



# The Rattigan

The Newsletter of  
The Terence Rattigan Society

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# Version

## A conference at Trinity in the footsteps of Rattigan

Past the porters' lodge and across the manicured lawns, Trinity College Oxford is majestic in the sunshine. It is not hard to imagine a young Terence Rattigan writing here, during his freshman year studying History at Oxford.

In June, the college proved the perfect setting for the Society's 2015 conference, celebrating the playwright's sometimes understated legacy. Members attended from homes as widespread as Ireland and New York, ready to enjoy a weekend of scholarly insights and fondly remembered personal tales about 'Sir Terry'.

Beginning with the chance to view Rattigan memorabilia, attendees kicked off a busy first day with a tour of the college. The group viewed spots such as the Jackson building where Rattigan lived in a room on staircase VI, and the library that still holds a record of the books he borrowed during his studies.

Leading Saturday's talks was Geoffrey Wansell, whose thoughtful presentation examined the playwright in the context of his influences, such as Chekhov, and his contemporaries, such as Noel Coward (*see page 3*).

All the way from the US, Dr Holly Hill followed with her talk: 'Crocker Harris and Mr Smith', describing the similarities between *The Browning Version* character and a professor from her own youth. Hill praised Rattigan's "masterful" portraits of women and the "fundamental decency" of so many of his characters (*see pages 4-6*). She also commented on the support for the playwright that the conference revealed: "I could only



A report by guest delegate  
**Alix Robertson**

*Special Conference Edition*

dream in the late 70s of speaking to a group of people who are so receptive and who truly enjoy Rattigan's work."

Rounding off the morning came Dan Rebellato, playwright and Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. In his talk: 'Queer Terry', he discussed the relationship between Rattigan's homosexuality and the major themes of his plays, looking in particular at how emotions are both concealed and revealed in his work.

After a traditional Trinity lunch in the main dining hall, guests made their way back to the conference room for what many felt was the highlight of the weekend. Thanks to the efforts of Catherine Day and sponsorship from the Society, ten drama students were able to attend and participate in a masterclass entitled 'Poignancy – why are we hurt?' led by actor, director and writer, Ian Flintoff.

Eve Farren, a student from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, described her excited anticipation of the event and her subsequent desire to become more involved with the Society, having found Rattigan's plays a notable absence from her studies. "What a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Rattigan's work and meet his enthusiasts. I enjoyed bringing *The Browning Version* to life during our masterclass and only wish we had had more time to engage with this rich material."

**Cont. on page 6...**

☞ THE TRINITY COLLEGE CONFERENCE, PP 1, 6  
☞ INTRODUCING DIANA SCOTNEY, PP 2, 8  
☞ GEOFFREY WANSELL'S CONFERENCE SPEECH, PP 3, 8

☞ CROCKER-HARRIS AND MR SMITH, PP 4, 5, 6  
☞ STUART GRIFFITHS OBITUARY, P 7  
☞ DATES FOR YOUR DIARY, P 8

## The Terence Rattigan Society

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2023

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Editor's note: Any views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of The Terence Rattigan Society or its Committee.

## INTRODUCING Membership Secretary Diana Scotney

In June 2010, Di organised a trip to the National Theatre with her family to see Thea Sharrock's production of *After the Dance* – which none of them had seen or even heard of. Also in the party was her son's Godmother, her close friend Barbara Longford. Barbara and Di were both extremely moved by the play and decided they wanted to find out more about Rattigan; in fact Barbara, who is nothing if not a woman of action, immediately suggested they form a Terence Rattigan Society. Having been Chair of The Noel Coward Society, Barbara had plenty of experience and some good contacts. She got in touch with both biographers and others connected with Rattigan. Enthused, Di started reading all she could about him and soon realised how many of his plays and films she had enjoyed over the years. So she was absolutely delighted to become Membership Secretary when Barbara got the green light to go ahead and the Society was launched in September 2011.

Barbara and Di first met in the early 1970s. They were both in the BBC Radio Drama Department. Aged 19, Di had started work with Bill Ash: an amazing man – Spitfire pilot, Texan, committed Communist – he was always going off for meals in the Chinese Embassy – escapee – the character played by Steve McQueen in *The Great Escape* was partly based on Bill – novelist, playwright and lifelong friend. His autobiography *Over the Wire* was a bestseller. Di also worked with, and learnt a lot from, Guy Vaeson, formerly a distinguished theatre director and a close friend of Harold Pinter, whose work the BBC produced on radio.

