

Huntingdon Drama Club
presents

Journey's End

by R C Sherriff

Thursday 8 November - Saturday 10 November 2001
Commemoration Hall, Huntingdon



Welcome to tonight's performance of Journey's End.

A friend originally told me about Journey's End 18 months ago. He described it as 'a play set in the British trenches during World War I. Not much happens, but it's a great play.' I found this remark so intriguing that, out of curiosity, I read the script. True, it is a play set in a British trench during World War I. True, it is a great play. False, something does happen.

Journey's End is a play about people, about life and the emotional effects of war on individuals. When the play was first performed in 1928 there was a fear that it would be a flop. Concerns were raised around this time that it would be viewed as 'anti-war', and would cause a public outcry and condemnation of its author, RC Sherriff. After all, the Great War 1914 - 1918 had not long ended and many families had lost a husband, a father and son/s during the conflict. However, this concern could not have been further from the truth. Journey's End was a huge success, and continues to be so. Why? Well, I feel that it is due to the writing and the honesty portrayed within the characters and the text and that it offers an insight into the horrors of war, an insight into the ordinary lives of individuals who believed in and died in the pursuit of freedom. The First World War touched the lives of so many, the likes of which have never, and will, hopefully, never be witnessed again. The sacrifice made by millions should never be forgotten. We pay tribute to them all.

Journey's End has been a labour of love, and a labour in itself, to produce. I would like to thank all those who have helped me bring it to life, especially Pete Sweeney, whose imagination, creativity and support has produced the set you see before you tonight. Thanks Pete.

Finally, I would like to say that all attempts have been made to present a play which truly captures the period and atmosphere of trench life. I am sure some of you will notice inconsistencies with the costumes and props! Hopefully, you will allow us some artistic licence but still be entranced by the play itself. I have enjoyed bringing this play to life and I hope you enjoy it too.

Gary Mackay
Director



The Play in Performance

Journey's End was first performed in a single Sunday evening performance by the Incorporated Stage Society in December 1928 with a 21-year-old Lawrence Olivier as Stanhope and directed by James Whale (*Frankenstein*, *The Bride of Frankenstein* and *The Invisible Man*). It had previously been rejected by most of the theatre managers in London, on the grounds that the public did not want to hear about war or that a play without women wouldn't be popular. After its first performance it was produced at the Savoy Theatre, where it ran for two years. RC Sherriff was suddenly famous; the play was translated into every European language and performed all over the world.

RC Sherriff 1896 - 1975

During World War I, RC Sherriff was an officer in the East Surrey Regiment. He was wounded in the battle of Passchendaele in 1917. His play, Journey's End, is based upon his real-life experiences during the war - mirroring the way he and his comrades lived and fought and re-living some of its incidents. Although he wrote several other plays, some novels, and several film-scripts (*Goodbye Mr Chips* and *The Invisible Man*), it is for Journey's End that he is best remembered.

The Commemoration Hall

The Commemoration Hall was built in 1842 by Robert Fox a local benefactor from Godmanchester and was opened as the Scientific and Literary Institute. It was operated by a small body of Trustees until a major refurbishment in 1960 resulted in its being handed over to the Town Council for its long term maintenance and operation

This refurbishment was funded by public subscription and until recently there was a wooden plaque above the doors into the main hall, with the following inscription.



**The Huntingdon Commemoration Hall
Provided by Public Subscription to Commemorate the fallen
of this Borough in the Second World War 1939 – 1945.
Opened by Sir Roy Bucher KBE, CB, MC 6th January 1960.**

Characters and Acts

Stanhope	↻	Jonathan Roberts
Osborne	↻	Andrew Kendon
Trotter	↻	Andy Hughes
Hibbert	↻	Stuart Nunn
Raleigh	↻	Dan Cordey
The Colonel	↻	Gary Cooper
Sgt. Major	↻	Andy Waller
Mason	↻	Chris Owens
Hardy	↻	Jonathan Salt
German Soldier	↻	Philip Pope
Broughton	↻	Raymond Livermore
Directed by	↻	Gary Mackay

The action takes place in a dug-out in the British trenches before St. Quentin.

Act 1

Evening on Monday, 18th March 1918

Act 2

Scene One: Tuesday Morning

Interval

Act 2

Scene Two: Tuesday Afternoon

Act 3

Scene One: Wednesday Afternoon

Scene Two: Wednesday Night

Scene Three: Thursday, Towards Dawn

Please Note:

Photography is not allowed during the performance.

Ensure all mobile phones are turned off.

There will be smoke and explosions during the performance.

