

# The Rattigan

The Newsletter of  
The Terence Rattigan Society

ISSUE NO. 31 JANUARY 2020

## Version

## Barbara bows out in style

There was an element of sadness to the AGM this year: our Founder and Chairman Barbara had decided to stand down from the latter role and this also lent a certain piquancy to the proceedings, which included Barbara's own report to the meeting and a tribute from her successor, Denis Moriarty, both of which items are reproduced in these pages. Our former Secretary, Clive Montellier, was also conspicuous by his absence since he has moved on to other pastures, but his role has been very ably filled by Martin Amherst Lock, who conducted the business of the day with great efficiency.

Martin also featured in the play reading which followed the AGM—*Wrong Move* by Peter Briffa, who joined us for the occasion.

*Wrong Move* was placed third in the recent TRS play competition and proved to be a tight two-hander of a suspense drama, with Martin as a kidnapped British author being held captive in a Los Angeles basement by a half-crazed former World Chess Champion, played by Giles Cole. It had several neat twists and turns and had indeed been rather favoured as a potential winner of the play

competition by some of the script-readers who participated. The reading was directed by Michael Gaunt, who managed to extract all the key elements in a very short rehearsal time, and Alison Du Cane provided the necessary stage directions. The play was well received by the audience, which included Vice-President Greta Scacchi.

Members had also contributed towards a gift for Barbara, to show their appreciation for the tremendous job she has done in steering the Society for the last eight years, so on their behalf Roger Mills made the presentation of some theatre tokens, a cheque to cover a couple of meals out with a companion, and some flowers. Lee Penhaligan then surprised her with a beautiful engraved vase from the



Our Founder and Chairman at the AGM on 30 November when she was presented with flowers and gifts by Society members and the Terence Rattigan Charitable Trust.

Terence Rattigan Charitable Trust.

*Editor's Note:* Barbara would like members to know how very appreciative she is of the wonderful parting gift of Theatre Tokens and a cheque to cover some choice restaurants either before or after the show. Though retiring from the chairmanship she will still be attending TRS events and she looks forward to seeing everyone on those occasions. ✂

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## The Terence Rattigan Society

President: David Suchet CBE Founder: Barbara Longford

Vice-Presidents: Michael Darlow, Lord Fellowes, Dr. Holly Hill, Greta Scacchi, Geoffrey Wansell

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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.

## Re-introducing our new Chairman Denis Moriarty

**D**enis was first introduced in this column in Issue number 18, but as he is the newly-elected Chairman, following on from where our wonderful Founder and Chairman Barbara Longford has left off, it may be forgivable to remind members of him—not that he will need much reminding for those who attended the Oxford Conference or either of the annual dinners held at his Club, the Oxford & Cambridge. He is a regular attender of Society events with his wife Jinnie and has the full endorsement both of Barbara and of the entire Committee.

Although he was unable to attend the AGM in November, he sent the following tribute to Barbara which was read out to the meeting:

*“My serious apologies for absence from the TRS AGM today - the more so, as our much loved and esteemed Barbara Longford has stepped down from being our Chairman - Founder Chairman indeed - and in her place I am honoured to accept the invitation of your committee to offer myself for election as her successor. For all the reasons we value Barbara so highly - far more eloquently advanced than ever I could, it is with a real sense of humility - and diffidence - that her mantle falls to me. Barbara is not just the hardest of acts to follow, she is our fount and origin, and the TRS which she created is emphatically hers, hers in concept and fulfilment, and in the energies, initiatives, and the bubbling torrent of creative ideas, and the knowledge and sense of theatre that she brought,*



*effortlessly - or so it seemed - to her task. This is something I can never match. She made all this possible by identifying and surrounding herself with a committee of All the Talents, to whom I shall look with much respect - and enthusiasm - in our forthcoming collaborations.*

*We should pause, too, to remember the contribution her much loved and late lamented Patrick brought to the many strengths she gave to the Society. In our membership, also, Barbara attracted a wide range of loyal, interested and interesting people from a wide range of experience, and this was her reward, and is the vital backbone of our success. On this - and in her style - we must only seek and hope to build - to do her the honour she deserves- and with you all I salute all she has done and join in the acclaim; congratulations, well done, heartfelt thanks and warmest best wishes.*

