

## COWARD WEBSITE FAMILY COMES OF AGE

After a few false starts and much restructuring the new Society website made its debut during the Easter break. The use of new software and a change in the way that the site is designed and managed will enable us to provide a better response to those who use the site for study, interest or simply to find out the latest about the world of Noël Coward. The site is divided into three sections. The first is a set of public pages that allow anyone to access a limited archive of information about Coward and to keep up-to-date with the Society and its activities. Browsers can find out about the Society, how to join and what to expect in the way of services from us. The second section is available to members only and provides a more detailed



page of new arrangements with our Internet service provider. These will allow for the storage of a large amount of material. You do need a user name and a password to access these pages. To obtain these please email us at: password@noelcoward.net

The third section is the long awaited Noël Coward Musical Index (NCMI) that is gradually unfolding on the website. Members will be able to access these pages but they will also be available to commercial and individual subscribers. Members will need a separate username and password for the NCMI - you will receive this when you email for the passwording for the Members' pages. For some years we have supported the 'marvellousparty' Yahoo email group. For those of you who are not aware of what an email group is - it is a facility that allows people to share a particular interest with others. A single member of an email group can send an email to the group and it will be received by all the members who, in turn, can respond with their own emails that are also shared with the group. In essence it is an opportunity to have a shared discussion via email. We will continue to support 'marvellousparty' but felt that it was time for us to have an email group of our own. The group is called 'anylittlefish' and is restricted to members of the Society. To join go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/> just follow the instructions and you will

News on the latest website changes for the Coward family of Internet websites

be able to join the group. We plan to use this facility to help provide information to members between Home Chats and give a focus for discussion about Noël Coward and the Society.

There are two other Coward websites that are part of the website family: <http://www.noelcoward.co.uk> that provides information on the Noël Coward Estate and details of where to obtain rights for all of Coward's work. The other is: <http://www.noelcoward.org> that contains information about the Noël Coward Foundation. In addition other helpful websites can be found at the following links:

- <http://www.alanbrodie.com> the website home of Alan Brodie Representation who represent the Coward Estate across the world.
- <http://www.tenchimneys.org/> the place to find out more about Ten Chimneys the Wisconsin home of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne.
- <http://www.eclipse.co.uk/wodehouse/> the home of the P.G. Wodehouse Society
- <http://members.aol.com/Novello/Society.html> the home of the Ivor Novello Appreciation Bureau.
- <http://www.sondheim.org/php/home.php?menu=0&submem=0&latest=5> the place of the Stephen Sondheim Society
- <http://www.dresscircle.co.uk/> Dress Circle the London based shop that is for theatre and musical recordings.
- <http://www.footlight.com/> the New York record store that stocks theatre and musical recordings including lots of rare items.

The website should reflect the wishes of members so please let us know if there are any text, graphics, sound or video items you would like to see on the site. If you have something we could use then let us know by email at: webmaster@noelcoward.net or send to:

The Noël Coward Society, 29 Waldemar Avenue, Hellesdon, Norwich, NR6 6TB

**The Noël Coward Photo Photo Collection**  
 Introducing the new photo collection! The Noël Coward photo archive and members page. There are all kinds of photos, illustrations and more.  
 To view the new site, click on the link or the image of the photo page.

**VIDEO AND MUSIC SERVICES**  
 We are pleased to announce that we have added a new section to our website. This section contains a collection of video clips and music tracks from the Noël Coward photo archive and members page. There are all kinds of photos, illustrations and more.  
 To view the new site, click on the link or the image of the photo page.

**THE NOËL COWARD PHOTO ARCHIVE**  
 This archive contains a collection of video clips and music tracks from the Noël Coward photo archive and members page. There are all kinds of photos, illustrations and more.  
 To view the new site, click on the link or the image of the photo page.

**THE NOËL COWARD PHOTO ARCHIVE**  
 This archive contains a collection of video clips and music tracks from the Noël Coward photo archive and members page. There are all kinds of photos, illustrations and more.  
 To view the new site, click on the link or the image of the photo page.

archive containing video clips from non-copyright material, some photographic and textual resources that will be of use to students and those planning Coward productions. It also stores all the back copies of Home Chat in Adobe Reader pdf format - eventually we hope to make the most interesting past articles from Home Chat more accessible by featuring them as web pages. In many ways this is a return to the concept of the original website we developed in the year 2000 that had to be stripped of many of its resources due to the limitations of space allowed for the site. The Internet world has changed a lot since then and we are about to expand the site to take advan-

# Society Events... what is in the pipeline for this year and the next?

Due to the great success of the 2004 event, NCS is arranging another visit to New York this year for the annual flower-laying ceremony and other exciting events. This will be a splendid opportunity for UK members to get to know some of the distinguished Coward aficionados across the pond.

The highlight of the trip will be the Celebrity Flower-laying at Noël Coward's Statue in the Gershwin Theatre. This will be on Sunday 11th December and will be followed by luncheon in the Broadway Room at Rosie O'Grady's Restaurant.

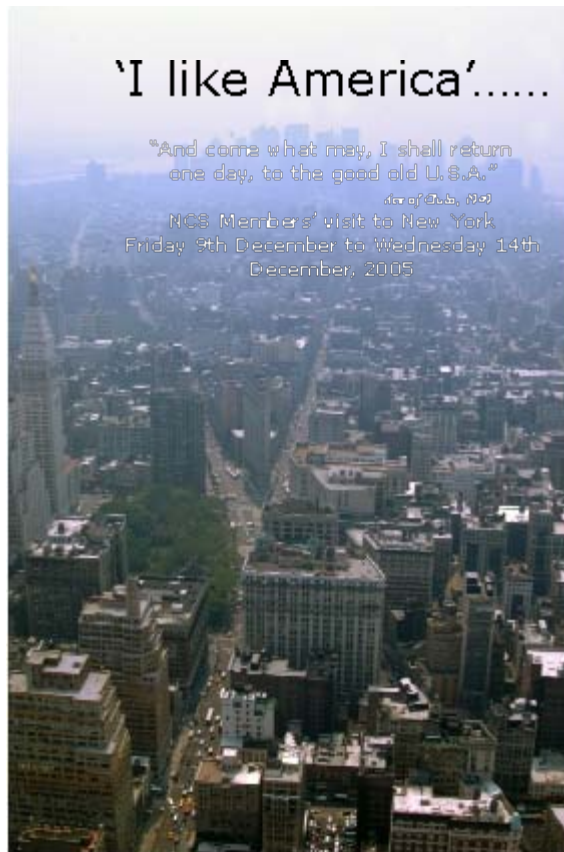
The Algonquin Hotel is preparing its Noël Coward Suite, with the assistance of Geoffrey Johnson and Barry Day and on the afternoon of Monday 12th December the new Suite will be dedicated by the British Consul General. This will be followed by a short cabaret in the Algonquin's famous Oak Room and VIP guests are being invited.

We shall be able to see the film of the off-Broadway production of *After the Fall*, which played at the Irish Repertory Theatre in 2004. The film is from the Theatre Collection archive at the Lincoln Centre.

There are other treats in store, which Ken Starrett and Barry Day will be working on as the year progresses. Ken has offered to act as our guide, as he did so brilliantly in 2004, to the many delights New York has to offer, for instance Broadway, Times Square, 5th & Park Avenues, Grand Central Station, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Rockefeller Centre, Radio City Music Hall, the Metropolitan Museum and MOMA, the Frick Collection, Central Park and Greenwich Village. He will also show us the theatres where Noël appeared and places where he stayed, including the house in Washington Square mentioned in 'Present Indicative'.