From Radio Drama Di moved to sixth-form Schools



Radio to join Stuart Evans, another remarkable character. Stuart produced a heady mixture of Drama, Poetry and Features. He himself was a well-known, if demanding, novelist, a poet – he had won the Hawthornden prize at Oxford – and a detective story writer (at night under a pseudonym). He was also a cricket fanatic. When Di arrived he told her he realised she might be a bit nervous so he had hand-drawn a couple of charts to help her – they turned out to be a diagram showing every fielding position and one showing every batting stroke as 'I tend to keep the radio tuned to cricket all day'.

Working with him proved to be a liberal education. Di met, amongst others, Derek Mahon, James Saunders, Kit Wright and Fay Weldon and, thanks to Stuart's ability to spot up-and-coming literary talent, the young Seamus Heaney and Tom Stoppard.

Although Radio Drama commissioned *Cause Célèbre* while Di was working there, she regrets that she never met Terence Rattigan.

Later, she moved to BBC Television as a Production Assistant and then to Thames where she worked in Drama and Children's TV – on programmes such *Magpie* and *Edward and Mrs Simpson*. But above all on *Rainbow*, still remembered with affection by thousands of viewers who were children then, and by Di for the outrageous double-entendres the cast managed to conjure from the script during read-throughs.

After having her family, Di went on to abridge several books for radio including *The Village by the Sea*

**Cont. on back page...**

# Above Osborne

**A summary of the opening speech at the Trinity Conference by our Vice-President**

**Geoffrey Wansell**

To be honest I was going to call my opening address to the Terence Rattigan Society Conference in his old college in June ‘Bugger Osborne’, but in the end thought the double *double entendre* might just be too much for us all. But it would have conveyed exactly what I had in mind, which was to point out that Rattigan was, for me, the greatest English playwright of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – head and shoulders above John Osborne, a mite ahead of Harold Pinter, and a street ahead of David Hare, Arnold Wesker, David Storey and many other pretenders to that crown.

In fact both Osborne and Pinter, who became Terry’s friend while he was still a young actor, admitted as much to me while I was writing my biography. Osborne, in particular, was more than a touch embarrassed by the damage his meteoric rise to fame in May 1956 had done to Rattigan’s reputation as a playwright. “He was a master of the art and craft of being a dramatist” John told me not long before his death.

Pinter agreed with Osborne and told me: “It was fashion and spite that saw him booted about. There’s always been plenty of that in the theatre. There was also a great deal of envy. One thing people don’t like in this country is success...” He’d had such a wonderful career when suddenly it was cut off. Both men regretted that deeply and felt for him.

In commercial terms only Somerset Maugham could truly challenge Rattigan for the title as the finest dramatist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – as he had four plays running in the West End at the same time in 1908, while Terry could only manage three at the same time in 1944. But who remembers a Maugham play now, except, perhaps, *The Letter*? Arthur Wing Pinero was truly an Edwardian and only *The Second Mrs Tanqueray* represents his work now, whereas Terry can claim at least four of the great plays of the past century, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Browning Version*, *The Deep Blue Sea* and *Separate Tables*.

Interestingly, *Separate Tables* had been running in the West End for 20 months when *Look Back in Anger* opened at the Royal Court and there is a good deal of similarity between the two plays. In particular the theme of *Table by the Window* resonates in *Look Back in Anger*. Both John Shankland’s marriage and Jimmy Porter’s have erupted in violence, which leads to separation. But the emotional needs of both battered wives drive them back to their husbands. Miss Cooper does not

hang on to John Malcolm after his wife returns, and neither does Helena manage to keep Jimmy once Alison reappears. Both wives are accused of sexual frigidity by their husbands – and called predictable by Rattigan and pusillanimous by Osborne.

There is no suggestion whatever that Osborne copied from Rattigan, but it was grossly unfair on Terry to dismiss his play as ‘French windows drama’ when he was describing a theme every bit as dramatic and hard-hitting as Osborne was. As Pinter put it: “I never found him a safe playwright at all. I always found him to be very adventurous”.