*I will do my best to further her vision and achievement, working with the committee she so admirably convened, and to continue the programme of excellence that she has set in train, encouraging and expanding our loyal following, in the enjoyment, study and understanding of the talents and legacy that Terence Rattigan brought to the theatre. My thanks to you all - and especially to Barbara, our very own Babs.”*

A short précis of his career would include the following, as detailed in Issue 18: **Cont. on p8...**

# Chairman's Report

## to the Eighth AGM, 30.11.19

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I'm happy to say that it's been another successful year for the Society. Since our seventh AGM last October here at Doggett's, when Michael Darlow directed a rehearsed reading of the TRS New Play Award entry – *The Rattigan Affair* – we've had six Society events.

The French Fund launch took place last November when The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama put on a magnificent production of *Flare Path*, and fortunately Dr. Holly Hill, our Vice President and the donor of the fund, was able to travel over from the States to be with us. Then in February the second tranche of the fund was used to finance *After the Dance*—another excellent production—at the Oxford School. The third event was in Devon with a visit to see *The Browning Version* and this was followed within a few days with the Annual Birthday Dinner at the Garrick Club, where our guest speaker was Dr. Holly Hill. The fifth event was our visit to *When the Sun Shines*, at the Orange Tree Theatre, which I was unable to attend due to having had emergency surgery. And lastly there was the Professor Dan Rebellato event at the Rattigan Archive in the British Library. The Committee has worked hard this year to ensure that we have given members a range of interesting activities to take part in.

Sadly, the time has come for me to step down as Chairman. As you know, I founded the Society in the centenary year, 2011, and I have been planning and arranging most of the events during the past eight years. I have simply run out of steam and now that my darling Patrick is no longer beside me, I have lost some of my joie de vivre. I've also had two serious emergency operations during that time and I feel I need to slow down.

But I've had a wonderful eight years as Chairman and I would just like to remind you of some of the highlights during that time. These are in addition to the many theatre visits. First, we **launched** the Society in September 2011 at the birthplace of Terence Rattigan, in Cornwall Gardens, London. Our first President, Princess George Galitzine, attended, looking every inch the fashion model in an elegant fuchsia pink silk jacket. This was a stylish occasion graced by music played on the grand piano, by a professional pianist society member. Other **parties** followed, two of which were held in Rattigan's former "set" of chambers at Albany, K5, courtesy of our late member, Antony Fletcher, whose home it was for 50 years. The following year, David Suchet, then a Vice President **planted a tree** in memory of Sir Terence at The Actors' Church in Covent Garden, which we turned into a theatrical occasion in the

church, followed by a reception at the Garrick Club. In 2012, Group Captain Clive Montellier (Monty to us all) arranged a magnificent visit to **RAF High Wycombe** where we saw the wartime office of Bomber Harris and Michael Darlow introduced a screening of one of the wartime films scripted by Rattigan for the RAF Film Production Unit.

We've held an **Annual Birthday Dinner** each year on a date in June nearest to the anniversary and have managed to attract wonderful speakers, despite not being able to pay them any fee. These include, Ronald Harwood, Julian Fellowes, Hugo Vickers, Simon Heffer, Professor John Bertolini and Dr Holly Hill, celebrating her 80<sup>th</sup> year in June. In 2013 I persuaded the staff at the **V & A Museum** to put on *An Evening on Rattigan*, as part of their members' events schedule. They were attracted to the idea largely because of Princess Galitzine's connection with the fashion world. Jean gave a memorable interview with Geoffrey Wansell, after which members performed extracts from Rattigan's plays.

I've already mentioned **The French Fund**, named after Harold & Pegs French, who helped Holly Hill with her research into Rattigan in the 1970s. Holly donates £1,000 each year and we use it to encourage a drama school to put on a Rattigan play. This is a fairly new but most effective initiative.

