



**Society** : Faringdon Dramatic Society.  
**Production** : Heroes, by Gerald Sibleyras  
**Date** : 13<sup>th</sup> November 2010.  
**Venue** : Faringdon Primary School.  
**Report by** : Gareth Jeremy.

## Report

My thanks once again to **Karen**, for the invitation to your Autumn production of **Heroes by Gerald Sibleyras, translated by Tom Stoppard**. This comic play I had not seen before, and therefore I was very interested in seeing it., --- and what a superb evening we had, --- and I'm sure I am not speaking for myself, and Jenny, but for the entire audience.

The moment one stepped into the Hall, seeing the tables set out for the meal, the lighting around the set, which looked so realistic, --- the wall looked far better than what some have around their lawns. --- and the 'doctored' dog looking so realistic, --- and well behaved.!! --- and the **Piano playing of Debra Warner, of different music, for an hour before the play started, --- was a joy to listen to,-- as 'background music.'**

The meal was excellent, plenty of it, --- and served so efficiently, --- with a smile, --- everyone was made to feel 'special', -- and so relaxed, --- which was the right ingredient for the play to follow.

Our sincere thanks to Sarah Varnom for thinking of doing the evening in this style. --- and to ALL those other people who were involved in the ordering, preparing, serving, and WASHING UP, --- it does not happen, without a TEAM EFFORT, --- Congratulations to everyone, including the BAR TEAM.

### The Play itself, ---

It was set on the terrace of a nursing home for old soldiers, somewhere in France.

It has three characters, --- Gustave, -- who has been at the home for many, many years, --- and never leaves the terrace.

Henri, -- who has a 'dodgy', leg

Philippe, who has some shrapnel stuck in his head, --- and keeps on 'passing out'.

The three men, an idealist, a pragmatist, and a fence sitter, dream of making their escape, if not to Indochina, then at least as far as the poplar trees, on the hill, the other side of the cemetery.

In their way stands the steadfast Sister Madeleine, who Philippe thinks she has a problem with birthdays.!! --- their own thwarted ambitions, and each other, --- not to mention the 200lb statue of the dog.

This play needed, --- strong, experienced, actors, --- and Sarah knew exactly who to call upon, --- and I'm sure they did not need much 'arm twisting' to take part. It would be wrong of me to single any individual out, --- one can sum it up in one **one word, --- they were Brilliant.**

Each had studied their character so well, --- and the whole play flowed, at a good pace, --- and how they all managed to learn so much, -- as they were on stage for nearly two hours, -- and had very little break, as they kept 'bouncing off', each other during the entire play, -- no mean feat to remember so much, especially the older one gets.! --- and the dog was well trained. I half expected it to turn its head at the end of the play. Congratulations to all three of you., --- your mannerisms, facial expressions, and above all timing ,were impeccable.



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### **Sarah Varnom, ----- Director**

This very experienced individual, has 'come up trumps' once more. She has a certain vision, which she can see through with distinction from beginning to end, and she is also aware that she has an excellent team she can call upon, in different departments. which is so reassuring.

The Society is fortunate that it can call upon such an experienced **Production Team. ----- who always come up with the goods.** --- however every Society must keep on striving to 'add new blood' to their team, --- this is not so easy, as people seem to lead such busy lives, and trying to attract the 25 to 45 year olds isn't easy. Perhaps your initiative of this show may trigger some people to perhaps join such a friendly group, --- who knows, -- but its worth trying.!

**Producer, ----- Debbie Lock,** --- another 'seasoned' campaigner who I'm sure had a certain input into the production.

### **Set Design / Construction manager. ----- Jo Webster.**

Another first class set. The stone wall seemed so realistic, and well painted, and the dog was so well made. Are you going to keep it in your garden, as a 'keep sake' ? I like the tree at the end of the terrace, and the way it had shed some leaves in September, ---- and poor Henri, with his dodgy leg had to clear them off the terrace, -- - I suppose on Sister Madeleine's instruction. !!

The **Construction team consisted of, --- Peter Webster, Carole Tappenden, Alan Merrick, Adrian Wells, Harry Wells, Richard Lock, Jeff Barry.**

**Special Effects, -- Alan Merrick.**

**Lighting Design, -- Ian Chandler.**

**Sound, --- Gary Bates**

**Stage Manager, --- Jeff Barry.**

The above people carried out their work with precision, and to a very high standard.

### **Costumes, --- Jeni Summerfield, Joan Lee.**

A very experienced team,-- who are so talented in their field. All costumes were in period, --- and the shoes had such a shine on them, especially Henri's. -- so in keeping with those veterans.!

**Props, ---- Fiona Merrick,** --- everything seemed in order. I liked the 'Newspaper used by Philippe.

**Continuity, --- Carolyn Taylor, ----** no problems, that I was aware of.

### **Make - up. ----- Mary Mountford - Lister.**

All seemed fine, --- I did not spot any 'bruising' anywhere on Philippe, considering he was falling over so often, due to the shrapnel stuck in his head.

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