The tragedy is that no one made the comparison at the time, and Rattigan’s fate was sealed by The Observer’s theatre critic Kenneth Tynan who praised Osborne and dismissed Rattigan as old-fashioned, and even worse, “unfashionable”.

In his review of *Look Back in Anger*, Tynan compared Jimmy Porter to Hamlet in what was one of only two positive reviews of the play, but the emergence of ‘kitchen sink’ drama to replace Rattigan’s French windows had begun and it gathered increasing pace – not least because Rattigan made an unwise comment to a reporter after Osborne’s first night suggesting that the 27-year-old was trying to say “Look ma, I’m not Terence Rattigan”.

With hindsight he would have been far better advised to say nothing at all, or even to embrace the new playwright as learning his craft.

If there was a villain of the piece in the destruction of Rattigan’s reputation in the theatre, however, it was not John Osborne, nor even Kenneth Tynan, it was Terry’s fellow undergraduate at Trinity, Oxford – the man who founded the English Stage Company and put on *Look Back in Anger*, George Devine. “George was unaware of his own bigotry” as Osborne was to put it later, but he was determined to rid the English theatre of what he called “the blight of buggery” – a little unlikely for a man who positively delighted in dressing up as a woman when he was still an actor. Devine wanted an end to the then secretly gay side of the West End theatre, epitomised by Terry’s mentor producer Binkie Beaumont.

Couple Devine’s spite and Tynan’s dismissal of Rattigan as “the Formosa of the English theatre” and you begin to see the origins of the vitriol that gnawed at his

**Cont. on back page...**

# Crocker-Harris and Mr Smith

*The conference address by our US Representative,  
Dr Holly Hill*

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I am standing here today because of two “bad” teachers.

At Miss Hockaday’s School for Girls when I was 14, my Latin teacher was a Mr Smith, a dull little man who wasn’t very good at his job. The girls made fun of him, and while I didn’t join in, I was afraid to criticize them and sat uncomfortably silent. A year or so later, when Mr Smith had moved on, the Headmistress shared his written evaluation of me. I don’t remember the exact words, but the essence was that, while I was a good and earnest student, I needed to master my desire to be popular and to stand on my own. I was heartstricken. Not only was Mr Smith right about my character but he was clearly more aware and wiser than I had imagined. And it was too late to acknowledge him.

How amazed I was, in an English class in my first year at university, to meet Mr Smith again in the character of Crocker-Harris in *The Browning Version*. Crocker-Harris / Mr. Smith moved me beyond any dramatic character I’d yet met. Though I didn’t realize it until I was choosing a subject for my Masters’ Thesis and then my dissertation, I had found not, as it turned out, just a subject, but a vocation.

Now that Rattigan has been a major force in my life for fifty-some years, I’d like to reflect on the aspects of his artistry that I most admire. My list is a trifle eccentric because in making it I wore no critic’s or academic’s hats but let my hair down.

1. Isn’t it amazing that Rattigan could take a stereotype or archetype and make the character so real and specific that the type is almost hidden. Freddie in *The Deep Blue Sea* is so vivid as the flyer who will always miss the glory days of “dicing with death” and the sense of importance and of belonging he felt then. Most of us know this “type” - people who peaked young and petered out. To me it is the youthful star athlete and the local beauty queen who revel in the attention and seldom get it again.

Or take Sebastian in *After Lydia*, a right blusterer and blackguard whom we want to throttle for most of the play and who then breaks our hearts. Sebastian is the archetype of the Miles Gloriosus, the Braggart Warrior, turned to tragedy. How much more dramatic and poignant is he than a nice guy carrying a hidden

grief. How expert Rattigan was at dicing with our expectations—Prince Uncharming and the Showgirl, A Variation on Camille and Armand, stripped of romantic varnish. In *A Bequest to the Nation*, the exquisite Romney portraits of Emma Hamilton become Hogarthian. This ability to turn expectations upside down is one of Rattigan’s strongest attributes in his “sense of theatre.”

2. Another is the nature of his endings. Rattigan’s dramas and, more surprisingly, his comedies, end not in a period but in a dash, an ellipsis, a semicolon. If we want to, we can wonder whether Lady Elizabeth will really be happy with Bobby when she’s just discovered other possibilities; which if any of the airmen in *Flare Path* will survive the war; what will happen to *After the Dance*’s Helen and Peter, and so on. These days that kind of speculation is politely called fan fiction. I understand the impulse.

