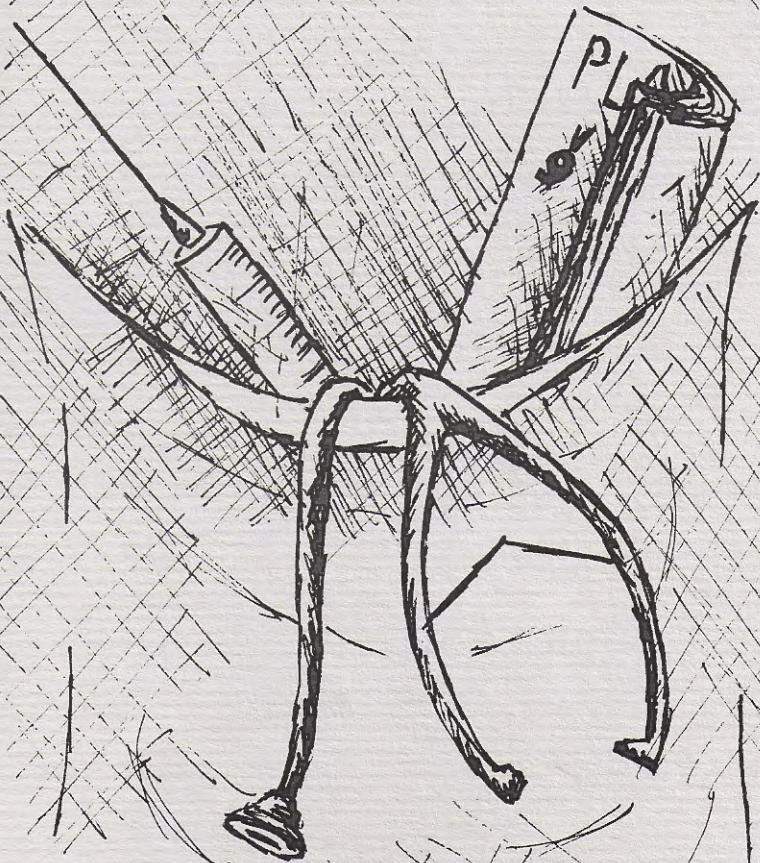


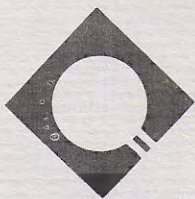
THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



HABEAS CORPUS

BY
ALAN BENNETT





THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance 8th October 1983

HABEAS CORPUS opened at the Lyric Theatre in 1973, starring Alec Guinness, and it was quickly recognised as one of the most hilarious of modern farces.

Since that time it has become a firm favourite with professional and amateur companies in this country. This production by The Questors opens while we are hosting the LITTLE THEATRE GUILD CONFERENCE – from 7th to 9th October. Among the delegates attending this conference we understand that there will be at least five people who have either directed or been involved in productions of *Habeas Corpus*.

Our Guests will no doubt give us their views on how we have shaped up.

Many Questors members will remember with pleasure the performance of the play, given here, by the Bradford Playhouse on June 1st and 4th as part of The English Amateur Theatre Week.

Alan Bennett's *Habeas Corpus* was described by Michael Billington in *The Guardian* as a gorgeously vulgar but densely plotted farce that is a downright celebration of sex and the human body. The effect is rather like seeing an animated McGill postcard in which the captions have been written by an elegant verbal stylist.

So we hope you will enjoy your trip to the seaside.

HOTPLATE

Delicious food is available in the Upper Foyer from 6.30 pm during the run of theatre productions.

Interval refreshments will be served and you can buy tea or coffee tokens in advance.

Orders for Interval drinks can also be given at the bar prior to the performance.

HABEAS CORPUS

A Play by
ALAN BENNETT

Cast in order of appearance

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Arthur Wicksteed | Michael Howard |
| Mrs. Swabb | Ruth Lister |
| Muriel Wicksteed. | Vivien Kerr |
| Dennis Wicksteed | Gavin McQueen |
| Constance Wicksteed. | Lesley Bilton |
| Canon Throbbing | Ken Ratcliffe |
| Sir Percy Shorter. | Jack Wood |
| Lady Rumpers. | Gillian Kerswell |
| Felicity Rumpers. | Cathy Jones |
| Mr. Shanks. | John Turner |
| Mr. Purdue. | Peter Grogan |

The play directed by **Geoff Webb**
Set designed by **Matthew Sudds and Geoff Webb**
Lighting by **Richard Broadhurst**
Sound by **Brian McLoughlin**

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

Patrons are respectfully asked to refrain from
taking refreshments into the auditorium.

