hour later

An interval of 20 minutes

Act Three – about quarter of an hour later





# WHEN WE ARE MARRIED

By J.B. Priestley

Directed by Michelle Hood

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord  
Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

No photography or recording!

# A Welcome from our Artistic Director



Welcome to Hampton Hill Theatre and TTC's production of *When We Are Married*, a play about marriage – or is it? It's certainly a good old laugh, a classic play in the repertoire of so many companies, both professional and amateur and these wonderful characters have been played by some of the greatest actors of the last century; how I wish I'd seen the relatively recent production featuring Roy Hudd and Maureen Lipman!

Priestley's writing is so accessible and so amusing that it's easy to forget that he often has a message for the audience hidden in the text. I'll leave you to make your own minds up about what that might be in tonight's play, but will give you a clue as to my thinking:

No matter what is seen on the outside it's the inner workings and hidden mechanics of any relationship or organisation that is really important and crucial to its success. So whilst our fabulous actors are out there taking their well deserved applause do please add in a little extra for all the designers, builders, makers, technicians and teachers who have helped bring you the production we see this evening. Not to mention our glorious front of House and bar volunteers. Tonight we bring you a true team effort and I'm grateful to each and every one of the cast and wider company who has worked so hard to deliver tonight's performance.

Enjoy the show and remember...

"Comedy, we may say is society protecting itself – with a smile", J.B. Priestley

**Lottie Walker**

# Author's Preface

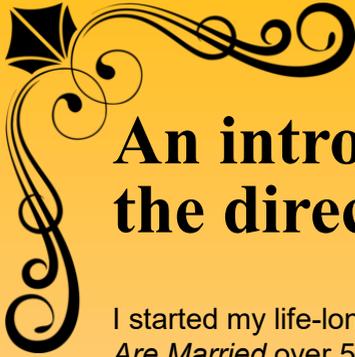


*When We Are Married* was produced at the St Martin's in October 1938, and transferred to the Prince's at the end of March 1939. It has been very popular ever since. I enjoyed writing this broadly farcical comedy because I had a lot of fun remembering and then using various aspects of West Riding life and manners known to my boyhood. The plot is nonsensical but the characters and their attitudes and their talk are all authentic. The play was magnificently cast and produced by Basil Dean, who in my opinion has a great flair for this kind of comedy. It was during the early part of its run that I had to take over, at twenty-four hours' notice, the part of Henry Ormonroyd, the drunken photographer, and thus did some acting, of a sort, about which I have boasted ever since.

J B Priestley, January 1949

In the heart of Northern England, three respectable couples, married on the same day, at the same church, and by the same vicar, join to celebrate 25 years of blissful matrimony. Or so they think.

The happy celebrations are brought to a sudden halt by a shocking revelation – these pillars of the community aren't quite as respectably married as they thought they were. As the home truths fly like confetti and conjugal rites turn to farcical fights, an evening of sparkling comic mayhem erupts. With a photographer from the local paper due to arrive any second, a missing housekeeper and a doorbell that won't stop ringing, can the three couples keep a lid on their embarrassing secret?



## An introduction from the director...

I started my life-long fascination with Priestley's play *When We Are Married* over 50 years ago when I played the part of the teenage maid Ruby Birtle in a production by the then Wimbledon Repertory Players. And after all these years, I still believe this ever-popular Yorkshire classic has managed to maintain its appeal over the 80 years since its creation in 1938.

However, Priestley chose to set his play 30 years earlier in 1908, to reflect the manners and social graces of the Edwardian era. This was a time which had seen the growth of Northern industrial manufacturing and the rise of a new, wealthier class living a more prosperous domestic lifestyle. Gender roles had also started to change with women's voices becoming louder and demanding better career opportunities and voting equality.

So, welcome to the drawing room of Joseph and Maria Helliwell's home in Cleckleywyke, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, as they welcome their friends the Parkers and the Soppitts to celebrate their joint silver wedding anniversaries. It's probably not giving too much away to say that the play centres on a rather implausible plot that these three long-married couples discover that, due to a bureaucratic quirk, they have never actually been married. So, in the world of 1908 – very much shock horror – and hence a device for Priestley's wicked comic wit as he exploits the different couple's reaction to the news. Of course, attitudes about the sanctity of marriage have changed enormously over the years and unmarried couples living together now rarely raises an eyebrow.