I had a friend who was a great fan of the 1950s Jennifer Jones / William Holden film *Love Is A Many Splendored Thing*, a grand romance in which Holden’s character dies. It was shown often on television in the Sixties, and my friend often watched. “Why?” I finally asked her. “Because,”

she said, “I keep hoping they’ll change the ending.”

I love a play that makes me keep on imagining what happens after the curtain falls. I have tried to envision Crocker-Harris’s life at the crammers, imagined the teacher Mr. Fowler in *Separate Tables* being visited by a student, thought about how much I’d like to send Lady Matheson a new wireless. I wouldn’t do this if Rattigan’s characters weren’t so compelling. Of course the things I’d want most to do, like find a terrific man for Miss Cooper, would not be credible even in the world of the plays. For Miss Cooper is too fine a realization of the type of single woman of great worth but little allure who ends up as the governess, the care-giver, the also-ran.

But my greatest fantasy is entirely Rattigan’s responsibility, for when he changed the ending of *The Winslow Boy* for the film, he positively encouraged fan fiction. Then David Mamet in his film kept that ending, and when Catherine says that she doesn’t expect to see Sir Robert again and he replies: “Oh really, Miss



Winslow? How little you know about men”, well, I’m planning the wedding. Actually, I imagine that Catherine and Sir Robert marry by special dispensation at Arthur’s bedside in hospital, then go to a nearby grand hotel for an ecstatic weekend honeymoon. As they are leaving Sunday afternoon and Sir Robert is at the desk, who does Catherine run into but John, his new wife and John’s oppressive father. As they are patronizing Catherine, Sir Robert arrives by her side and she introduces him as her husband. Heheheheheh.

A third reason that I cherish Sir Terence’s plays—and also his films that I’ve seen—is his portraits of women. I bristle when I read or hear about how Rattigan was “really” writing about gay men and gay relationships, because I think his portraits of women so masterful. I was raised in the 1940s and 50s—the last generation of Western women to be force-fed standards which dictated that a woman put the needs of her husband, children, church and community before her own and be grateful for any leftovers, because career ambitions, sexual curiosity and practically any form of independence were dangerous to family and society and, worst of all, selfish. So meeting Catherine Winslow when I was 19, and Hester Collyer before America’s Women’s Movement got started, and Olivia Brown—a glorious glamorous creation whose charm and allure were recently demonstrated to me again in the Dallas, Texas production of *Less Than Kind*—all these characters contributed to my generationally rebellious sense of who I wanted to be, and are among my dramatic heroines still, personally and artistically. I think I most admire Catherine, a character who did not exist in the Archer-Shee family but was imagined by Rattigan—a woman who gives up the fiancé she loves to pursue what she believes is right, and who reaffirms her choice even when she thinks all is lost.

A special mention for two of my favorite Rattigan film creations—there are many of his films that I have never been able to see, just in case I’m leaving someone out—in *The VIPs*: the Duchess whose estate is saved by a contract to use it in a film, who says, standing in front of an airport travel poster picturing her castle, “I can keep my home” - one of those Rattigan moments when a few words convey an emotional wallop. And the role that marked Maggie Smith as a future star, the mousy secretary hopelessly in love with her boss, who saves him from bankruptcy by asking a billionaire she spies in a hotel lobby for a loan. Two strong women after my own heart. As is, incidentally, the Queen Mother in *Adventure Story*.

As sheer virtuoso playwriting, consider the women in *Separate Tables*. I’m not sure if many people have remarked about Rattigan’s variations on brutal narciss-

ism in the same play. Anne Shankland and Mrs Railton-Bell are cut into different shapes from the same bolt of cloth. There appears to be faint hope for Anne and no hope for Mrs R-B that they will move far from the behavior that a friend calls “I, Me, My, Mine, Moi.” Also in *Separate Tables*, Jean Stratton is an ingenue with career ambitions in the first act and a doting mother in the second. As the latter, she is outraged by the “Major’s” behavior, projecting that her daughter could one day be accosted by a man like him and she becomes Mrs. Railton-Bell’s staunchest ally. Jean has wondered in the first act if she will ever become like one of the old people at the hotel. The subtle point that Rattigan makes in her characterization is that she has the potential to become like the worst of them.