It is not yet possible to be specific about the costs of the trip because the airlines and the hotels have special offers much nearer the time. For instance, in

December 2004 some members booked an excellent scheduled flight with British Airways, LHR/New York return for £268, paying in September. Similarly hotels in New York will quote a rate by the day. However, the Society does have contact with hotels in New York and Barbara Longford, who is arranging the trip for the UK members, will endeavour to find some good deals. As an example, Barbara has had an initial quote of



£625 per person, including a United Airlines flight and B&B at the four-star Belvedere Hotel. This is for the five night stay and is based on 30 people in the group. Payment for the lunches, etc., can be made in the US, in local currency to Ken Starrett, when we arrive in New York. Even at this early stage, Barbara would like to know how many members are interested in attending, to help her when negotiating hotel rates, etc. so please be kind enough to complete the relevant section of the enclosed slip. *Barbara Longford*



## Coward on Film, with Stephen Fry

Sunday 22nd May, 2005, 2 – 5 p.m.

The Noël Coward Society is delighted to announce that Mr Stephen Fry has accepted our invitation to join Moira Lister and Sheridan Morley and become an Honorary Vice President, of the Society. Stephen will formally accept this honour at our forthcoming film event, 'Coward On Film'. To coincide with the publication of Barry Day's book 'Coward on Film – the Cinema of Noël Coward', NCS has arranged a private show-

ing of *The Scoundrel*, in which Noël starred in 1935. In this, the first substantive film role for Noël, he plays a ruthless, cynical, hated publisher who is killed in a plane crash. His ghost must wander restlessly until someone sheds a tear for him. This Paramount film by Hecht and M. Arthur remains a cult classic and shows our hero in one of his most interesting film roles. As his character Anthony Mallare says: 'I'm never nice', a view confirmed by one of his victims, Cora Moore, who says, upon reading about Mallare's plane crash – 'I've just learned that there IS a God!' This is true film noir with acting cameos for most of the New York theatre elite of the time, including the critic Alexander Woolcott.

The screening will take place at the Charlotte Street Hotel, 15-17 Charlotte Street, London W1 and will be preceded, at



2.00pm prompt by an introduction by one of our distinguished patrons. The hotel is adapted from a warehouse building. It is traditional in style with a modern touch. The screening room is orange with very comfortable orange chairs. After the screening Stephen Fry will be presented with his official NCS Scroll of Honour and will talk to us about The Master. Afterwards,

over tea and cakes, Sheridan Morley will tell us more about *Coward on Film*. Copies of Barry Day's new book will be available to Members at a 20% discount on the retail price. The cost of attending this event will be £35 for Members and £35 for one guest. Additional non-member guests may attend at a cost of £40 and tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Priority will be given to those Members who have already sent a £10 deposit to Mr Geoffrey Skinner for the film event. Geoffrey will be in New York on May 22nd, so Barbara Longford has taken over the arrangements and has the deposit cheques. To secure your reservation, please complete the enclosed slip and return it, with your cheque, as soon as possible.



## APRIL IN PARIS

News from Celia Cologne who is organising our trip to Paris which is now to be held in the Spring of 2006. She writes... Helene Catsiapis (our contact in Paris!) has done so much research for us that we feel the venture needs more time so that we can coordinate an irresistible package of 2/3 day events. As a result we are moving this event to the Spring of next year, so look out for later Home Chat issues this year which will be advertising this trip as one of our main events!  
*Celia Cologne*

## Bunny Lake is Missing at the National Film Theatre

In the NFT programme for May, as the second part of a season on the director Otto Preminger, they are showing *Bunny Lake is Missing* on Saturday 14 May at 6.30 p.m. and on Wed 18th May at 6.20 p.m. National Film Theatre Box Office: 020 7928 3232. This film has also recently been released on DVD (Region 1 but playable on multi-regional DVD players in Europe)

## Date for our first Coward Weekend Conference

Friday 1st September, 2006  
to  
Sunday 3rd September, 2006

Our first weekend conference will take place at St. Catherine's College, Oxford. Accommodation exists for 50 members in en suite rooms. Please note this date in your diaries. Preparation work is underway for the conference and details will be circulated later this year. On the draft speakers list are dramatist Marcy Kahn, author and Coward historian Barry Day, Professor Kaplan who organised the academic conference on Coward at Birmingham University in November 1999, musicologist Dominic Vlasto and John Knowles.

## In Australia...

The get-together with people interested in Coward in New South Wales took place in March. Twenty-seven people were there and a few others sent apologies. There was a very positive feel about things at the end of the meeting and a definite desire to arrange things on a more formal and regular basis in the future. The guest speaker was Rodney Fisher, a very experienced director of Coward for both the Melbourne and Sydney Theatre companies. He both entertained and informed the gathering for about twenty minutes with his recollections of his experiences with Coward's works. He is very keen to keep in touch with future events and very happy to be of assistance with planning whenever he can.

*Robert Wickham*

## LAUGHTER, LISTER & LOVE

Champagne & Noël Coward Cabaret  
Saturday, May 7th at 2.30pm



Tickets £6. Guests most welcome. Credit Card or cheque made payable to The Noël Coward Society at: 3, Somerville Road, Ringwood, Hants. E24 1X

### Public transport:

London underground District line to Richmond Station. Bus route 70 opposite the station entrance to bus stop outside Hampton Hill Theatre.

This is a joint entertainment between The Noël Coward Society and Teddington Theatre Club members.

Alan S. Bennett presents

## I Got Music

A celebration of the life and music of George Gershwin.

Songs and stories of a remarkable life with songs, praise and musical director of The Kennedy Centre Orchestra MICHAEL LAW and award-winning critic, broadcaster and writer RICHIE COX, author of the latest biography of George Gershwin.

Part one (9.15pm)

Part two (10.45pm)



## Noël Coward Lost and Found

Much loved broadcaster, journalist and author SHERIDAN MORLEY was Coward's friend and first biographer. He is joined by stylish singer and pianist MICHAEL LAW in a brand new celebration of songs and stories. Sheridan and Michael return to the Pizza on the Park with this new show, following their sell-out runs at this venue in 2000 and 2003 and their very popular appearances at The Kings Head and Jermyn Street, London.

*'Sheridan Morley is in his element... the songs are expertly performed by Michael Law... a feast of gems.'*  
- Evening Standard



## Pizza on the Park

Monday May 23rd to Thursday May 26th 2005

Tickets £11 and £16 for Mon/Tues, £16 and £18 for Weds/Thurs

Booking 020 7235 5273

## SOCIETY EVENING with SHERIDAN MORLEY and MICHAEL LAW at Pizza on the Park Hyde Park London

Join Society members on  
Tuesday 24th May for a  
Gershwin/Coward evening at  
Pizza on the Park.

