

Faringdon Dramatic Society

NODA
For every stage

presents

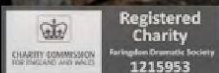
LARK RISE

by Keith Dewhurst
from the book by
Flora Thompson

Thu 14th May
Fri 15th May
Sat 16th May
2026

The Poultry Yard,
Coleshill Village
Estate

This amateur production of "Lark Rise" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd., www.concordtheatricals.co.uk.



www.faringdondramatic.org.uk



Lark Rise

By **Keith Dewhurst**

Based on the novel by **Flora Thompson**

Flora Thompson was born in 1876 and spent her early childhood in the hamlet of Juniper Hill, near Bicester. Her book “Lark Rise” which was written in 1939, is an account of the life she remembered; the only names she changed were her own (Flora became Laura) and her brother’s (Edwin became Edmund). The dialogue and many of the scenes in the play, although they did not take place on a single day, are taken straight from the book.

The action takes place in and around the hamlet of Lark Rise in the late 1880s. It is the first day of the harvest. The scenes in Act I are set in the Timms family cottage, the gardens of neighbouring cottages, on the village green, and in fields around the village.

In Act 2 there are also scenes on the way to the “big house”, in the village pub, and in the church. The final scene is thirty years later.

Director’s note

As soon as I saw the poultry yard at Coleshill, I knew I wanted to put on a production of Lark Rise here. It looked like it could be Flora Thompson’s home. This story set in a quintessential Oxfordshire rural village was made to be told here.

Performing Lark Rise outdoors has added a special something you can’t manufacture indoors. The light changes as the scenes change, the birdsong becomes part of the storytelling, and you aren’t just watching village life—you are part of it.

I really hope you enjoy this production as much as we have enjoyed bringing Laura’s story to life.

There will be an interval of about twenty minutes between acts, during which refreshments will be available

Cast

Laura	Kiara-Skye Rowley
Edmund	Liam Hoyland
Emma Timms	Abby Valentine
Albert Timms	Andrew Slater
Mr Morris (Bailiff)/Old Postie/Rector	David Couzens
Bishie/Cheapjack	Jeffrey Slater
Boamer/Doctor	Nick Morris
Pumpkin/Jerry Parish	Matthew Warner
Old Price/Twister	Duncan Sinclair
Old David/Grandfather	Richard Lock
Fisher/Carrier	Xander Phillips
Mrs Spicer	Bex Hutchings
Mrs Blaby	Amanda Linstead
Mrs Peverell	Verity Roberts
Mrs Miller	Sarah Couzens
Old Sally	Carolyn Taylor
Dick/Squire/Pridham	Mike Fraser
Mr Sharman/Algy	Gary Field
Queenie Macy	Joan Lee
Martha Beamish	Tatum Rowley
Mrs Beamish	Alison Morris
John Price	Wesley Belcher
Mrs Andrews	Andrea Forgione
Garibaldi Jacket/Villager	Helen Barker
Villager/Tramp	Eleanor Warner
Polly	Ellie-May Smith
Villager/Landlady	Sarah Nutbrown
Villager/Barmaid/Caller	Rachel Bowers

Musician

Jon Lane (violin)

Vocalists

Vixz Edmonds, Bex Hutchings

Directed by **Debbie Lock**

Producer: **Gary Field**

Production Team

Stage Manager and props:	Vixz Edmonds
Stage Crew and construction:	Tony Edmonds
Costume design and creation:	Jeni Summerfield, Joan Lee, Jane Cadogan
Prompt:	Julie Kent, Jeni Summerfield
Lighting:	Gary Bates, Ian Chandler
Poster Design / Photography:	Ian Lee, Paul Mountford-Lister
Programme:	Dave Headey
Box office:	Ian Lee
Chaperones:	Jayne Hoyland, Sam Rowley, Kirsty Phillips
Front of House Manager:	Shela Rowan
Front of House Team	Gillian Turnbull, Paula Read, Jan Crowdson, Derek Crowdson, Ian Lee, Sue Ashforth-Smith, Carole Tappenden

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the **Buscot and Coleshill National Trust** for allowing us to stage *Lark Rise* at Coleshill. Performing in such a beautiful and historic setting has added a special authenticity and atmosphere to the production.

We are very grateful for their support and for helping us bring this story to the community in such a meaningful way.

We would like to thank **Faringdon United Church** for rehearsal facilities, and the **Oxfordshire Drama Wardrobe** for additional costumes.