There were many, many more splendid occasions and if you would like to look at portraits and photographs of these you will find them on our website in the 'Events Archive' section.

However, I must remind you of the two most significant events during my tenure. The first is the Conference '**In the Footsteps of Rattigan**' at Trinity College, Oxford in June 2015. We had a magnificent programme of lectures and activities and dined in Hall. We held the conference during term time, so that students could participate. I know that the Committee is considering arranging a future conference out of term time, so that members could stay in the college.

The other significant event was the introduction of **The Terence Rattigan Society Award for a new play for the theatre**. This was the most ambitious project we have ever attempted and involved a Press Launch, accompanying literature and publicity. We attracted almost 200 entries, all of which had to be read and processed. Many members agreed to do initial reading of the scripts. They worked tirelessly on this and I was happy that Junko Tarrant (the owner of the apartment at Rattigan's birthplace) allowed us to use her home for a third time, to throw a thank-you party for these members. I was greatly helped with the work surrounding the award, by Clive Montellier, Roger Mills and Giles Cole and I hope that some time in the **Cont. on p5...**



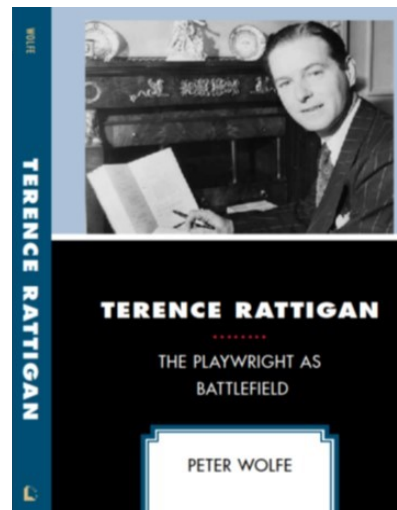
# Not for beginners

**Prof. Dan Rebellato**

**reviews TRS member Peter Wolfe's new book: 'Terence Rattigan: The Playwright as Battlefield'. Lanham: Lexington, 2019.**

Honestly, you wait 35 years for a book-length academic study of Terence Rattigan, then two come along at once. Until a few years ago, the only academic monograph of Rattigan's work was Susan Rusinko's very good study from 1983. Now we have two more; hard on the heels of Bertolini's *The Case for Terence Rattigan* (2016), we have Peter Wolfe's new book. All this activity is very welcome because for a long time, academia has seemed to turn its nose up at our Terry. He's not 'literary' enough for literature and too commercial for theatre studies, which, in Britain, emerged around the same time as the Angry Young Men and has tended to concur with the verdicts of the 1950s. This is short-sighted, of course, because, as Wolfe puts it rather well 'His polished stage technique [...] makes the plays easy to follow but hard to fathom' (p. 141). In other words, the work that goes into making them seem smoothly effortless in the watching hides a ferocious amount of effort and complexity.

Wolfe's approach is to consider the plays synchronically – that is to say, all at once – as one collective symptom of Rattigan's own complex issues with his father, his sexuality, his fame. The best chapters are 3 and 4, which deal with homes and homes-from-homes, the former chapter focusing on *The Winslow Boy* and *The Browning Version*, the latter on *The Deep Blue Sea* and *Separate Tables*. Wolfe is a literary scholar and he is extremely alert to the tiniest linguistic resonances: I enjoyed his illuminating observations on the phonemic connections between Hester Collyer and Hedda Gabler, between *Man and Boy*'s Mark Herries and the gay novelist Hugh Walpole's *Rogue Herries*. There's a fascinating suggestion that Hester's act of polishing Freddie's shoes at the end of Act 2 of *The Deep Blue Sea* echoes Christ's washing of the disciple's feet and he suggests this image yokes together 'sacred and profane love' (p. 138). His insights are not always as minute as this: he is very persuasive on Rattigan's attitudes and stage-



craft, as when he observes that his characters 'grip us hard when they can't explain themselves' (p. 39) and that, against the image of Terry as the boulevard entertainer, for him 'life is hard and sometimes un-


readable' (p. 43). There's a particularly striking observation on a stage direction in which Sir Robert Morton 'turns to go' and he captures the delicate precision of Rattigan's writing as he notes that 'Turning to go differs from going' (p. 64). Wolfe is very alert to the hesitations and complexities that disturb that smooth dramatic surface.