Please book your tickets directly with Pizza on the Park (Tel: 020 7235 5273). Tickets cost £14 each, if purchased in advance by credit card, or £16 if paid for on the door. Please mention, when booking, that you/your party are part of the Noël Coward Society group, so that the restaurant may ensure that we are seated together. The first Gershwin set begins at 9.15pm so it would be advisable to arrive at approximately 8.00pm to have dinner. NCS is not making any special arrangements about the meal, so members are free to choose from the basic menu of pizza and pasta dishes, salads and starters, etc. The Coward show - 'Noël Coward - Lost and Found', is completely new to Sheridan and Michael's repertoire. It is advisable to book early and please let Barbara Longford know about your booking by returning the enclosed booking slip to her. Barbara will be organising the group and she would like to invite everyone attending to be her guest for champagne cocktails from 6.p.m. onwards, at 7 Argyl Mansions, opposite Olympia, London W.14. From there, a number 9 bus goes directly to Pizza on the Park!

### ELECTIONS TO THE SOCIETY'S COMMITTEE

Noël Coward Limited, the body which is legally and financially responsible to the Noël Coward Foundation for supervision of the Society has taken note of the motion passed at the AGM asking that elections to the committee be postponed. A new timetable has been agreed which is set out below. The make-up of the new committee has also been reconsidered. Up until now membership of the committee has been by invitation. The core of the committee since the Society was founded has been representatives of various bodies professionally interested in the work of Noël Coward i.e. the BBC, Alan Rodie Representation, Samuel French Ltd, Methuen Books, Warner Chappell Music and the Foundation itself. It has been agreed that these six bodies should continue to have the right to nominate one member each to the committee. To ensure democratic control seven committee members will be elected by the membership. In addition the committee may co-opt up to four advisory members whose knowledge and skills they feel will be useful to them. Advisory members will not be able to stand for office or vote on constitutional matters.  
**Accordingly nominations are invited for the seven elected**

**members of the committee.** Members may nominate themselves or up to seven other members provided those members have given permission for their names to go forward. On this occasion only, election to the committee will be by postal ballot of all members in good standing. Candidates will be allowed up to 100 words on the ballot paper to make a statement in support of their candidacy. The attendance record of candidates who have already served on the NCS committee will also be published. Finally the ballot paper will allow members to authorise Barbara Longford, as current Chair, to exercise some or all of their seven votes on their behalf, if they so wish.

**All members are urged to return their ballot papers.**

#### Time Table

**15th May 2005** Closing date for nominations to be received by Graham Martin, Treasurer NCS, Blinkhoms, 27 Mortimer Street London W1T 3BL. **Early June** Ballot papers with SAE for return distributed with June Home Chat. **31st August 2005** Closing date for ballot papers to be received by Graham Martin. **Early October** Result announced in Home Chat.

Though Noël Coward has been in his hilltop Jamaican grave for more than 30 years, he remains our greatest entertainer. Coward could write, act, sing, compose songs and play the piano. He directed and produced, lit up the West End and Broadway, appeared in cabaret in Las Vegas and Paris and, as this book makes abundantly clear, he was an indispensable force in the history of British cinema.

Coward's Hollywood forays were less illustrious, however. The parties were fun, "except for Joan Fontaine's titties, which kept falling about", but he didn't care for the studio system, finding it "sprawling, untidy and wasteful". He bewailed the fact that, when adapted for the screen, his plays were "rewritten by incompetent hacks, vulgarised by incompetent directors, and reduced to common futility". He believed *Design For Living* (1933) had had its eroticism removed. *Bitter Sweet* (1940) was converted into a vehicle for Jeannette MacDonald and became, he lamented, "the dullest, vilest muck-up that I have ever seen in my life".

The Hollywood moguls believed Coward to be stilted but, in fact, he was understated. The 1931 film *Private Lives* (starring a zestless Norma Shearer and Robert Montgomery) is all small talk ("very flat, Norfolk") but the point of the play is the vibrancy of unspoken feelings and powerful emotions welling up behind the words.

This was made abundantly clear when Coward himself, alongside Gertrude Lawrence, enacted it on the stage. Coward's clipped, punning, economic delivery, his dry and restrained manner - it's all quintessentially British. No wonder he concluded: "I'm not keen on Hollywood. I'd rather have a nice cup of cocoa." He lamented through personal

experience, therefore, to retain his contractual rights of veto over the cinematic transfers, but what brought out the best in him was the Second World War. His 1942 movie, *In Which We Serve*, is a masterful study of gallantry, of the behaviour of ordinary men (played by John Mills, Bernard Miles and Richard Attenborough among others) facing danger.

Based on Lord Mountbatten's experience of commanding a destroyer sunk by enemy action off Crete, the film benefited from Coward's interviews with survivors. Coward wore Mountbatten's actual cap when playing the role of the captain of HMS Torrin, and he has his authority and seriousness. He eliminated his exuberant and flippant mannerisms while decency and concern shine in every word he utters. Winston Churchill saluted a propaganda triumph but the film is more resonant than that - as a treatment of heroism it hasn't dated.

How much was David Lean responsible for Coward's cinematic success? He shot HMS Torrin in calm seas and storms, fighting off air attacks and pursuing submarines. There is a documentary realism. He also directed the seemingly drab *This Happy Breed* (1944) which, unfolding in a working class street, becomes a miniature epic.

*Bitter Spirit* (1956), by contrast, is a mad fantasy. Who can forget Margaret Rutherford's tweed-caped occult expert Madame Arcati, chins wobbling magnificently, sensing the presence of poltergeists and Rex Harrison's dead wives? It is a subversive film about celestial adultery and a ghost threatening to join you in bed.

How spooky, too, that at least three of Harrison's real ex-wives or mistresses were to die young in mysterious circumstances - Carole Landis, Kay Kendall

and Rachel Roberts. What a monster he was. "If you weren't the finest light-comedy actor in the world next to me," Coward told Harrison, "you'd be good for only one thing - selling cars in Great Portland Street."

With age, Coward became a caricature of himself, shuffling off to Switzerland and the Caribbean as a tax exile. He made cameo appearances in overblown projects with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, hung out with the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret, and turned down the opportunity to be a Bopnd villain. He relinquished Humbert Humbert in Kubrick's *Lolita* to James Mason. However, he will always be cherished as the high camp Mr. Bridger in *The Rankin Job* (1969), who organises the bullion raid from his prison cell. "It's incredible to think that he started life as a Cockney barrow-boy in Whitechapel," he said of Michael Caine. Coward himself was born ("a brazen, odious little prodigy") in Teddington in 1899, a few months before the death of Oscar Wilde, and he dominated 20th-century popular culture. Will we ever see his like again?

COWARD ON FILM is available at a discount price for NCS members. Scarecrow Press is offering an exclusive 20% discount on the published price of this book to international Noël Coward Society members. Claim your discount on the 208 page book (normal price £31.00) by ordering from NBN International by telephoning +44 (0) 1752 202 301 and quoting: **scpcoward05**

Copies of this book will be available at our event 'Coward On Film' on May 22nd at the discounted price.

See you there!

#### FAVOURITE COWARD QUOTES...

*Consider the public. Never fear it nor despise it. Coax it charm it, interest it, stimulate it, shock it now and then if you must, make it laugh, make it cry, but above all never, never, never bore the living hell out of it.*

*I am not a heavy drinker. I can sometimes go for hours without touching a drop.*

*I have a memory like an elephant. In fact, elephants often consult me.*

*Just say the lines and don't trip over the furniture.*

*I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.*

*I'll go through life either first class or third, but never in second.*

*If you must have motivation, think of your paycheck on Friday.*

*It is discouraging how many people are shocked by honesty and how few by deceit.*

*Mona Lisa looks as if she has just been sick, or is about to be.*

# JUNE BRONHILL - 1929 - 2005

June Bronhill, the darling of Sadler's Wells Opera Company in the 1950s and early 1960s, sadly died, at the age of 75, in Sydney on 24th January 2005.

