

# RAVING MAD

NO 28

*"Be happy and spread happiness and good cheer throughout the year"*

Well it's that time of year again and certainly time for another Newsletter to bring you all up to date with what is happening on the MAD front. Before doing that, I would just like to say that whatever time of night or day you are reading this, on behalf of MAD we wish you a wonderfully happy glowing energised and peaceful New Year.

*By the way did you know that one of our famous playwrights was terrified of this time of year? – 'Noel Coward'.*



Meeching Amateur Dramatics  
present

# JACK and the BEANSTALK

by Norman Robbins



**Meeching Hall**  
Fort Road, Newhaven BN9 9QE  
Tues. 21st - Sat. 25th January 2014  
7.45pm  
MATINEES: Sat. 18th & Sat. 25th  
2.30pm  
Adults £8 Children £6  
TICKETS from Meeching Estate Agents, High St., Newhaven  
01273 515566

As Basil Faulty would say, "Sorry" I digress, for those of you who are not aware MAD this year has finally succumbed to public appeal, to give you a traditional pantomime, complete with "Its behind you, Oh yes it is, Oh no it isn't". I am talking about **Jack & the Beanstalk**, by Norman Robbins, which you can come and see at Meeching Hall each evening at **7.45pm between, Tuesday 21 and Saturday 25 January 2014**, there are two matinees on two **Saturdays 18 & 25** at 2.30pm. Tickets are £8 adult and £6 for children from Meeching Estate Agents, High Street, Newhaven Tel 01273 515566 or any problems getting there contact me 07912 965507. ('Problems getting there' should not include laziness). So let's have your support, especially for Gill Veck directing for the first time with MAD.

By the way, playing Simple Simon has got to Kieran he recently changed his computer password to 'doc-dosy-happy-sleepy-sneezy-bashful-grumpy-London? When asked why he had done this he replied – *wait for it!* "It has to be 7 characters and one capital!!!"

## ANOTHER MAD YEAR GONE BY...

Financially challenging as usual, so '*fun raising*' in both senses of the phrase was of high priority. Having said that we have had some great social events to keep a little sanity and silliness, in our lives, some spontaneous, others planned. So those of you who have sat on Santa's knee, laughed with Adger Brown and Tucker, sung along with Mumford & Son at Lewes, saw Barnum at the Festival Theatre, experienced Spymonkeys nude 'love in', frolicked in the mud having been scared by witches, smugglers and a very old man in Friston forest (he looked so much like Santa) - culminating in great hot dogs and soup in Garry's 'Hells kitchen' - pretty well know what I mean. Finally, a big thank you, whoever you are for the generous donation, which has so helped MAD and thanks also go out to all who have strived and worked hard for us in 2013.



### NEXT ONE UP!

## 'Old Boilers'

So to the future, I assure you it is going to be a very exciting year for MAD. Starting with our next production, and what could be better than a farce based around the comings and goings at a Blackpool B & B. Including four women of a certain age deciding to celebrate divorce in style and with the idea of a hen party to let their hair down. Garry, the Director has come



up with a cracker this time called 'Old Boilers' by Adrian Cale; this being our next production **30, 31 May & 5, 6 & 7 June** with a read through on **Tuesday 28 January** and auditions on **Thursday 30 January**. So come along, it's very funny; we need 6 females and 3 males.