But let yourself be transported back to an earlier time, long before the sexual revolution, and to observe a different set of rigid social rules and manners. For this was a time of high teas, maids wearing mop caps, men by fireplaces with thumbs in waistcoat pockets and ladies wearing elegant long gloves – and, of course, a time when ladies would always leave the dining room while the men talked politics and business and smoked cigars.

In the run, at the St Martins in 1938, the iconic role, that of the young maid Ruby Birtle, was played by Patricia Hayes and the production was directed by the legendary Basil Dean. Over the years a bevy of well-known actors have taken part in the play. Indeed, the BBC have produced two television versions – the first in 1975 had John Stratton, Eric Porter and Richard Pearson in the roles of the three husbands - with their wives played by Beryl Reid, Patricia Routledge and Thora Hird - plus Ronnie Barker as the drunken photographer. A second version, in 1987, featured Peter Vaughan, Timothy West and Bernard Cribbins as the husbands with their respective wives played by Patricia Routledge (again, but playing a different wife), Prunella Scales (West's real-life wife) and Rosemary Leach. Joss Ackland played the photographer with Liz Smith as Mrs. Northrop and Patsy Rowlands as Lottie Grady. A later BBC radio version included Alan Bennett, Michael Jayston, Nicola Paget, Gwen Taylor and Polly James.

So, many famous footsteps for our intrepid actors to follow. I hope you enjoy being transported back to Edwardian Yorkshire.

**Michelle Hood, Director**



# The Celebrations...



# Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Ruby Birtle.....Matilda Thomas  
Gerald Forbes .....Jacob Taylor  
Mrs Northrop ..... Jenny Hobson  
Nancy Holmes .....Lydia Vincent  
Freda Dyson..... Hannah Postinger  
Henry Ormonroyd.....Daniel Wain  
Alderman Joseph Helliwell .....Geraint Thomason  
Maria Helliwell ..... Ruth Chaperlin  
Councillor Albert Parker..... Charles Brain  
Annie Parker .....Janis Haves  
Herbert Soppitt .....John Mortley  
Clara Soppitt ..... Sally Halsey  
Lottie Grady..... Samantha McGill  
Reverend Clement Mercer .....David Robins  
The Mayor ..... Liz Salaman



# Biographies

## **CHARLES BRAIN – Councillor Albert Parker**

Charles is performing in his first play as a member of TTC. He has previously performed as Young Scrooge in a production of *A Christmas Carol* for Shepperton Players. Charles has performed in a variety of different shows over the years and looks forward to bringing his experience to TTC. He hopes to feature in many performances to come.



## **RUTH CHAPERLIN – Maria Helliwell**

Ruth spent many years performing in musicals with GLOC Musical Theatre, before joining TTC in 2019. She has performed in both chorus and principal roles in many shows, including *Copacabana*, *Moll Flanders*, *Sister Act* and *Urinetown*, in which she was lucky enough to take on the role of Penelope Pennywise. Roles for TTC have included Thomas Cromwell's wife, Lizzie, and Edward Seymour, brother of Jane Seymour, in *Wolf Hall and Bring Up the Bodies*. She last appeared on the HHT main stage as one of the Venticelli in *Amadeus*.



## **SALLY HALSEY – Clara Soppitt**

Following her appearance as Lily in *Sex Cells* for OHADS in the Studio at HHT, Sally appeared as Mrs Jarrett in *Escaped Alone* – a filmed on-stage production for TTC that was shown on-line during lockdown last year. Sally also appeared in a number of other Lockdown productions, her particular favourite being *The COVID Diaries* written by TTC's Artistic Director, Lottie Walker. Over the years, Sally has appeared in many productions for TTC – most memorably as Sandy, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, as Shaz, *The Madness of Esme*, and as Chiffon, *Little Shop of Horrors*.



## **JANIS HAVES – Annie Parker**

Performer, singer-songwriter, stand-up and musical comedian, Janis toured and recorded three commercially released albums before 'spicing things up' by jumping into the world of stand-up and musical comedy. Playing 900 comedy gigs in four years across the UK, a solo musical comedy show, *The Evil Queen Rules*, performed at the Edinburgh Fringe and six Token Man Comedy theatre shows (three top girls and one pretty good bloke). Next up is *In Her Own Words*, a musical journey show from 1960 to 1980, singing the songs and telling the stories of the female singer/songwriters that changed the world with their songs.