Although famous for her opera and operetta roles, especially Hanna Glawari in *The Merry Widow*, June was an extremely versatile performer and had an amazingly varied career. As well as playing *Lucia Di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden and Gilda in *Rigoletto* at The Wells and the Sydney Opera House, she appeared in the musical *Robert And Elizabeth* in the West End and Maria in the original Australian production of *The Sound Of Music*. She also appeared in variety at the London Palladium, essayed the role of Mrs. Slocombe in the Australian TV version of *Are You Being Served?* and scored a success in straight plays such as *Straight and Narrow* and *Arsenic And Old Lace*.

However as this is the magazine of the Noël Coward Society, I will focus on her connections with The Master.

In December 1969 June participated in the *Gala Midnight Matinee* at the Phoenix Theatre held to celebrate Noël's 70th birthday. June later recalled: 'When Noël was asked if there was anything he would particularly like to be included, he named Melanie's Aria (*Conversation Piece*) - and also that I should sing it. I was very honoured.' She also added: 'I don't think I did it justice that night as

boy, was I nervous!'

The following year June embarked on a very long provincial tour of *Bitter Sweet*. I caught the show at Birmingham and June was magical in the role of Sari. She coped superbly well with the demands of portraying a 70-year-old woman who, then, in a matter of minutes transforms to an eager young girl in love with her singing teacher. Her magnificent voice was heard to full advantage in 'The Call Of Life' and 'What Is Love?' But perhaps the most memorable scene was when she performed 'Zigeuner' in the final act. You could have heard that proverbial pin drop! Her co-star was John Larsen, an old friend from her Sadler's Wells days, and he remembers how even when June tore a ligament in her foot and was advised not to go on stage, she did not miss a performance. In some scenes she was carried on and in some she used a wheelchair or crutches but she still performed 8 performances a week. (A lesson some of our present day divas could do well to heed!) Shortly before the *Bitter Sweet* tour, June recorded the score for EMI. Sadly Johnny Douglas's arrangements are rather uninspiring and muzak-like, the tempi soporific and the chorus sounds more like The Mike Sammes Singers than a chorus in a show. Theatrical and vital it certainly isn't! What a shame EMI didn't wait a few months and then record the tour cast. Back in the 1970s BBC Radio 2 presented gala concerts on a regular basis on Saturday evenings and in March 1976 there was a live broadcast from the Festival Hall of a wonderful concert entitled *The World Of Noel Coward*. The BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Marcus Dods was joined by John Hanson, Joan Savage, John Fye, Gordon Langford, The Robert Docker Quintet, The Nigel Brooks Singers and, of course, June Bronhill. The concert was introduced by Evelyn Laye. June sang a couple of rarely heard Coward



numbers: 'Where Are The Songs We Sung?' And 'This Is A Changing World' but the real rarity was the duet 'Lover Of My Dreams' from *Mirabelle*, the musical comedy featured in *Cavalcade*, which June sang with John Hanson.

Towards the end of the concert several songs from *Bitter Sweet* were featured and the ovation given to June's rendition of 'Zigeuner' stopped the concert for a good three minutes. The BBC repeated this gala concert in 1985 and 1992 and a copy of it can be found in the National Sound Archive.

June moved back to Australia to live later in 1976 but that did not end her connection with Coward as in the late 1970s June and the Australian entertainer Dennis Olsen devised a two-hander revue called *The Masters*. This highly entertaining evening focused on the words and music of Noël Coward and Ivor Novello and played to great success throughout Australia. It was broadcast in its entirety on Australian radio and highlights were issued on a record (sadly only issued in Australia and now long deleted) called *Together With Music*. Although the concert tour was usually only backed by piano accompaniment, the album had the musical support of the 70-piece Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. I had the good fortune to see the only performance of *The Masters* in England when June staged it for one performance only at the Wimbledon theatre one Sunday evening.



John Larsen and June Bronhill in *Bitter Sweet*

numbers: 'Where Are The Songs We Sung?' And 'This Is A Changing World' but the real rarity was the duet 'Lover Of My Dreams' from *Mirabelle*, the musical comedy featured in *Cavalcade*, which June sang with John Hanson.

in March 1982, whilst she was appearing in the revival of *The Sound Of Music* at the Apollo Victoria. I remember June having a ball with 'Chase Me Charlie' and delivering a beautifully sung 'Something Very Strange', from Coward's *Sail Away*. This number has long been one of my favourites and I cannot understand why it is so neglected.

I was lucky enough to see June in concert many times and she often included

'I'll Follow My Secret Heart' and 'If Love Were All' in her programme but I would have loved to have been a member of the audience at a Royal Gala in Australia attended by Prince Charles, the Prince Of Wales. June decided to perform 'Chase Me Charlie', much to his obvious delight!

Finally, I would just like to draw your attention to the CD *The Words and Music Of Noel Coward*. Originally recorded in 1965, EMI released it on CD

a couple of years ago and features June singing 'Dearest Love', 'You Were There', 'Someday I'll Find You' and 'I'll See You Again'. Other artists heard on the recording include Joyce Grenfell, Dickie Henderson, Cleo Laine and Kenneth Williams. The recording was produced by Norman Newell, who also sadly died recently and who incidentally produced June's first recording for EMI - *The Merry Widow*.

Geoff Bowden

## Bobby Short

Supper-club singer who specialised in the songs of Cole Porter and became a New York landmark

Bobby Short, the American singer and pianist who died yesterday aged 80, was for more than 35 years the voice of supper-club singing at the Cafe Carlyle in New York; he specialised in the songs of such composers as Cole Porter, Noël Coward, Duke Ellington and the Gershwins. "Almost every night people come to the Carlyle Hotel and ask me to 'please play some Cole Porter,'" he said, "just as if they were ordering Champagne and caviar. That is the way of requesting what they feel are the best songs they can possibly hear in a supper club." Having made his name as a suave nightclub performer decades before, Short appeared on television and the wireless, on the stage and the screen, cut records and performed at the White House for Presidents Nixon, Carter, Reagan and Clinton - a far cry from his modest beginnings. Robert Waltrip Short was born on September 15 1924 at Danville, Illinois, the ninth of 10 children, of whom "there were never more than seven of us alive at any one time". His father, Rodman Short, was the son of a slave who after abolition had become a farmer. Rodman Short worked as a coal miner at Danville and in Kentucky, and later as a postman, public notary and justice of the peace. With the Depression, though, he was obliged to go back to the Kentucky mines, returning to his family once or twice a year until he died in 1936. All the family was musical, but Bobby's mother Myrtle, who to support her children worked long hours as a home help, refused to allow jazz or blues records in the house. She did, though, allow Bobby to play in local roadhouses, provided she knew the mother of someone in the band. The few dollars that Bobby earned covered the gas bills and pain for his siblings' books and clothes. "Mother never cracked more than 10 dollars a week as a domestic," Short remembered, "and here I

