

P R O G R A M M E



A distant View

A Play to celebrate 800 years
of Cuddesdon people and their Church

by
MAIDA STANIER

'A Distant View' was specially commissioned from the local writer, Mrs. Maida Stanier, by the Cuddesdon 1980 Committee. In response, she created a play that both celebrates a wide spectrum of Cuddesdon life and reveals her affectionate knowledge of the history of the village.

Church and village interests rub shoulders in the play as they have done in the community. Central to the drama are the building of the Church, initially completed in 1180, the founding of the Theological College in 1854, the Reformation, the Civil War, and the threat of enclosures in the 19th century.

Moving haphazardly through time from 1180 until the late 19th century 'A Distant View' also celebrates the colourful pre-reformation appearance of the Church by incorporating the Cuddesdon Mummers' Play. The actual medieval text, discovered seventy years ago, is used for this.

'A Distant View' has a strong element of folk tradition: we hope we can convey the spirit of this tradition as well as a history of the Church itself. They are, we suspect, part of each other.

T. D.

Cast includes:

Denis A. Birchett; Faith, Jim & William Fitchett; Alan Harris; Mick Jones; Gareth Morris; John Paxton; James Radcliffe; Bill Saumarez Smith; John Wilkinson.

Costumes by Heather Howes
Music by Jack's Maggot Band
Musical Direction by Mick Jones
Lighting by Ken Bishop
Production and Design by David Gamblin;
Heather Howes; Caroline Mackay; Bill Saumarez Smith

Producer : Tony Davis

Please see insert for full production details.
There will be an Interval of fifteen minutes.

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Faggotty Man ALAN HARRIS
William Nixey, constable ... JIM FITCHETT
Francis Munt, morris dancer
and musician MICK JONES
Richard Tapster, farm
labourer and shepherd WILLIAM FITCHETT
Bartholomew Day, carpenter . JOHN PAXTON
Robert Wildgoose,
churchwarden GARETH MORRIS
Thomas the Foundling JAMES RADCLIFFE
Susan Nixey EMILY SMITH
Children ARTHUR FITCHETT
and JOSEPH SMITH
Soldier JOHN WILKINSON
Vicar BILL SAUMAREZ SMITH
Widow Piercy, landlady of
the Three Compasses FAITH FITCHETT
Samuel Wilberforce DENIS A. BIRCHETT

The Cuddesdon characters are all based on real people whose names have appeared on parish lists.

MUSICIANS

JOHN CORLETT - concertina and mandolin
JOHN DAWSON - melodeon and whistles
MICK JONES - pipe and tabor, electric bass
SIMON RHODES - keyboards

PRODUCTION

Lighting assistant - GORDON BALME
Production assistant - MICHAEL WRAY
Refreshments - HELEN BROWN
Clog dancing - KAY BROCKALL
Floodlighting - PETER KING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of those concerned with Ripon College who have helped us, especially Linda Bobby, Colin & Christine Everett, Jennifer Robinson and David Wilcox.

Christine Bloxham; John Chandler, for sound and lighting equipment; Mill Lane School, Chinnor for the blocks; Mrs. Graham, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council Wardrobe, for some of the costumes; Roy Green and his helpers; Keith and Kathy Hawley for the loan of furniture and props from Kathy Hawley Antiques, Denton; Roy Judge; King's Lifeguard of Foote, No. 5 Company, Sealed Knot, for 'Babylon' and props; Morrells Brewery for the barrel; Oxford College of Further Education Staff Association for the Father Christmas outfit; Science Studio (Oxford) Ltd. for the hourglass; Roger Simmonds; Toc H; The Other Oxfordshire Theatre for the stocks; Easil Townsend for the bell recording; Wheatley Morris Men, Peter Lund and Christ Church Library.

NOTES

The Cuddesdon Mummings play was collected at the turn of the century but just how old it is no one knows; it cannot, sadly, be claimed to be medieval.

Applause, although unusual in a church, is very welcome.

At the end of the play the cast will gather on stage to sing Tallis' canon, 'Glory to Thee, my God, this night'. We would be delighted for you to stand and join us singing this hymn, verses 1,2,4, & 7. The Tallis canon is hymn No. 267 of 'The English Hymnal', a copy of which should be in front of your pew.