Cast profiles

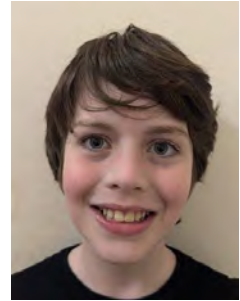


Kiara-Skye Rowley (Laura)

Kiki is pleased to be taking the lead as Laura in Lark Rise. A member of FDS for three years, she has appeared every panto since, as well as a bunny, a mouse, the hilarious Cyril the Squirrel in **Beauty and the Beast** (2025) and Little Anna in **Frozen** (2026) at school. Her energy, charm & sense of fun shine in every role; she's curious, brave & full of heart. "I can't wait to play Laura, and performing in beautiful Coleshill makes it even more magical!"

Liam Hoyland (Edmund)

This is Liam's second production with FDS after having a wonderful time taking part in the panto, **Beauty and the Beast**, his favourite line being 'he sounds like my three-year-old'! Liam said 'I'm really having fun doing this play and I am enjoying acting more and more. I hope everyone likes the show.'



Abby Valentine (Emma Timms)

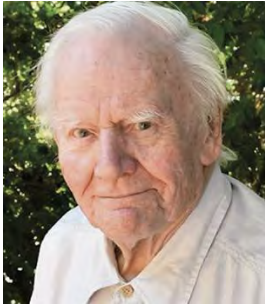
Abby has appeared in countless productions with FDS since her debut in 2007. In more recent years, she has performed in **Wishing on a Star**, **Shakers**, **Sleeping Beauty**, and was the Fairy Godmother in **Cinderella** in 2025. Her latest appearance was one half of a wacky scientist duo in 2026's production of **Beauty and the Beast**.

Debbie Lock (Director)

Debbie has been with FDS since 1987 and has appeared in, and directed, a variety of productions. To date she holds the society record for acting in sixty plays and pantos plus she has directed another nineteen!

Some of her performances on stage were in **Our Country's Good** (2019), and she was Sir Veillance in the award-winning panto **Arthur's Adventure** (2017). Debbie has also held significant roles on our committee, off and on over many years.





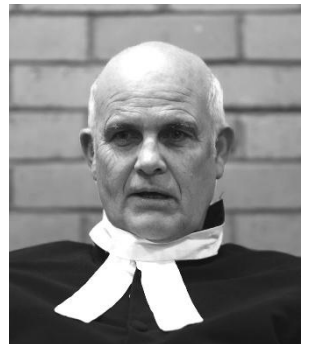
Keith Dewhurst (author)

Keith Dewhurst (1931–2025) was best known for his vivid stage adaptations and contributions to British theatre and television. His acclaimed adaptation of **Lark Rise to Candleford** (1978–79) is one of his best known works.

He wrote for major institutions such as the National Theatre and contributed to series like **Z-Cars**, developing a distinctive, accessible style often combining storytelling and music.

Rehearsal Photos





Faringdon Dramatic Society

Since its formation in 1948 Faringdon Dramatic Society has mounted over 200 productions, ranging from pantomime to dramas, comedies / Shakespeare. We have carried off a number of awards including **Heroes** in 2010 and most recently the NODA Pat Redhead drama award for **Over by Christmas** in November 2025, directed by Heather Kent and Carolyn Taylor.

Between 2012 and 2017 **Jack and the Beanstalk, The Snow Queen, Happily Ever After** and **Arthur's Adventure** were winners of the pantomime competitions run by the Oxfordshire Drama Network.

Our current membership is around 60, but new members are always welcome; there are opportunities for backstage / front of house personnel as well as actors.

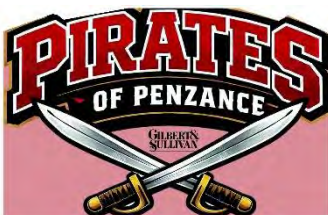
We would be really pleased if you would write us a review – your honest opinions will be much appreciated:

www.faringdondramatic.org.uk

where you can also find up to date details of the Society and membership.

Join FDS and Friends for our next production **100 Years of Musicals**, taking place at the Faringdon Corn Exchange for one night only on Saturday 19th September.

Tickets will be available from our Online Box Office.



Our friends in Amegos Theatre are staging **Pirates of Penzance** in Wantage, 23-25 July. Do support them if you can – you might see some familiar faces!