

the mitre players

PRESENT

# ALADDIN

AND HIS MARVELLOUS LIMEHOUSE  
LAMP

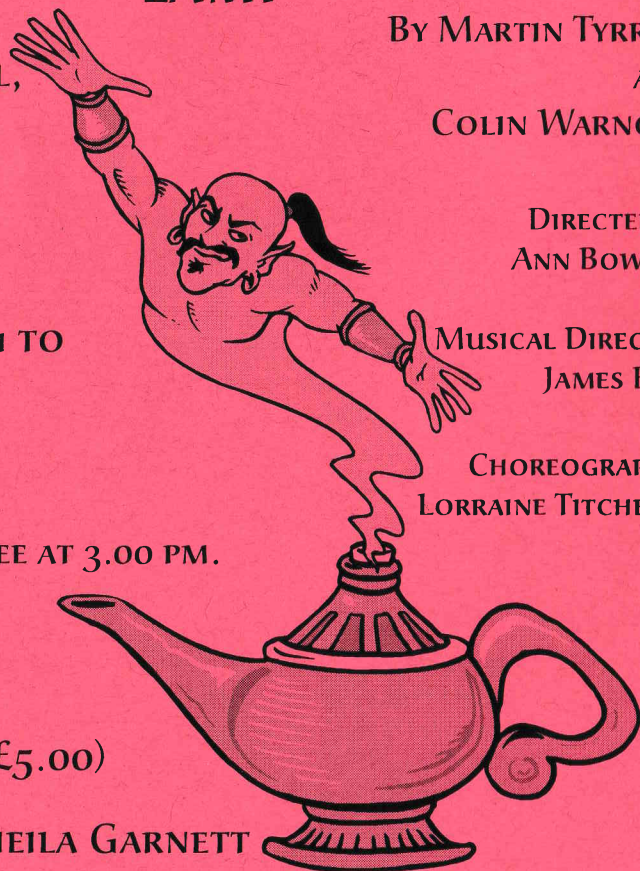
TRINITY SCHOOL,  
SHIRLEY ROAD,  
SHIRLEY PARK,  
CROYDON.

THURSDAY 10TH TO  
SATURDAY 12TH  
JANUARY 2002  
AT 7.30 PM.

SATURDAY MATINEE AT 3.00 PM.

TICKETS £7.00  
(CONCESSIONS £5.00)

