



Event: The 5th Leatherhead Drama Festival
Date: Monday 5 – Saturday 17 May 2008
Tickets: Junior Week: £8.00 each
Senior Week £10.00, Awards Night £12.00

PRESS RELEASE

The Heath Players pay their respects at the Leatherhead Drama Festival

Next week sees the start of the largest drama Festival in the UK, taking place at The Leatherhead Theatre. With Patron Sir Michael Caine lending his support – and dishing out the awards on the last night – this festival is a real jewel in the Mole Valley cultural calendar.

Each participating group works tirelessly to produce their play to the highest standard in the hope of becoming one of the winners (and shaking the hand of the man himself!) and this year for the first time, there are an additional 10 groups taking part, surely a testament to how successful and important this event has now become.

The Heath Players are one such group currently in the throes of rehearsing, prop collecting and set-building all in anticipation for their performance of *A Respectable Funeral* on Friday 16 May. However, they are somewhat used to the fierce competition that drama festivals can create and have had a little taste of fame when they were delighted to win the UK One-Act Festival in 1987 with their entry, the wonderful Noel Coward comedy *Private Lives*. So one would expect them to be used to the pressure!

Formed in 1948 and producing 3 plays a year, The Heath Players, now based at Box Hill Village Hall, is a fairly small drama group, characterised by a strong sense of family. The Players have produced a wide range of plays and shows, including classical drama, pantomime, thrillers, and comedies.

They find by entering into drama festivals over the years, they have been able to develop and hone new skills, acquire extra theatrical experience and bring their work to a much wider audience. But, it's not all work! They always make a point of enjoying themselves along the way!

Their entry into this years festival is written by Jimmie Chinn and directed by long-standing member of the group Greta Cresswell. *A Respectable Funeral* centres on the relationships between four siblings on the death of their elderly mother. As they come together to her house after the funeral to clear her furniture and belongings, they start to reminisce and eventually discover a deep and dark secret about her that has cast a shadow over their relationship with her and is in danger of breaking up the entire family!

For more information on this or any of the events taking place at The Leatherhead Theatre, please contact:

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This gentle and amusing play focuses on the characters and circumstances they have found themselves in (which I am sure the audience will relate to!) and was first performed by the company last year. It received such praise, that they have decided to bring it to this year's Drama Festival in the hope of winning the Senior Winning Group category and the Sir Michael Caine 'Coach' Trophy. Wish them well!

You can keep up to date with all the events and activities by logging onto the festival website at www.leatherheaddramafestival.org

Tickets for the festival are available at The Leatherhead Theatre Box Office priced as follows:

£8.00 for the Junior Week (*Season Ticket for 5 nights £20.00*)
£10.00 for the Senior Week (*Season Ticket for 5 nights £25.00*)
£12.00 for the Awards Night

by calling **01372 365141** or booking online at the secure theatre website (subject to a £1.00 transaction fee) at www.the-theatre.org.

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