## **JENNY HOBSON - Mrs Northrop**

Jenny first stepped on to the stage at the age of five and has rarely been off it ever since. She attended drama school in Birmingham which led to radio work and teaching. Having moved around the country, she was drawn into local theatre groups, and was fortunate to be offered many interesting roles from Electra to Madame Arcati! She joined TTC in 2014 and subsequently played in *Equus* and OHADS's *Family Circles*. Jenny directed *Stevie* for TTC in 2016, plus two one-act Bennett plays in 2019. She recently greatly enjoyed playing Lena in TTC's film project *Escaped Alone*, created during lockdown.



## **MICHELLE HOOD – Director**

Michelle is active at TTC as a director (including both musicals and straight plays) and as an actor, most recently in the video drama *Escaped Alone*. Michelle trained at the Guildford School of Drama and worked as a professional actress for many years. She has recently retired from running her own stage school and has previously been TTC's Artistic Director. Her next venture is directing an open-air production of a shortened version of *As You Like It* for RSS as part of an English Heritage summer event at Marble Hill.



## **LYDIA Kennard – Nancy Holmes**

Lydia's last role and stage debut was as Lady Rochford in TTC's *Wolf Hall and Bring up the Bodies*. During lockdown, she regularly performed in online plays with TTC and was part of the two online Weekend Marathons reading poems, stories and plays. This included performing as the Hon. Gwendolen Fairfax in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*.



## **SAMANTHA McGILL – Lottie Grady**

Samantha was last involved with TTC in October, when she choreographed the first ever Halloween Pantomime, *Cinderella Meets the Monsters!* Previously for TTC, she has appeared as Myrtle in *Still Life*, which was part of a Noel Coward double bill, for which she won her second Swan award. Over the years, she has appeared in four West End productions, and numerous national and international tours, some of which include *Singin' in the Rain*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Her voice can be heard on many recordings of children's stories and UK radio jingles.



## **JOHN MORTLEY – Herbert Soppitt**

John has been a member of TTC for about five years now and has also been a member of RSS for over 25 years. He has been in many productions over this time and has received five Swan Nominations and two Swan Awards (Best Supporting Actor and Best Actor). His last production was with RSS in Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* last Christmas and he last performed with TTC in the wonderful back-from-Covid production of *The Recruiting Officer* last September.



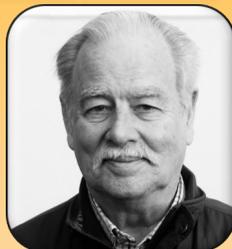
## **HANNAH POSTINGER - Freda Dyson**

Hannah returns to acting as Freda Dyson, after having taken a long break since her involvement in TTC as a child. This is her first adult role in a TTC production and she hopes to continue being active and developing her skills.



## **DAVID ROBINS - Mercer**

David is delighted to be playing Mercer. A clergyman is a useful addition to the professional roles he has played recently - in his last outing with TTC in *Cause Célèbre*, he played the judge and the murdered architect who occasioned the trial. As then, so now, a pleasure to be part of a TTC ensemble.



## **LIZ SALAMAN - Mayor**

Liz appeared in *Cause Célèbre*, the last TTC production before the pandemic. She was delighted to be chosen to be part of the TTC crew producing a film of *Escaped Alone* directed last summer by Daniel Wain. Previous appearances at TTC include *Stevie* and *Echoes of the War*. Liz has also been seen at RSS in productions including *Tom and Viv*, *The Railway Children* and *Hedda Gabler*.



## **JACOB TAYLOR – Gerald Forbes**

Jacob's debut with TTC was in 2015 with *My Boy Jack*, for which he won the Swan Award for Best Young Male in a Play or Musical, and since been an active thespian. He performed for TTC in *Pornography* and *Cause Célèbre* before the 2020 lockdown struck and, during them, kept active in a variety of radio plays as actor, sound designer and soundtrack composer. Jacob's recent productions include *Hay Fever* (RSS), *Shakespeare in Love* (TTC) and *Trial By Music* (HLO).



## **MATILDA THOMAS – Ruby Birtle**

Matilda is currently in her final year at The Brit School studying Musical Theatre and has just finished her final performance in the musical *A Chorus Line* and will be continuing on her drama school journey at Rose Bruford in September. She hasn't been part of a TTC production since *The Snow Queen* in 2014, where she played the role of Young Gerda, and is excited to be finally returning to TTC.