Production Team

- Set Designer & Stage Manager 🌀 Pete Sweeney
Back Stage Crew 🌀 Bob Pugh
Chris Hunnham
Continuity 🌀 Gaenor Pring
Make-Up 🌀 Diana Mackay
Paul Sweeney
Props 🌀 Liz Graham
Costumes 🌀 Imperial War Museum,
Duxford
Nigel Sweeney
Lighting 🌀 John Morgan
Sound 🌀 Steve Goodwin
Chris Dixon
Special Effects 🌀 Kevin Attwood
Front of House 🌀 Valerie Gerrard & Team
Publicity 🌀 John Morgan
Valerie Gerrard
Poster & Programme Design 🌀 Simon Webb

HUNTINGDON DRAMA CLUB'S

Next Production:

‘Worlds Apart’ by Valerie Gerrard

My sincere thanks go to:
Imperial War Museum, Duxford
Cambridgeshire Constabulary HQ
Huntingdon Town Council
The Card Gallery, Huntingdon
Mr E Bocking
Nigel Sweeney
Pete Sweeney
Les & Trevor (The Caretakers)
Diana Mackay
Phil Cox
Andy Waller
Shakespeare at the George
Jewsons, Huntingdon
Tesco's, Huntingdon
Huntingdon Youth Theatre
Hinchingbrooke School Drama Department
Simon Webb
Dick Underwood
Ted & Gilly Morgan
Sainsbury's, Huntingdon
W H Smiths Ltd
Waitrose Ltd.
Sports and Fashions, Huntingdon
The Barley Mow, Hartford

and

**TO ALL THOSE WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES
DURING THE GREAT WAR 1914 - 1918**

Jonathan Roberts

I like acting, eating and Kylie. I hate not acting, not eating and the long time that Kylie spent out of the limelight.



Andy Kendon

I have been involved with amateur dramatics in Huntingdon for over 20 years. I've mostly helped backstage but in the recent past, I have performed on stage 'treading the boards'. Recent productions include *Rope* (as Rupert), *One Flew over the Cuckoos Nest* (as Chief Bromsden) with the Huntingdon Drama Club, *Macbeth* (as Banquo) with Shakespeare at the George and *Blue Remembered Hills* (as Willie) with the Combined Actors of Cambridge.



Stuart Nunn

I am new to the Huntingdon Drama Club but have been acting since the age of 11 years. I count as my most memorable appearances: Barnaby in *Hello Dolly*, John Merrick in the *Elephant Man*, several parts in the six hour production of *Nicholas Nickleby* and, most recently, Flute in the open air performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in St. Ives. In my spare time I work for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link building the high speed railway between the Channel Tunnel and St. Pancras Station.



Chris Owens

This is my first production with Huntingdon Drama Club I have been involved with shows ranging from Pantomime (St Ives Centre Players) to Shakespeare (Shakespeare at the George and Hemingford Players). I have also been in musical productions (SIMADS). I love acting and it is always a great experience. I have enjoyed being a part of *Journey's End*, have had a great time and have really enjoyed myself. *Journey's End* really makes you think what the real soldiers did for us. Enjoy the show.



Dan Cordey

I have been involved with a number of Huntingdon Drama Club productions, including *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Fluff*. I have also appeared in productions of other local groups including *Dracula* with FADS and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Hemingford Players. Someday, probably when I'm old and grey, I would like to act professionally.



Gary Cooper

When I first moved to Huntingdon some 14 years I joined the Huntingdon Drama Club and thoroughly enjoyed a number of plays. Children and house building put a stop for a while and I'm delighted to be back. "Strong smell of bacon though."



Jonathan Salt

This is my second production with Huntingdon Drama Club. My first was *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (as McMurphy). I am also involved with several companies in Cambridgeshire. I have performed in *Macbeth* with Shakespeare at the George, and with The Hemingford Players' production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In my spare time, in between eating and sleeping, I have been known to teach and direct plays, both here and abroad.

This year I directed a successful production of *Tom Sawyer* for the St Ivo School and have recently started up a the St Ives Youth Theatre.



Philip Pope

This is my first time with the Huntingdon Drama Club and only my second production ever. I was recently in a school production of *Tom Sawyer* (as Injun Joe) and was told I was very good. Although this is my first time with the club I am looking forward to it immensely.



Andy Hughes

This is my first attempt at amateur dramatics so don't judge too harshly. Trotter is a nice bloke, you'll like him. Like me he's a big fan of life and all its treats. For me: beer, Kylie Minogue etc. ..., for him: his stomach. Enjoy tonight.



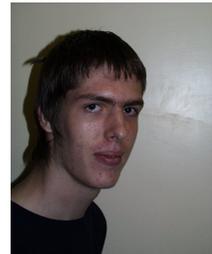
Andy Waller

This is my first show with HDC but you may have seen me in and around Cambridge. I have been a member of Meridian Theatre in Comberton since 1980. I have performed with Bawds in *The Madness of King George III*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Katherine Howard*. With Festival Players: *Annie Get Your Gun* and *South Pacific*, Combined Actors of Cambridge: *Great Expectations*, Random Choice: *12 Angry Men*, with Campaign Amateur theatre at Ely: *Camelot*. My acting credits with Meridian Theatre include, *Outside Edge*, *Abigail's Party*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Real Inspector Hound* and *Our Country's Good*. Directing credits: *Oh What a Lovely War!*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *Journey's End* and several Pantos. My hobbies include running TAKE AIM HIRE, which hires out stage weapons and military items.