But a question I kept asking as I read this book is, who is it for? It's probably not for the contemporary academic community, as Wolfe's attitude to criticism – as I suspect he'd acknowledge – is a little stuck in the 1960s. It sets itself up as a biographical study but the biographical knowledge is a little thin and, in any case, if he wanted to think through how the plays articulate 'the playwright as battlefield', why didn't he spend some time in the Rattigan Archive looking at the drafts and other correspondence, where the battle's first shots are fired? A motif that has run through a lot of literary-critical thinking over the past half-century is that texts need to be understood as texts, not as simple windows into a fictional world. Wolfe almost tends to write about the characters as if they are real people with minds and feelings, which, of course, they are not; even as rich and complex a character as Hester Collyer is ultimately a textual structure, with no mind or feelings to comment on. With Rattigan's artful construction of character, I longed for Wolfe, in his words, not just to follow but to fathom.

But it's also not really for the casual reader: he presumes in us a comprehensive knowledge of the plays before we start. Having worked on them for thirty years, I'm pretty familiar with these plays but I often found myself lost as the prose leapt prodigiously from play to play, without introduc-

ing any of them. This is not for the Rattigan beginner! Indeed, the book has a curiously stream-of-consciousness feel to it. I frequently found myself puzzled at the connection between one sentence and the next (as, for instance, his bemusing suggestion that four references to 'snails' in *French Without Tears* are 'a reminder of Hitler's hunger for *lebensraum*' [p. 15]). There are unsettling lurches of style between fairly formal academic prose and slang, precision and wild generalisation, and frequent blunt sentences ('She's aching for him to stay' (p. 92), 'He can't escape fraud' (p. 97) that strike a jarringly hard-boiled tone, like Dashiell Hammett has branched out into theatre criticism.

The stream-of-consciousness feel is also reflected in a slightly careless attitude to detail that either suggests his priority has not been a full immersion in post-war British culture or some lax editorial work at the publisher. He says *Waiting for Godot* and *The Deep Blue Sea* premiered in the same year (they didn't); that the Wolfenden Report legalised sex between men (it didn't); that Pinter could have been an influence on *Variation on a Theme* (it couldn't); that the presenter of BBC's *Face to Face* was Hugh Purcell (it wasn't); and that the Beatles' first LP was issued by Polyphone Records and contained 'From Me To You' and 'She Loves You' (it wasn't and it didn't).


But there's no doubting Wolfe's appreciation of Rattigan and I wouldn't want to neglect the numerous insights he offers into individual plays. The plus side of its stream-of-consciousness approach is that the reader is able to immerse himself in a vivid encounter between a smart critic and these plays. Still, I'd love to see a contemporary reading of Rattigan that draws out the way he continues to speak to us now. 

**Dan Rebellato** is Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has written plays for radio and stage and his books on theatre include '1956 and All That' (1999). He has also written introductions to all the Rattigan plays published by Nick Hern Books and was one of the final judges for the TRS Playwriting Competition. He is seen here at the TRS Conference at Trinity College, Oxford, where he was one of the keynote speakers.



## Surviving in the Theatre

... is the promising title of a new biography of our Committee Member, Michael Wheatley-Ward—survival in this case relating to theatre management. It proves beyond doubt that the desire to work behind the scenes and as a theatre manager and producer has just as strong a pull as the desire to act or write.


The book is a collaboration between our Michael, from whom we occasionally hear in the first person throughout the book, and Michael Flagg, a retired university lecturer and 'am-dram' enthusiast, who writes about our Michael in the third person. It is a story of guts and determination and overcoming seemingly insuperable odds, and covers his involvement with the Theatre Royal Margate, the Theatre Royal Stratford East, his first West End job on the ill-fated Lionel Bart musical *Twang!*, his brushes with legendary figures such as Binkie Beaumont and Peter Saunders, and much else up to the creation of the Sarah Thorne Theatre in Broadstairs, which he still runs. Bravo to both Michaels! 