My penultimate reason for admiring Rattigan is the fundamental decency of most of his characters. I mentioned this to Sir Terence when I interviewed him in New York in 1974. It turned out that he and I both enjoyed the mystery novels of Dick Francis, who wrote about malfeasance in the world of horse racing and who shared an attribute that American critic Kay Nolte Smith (also a Dick Francis admirer) described: “While other writers look for feet of clay in heroes, Mr R looks for wings in the average man”.

Finally, I think that Terence Rattigan was a consummate poet of the theatre. I used to have fun with my unenthusiastic dissertation professors by reminding them that Aristotle wrote in his *Poetics*: “It clearly follows that the poet or “maker” should be the maker of plots rather than of verses; since he is a poet because he imitates, and what he imitates are actions.” Rattigan was such a superb maker of plots, and some of them are flawless in the Aristotelian sense of moving from beginning to end without scenes that could be interchanged, moved about or left out. In the rehearsals at Theatre Three in Dallas last year of Adrian Brown’s adaptation of *Less Than Kind*, the actors and director and stage management were constantly remarking on the sheer craft and ingenuity of the writing. And that’s not even Rattigan’s greatest work.

Rattigan was beaten up on both sides of the Atlantic for putting character and story before ideas, for dramatizing rather than lecturing or haranguing or writing in symbols like birds, towers, trees and so on. But the other sense in which he was a consummate poet is his mastery of dramatic implication. Take the *Less Than Kind* scene where Olivia and Michael are reading, respectively, *The Tatler* and *Labour Monthly*.

It conveys perfectly the values and longings of both while moving the plot forward through *The Tatler’s* photo of Sir John and Lady Fletcher.

My favorite line in all the plays is Catherine Winslow’s “Across the floor.” **Cont. on page 6...**

## Crocker-Harris and Mr Smith

*continued from p 5*

Three simple words are at once a self-discovery by Catherine, an announcement, a challenge and a flourish of trumpets. In 1981, I covered for *The Wall Street Journal* a performance of *The Winslow Boy* at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC—as sophisticated an audience as one can imagine. “Across the floor” was met with applause. The audience heard the trumpets and responded with its own. Another understated flourish of trumpets is Sybil’s “No, Mummy. I’m going to stay in the dining room and finish my dinner.”

In conclusion, I am profoundly grateful for the founding of The Terence Rattigan Society, and in particular to Michael Darlow and Barbara Longford for suggesting that I be included. The brilliance of many founders’ achievements in bringing about and seeing through the Rattigan Centennial, the charming doggedness of Alan Brodie in traveling America to encourage revivals (which has been especially successful in the Broadway revivals of *Man and Boy* and *The Winslow Boy*) are inspirational. And your meetings sound like such fun—I wish I had the means to fly over for them.

There is so much to do in the future, in particular to involve new generations of directors, actors and audiences in revivals, to encourage graduate students and rising academics to examine aspects of the plays and films in depth and to solicit and support books about Sir Terence’s work. I hope I’m around a long time to help celebrate these.

I began by telling you how my unappreciated Latin teacher Mr Smith led me to his dramatic counterpart Crocker-Harris, and thereon to a vocation for studying and writing about the artistry of Sir Terence Rattigan. I have felt an ongoing sorrow that I was never able to acknowledge my belated appreciation of Mr Smith. Recently, a friend gave me comfort by saying that I had acknowledged Mr. Smith, every time I wrote or spoke about Rattigan. I hope so. I dedicate this speech to Mr Smith. I thank him, and all of you. 🌀

*“Wonderful conference; great publicity and superb organisation; hugely comprehensive; stimulating speakers and a very varied programme. Congratulations to all concerned.”*

With feedback like that, member Denis Moriarty just had to expand his views! A report by him will feature in the next issue, along with extracts from other conference speeches.

## Conference report

*continued from front page*

Incorporating scenes from *The Browning Version*, Ibsen’s *Enemy of the People* and Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part I*, the students gave lively and varied performances, under the guidance of Flintoff who helped to draw out parallels between the plays. An especially rambunctious Falstaff, played by Hannah Cooper-Dean from the Guildhall School of Acting, was a highlight that had the audience in stitches.

