

Craig Phelan: Many thanks to the proud possessor of cool alabaster thighs, they seem to be a main essential to the plot!

Joyce Wells: In two years with the Bletchingley Players, with the exception of a brief appearance as a parlour maid, I seem to have specialised in dotty old ladies. Type casting some may say!

Jackie Lucas: I'm not sure whether to be flattered or insulted at being selected to play a character of this age! luckily I found a course at the Tolpuddle Evening Institute covering stage makeup which was invaluable in helping to create "Marge".

Di Brooke: Although enjoying her part in Carmaba's Revenge" and always open to ideas to supplement her pension, Di hopes Bletchingley Players do not consider her character in this production as typecasting!

Liz Tomlin: After producing Pygmalion, Liz has enjoyed returning to the stage to play Doris, an elderly lady with a certain fondness for alcohol.

Sally Harling: "Is there a criminal element hidden somewhere in all of us? And to what depths are we prepared to go?"

Felicity Lund: Having started on stage as a rabbit at the age of four, Felicity is pleased to at last to be playing a more realistic role—according to her husband.

Barbara Saunders: Directing her first full length play for Bletchingley Players, Barbara is enjoying getting her Revenge on the members of the cast who have previously directed her.

Next production: Steel Magnolias by Robert Harling directed by John Tomlin. October 20th 21st & 22nd 2005.

BLETCHINGLEY PLAYERS
AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY
PRESENT

CARAMBA'S REVENGE

BY

WILLIAM NORFOLK
PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY
BARBARA SAUNDERS



AT BLETCHINGLEY VILLAGE
HALL

5TH, 6TH & 7TH MAY 2005.

THE ACTION OF THE PLAY TAKES PLACE
IN THE LIVING-ROOM OF A TERRACED
HOUSE

Time: The present

ACT 1

- Scene 1 A Saturday in Autumn. Noon.
Scene 2 One hour later
Scene 3 The following Thursday. Morning
Scene 4 Seven Thirty the following evening

ACT 2

- Scene 1 Immediately following the end of Act 1
Scene 2 Ten forty-five the following morning
Scene 3 Half and hour later
Scene 4 One week later. Evening

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

LOTTIE	DI BROOKE
DORIS	LIZ TOMLIN
MARGE	JACKIE LUCAS
RONNIE	SALLY HARLING
AUGUSTUS GRUBB	CRAIG PHELAN
ROSE	FELICITY LUND
GRACE	JOYCE WELLS
DIRECTOR	BARBARA SAUNDERS
PROMPT	EILEEN SHORE
PROPS	JENNY BARNETT
STAGE MANAGER	JEREMY LUND
LIGHTING	RODNEY BAIN
SOUND	RODNEY BAIN AND ROBIN WHITTAKER
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER	SUSAN SARTI
BOX OFFICE	SUE WALKER

Caramba's Revenge

Bletchingley Players

Reviewed by

Tony Flook

BLETCHINGLEY

Players has the same problem as that facing many amateur dramatic groups. It has a small, mainly mature and predominantly female core of actors. This inevitably limits the range of plays it can credibly cast and that will, at the same time, appeal to its audience.

At first sight, *Caramba's Revenge* seemed to meet the criteria well. It's funny, with a very slightly dark edge in places, and five of the seven characters are described as being aged 60 or more years' old. It is, though, quite a long play, broken into eight scenes. This, together with an extended interval for a fish & chip supper, made for rather a protracted evening at Bletchingley Village Hall.

Three elderly women, living together to pool their meagre resources, accidentally stumble on a way to

supplement their finances. First, they fail to declare the death of Vi, the fourth member of the 'co-operative', and continue to draw her pension. Then, aided by a new recruit, they try to add to their funds by killing the weakest of the original trio. Events take an unexpected turn when they vote to make a career of murder and take on their next intended victim.

By its nature, *Caramba's Revenge* is a relatively static play and the principal characters would, by their nature, have tended to speak in a measured way. There was, though, scope for more variation of style between the original three – Lottie, the self-deluding aspiring novelist, played by Di Brooke; Marge, the woman addicted to self-improvement through evening classes, performed by Jackie Lucas and Doris, the not-so-secret drinker, given a

carefully observed interpretation by Liz Tomlin.

Sally Harling brought a breath of fresh air into their lives as Ronnie, the girl who arrives from the USA to track down Vi, her Grandmother, learns the amusing truth about her own offbeat background and joins the plotters.

Felicity Lund dominated the second act as Rose, who turns the tables on the cabal (which, by now, includes Ronnie's boyfriend, an easily corrupted policeman). Her bird-like movements and crisp delivery injected life when it was most needed.

The set design made good use of the stage to create the location – the living room in a terraced house, with realistic hints of the kitchen, hallway and garden. The dated furniture looked totally right but, filling the room as it did, tended to make some movements awkward.

Overall, director Barbara Saunders and her cast gave an intriguing peep into the minds of these far from sweet little old ladies.