## **GERAINT THOMASON – Alderman Joseph Helliwell**

Geraint took to the stage a dozen years ago in *Sweeney Todd*, performing at the Rose Theatre, Kingston. Other musicals followed, including a run of *Into the Woods* at the Edinburgh Fringe. Three seasons as an alarmingly large panto dame were followed by performances in a cutting-edge 2015 immersive theatre production. With TTC, Geraint has played a man interested in roadworks and flat-roofed extensions in 2018's *A Month of Sundays*, the intellectually challenged Duke of Suffolk in 2019's *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up The Bodies*, a film nerd in a lockdown virtual plays, and recently a disdainful misogynist in *Shakespeare in Love*.



## **DANIEL WAIN – Henry Ormonroyd**

Daniel's last TTC performances include Richard Burbage in *Shakespeare in Love* and O'Connor in *Cause Celebre*, the week before the first lockdown. Efforts to keep active during the pandemic included co-producing TTC's two 24-hour online theatre marathons, making his debut as both film director, TTC's *Escaped Alone* and opera director, compering the Gala Evening that reopened Richmond Theatre, and producing *Maybe It's Because* at the 2021 Camden Fringe Festival. Besides writing this year's TTC panto, Daniel is reviving *Maybe It's Because* at Twickenham's Mary Wallace Theatre in November after producing (and performing in) *Larkin with Women* at the Old Red Lion Theatre, Islington in September.



# And the revelations...



# The Production Team

Director .....	Michelle Hood
Production Manager.....	Daniel Wain
Stage Manager .....	Lyn Randall
Lighting Design & Operation .....	Laura Sharp
Lighting Operation.....	Rob Foot
Sound Design .....	Wayland Booth
Sound Operation.....	John Pyle
Set Design, Build & Dressing .....	Priya Virdee
Set Design & Build .....	Alan Corbett
Set Build Team .....	Fiona Auty
.....	Jack Tidball
Set Painting.....	Emma Mason
Costume Lead.....	Mags Wrightson
Wardrobe Team .....	Lesley Alexander
.....	Maggie Revis
Ladies' Hair & Make-up .....	Junis Olmscheid
.....	Trine Taraldsvik
Props .....	Lyn Randall
.....	Jacqui Grebot
Marketing .....	Christine Wayman
Publicity Photography .....	Nigel Cole
Dress Rehearsal Photography .....	Sarah Carter
BAT Link .....	Dave Rumens
Artistic Link.....	Daniel Wain

# Some of the cast at their own weddings



# COMING SOON

**Booking at [www.thelittleboxoffice.com/teddingtontheatreclub](http://www.thelittleboxoffice.com/teddingtontheatreclub)  
or phone 020 8410 4546 (5.00pm - 8.00pm Mon - Sat)**

**TUE 24 MAY - SAT 28 MAY 2022**

## **ABIGAIL'S PARTY**

By Mike Leigh

**Step into 70s suburbia, down a gin and tonic, and settle in for the drinks party from hell.**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.

**TUE 28 JUN - SAT 2 JUL 2022**

## **OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD**

By Timberlake Wertenbaker

**The funny, uplifting and true story of the first play to be performed in Australia.**

This is amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

**WED 6 JUL - SAT 9 JUL 2022**

## **THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE**

By Frank Marcus

**Foul-mouthed. Foul-tempered. But does she deserve to die?**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.  
on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

**TUE 4 OCT - SAT 8 OCT 2022**

## **PYGMALION**

By George Bernard Shaw

**How can you turn a common flower seller into a duchess? .**

Teddington Theatre Club is affiliated to Arts  
Richmond and this production is entered for the  
Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals.



# Acknowledgements...

The cast and production team of  
*When We Are Married*  
would like to thank everyone involved in this  
production and a special thank you to Sally Halsey for  
help with direction, to Lottie Walker for help with  
music, to Helen Geldert for help with singing, to  
Jacob Taylor for help with transportation, to Jack  
Tidball and Luke Povey for set construction and  
finally to Daniel Wain for taking over at short notice as  
Production Manager.

And of course the front of house, box office and bar  
teams without whom the show couldn't go on!



# **TEDDINGTON** THEATRE CLUB

**Facebook: @teddingtontheatreclub**

**Twitter: @teddington\_tc**

**Instagram: @teddingtontheatreclub**

**[www.youtube.com/c/teddingtontheatreclub](http://www.youtube.com/c/teddingtontheatreclub)**

**[www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk](http://www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk)**

Teddington Theatre Club is resident at Hampton Hill Theatre.

90 High Street, Hampton  
Hill, TW12 1NZ

Company registration number  
939448. Registered charity  
number 257265

**HAMPTON HILL**  
THEATRE