could make almost half that in one night's work. I think she respected me for it." He had taught himself to sing and to play at the family piano, listening to Bing Crosby, Ivie Anderson and Earl Hines on the wireless. He learned Ellington's Sophisticated Lady and In My Solitude, songs with amorous lyrics he did not fully understand. When two agents came to Danville and heard Bobby, they signed him up to perform in Chicago. Aged 11, he sensed that Sophisticated Lady was not quite right for him yet and dropped it, but, he said, "I could not find it within me to believe that I was a child"; nor did he want to be accepted as a black singer, but just as "the best singer". Each club date now netted him \$30 or more, and in 1937 he went to New York; but sensing that, as a black, and very young, singer, he did not fit in, he returned to Danville. He finished school, then sought out the best hotels and clubs. Once solvent, he acquired the sartorial taste for which he would later be known almost as well as for his singing. He went to the Capitol Lounge in Chicago, where he eschewed boogie-woogie in favour of songs by Cole Porter, Noël Coward and the Gershwins. A year later he went to Beachcomber in Omaha, where he played for a week with Nat King Cole, a lifelong friend. Then came Los Angeles, where as part of a comedy band at the Radio Room he learned more about the world of the Broadway musical. But he was sacked when another comedy band arrived; part of its act involved smoke pouring from the conductor's hat: the flour which simulated this covered Short one night and he refused to go on for the next show. He went on to Milwaukee, playing opposite the trio led by Art Tatum - "my idol". His next engagement was at the Chase Hotel, St Louis, with another idol, Hildegard, whose manager hired him to appear at the Blue Angel in

New York, where Mildred Bailey was also on the bill; had Short not been as svelte as he was, it is hard to imagine how he could have shared her dressing-room. He already knew that New York was the place for him, but a lean patch on the West Coast followed. He made the most of his time there, expanding his repertoire, and he found work at the Cafe Gaik, the choicest spot on the Coast. Licensed for a week, he stayed for more than three years. "I fell into a velvet-lined rut," he later remarked of this period. He realised that, for his work's sake, he had to break new ground: in the early 1950s he went to Paris, and for a time to London, before returning to Los Angeles in 1954, where he met Hull Moore, who became his manager. Moore arranged a recording session for Short and the tape was sold to Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records. Short made a series of albums for Atlantic in the 1950s, which included Porter, Rodgers and Hart, and Gershwin. His recordings were successful, and soon he was earning \$1,000 a week in Manhattan clubs and had a slot on television. But then, as the nightclub market began to wither in the 1960s, he risked more than he could afford in an ill-advised restaurant-cum-nightclub venture. Things looked up in 1965 when he won a part in *The New Cole Porter Revue* at Square East in Greenwich Village, after which he supplemented work in New York with engagements in Boston and in London. In 1968 he gave a memorable concert at New York's Town Hall with Mabel Mercer. When the owner of the Carlyle Hotel, in Madison Avenue, asked Ertegun whom he should hire to perform in the Carlyle Cafe while George Feyer was away on holiday, Ertegun proposed Short - who landed a contract for six nights a week, eight months a year. At the Carlyle in 1971, he celebrated what would have been Porter's eightieth birthday, playing

been Porter's eightieth birthday, playing more than 40 of the less familiar songs. There followed the double LP, *Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter* (1972), which, he said, "made me think for a moment that I'd actually become a recording star". Porter's songs are often played for laughs, but in the songs on that 1972 LP, Short brought out the pain and emotion beneath. He recalled Porter himself as "such a gracious person. I remember performing at a swank Christmas party at which he was present. When he rose to leave the party it was obvious he was in great pain... Yet he literally dragged himself over to the piano and said to me,

"Thank you so much. I am always pleased to hear you play my songs." Of course, I was deeply touched." Porter's appreciation was shared by Noël Coward, who met Short in 1955. "You know how much I have always enjoyed and admired your work," Coward wrote to Short later. "You have have an unmistakable, unique quality which never fails to give me very special pleasure. Hurry and record my songs - I am already looking forward." Short did so a year before Coward's death, and if *Bobby Short is Mad About Noël Coward* is not quite the revelation of the Porter set, he none the less came closer than anybody to giving

new life to songs that were very much Coward's own; again, he avoided the obviously comic material. Short wrote a memoir of his life up to the age of 17, *Black and White Baby* (1971). He appeared in the films *Kismet* and *Her Sisters* and *Splash*, and in the television series *Roots*. Norman Mailer once wrote a poem in his honour. He lived in a large apartment in the Carnegie Hall building, for a time with two Siamese cats, Rufus and Miss Brown, and a life-sized wooden lion.

*Published in the Daily Telegraph*

## Remembering my mother

Sheridan Morley

"To die will be an awfully big adventure," says Peter Pan, and the line has suddenly come back across a century to haunt me, not because of *Neverland* or any other of the ghastly Pan movies, but because one of J.M. Barrie's last goddaughters died a few days ago. She was my mother Joan: she was in her 95th year, and she died peacefully in the bed where she had given birth to my brother and sister more than 50 years ago. She had suffered no serious illness and was in no pain: one of the last things she told me was that in a long lifetime she had never seen a hospital ceiling, only ever entering such buildings as a visitor. Her death was, as they say on these occasions, a peaceful blessing. Except, of course, for the rest of us.

By the rest of us I mean a relatively her sister, her seven grandchildren, her three great-grandchildren (one new, barely three months old), and of course her three children - and that's before we start on all the in-laws and ex-in-laws and godchildren to whom she was the ever-loving and beloved centrepiece. She was a caring and careful rock in an uncaring and careless world, the best of ports in all kinds of personal and professional storms, when her advice would be unchallengeable - stay indoors, like any sensible person, or at the very least try not to lose your umbrella, and of course we always did. (Lose the umbrella, I mean.)

The miracle of Ma was that in a noisy world she spoke quietly, and at the heart of a family over-full of extroverts she remained all her life both modest and calm. When, years ago, Robert Morley,

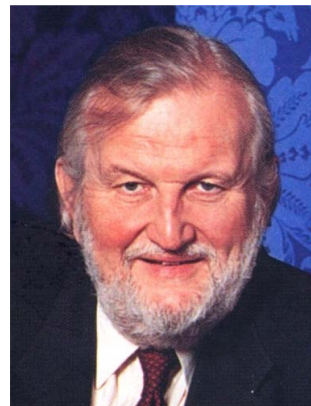
my father, came home with the dread news that they owed the Inland Revenue £100,000 pounds in back tax and were therefore now almost certainly bankrupt, Ma replied, "Yes, dear, and the Hoover is broken." "You can't have heard what I told you," said Pa. "Oh, I heard, darling," said Ma, "but there's nothing we can do right now about £100,000; on the other hand, we could go and get a new plug for the Hoover."

That, in one of many ways, was my darling mother. In one sense, she lived a life surrounded by giants: her father was Herbert Buckmaster, founder of both the Club and the Fizz that took the first half of his surname and still survive to this day. Barrie had been her godfather because her mother, Gladys Cooper, had been one of his very first Peter Pans, and mother and daughter were equally ageless, defiant and unbeaten by life.

Joannie left her childhood to marry my father Robert Morley, like Dame Gladys an extreme theatrical, and she became the still, ever-reassuring, consoling and congratulatory homemaker for a vastly extended family of actors, playwrights, directors, restaurateurs, cooks, bartenders, artists, producers and photographers. Sometimes that was just one relative trying it all, often it took more than one of us. In a highly theatrical world she remained wonderfully untheatrical, and whenever one of her large brood managed, unusually, to make a sensible marriage or to choose a reliable career, her quiet relief was almost equal to her loving amazement.