### THEY ARE BACK!

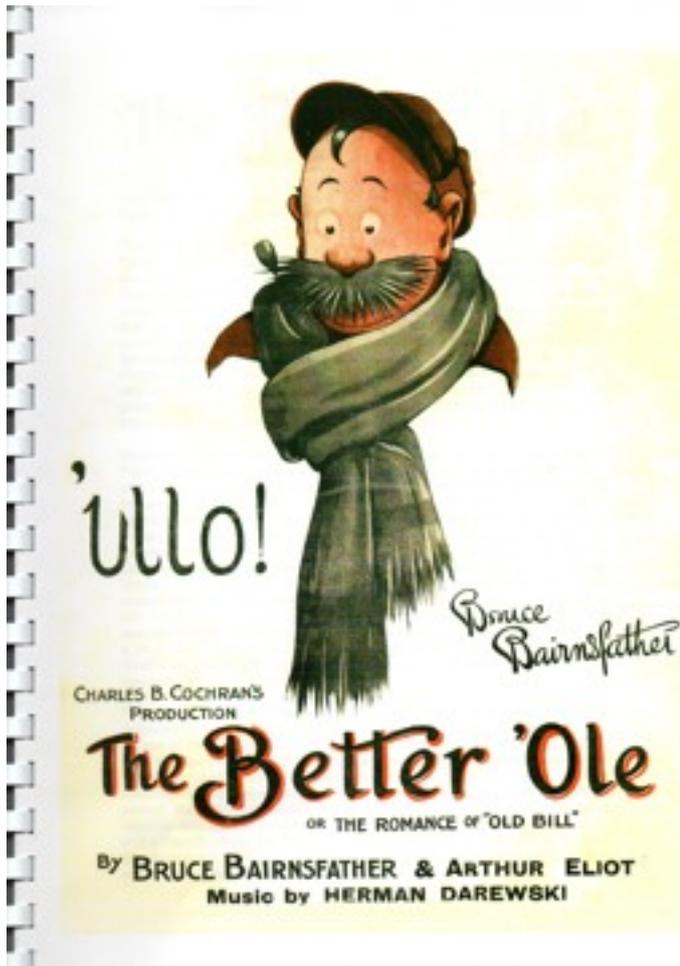


If you are still a 'StrangeFace' first timer 6 February, 7pm is a date for your diary this award winning theatre group who use music, mask & puppetry will again be at Selmeston & Alciston Village Hall, with their brand new show for 2014, 'Shooting the Moon'. Not to be missed, speak to Tony - Check out their website [www.strangeface.co.uk](http://www.strangeface.co.uk) & while you are at it check out [www.mytheatrematters.com/](http://www.mytheatrematters.com/)

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*By the way whose cruel idea was it for the word 'lisp' to have an 's' in it?*

# 'ULLO! THE FUTURE IS AT THE FORT



As an aside and something very exciting in the MAD calendar, after this we are putting on a unique August bank holiday production of 'The Better 'Ole' by Capt Bruce Bairnsfather & Capt Arthur Elliott to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the First World War. It is going to be at the Fort, for three nights **Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 August**. This is a remarkable play dealing with a serious subject in an amusing and light hearted way with great sing-along songs from that era, telling the story about three British 'tommies' on the Western front; it took the West End by storm during the war playing at the Oxford Theatre for over two years. It then went onto the world stage and incidentally was last seen in this area at the Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne in 1918.

I must admit to having a long time, aspiration to direct something on this scale and different to commemorate WW1, so with thanks to Mark Warby of the Bruce Bairnsfather Society in Warwickshire and Bairnsfather's family in America, Newhaven Town Council for a grant and Lewes District Council who own the Fort,

we have a green light for it to happen. So there will be a read through and an opportunity for *anyone interested in becoming involved. MAD needs you!* From set builders, (we need trenches and real mud) through to chorus members especially if you like songs like 'It's a long way to Tipperary', 'Keep the Home fires burning'. Come along on **Tuesday 18th February 7.45pm** for an introduction to Big Bill, his mates and the French "ma'amselle's" who sang and laughed with the tommies before they went 'over the top' - auditions on **Thursday 20th February 7.45pm**.

It is hoped and positively encouraged for those involved in the May production will also get involved in the August production. Although rehearsals for the Better ole will start formally after the 'Old Boilers' production there will be occasions when we meet up for the odd musical evening singing WW1 songs with our production pianist Margaret Farmiloe.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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# hot off the Press



## REVIEW

### MEECHING AMATEUR DRAMATIC (MAD) JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

It is good to see a large lavish professional pantomime starring your favourite soap characters, but they are more like going to a West End musical these days so it was great to see Meeching Amateur Dramatics Society's traditional pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk. No frills and fripperies, just panto as it used to be when I was a child. Not too long and plenty of audience participation.

It has all the necessary ingredients including a magnificent pantomime cow ably played by Gueni Jackson and Sharon Ward. I went to the first matinee which was packed with kids, some as young as two years old and they loved every minute of it.

This is the first time MADS has staged a traditional pantomime since they put on Cinderella in December 2004 and their choice should be applauded and congratulations to director Gill Veck and Tony Gibbs who came up with the idea.

Charlotte Fuller is a splendid Jack and Emma Ruggins a beautiful Princess. Lee Harris kept us all laughing as Dame Trott and Kieran Beal was a great choice to play Simple Simon. The resplendent King Hubert the Umpteenth of Serenia was Steve Wetherilt who looked and played the part well and the obligatory good fairy Thistledown was also well cast. Donna Beard sounded and looked very impressive as the Giant and the best piece of casting was selecting Wendy Gostock to play his henchman Rancid. She looked and sounded really evil producing a lot of boos from the audience.

Mandy Crnkovic choreographed the production and the chorus were excellent comprising Mandy, Paula Jackson, Jacky O'Callaghan, Ben Smith, Michael White and Lisa Wray.

There is still a chance to catch this excellent panto as there is another matinee on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm and evening performances nightly at 7.30pm until 25<sup>th</sup>. **Amanda Wilkins**

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