

Faringdon Folly

Heroes - a poignant and funny play, leaving a sad taste behind ...

ON entering the junior school's hall, the venue for tonight's play, members of the audience were ushered to a table. Almost immediately they were served with an attractive plate made up of bread, cheese, pate, grapes and a drink, all accompanied by the piano playing of Debra Warner, and then settled down to enjoy Heroes.

This was a new direction for Faringdon Dramatic Society as Heroes is quite a short play, Tom Stoppard's English language adaptation of Gerald Sibleyras' play *Le Vent de Peupliers* (The Wind in the Poplars). The action centres around three French WW1 veterans, Gustave, Philippe and Henri (and a stone dog) who sit on the terrace of their sheltered home and reminisce and speculate on what to do. They pass their time grumbling

about the staff, dreaming about young women and arguing over whether the dog is alive. They also hatch a plan to make a break for freedom - taking the dog with them.

What holds it together is the sharp, well-observed, funny and poignant dialogue between the three characters, superbly played by the common man Henri (Dave Headey), the aristocratic Gustave Oohn Taylor) and the seizure-prone Philippe (Daniel Lander). The three men are trapped in their own situation, but there is much comedy to be had from it. Seeing the three men practicing being roped up to cross a river was priceless.

The play's message is not only about human mortality, but also about the universal desire to escape from the confines of life. Directed by Sarah

Vamom this was a wonderful, and moving production of which the FDS should be rightly proud. An absorbing evening's entertainment and the food idea worked a treat. AC

Just a week after the production closed the Folly learnt the sad news of John Taylor, an FDS stalwart and former chairman.