Precisely because she was all her life surrounded by noisy, highly strung eccentrics, she saw it as her mission to remain throughout her long life an oasis of calm intelligence and tranquillity. We all went home to Ma because we knew she would celebrate our successes, forgive our failures and urge us on to the

next project, even if she never quite understood why we all insisted on treating life as a contest, when to her it was really more like the weather, there to be either discreetly celebrated or mildly regretted. But now there's no going home because, with her, the home itself has gone; and I have to admit at the last that, like Robert, I loved my mother passionately and, like him, never quite managed to explain, perhaps until now, why she mattered so much to us both and, of course, to all of us. When she told her mother that she was about to marry Robert, Gladys wired back: "Well, dear, if you love him he can't be all that bad," and I think it matters to put on the record now, as she never did, that she really was all that good. She was just wonderful to all of us, even if we didn't always deserve her. When in the 1940s the actor Clifton Webb achieved my age, his mother also died and he became inconsolable until Noël Coward sent the following message: "Clifton, you have really got to stop all this grieving and mourning over your mother's death: in my experience, it is not entirely unusual to be orphaned at 65."







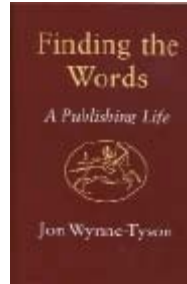
# Coward's confidante

from The Stage 10th March 2005 by Patrick Newley

Esme Wynne (1898-1972) may not be a familiar name to most theatregoers but she was a considerable influence on the early life and career of Noël Coward. An aspiring actress and author, she was Coward's closest adolescent friend. She and the young boy actor Noël spent much of their time away from school together riding on trains without tickets, exploring the West End and developing their mutual love of the stage. They shared such intense conversations that they sometimes bathed together so as not to interrupt their line of thought. She called him Poj and he called her Stoj. They kept their nicknames for each other throughout their adult lives. Esme's son, Jon Wynne-Tyson, a distinguished independent publisher of four decades, has written a fascinating autobiography, *Finding the Words - A Publishing Life*, in which he reveals the extraordinary relationship between his mother and the legendary entertainer. "The friendship between Noël and my mother dated from 1911," says Jon. "Noël never made a secret of the fact that Esme's star status was a powerful spur to his acting ambitions. As well as taking and making every opportunity to act together and to

be in each other's company when not working, they collaborated in plays, sketches and lyrics, their rapidly formed friendship becoming closer than that of most siblings, with an intimacy all the more objective and intense because of the absence of anything sexual in their association. No-holds-barred confidants on matters of life, relationships and their ambitions, they knew more of each other's lives and minds than their own parents. They even discussed whether they should form a platonic marriage but Esme's difficult mix of passionate nature and greater respect for conventions ruled this out." Much to Coward's dismay, Esme gave up the stage, married Linden Charles Tyson in 1918 and eventually became a novelist and an impassioned Christian scientist. Although much of Wynne-Tyson's autobiography is about his literary ventures, it is also a valuable study of Coward's early life and contains material so far unseen in biographies of The Master. Wynne-Tyson knew Coward well himself and there are many anecdotes about his visits to Blue Harbour, Coward's luxurious retreat in Jamaica. Prior to writing *Finding the Words*, Wynne-Tyson had also written a very

witty comedy, *Marvellous Party*, which supposes a middle-aged reunion in Las Vegas between Noël and Esme. Although never produced so far in the West End, there was a radio version starring Stanley Baxter. Wynne-Tyson also published a variety of contemporary poets and he was a friend to many leading literary figures. Perhaps the most bizarre story in the book is how he became the Fourth King of Redonda, a wild uninhabited outcrop in the West Indies with Fitzrovia associations. A rich literary feast, *Finding the Words* is an unexpected pleasure. *Finding the Words: A Publishing Life* by Jon Wynne-Tyson is published by Michael Russell Publishing Ltd, ISBN 085955287. Patrick Newley



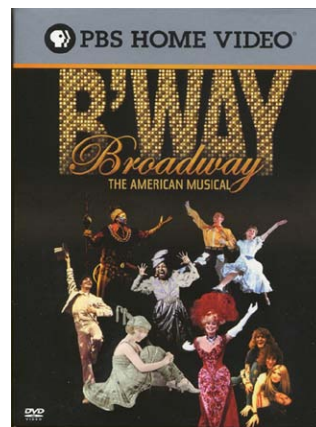
(Our thanks to Stephen Marshall for sending us this review)

## BROADWAY - The American Musical

A PBS DVD of the successful series *Broadway: The American Musical* is an ambitious and absorbing exploration of a unique American art form that has always been best experienced in live performance. Hosted and narrated by Julie Andrews, the six-part, six-hour documentary traces the history of musical theatre from its roots in vaudeville, operetta, and minstrel shows, to the dawn of what would become the modern American musical, *Show Boat*, and on through many changes that seemed to reflect those in American culture itself. Significant creators discussed include Florenz Ziegfeld, George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Bob Fosse, and David Merrick, and notable shows (*Oklahoma!*, *My Fair Lady*, *West Side Story*, *Company*, *Cats*, and recent hit *Wicked*, among others) are analyzed through performance clips and interviews with songwriters, stars, directors, producers, critics, and historians. The series' most

obvious weakness is its use of only brief excerpts of the performances - no song is heard in full. Because the series is designed to appeal to a general audience a lot of the information won't be new to diehard Broadway fans, but they should be especially pleased by the DVDs' bonus features, which include additional performances and about four more hours of interviews. Stephen Sondheim fans should be fascinated by footage of the composer-lyricist discussing 'Someone in a Tree' at the piano, and then running through the song with original cast members of *Pacific Overtures*, as well as interviews of him talking about his own shows and songs (e.g., listing the songwriters he pastiched in *Follies*) and reminiscing about mentor Oscar Hammerstein II. Other bonus performances include vaudeville films from the Library of Congress, original cast television performances of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 'If I Loved You' (from

*Cavalcade*, unfolding over 12 minutes) and 'Some Enchanted Evening' (the reprise version from *South Pacific*), *Rev's* Jonathan Larson spoofing Sondheim, and two behind-the-scenes looks at *Wicked*. David Hovavski



# MASTERWORDS

by Don Chiote

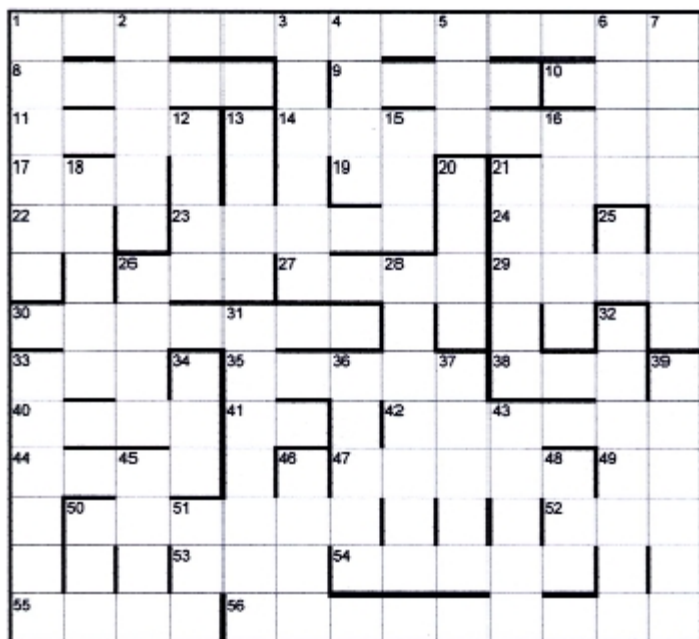
There is a £25 prize for this special one-off crossword. The winner will be drawn on May 1st 2005 from all correct solutions. Please send your solution in the form of a photocopy to: Don Chiote c/o:

The Noël Coward Society,  
29, Waldemar Avenue, Helleston,  
Norwich, NR6 6TB  
or email a scanned copy to:  
donchiote@noelcoward.net

## Introduction:

The unclued lights are all associated in different ways with *Iac* (two words), which may be a capital profession. One of them is a "character" rather than a real person, but his "sister" appears under her real name. Another loses his head to become Musical Director!