Raymond Livermore

I have been a member of the Huntingdon Youth Theatre since last September. Before then I had no acting experience with the exception of primary school assemblies. Since September I have performed in *Bugsy Malone* and *A Christmas Carol* (which was performed in France) with Huntingdon Youth Theatre and the *Only Fools and Horses* 'From Scratch Workshop' with HDC.



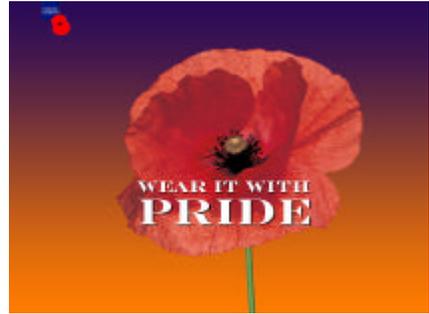
Past Productions.

- 1976 Spring The Lion in Winter
Autumn Ten Little Niggers
- 1977 Spring Barefoot in the Park
Autumn Ring Round the Moon
- 1978 Spring Boeing-Boeing
Winter The Owl and the Pussycat
- 1979 Spring Habeas Corpus
Autumn Sink Trap
Winter The Snow Queen
- 1980 Spring There's a Girl in my Soup
Autumn The Anniversary
Winter Plotters of Cabbage Patch Corner
- 1981 Spring Donkey's Years
Autumn Blithe Spirit
Winter Gingerbread Man
- 1982 Spring Clouds
Autumn The Man Most Likely To...
- 1983 Spring Relatively Speaking
Autumn Hay Fever
- 1984 Spring Entertaining Mr. Sloane
Winter She Stoops to Conquer
- 1985 Spring Filumena
Autumn Suddenly at Home
- 1986 Winter Arms and the Man
Spring Absent Friends
Autumn Night Must Fall
- 1987 Spring Lord Arthur Savile's Crime
Autumn Laburnum Grove
- 1988 Spring Any Number Can Die
Autumn Easy Virtue
- 1989 Spring Under Milk Wood
Autumn Pygmalion

1990 Spring A Day in the Death of Joe Egg
Autumn Caught on the Hop
1991 Spring School for Scandal
Autumn Pass the Butler
1992 Spring Lady Windermere's Fan
Autumn The Ghost Train
1993 Spring A Chorus of Disapproval
Autumn Loot
1994 Spring Tom Jones
Autumn The Empress of Othernow
1995 Spring No Sex Please We're British
Autumn Out of Sight... Out of Murder
1996 Spring The Importance of Being Earnest
Autumn Dracula
1997 Spring The Hollow
Autumn Absurd Person Singular
1998 Spring An Ideal Husband
Autumn On the Razzle
1999 Spring Rope
Autumn Working With Amateurs
2000 Spring Bazaar and Rummage
Autumn One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest
2001 Spring Picasso at the Lapin Agile

For details of earlier productions (and other club news),
please visit our web site at
<http://www.huntingdondramaclub.co.uk>

On 11th November 1918, the guns fell silent in Europe. For the millions who had fought in the Great War, and for their families, the 'land fit for heroes' turned out to be an illusion. Instead there was suffering and deprivation, homelessness and unemployment. Out of this was born a voice to fight for the justice and rights of the ex-Service community -The British Royal Legion.



The Legion introduced the Poppy Appeal and an annual two-minute silence in national remembrance of all those who had died in service. They established soup kitchens and convinced landlords to provide cheaper rents for ex-servicemen until they got back on their feet.

But their work didn't stop there. In the 1920s the newly established Legion was the only hope for many war heroes, left to begging and living on the streets. Eighty years later the situation is shamefully similar.

In London alone, around 100 unemployed ex-service people sleep rough each night, with another 500 living in hostels for the homeless.

Today, the UK's men and women continue to serve their country, in the Falklands, the Gulf, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland and now in Afghanistan. They need to know that The Royal British Legion will be there to help them when they need it most.

The Legion provides help to the ex-service community on a number of different fronts. We provide beds in seven care homes, as well as three homes dedicated to providing much needed breaks for over 4,000 careers and veterans recovering from illness or bereavement.

We also answer about 300,000 urgent calls for help each year. Our work ranges from emotional support for someone coming to terms with the loss of a loved one, a little financial help for a family struggling to make ends meet, or rehabilitation and advice for ex-Service men and women starting life as a civilian with the scars of their wartime efforts.

But often it is the little bits of kindness that we provide on a regular basis that can make all the difference. Like welfare advice, or just friendship for an isolated or disabled service person.

Without your help we won't be able to respond to all these requests and provide the support that makes the lives of these individuals more bearable.