## Chairman's Report

*continued from p3*

future the Society will repeat this. The winning play *The Onion at the End* received a professional production courtesy of committee member, Michael Wheatley-Ward, at his community theatre in Broadstairs. There were cash prizes also for the winner and runner-up, consisting largely of a donation from a fund which wishes to remain anonymous.

In July 2011, I invited a group of people to come to my home and sit around my kitchen table for an initial meeting to chew things over. Only two of these people are no longer committee members, Clive because he has moved to Tewksbury and Andrew, who is now living in Devon. We've welcomed new faces onto the committee over the years and I should like to thank them all for being so supportive and being lovely friends.

I've had a wonderful time with the TRS and enjoyed the company of so many lovely members. I am very happy indeed to be handing over to Denis Moriarty. Most of you know Denis as he has hosted events for us at the Oxford & Cambridge Club. Sadly, he is unable to join us today but I know he will keep the TRS flame burning. THANK YOU. 

# In search of the definitive version (of Rattigan's plays)

by Michael Darlow

In his review of *While The Sun Shines* at the Orange Tree Theatre (see picture) for the July edition of *The Rattigan Version*, Paddy Briggs says that *While The Sun Shines* is not included in “the definitive four volume complete plays”. Unfortunately, he does not tell us which “definitive” collection of Rattigan’s plays he is referring to. Could he, perhaps, be referring to the Methuen edition, first published in 1981, which includes an introduction by Anthony Curtis? I doubt it – *While The Sun Shines* is not the only Rattigan play missing from it. In saying this I am not criticising Anthony Curtis who played a vital early role in rehabilitating Rattigan’s critical reputation. He wrote the ground-breaking BBC Radio 3 programme *Rattigan’s Theatre*, first broadcast on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1976, which included not only contributions from many of the actors, producers, directors and other collaborators with whom Rattigan had worked but also part of a letter from David Rudkin (whose *Afore Night Come*, about a group of fruit-pickers who commit a violent, on-stage, murder, had caused an outcry when it was first produced by the RSC in 1962). In his letter Rudkin said that he saw in Rattigan “not at all the commercial, middlebrow dramatist his image suggests but someone peculiarly haunting and oblique who speaks to me with resonance of existential bleakness and irresolvable carnal solitude”. Rattigan heard the broadcast and afterwards told Curtis that Rudkin was right, but “I never thought that my slip showed as much as that”. Later, in a 1978 article in *Plays and Players*, Curtis wrote that he detected “a deeply Proustian ambivalence at the heart of Rattigan that needs, as they say, to be gone into.” Shortly before Rattigan’s death his agent approached Curtis about writing an “authorised” biography of Rattigan but, owing to pre-existing commitments, Curtis had to decline.

(A few months later Gillian Hodson and I received Rattigan’s blessing, and his generous assistance, to write his biography, first published in 1979 and since updated in new editions as I have discovered new information about Rattigan’s life and work).



So where can one find a ‘definitive’ edition of Rattigan’s ‘complete plays’? So far as I can discover no publisher has printed all of Rattigan’s plays. However, there are three editions of Rattigan’s plays which, although none of them is “complete”, could reason-

ably be described as “definitive”.

The first, and most obvious, is the original four volume *Collected Plays of Terence Rattigan* published by Hamish Hamilton, the first two volumes in 1953, the third in 1964 and the fourth in 1978. Not only does this collection include *While The Sun Shines*, the first three volumes have introductions written by Rattigan himself. (The fourth, published a year after Rattigan’s death, has an introduction written by his friend the critic B.A.Young.) This edition of the *Collected Plays* contains what could be described as the “the authorised” versions of most of Rattigan’s plays – that is to say that the texts of the plays included in the four volumes were personally approved by Rattigan. However, there are a number of problems with this collection. The most obvious being that it does not include all of Rattigan’s plays – not even all the plays which were produced in London during his lifetime. The most glaring omission is *After The Dance* which, although it opened in the West End in June 1939 to favourable reviews, closed after only 60 performance owing the approach of the Second World War. Also missing are the plays which he co-wrote with others. These absentees include *First Episode*, written with Philip Heimann, and *Follow My Leader*, written with Tony Goldschmidt. All three of these