Clues with their number in [ ] all have references to NC and/or his works and lyrics.



## Clues Across

- [8] He travelled thus in 1934 song (5)  
 9 The way to Mandalay (4)  
 [10] He waited a bit in 1945 song  
 [11] and 27ac, 22ac & 23ac: 1928? (4,4,2,5)  
 14 Traveller drew near! (8)  
 [17] \_\_\_\_\_ anybody seen our ship? (3)  
 [19] See 35  
 [21] An opal, maybe, in one's hand? (4)  
 [22] See 11  
 [23] See 11  
 [24] I find America - right? (2)  
 [26] Mad about him (3)  
 [27] See 11  
 [29] Thin film director (4)  
 [33] Where \_\_\_ the songs... (3)  
 [35] and 44ac, 33dn & 19ac: Permanently posthumously - published song (5,4,5,2)  
 38 Old affirmative (3)  
 40 Sounds like a swan-song (4)  
 41 Concerning part of Red peppers? (2)  
 [42] Blithe Madame (6)  
 [44] See 35  
 47 Dishes endlessly mixed and thrown (5)  
 49 Small measure (2)  
 52 Biblical character twice in the limelight (3)  
 53 Odds of 41 make play section (3)  
 54 Rodgers & Hart had such a hotel (5)  
 [55] (See 33) ... we did, rather ungrammatically! (4)  
 [56] Cut out the accompanist! (9)

## Clues Down

- 2 Aracket, and one is confused (5)  
 [3] It is waiting just ahead in 1932 song (3,3)  
 [4] Any little \_\_\_\_\_ can frolic in the sun (4)  
 [5] Little Payn (3)  
 [7] Let us not be beastly to them in song (7)  
 [13] Mr. Essendine (4)  
 15 Maiden name (3)  
 [16] Regency types in song (5)  
 [18] Post-Wildean ball? (5)  
 [20] Make-believe songstress (4)  
 [21] Pretty heroine of story (5)  
 [25] Paphika! (2)  
 26 Sounded sanguine in Yugoslavia (4)  
 [31] Merry Christmas, without mothers, but with tea, we hear, is a star for Noël (6)  
 [32] Met a lot of trouble to get Graham's song (7)  
 [33] See 35ac  
 34 31 was one once! (3)  
 36 It allows me in, please sir! (5)  
 37 In heaven I can find her (5)  
 39 Not the last down, but the last across it? (6)  
 43 Little big string (5)  
 45 French bloom, you say? (4)  
 46 Lovely McCartney Maid (4)  
 48 Fool or horse-boy (3)  
 50 I'm a new-sounding animal from Flanders (3)  
 [51] An early baseball hit for Noël (3)

## Late News....

Sanctuary records have just released Noël Coward - Mad About The Boy - Castle Pulse - Release Date 28/3/2005 Nos: PEXCD367 5016073 336729 A large 3 CD collection of 61 tracks with Coward singing all the solo back catalogue plus a lot of the dance band tracks. A review of this in the next Home Chat! For details see <http://www.sanctuaryrecords.co.uk>



## Conversation Piece... *a less than private ramble by the editor*

The current Zeitgeist of the West End - the re-living of 'Abba, Rod Stewart, Queen and Madness' moments - has proved to be highly lucrative and successful but at what cost to more imaginative and innovative theatrical ventures. To be fair they are not all cut from the untailored cloth of nostalgia. But together with the marathon runners of *The Lion King*, *The Producers* and the whole of the Andrew Lloyd Webber stable they form a barricade that only the courageous would attempt to breach, (if I 'mix 'n match' many more metaphors I shall die in literary hell! - oh who cares!) You may not be surprised therefore that I choose to raise a flag to the brave souls who in my view have produced two of the most interesting productions in the last 12 months - *Jerry Springer The Opera* and *Acorn Antiques - The Musical*. For a start they are different, and controversial - God bless 'em! One for its language and theme and the other for its sheer nerve in turning a three-minute TV comedy sketch based on a shabby TV soap-opera into a full-blown musical. They do however work and what's more captivate their audiences. Over the years I have thankfully only caught snatches of the Jerry Springer TV show in moments of idle charnel-hopping so when I saw the promos for the theatre show I had only a limited idea of what it might be about. I did however read about its inception and gradual development into a West End show and it was this that created the desire to see it. After the first twenty minutes I wondered if it was going to go anywhere and then it took off and the second Act had me totally hooked. The show was of

course enriched by the seeing it with my old friend Ken Starrett and spotting Catherine Zeta Jones, Michael Douglas and Trevor Nunn in the audience. Since then it has won virtually every stage award going and triggered apoplectic anger amongst certain religious groups - earning a deserved place in theatre history.

Seeing the outstanding Julie Walters with other Victoria Wood stalwarts in *Acorn Antiques - The Musical* was a real treat. Neil Morrissey actually stood by my seat as he banters with the stage cast in the first act - steady now John don't lose your grip! Ok so where have you been lately where a whole Saturday matinee audience falls about over a pair of Marigold gloves and rises to a person to give a standing ovation at the end? Enough - this indulgence must stop - back to matters Coward. The Winter is supposed to be a time of rest prior to the activity of Spring and Summer - so it's a surprise that during this latent period NCS has made the final steps towards its independence and with the support of the Coward Estate and Noël Coward Ltd. has established a new structure for its operation and the election of its committee. This will allow Noël Coward Limited to wind up its watching brief and give the NCS committee the opportunity to organise itself entirely as a separate body. A real tribute to all those people who have worked towards making the Society such a success. The card of events that lies ahead provides a real depth and an international flavour to our activities. We have visits planned to New York and Paris; the first university weekend conference since the 1999 centenary

year (to be held at Oxford) and a developing educational asset in our redesigned website. Our new email group facility (called 'arylittlefish') will provide a forum for email discussion on Coward. In Australia Robert Wickham reports his first successful Coward meeting and in North America our numbers continue to rise thanks to the efforts of Ken Starrett and our representatives there. The sales of books and records have continued with the promise of a third catalogue to be issued in the late Spring and the development of an online bookshop on our website ([www.noel-coward.net](http://www.noel-coward.net)). Barbara Longford and Stephen Greenman attended a concert on Tuesday 29th March where the Society arranged for Simon Green, accompanied by his musical director, David Shrubsole, to open the concert dinner (in aid of a Mayoral charity for the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea) with a medley of songs from their CD *Take Me To The Merid*. Coward's 'Try To Learn To Love' was followed by 'Love Is' by Ericusse, and Cole Porter's 'I've Got You Under My Skin'. Later during the dinner Simon and David entertained diners with two Coward songs, including 'London Pride'. Simon is a celebrated actor and director. As cabaret performers they have appeared at New York's Carnegie Hall in the Noël Coward Centenary Gala where they were asked to return the following year to perform their own show, *Simon Green - Solo*. Their next London appearance will be 8 to 11 June 2005 at The Pizza on the Park, Knightsbridge. That's it for now! *John Knowles*