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Stage Manager | — | Roger Sturm |
| Deputy Stage Manager | — | Gordon Miller |
| Assistant Stage Managers | — | Jennifer Beaumont Helen Feather Kitty Fitzherbert Marianne Horne Mary Sturm Matthew Sudds |
| Wardrobe | — | Stella Bond |
| | assisted by | Judy Sturley |
| Construction | — | Richard Fernley |
| | assisted by | Roger Adams |
| Properties | — | Jane Blackwell |
| | assisted by | Doug King |
| Lighting Assistants | — | Bronwyn Beckford Helen Feather |
| Sound Assistant | — | Angie Elton |
| Assistance from | — | Gerry Blake Beth Crowley Lynne Featherstone Janet Featherstone Don Kincaid Eric Kirby |
| The recorded music played by | — | Neil McArthur Richard Allen Katherine Pollard June Malcolm John Rolfe |

THIS PRODUCTION OF *HABEAS CORPUS*
HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY
WHITBREAD LONDON LTD.



The Questors Theatre Company extend a warm welcome to all new members.

Following our Autumn recruitment drive, which included the open day on October 1st, we know there will be many people in our audience who will be attending for the first time. To give you, the playgoer, the opportunity to express your views an **OPEN DISCUSSION** is held after each Theatre production.

So why not join us on
Tuesday, October 18th at 7.45 pm in the **Bernard Shaw Room**. Admission free.

The evening's discussion will be led by a special Guest Speaker and you will meet the cast and the production team. This is your chance to let us have your opinions.

THE LITTLE THEATRE GUILD THE EARLY YEARS

by Alfred Emmet

The first move to form some association of Britain's amateur little theatres was made by the *Crescent Theatre* in the middle thirties, but administration difficulties prevented that from getting off the ground. In 1938 John Fernald and Alfred Emmet sponsored a resolution at the British Drama League Conference to establish a special Little Theatre section of the B.D.L., but that initiative became a casualty of war.

It is not easy now to recall the sense of total isolation felt when working in an amateur little theatre during the war years. Even if one were aware of what other little theatres were doing — in fact we had virtually no contact at all — the slogan was 'is your journey really necessary?' and one stayed at home. Each little theatre was alone in wrestling with its day-to-day problems: how to obtain timber licences so that scenery could be made, clothing coupons to buy materials for costumes, petrol coupons for transport of a show to some hospital or ARP centre and above all, how to get the 'wise men' at the Customs and Excise to agree that a particular play was 'educational' and therefore qualified for exemption from entertainments duty. (Even as late as 1949 there was a great outcry and questions in Parliament when a professional management was granted exemption for *A Streetcar Named Desire!*).

There were three factors that first brought together the four little theatres that in 1946 took the initial steps to form The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain (*Bradford Civic Playhouse; Highbury Little Theatre, Sutton Coldfield; People's Theatre, Newcastle and The Questors Theatre*). Firstly, just loneliness and the desire to find friends with common aspirations for the theatre; secondly the need for mutual help and cooperation in tackling difficulties and problems; thirdly, the conviction that the little theatre movement was of importance and that its united voice should be heard in circles of power and influence — and money!

In the first two heady and successful years the Guild grew in size to 14 members; it established contact with, and in some cases representation in, virtually all other national theatre organizations both amateur and professional; registered a satisfactory procedure with Customs and Excise for entertainments duty exemption; agreed percentage royalty terms on behalf of little theatres with 14 play agents; carried through the commissioning of a new play from Norman Nicholson; took an active part in discussions leading to the formation of the International Amateur Theatre Association and played a substantial role in the British Theatre Conference of 1948. The latter probably did more than anything else to make the Guild known and there could not have been many people in the world of theatre who had not at least heard of the Guild by the middle of that year.

Reprinted from *The Questors First English Amateur Theatre Week Programme* — May / June 1977

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Forthcoming Attractions

IN THE THEATRE

5 – 19 NOVEMBER

HAMLET

by William Shakespeare

Hamlet, like all other truly great plays, will bear being seen again and again, for every new production will reveal fresh insights. The coming production by Alfred Emmet, based upon a remarkable book, *The Shakespearean Ethic* by John Vyvyan (described by Christopher Booker as 'the best book about Shakespeare ever written'), puts forward an interpretation which we may have been missing for over 300 years.

IN THE STUDIO

27 – 30 OCTOBER

An exciting double bill by
modern British authors

GOTCHA

by Barrie Keefe and

LEONARDO'S LAST SUPPER

by Peter Barnes

Both plays directed by Neville Raschid

If you would like to know more about The Questors why not attend one of the new or prospective members evenings? These are held every Wednesday, commencing at 7.45 pm in the Grapevine Bar. This is not only an opportunity to ask questions but includes a comprehensive tour of the Theatre, wardrobe, workshop and rehearsal areas.

THE LITTLE THEATRE GUILD continued

When the second English Amateur Theatre Week was held in March 1980 the Little Theatre Guild consisted of approximately forty companies who owned their own Theatres.

Michael Shipley in his programme notes for the third EAT week in May 1983 wrote 'The guild is continuing to expand; we are now 55 strong. We are truly a representative national body.'