Commenting on the workshop, Flintoff said: “The students brought these contrasting yet similar drama events vividly to life – with women sometimes playing men and vice-versa. In this way it was hoped that insight and recall could be underlined and stimulated.

“That the students worked so well is demonstrated by the fact that I, who prepared the class, the theme, and all the scenes, found yet new ideas and unexpected insights emerging from their telling performances.”

The day’s events were rounded off by literary agent Alan Brodie, who discussed: ‘The Centenary and Beyond’, celebrating the reappraisal of Rattigan’s work in recent years. Brodie noted the range of new actors engaging with Rattigan, such as Benedict Cumberbatch, Sienna Miller, Anne-Marie Duff and Sheridan Smith.

Saturday’s celebrations concluded with a birthday dinner in the main hall, and a moving toast to Sir Terence from Society life member Michael Imison. Guests were then invited onto the lawns to view a spirited production of Noel Coward’s *Hay Fever* by the Trinity Players, the College’s student drama society, ending the day on a high of laughter and a celebratory glass of bubbly.

Day two opened with another display of the Trinity Players’ talents, as they gathered to give an evocative reading of Rattigan’s *First Episode*, his first play written during his time at the College.

Vice-President Michael Darlow then brought the conference events to a close with his speech: ‘Rattigan the Radical’, embracing the playwright’s confidence in challenging human flaws.

For those who weren’t quite ready to leave, there was a walking tour of the university town led by lecturer Denis Moriarty – a leisurely end to an unforgettable weekend. 🌀

**Alix Robertson is an Oxford graduate, who has just won a Young Journalist of the Year award.**

## Obituary

# A fluent, deeply knowledgeable talker

*an appreciation of Stuart Griffiths*

*by John Scotney*

Tariq Ali, Jeremy Thorpe, Michael Heseltine, Robin Day and in Trinity Term 1958, Stuart Griffiths – all presidents of the Oxford Union.

When I first met Stuart in Radio in the 1970s it seemed hard to believe this shy, reticent somewhat bumbly man had shared a lectern with such fluent, supremely confident self-promoters. I had not dug deep enough. His abilities were apparent to the much wiser Keith Williams who whisked him off to Television. Keith was Head of TV Script unit and subsequently Head of Plays and a figure much respected for his flair for encouraging and developing new writers. Stuart became his right hand man, equally adept at nursing new talent and at adapting classic plays for Television: most notably Bruchner's brilliant but rambling *Danton's Death*.

At Keith's insistence he brought out a guide that was given to potential TV writers – people with imagination and talent but lacking experience and the requisite craft skills. Later Stuart published it as 'How Plays are Made'. His method was to analyse the works of distinguished dramatists in order to show how they did it. He insisted playwrights were as much craftsmen as wheelwrights or shipwrights.

As someone who has spent most of my life selecting plays, directing plays, encouraging new writers, rejecting plays, editing scripts, judging playwriting competitions and even writing scripts myself, I reckon Stuart's 113 pages is just about the most authoritative manual anyone could hope for.

It was this intimate understanding of the playwright's craft that inspired Stuart's enormous admiration for Terry Rattigan - someone who not only had things to say but who was a consummate master of expressing them in dramatic form.

More recently he produced a more scholarly pamphlet on Shakespeare's debt to the Latin he studied at Stratford Grammar School. It's hard going but worth it – particularly impressive is his analysis of Mark Antony's 'Friends, Romans and Countrymen...' Stuart demonstrates how the speech conforms almost precisely to the rules of rhetoric as practised in ancient Rome and studied in the Elizabethan school curriculum.

Stuart died on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of May, just three days after his 81st birthday. I had the impression that in the latter years of his life, though he was often lonely he also experienced more happiness than at any time since he left Oxford. And for this the Society was largely responsible.



Stuart Griffiths pictured in the bar at the RAF Club after the Society Dinner there in 2014

He was a regular at the Noel Coward Society but really came into his own with the foundation of the Terence Rattigan Society. Until his last illness he remained remarkably active – taking great pleasure in the company of the fair sex and, once inspired by a couple of glasses of wine, a fluent, deeply knowledgeable and stimulating talker, if sometimes a somewhat garrulous one.