plays are, I think, essential for a proper understanding and appreciation of Rattigan's work. The main reason behind Rattigan's decision to exclude some works from the *Collected Plays* was that during the period when the first three volumes were being published he was striving to convince the critics that the fact that his plays were commercially successful was not a sound reason for dismissing him as a serious dramatist. He ruefully recalled a repertory theatre manager telling him: "What's so nice about doing your plays in my theatre is that their profits pay for the good ones". He decided to write introductions to each volume in the collection in which would argue that, contrary to the popular belief that commercial success implied a lack of seriousness or creative ambition, the fact that his plays had been so commercially successful might, in fact, imply that they possessed 'positive virtues'. (Both *French Without Tears* and *While The Sun Shines* had run for over a thousand performances in the West End, a feat which at that time had never before been equalled by any other playwright.) However, in order to make this argument he had to exclude any play which had not been a commercial success.


To make his case, while appearing light-hearted and avoiding accusations of being pompous or big-headed, Rattigan created a comic character called Aunt Edna – the personification of the average playgoer down the ages who, although a 'hopeless low-brow', knows what she likes and, in the end, unfailingly succeeds in distinguishing between the dramatic wheat and the theatrical chaff. Unfortunately Rattigan's argument backfired. Writing in the *Daily Express* John Barber told him to "Come off it, Mr Rattigan", while in *The Observer* the young Kenneth Tynan told him that he was wrong – plays which fail commercially do so not because they are 'not good enough for Aunt Edna' but because they are 'not bad enough for her'. Aunt Edna follows, never leads, intelligent taste.

The publisher who has come closest to publishing all of Rattigan's plays is the ever-dependable Samuel French Ltd, with their "Acting Editions". Each play in the series is published separately and in a variety of easy to handle, practical formats. As well as the texts they include character lists and descriptions, set diagrams, sound and lighting cue lists and props lists, all based on the play's original London production. However, among the plays

which appear to be missing from Samuel French's list are *After The Dance* and *Follow My Leader*. Another problem is that the text performed in a play's original London production may have been altered during production, with the result that in a few places the text in a French's Acting Edition may differ from Rattigan's original text. The most egregious example is *Love In Idleness*, where Rattigan had been so over-awed by the stars of the original London production, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, that during rehearsals he had allowed them to make changes to the text so fundamental that they amounted to a virtual rewrite of the entire play. Even the play's title was changed, from the original *Less Than Kind* to *Love In Idleness*.

Happily, in 2011 Samuel French published both Rattigan's original text and the Lunts' altered version in one single volume, so readers can now decide which they prefer. So generally, for practical use, if one is rehearsing a Rattigan play for instance, I would go for a French's Acting Edition.

However, for me, the edition which comes closest to being 'definitive' is the series published by Nick Hern Books. Each of the texts printed in these volumes is the result of painstaking research by Professor Dan Rebellato, who has studied and analysed the original manuscripts and other papers held in the British Library plus a wide range of materials held in other archives. Each volume in the series includes a useful biographical outline of Rattigan's life and career, plus an explanation by Rebellato of how the play fits into Rattigan's development as a dramatist and a scholarly analysis of the play's text and structure.

To date the series includes *First Episode*, *French Without Tears*, *After the Dance*, *Flare Path*, *Less Than Kind* and *Love In Idleness*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Browning Version* and *Harlequinade*, *Who Is Sylvia?* and *Duologue*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Separate Tables*, *In Praise of Love*, and *Cause Célèbre*. Although Nick Hern Books say they currently have no plans to add to the list, Rebellato has said he would particularly like to add *While The Sun Shines*, *Man and Boy* and *Ross*. I hope that one day they will also add *Follow My Leader* and the rest of Rattigan's produced stage plays, together with his original radio and television plays and, perhaps, the most significant of his film scripts and a few of his unperformed plays. 

