

Much Ado About Nothing

Wed 18th to Fri 20th June 2003
in the grounds of Sudbury House Hotel
in aid of the British Heart Foundation
Director: John Taylor

A play by William Shakespeare

Much Ado raises £1400 for British Heart Foundation

THE leafy grounds of Sudbury House Hotel provided an ideal setting for three performances of William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* in June.

Faringdon has embraced open-air Shakespeare before, but the players then were drawn from professional touring companies. On this occasion the Faringdon branch of the British Heart Foundation invited Faringdon Dramatic Society to mount an amateur production, as part of its fundraising endeavours.

This was perhaps a brave venture for the Foundation and the Society, but neither were disappointed. The professional polish, of the production was there for all to see- and over 400 turned up (with picnics in many cases) to support the enterprise. The weather held -windy on two nights, glorious sunshine on the third, and no rain. At the end of the day Faringdon branch BHF chairman Jim Brown was able to announce that after clearing all expenses the show had generated just over £1,400 to be donated to BHF funds.

John Taylor, who directed *Much Ado*, commented: "This was a tremendous team effort. The Society is blessed with some outstanding actors and actresses who had rehearsed since

Moreover, we have a very talented backstage team" including set design, set construction, sound, lighting and costumes.

"Our wardrobe team of Jeni Summerfield and Joan Lee had created a range of colour co-ordinated, historically authentic costumes that would be the envy of many professional companies. We were fortunate, too, to secure the services (free of charge) of Downwind, a group of local musicians who perform on period instruments, and who brought an added touch of magic to the occasion. I was very proud to be at the helm of such a wonderfully gifted company."

Space does not permit us to include a detailed report on individual performances, but the Oxfordshire representative of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association (of which we are members) attended and has delivered (as is usual) a detailed critique for the Society's benefit. The society always pays particular attention to their appraisals- the nearest it gets to a review by a drama critic!- and on this occasion it was rewarded with a glowing report. The British Heart Foundation and the Dramatic Society would like to thank the people of Faringdon for their splendid support.

February and who gave of their best.

Newspaper article with kind permission of 'The Faringdon Folly'

Much Ado About Something

Director:

Enter Director, centre stage Cast and crew fall uncharacteristically silent.

No lines to learn
No part commit to memory
(Except for one line by the tomb
When, like Hitchcock, I insert myself
Into the action),
Permit me then to rectify the deficit
And thank you all most warmly,
Cast and crew,
For long hours spent in honing Much Ado.
Though all the world's a stage,
As has been writ before,
Stages need construction, hammer, nail and screw;
They do not build themselves.
And likewise dresses do not spring
New-fashioned from a catalogue
But need a needle and a thread,
An eye for colour and a cool unflustered head.
Music, dance, props, posters, programmes
Call for skills, and other jobs
Too numerous to list.
Meanwhile and paramount perhaps, the players -
Buffoons, villains, lovers, boys,
Grand seigneurs, gentlewomen,
Representatives of church and law -
May diaphragms propel your voices hence
To visit parts that other voices miss,
And with these heartfelt thanks I do you beg
Go forth, enjoy, and break a leg!