He was looking forward to taking Society members on a tour of the Oxford Union during the recent Oxford conference. His presence was much missed. ☹



Members dining in hall at Trinity College before repairing to the Lawns for an open air performance of *Hay Fever* by the Trinity Players. The audience were mostly wrapped in jackets and blankets but the youthful cast braved the evening chill in skimpy cocktail dresses and open-necked shirts as if to the manner born. Photo: Roger Mills

## Diana Scotney *cont. from p 2*

by Anita Desai and *Christmas with the Savages* by Mary Clive before returning to full time work, but no longer in 'the Media' - first in primary education and then later in adult training. However, she retained a great passion for the theatre and was lucky enough to go on many trips to the Edinburgh Fringe courtesy of her two sons who for several years performed there. Her elder son also wrote and performed with his friend, the comedian Nick Helm.

Now retired, she is delighted to be playing a part in the Society and working to ensure that Rattigan's legacy lives on, especially among young drama students and audiences today. ☞

## Above Osborne *cont. from p 3*

soul in the years after 1956, sapping his confidence, and health, and which brought his life to a premature end just 21 years later at the age of just 66. Throughout those last years the critics "despised him with a scorn almost incredible in its ferocity" according to the critic Harold Hobson, led, of course, by Tynan who even called him "the bathtub baritone of the drama".

Jealousy, enmity, spite and vindictiveness among a small handful of men at the heart of the newly emerging theatre in London contrived to destroy Terry's reputation, belittle his talent, crush his fragile ego (and vanity) and bring him to his knees and an early death. The cancer that was eventually to claim his life was first diagnosed just two years after Osborne's opening night in Sloane Square.

That is part of the reason why I say so firmly: 'Bigger Osborne', for he, Tynan and Devine cost the life of the finest English playwright of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is essential for the Society to right that wrong, and reclaim his legacy, honour his memory and reinstate him at the pinnacle of English drama in the past one hundred years. ☞



Among the items on display in the Sutro Room was the typewriter given by TR to Adrian Brown, and donated by Adrian to Trinity. Many other items of memorabilia were also on view, courtesy of the College Archivist, Clare Hopkins, who led a tour of the College.

## Dates for your diary

### Saturday 5 September 2015:

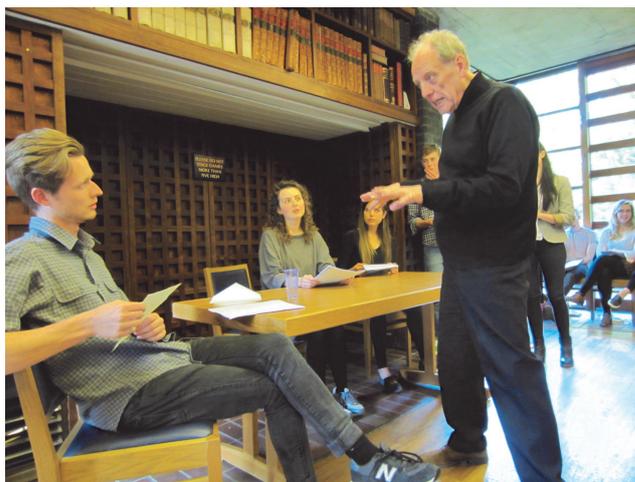
2.30 pm. **Flare Path** at Richmond Theatre with an optional supper at The Duke, 2 Duke Street, Richmond, TW9 1HP. The TRS group tickets have all been sold, but if members would like to book separately they would be most welcome to join us for supper at 6pm. Contact: Barbara Longford.

### October/November 2015:

Afternoon/early evening. **AGM** plus a play reading: Rattigan's **Follow My Leader**, led by Adrian Brown and followed by a supper, with Denis Moriarty hosting, at the Oxford & Cambridge Club.

### Saturday 5 December 2015

2.30 pm. **Harlequinade** at the Garrick Theatre starring Kenneth Branagh and Zoe Wanamaker. As part of the same bill, Zoe will also perform the Rattigan monologue **All On Her Own**. The TRS tickets have all been sold, but if members would like to book separately they would be most welcome to join us for the surrounding events, TBC. Contact: Barbara Longford.



Ilan Flintoff directs the drama students in his masterclass and (below) Barbara receives a floral tribute at the dinner from Clive Montellier on behalf of the Society. Photo: Roger Mills