## Dates for your diary

**Tuesday 11 February 2020**

**French Without Tears at LAMDA**—This is the third production to benefit from the French Fund set up by Holly Hill. TRS members are invited to the 2.15pm performance, to be followed by Q&A, tea and cake and with the cast. A booking form has been issued.

**Tuesday 9 June 2020**

**Annual Birthday Dinner**—This year the annual dinner will take place on 9 June and will be hosted by our new Chairman Denis Moriarty at the Oxford & Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, where we have previously dined very enjoyably. A booking form will be issued.

## Re-introducing Denis Moriarty *continued from p2*

After Oxford Denis went straight to the BBC at Bush House to work on the overseas services. His first break came when he landed a job as Assistant Producer, Music and Arts. His youthful choral experiences had led him to working with the foremost conductors of the day, his first audition having led to his singing on a recording of the Brahms *Requiem*, under Klemperer, with Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau as the soloists. One of the highlights of Denis's career at the BBC was his four years as director of the very popular TV programme *Face the Music*, with the legendary Joyce Grenfell, Joseph Cooper, Bernard Levin et al.

In the mid-70s, he was introduced to Alec Clifton-Taylor, who had written a book on English buildings. Denis describes Clifton-Taylor as 'quirky and oddly posh', and it was a very fruitful professional partnership at the BBC, leading to two series of six programmes on English towns. Denis can still lecture on any number of them to this day – along with many other subjects that have attracted his interest, such as poets, composers, architects and art movements. He also involved himself in politics, standing as a Labour candidate against the late Airey Neave in Abingdon in 1974. As well as the Oxford & Cambridge he is also a member of the Garrick Club and is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Scriveners, in which latter capacity he performed in The Scriveners' Play from the York Mystery Cycle—*The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*—at the celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the Company's Royal Charter in 2017. A man of many parts. ☞

## Obituaries

**David John Henry Langrish**

*30 July 1937—16 August 2019*

One of our founder members, David Langrish, passed away on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2019, in Norfolk, after a short illness. David was born, raised and lived in Feltham, Middlesex, for most of his life. He attended local schools and was very active in the am-dram scene where he staged, directed and appeared in many of his own revues.

He lived a double life in that he earned a living from various administration positions but spent a hundred percent of the rest of his time in the theatre and cinema. He was an inveterate theatre-goer and one of his earliest recollections was of his father taking him to see the original production of *Blithe Spirit* at the Piccadilly Theatre in 1941, at the age of 4!

David was a friend of many theatricals and two in particular were close to his heart. The late Kenneth Williams and Dame Judi Dench. It must be said that Judi assisted me and my wife with some very kind letters to help boost David's health in his final days—one of which letters he held until the end.

David was also a play-reader and adviser to West End producers Peter Bridge and Michael Codron. He also operated his own Theatre Awards list, cherished by those who knew him.

For the last 15 years he lived in Sheringham, Norfolk but continued to visit theatres all over the country until 18 months ago. A funeral mass was held on 13 September.

*Michael Wheatley-Ward*

**James Cellan Jones**

*13 July 1931—30 August 2019*

James Cellan Jones was one of the outstanding directors and producers of British television drama during the postwar era. His single plays, series and serials, from the 1960s to the late 90s, included seven episodes of *The Forsyte Saga* (1967), which achieved viewing figures of up to 18 million a week. A long line of period TV dramas followed, including *Fortunes of War* (1987), making stars of Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson. In the late 70s he was head of the BBC's television play output, commissioning various notable series, including Dennis Potter's *Pennies from Heaven*, before returning to the fray to direct many more TV films and series. He was a founder member of the TRS and was profiled in the 10th issue of this newsletter (2014).

*The Guardian (extract)*

We have also recently learned of the death of an honorary member of the TRS, **Anthony Fletcher** (profiled in Issue No.14 in 2015). We remember and pay tribute to all three gentlemen. ☞