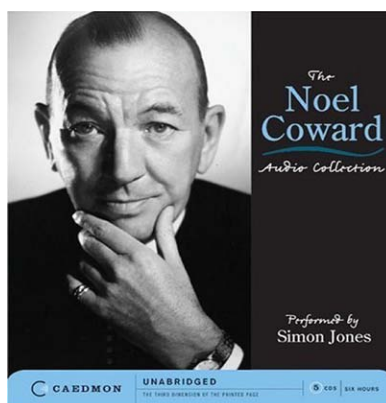
## The Noël Coward CD Audio Collection: Unabridged Selections

by Noël Coward, Simon Jones (Narrator)

Throughout his life, Noël Coward the master songwriter, 'derived a considerable amount of private pleasure from writing verse'. Much of it is gathered in this first ever CD collection. From moving war-time encounters to satirical barbs at familiar Coward targets and personal reminiscences, this delightful collection is a perfect blend of vintage Noël Coward sure to be enjoyed by faithful fans and new listeners alike.

The collection includes two short stories, *Cheap Excursion* and *The Kindness of Mrs. Radcliffe*, and various poems. And from the Caedmon Treasury Sir Noël Coward himself and Margaret Leighton perform Coward's adaptation of his *Brief Encounter*, scenes from *Blithe Spirit* and *Present Laughter*, the interlude from Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart*, concluding with the duo reading more from Coward's *Collected Verse*. Simon Jones links this treasury of Coward's spoken verse with his narration.

Released April 2005 - HarperAudio - ISBN: 0060764562



## WHAT'S ON? Is your production or event shown here...?

If you want an item to be included here or on our website then please send details to:

What's On, The Noël Coward Society, 29, Waldemar Avenue, Hellesdon, Norwich, NR6 6TB or email: [whatson@noelcoward.net](mailto:whatson@noelcoward.net) Tel: +44 (0)1603 486188 Fax: +44 (0)1603 400683

Professional companies and individuals are shown in blue

\*denotes Premiere, TBC = To be confirmed

### In the United Kingdom

#### Hay Fever

5 to 9 Jul - Combined Actors, Cambridge, The ADC Theatre, Cambridge

#### Blithe Spirit

22 to 30 Apr - BATS, & Tibb's Church hall, Bishopston, Swansea

13 to 16 Apr - Denton West ADS, Manchester

29 to 30 Apr - Holton Players, Village Hall, Holton, Oxfordshire

7 to 9 Jul - Central Studio Theatre Company, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke

19 to 21 May - The Court Players, The Memorial Hall, Rangeworthy, Bristol

13 to 16 Apr - First Team Theatre Co, The Old Laundry Theatre, Bowness-On-Windermere, Cumbria

23 to 30 May - Geoffrey Whitworth Theatre, Crayford, Kent

1 to 4 Jun - Studio Theatre, The Godolphin School, Salisbury, Wiltshire

12 to 16 Apr - Condover Players, Village Hall, Condover, Shropshire

28 to 30 Apr - High Tor Players, The Whitworth Inst. Darley Dale, Derbyshire

14 to 16 Apr - Highcliffe ATS, Highcliffe Primary School, Birstall, Leicester, Leicestershire

#### Private Lives

Summer 2005 (TBC) Dublin Gate then Irish Tour

13 to 18 Jun 2005 - The Pump House Theatre Company, The Pump House Theatre, Watford, Herts

End Jan 05 16 week UK tour Triumph Proscenium Productions & Bath Theatre Royal Productions

10 to 17 Apr - Rustington Players, Littlehampton, West Sussex This Happy Breed

13 to 21 May - Questors Theatre, Ealing, London Red Peppers

Postponed - The Matrix Theatre, Newbury, Berks

#### Laughter Lister and Love

Saturday May 7th, 2005 at 2.30 pm - A Noël Coward Cabaret at the Noël Coward Studio Theatre at the Hampton Hill Playhouse. email: [elia@cologne.fsife.co.uk](mailto:elia@cologne.fsife.co.uk) or

post to: 3 Somerville Road, Poulner, RINGWOOD, Hants BH24

#### Present Laughter

11&12 May - Amersham & Wickham College, Amersham, Buckinghamshire

#### Waiting In The Wings

19 to 21 May St. Mary's Hampton DG, St. Mary's Parish Hall, Hampton, Middlesex

25 Jun to 2 Jul - New Venture Theatre, Brighton, East Sussex

### WEST END HIGHLIGHT - ~~BLITHE SPIRIT~~

Featuring Penelope Keith, Joanna Riding, Amanda Drew and Aden Gillett - Director: Thea Sharrock

From the 16th November 2004 to 28th May 2005.

Monday to Saturday 7.30 pm.

Thursday and Sat Matinee 2.30 pm.

Ticket price from £15 to £40

For more information or to make a booking at The Savoy Theatre please telephone the box office 0870 1648787

### Still Life

6 to 8 Apr - Friends of the Winter gardens, The Platform, Morecambe, Lancashire.

### NCS 'Coward In Paris'

Moved to April 2006 see details inside.

### NCS 'Coward On Film'

May 22nd - see article inside.

### In North America

#### Hay Fever

31 Mar to 10 Apr - Seminole Community College Fine Arts Theatre, Sanford, Florida

#### Fallen Angels

Apr to Nov - (in repertory) Stratford Festival Theatre - Stratford, Ontario - Canada

#### Private Lives

12 to 15 May Stage 43 Theatrical Soc. Port Coquitlam BC

18 to 17 Sep Vision Theatre, Nepean, Ontario

#### Blithe Spirit

14 to 24 Apr Buckhorn Community Centre, Buckhorn, Ontario

25 Aug to 4 Sep, 2005 - Weston Playhouse Theatre Company 703 Main Street, Weston, VT 05161 Box Office: 802-824-5288

Information about ticket prices, directions and group discounts is available at [www.westonplayhouse.org](http://www.westonplayhouse.org)

#### Present Laughter

7 to 16 Apr - Gas & Light Productions, Calgary, Alberta

#### Bitter Sweet

24 to 28 May - Somerset Opera at the Brevhouse Theatre, Tunton at 7.45pm, with a matinee at 2.30pm on Saturday 28 May 2005. Tickets £12 (no concs). Matinee £10.

Tickets from the theatre. Box Office 01823 283244 [boxoffice@thebrevhouse.net](mailto:boxoffice@thebrevhouse.net)

### In Europe

Nothing known at present

## Alan Brodie has moved...

Alan Brodie Representation who represent the Noël Coward Estate have now moved to the following address:

Alan Brodie Representation Ltd.,

6th Floor, Fairgate House,

78, New Oxford Street,

London,

WC1A 1HB

Tel: 00 44 (0) 207 079 7990

Fax: 00 44 (0) 207 079 7999

[info@alambrodie.com](mailto:info@alambrodie.com)

[www.alambrodie.com](http://www.alambrodie.com)