BOX OFFICE: SHEILA GARNETT  
020 8650 7882



By MARTIN TYRRELL  
AND  
COLIN WARNOCK

DIRECTED BY  
ANN BOWDEN

MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
JAMES BEAL

CHOREOGRAPHER  
LORRAINE TITCHENER

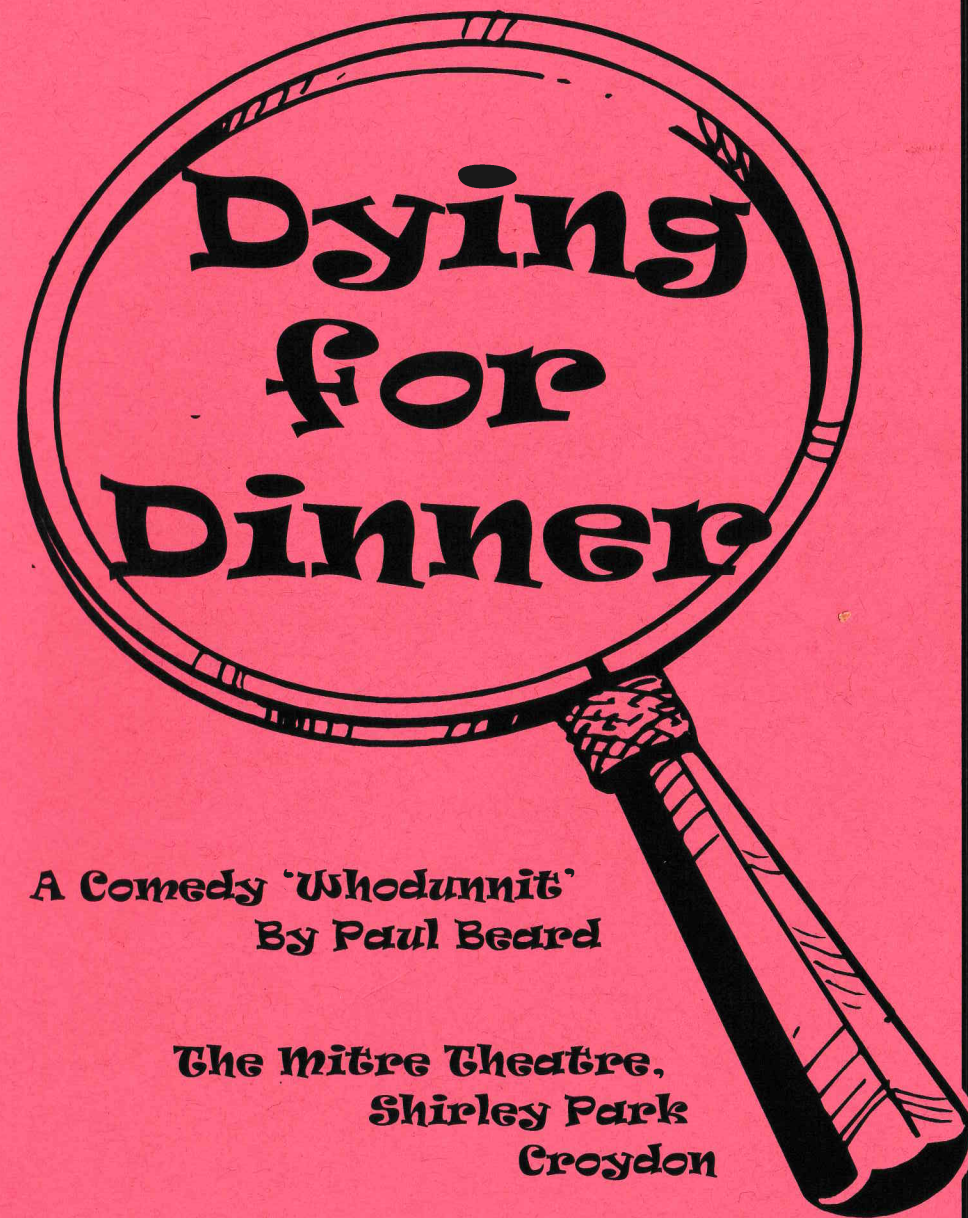
the mitre players

# Dying for Dinner

A Comedy 'Whodunnit'  
By Paul Beard

The Mitre Theatre,  
Shirley Park  
Croydon

Programme



## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Welcome to the Mitre Players' autumn production of 'Dying for Dinner'. It is a while since the society has performed an original play and this one is written and directed by one of our own members, Paul Beard.

This has been an interesting show to perform because it draws an extremely fine line between fiction and reality. Maintaining the production's credibility and integrity has required discipline from all departments.

Our last show 'Return to the Forbidden Planet' was great fun to do and a great success, with every performance sold out, both in Croydon and Dawlish. We hope we shall be able to continue this trend and we would like to thank you all for your continuing support.

Our next show 'Aladdin and his Marvellous Limehouse Lamp' will also be performed here at the School on Thursday 10th, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January. Written by Martin Tyrrell with music by Colin Warnock, 'Aladdin and his Marvellous Limehouse Lamp' includes all the usual traditional pantomime elements. It

should be great fun for all the family.

Other productions for the forthcoming year are in an advanced stage of preparation and are announced in the Mitres newsletter, which is sent to all current Members and 'Friends'. If you are not currently on our mailing list please let our membership secretary (details elsewhere in the programme) know and be kept right up to date with Mitre news, as it happens.

For this evening however, we are hungry to see 'whodunnit' and who is 'Dying for Dinner'.

Andy Thompson.

Chairman



# the mitre players

(A section of the Old Boys' Association of Trinity School)

Present

## Dying for Dinner

A Black Comedy Multi-Whodunnit  
Written by Paul Beard

Director: Paul Beard

The Mitre Theatre,  
Trinity School, Croydon

Wednesday 24th to Friday 26th October 2001

An amateur production by arrangement with New Theatre Publications  
The author acknowledges the support given by Sir Alan Ayckbourn by giving permission to use the characters from *Table Manners* but wishes to make it clear that no part of *Dying for Dinner* was written by Alan Ayckbourn.

*Please note that smoking is prohibited in the auditorium.  
We would respectfully remind you that the taking of photographs and the use of audio and video recording equipment is strictly forbidden.  
Please remember to switch off all mobile phones and pagers.*

THANK YOU

## The Writing of "Dying for Dinner"

The most common question I am asked (*other than why do the Metropolitan Police still employ you*) is "When you're thinking of writing a new play where do you get your ideas from?". Well, about six years ago I saw a survey in Amateur Stage which showed that the most favoured genre of play by amateur audiences was comedy, swiftly followed by murder mysteries. Also high on the list were plays about amateur drama. I scanned the Samuel French play directory and could find nothing that matched all three criteria, saw my chance to fill a gap in the market and filed the idea away into the 'must get round to doing that one' file.

A couple of years ago on a trip to Australia, I came across a 'Murder Mystery' dinner party game. I bought it and on my return to England, I set about organising two dinner parties at my home. I set up video cameras and filmed the process to see how it all worked and voila! The rest as they say is history. Needless to say the script has been over-dramatised and bears no relation to the goings on at either party, which as I recall ended up both times with everybody getting drunk and one of the players regurgitating his dinner down my newly plumbed kitchen sink. Having got the skeleton of the play written, I needed to find a play for the company to be in the process of performing and my research revealed that 'Table Manners' by Alan Ayckbourn was the most performed amateur play for the second year running, so it seemed a suitable choice, not least because Mr Ayckbourn is a particular writing guru of mine and I'll be the first to admit I have tried to lean heavily on his particular style for this piece although you'd never know it.

Having finished the first draft, I sent the script off to Mr Ayckbourn to obtain his blessing to refer to and use his characters in my play and I now have a marvellous signed letter of appreciation from the man himself which, with a bit of luck, my heirs will be able to sell for a fortune one day.

Unlike many writers, I am fortunate to be a member of a theatre group who are brave enough to take on a new work and showcase it, and the opportunity to workshop a new piece in rehearsals with the actors to find its strengths and weaknesses prior to its presentation, gives me the opportunity of fine-tuning it before you, the audience, get to see it. I hope we've got it about right but you'll be the judge of that, and I'm sure that once I've seen it performed before a live audience, I will be making a few more changes before I send it off for publication.

Paul Beard

## the mitre players

The Mitre Players is the dramatic society of the Old Boys of Trinity School (The Old Mid Whitgiftian Association). We are a very friendly and sociable society, presenting 4 or 5 productions a year in a wide variety of venues. Putting on a production not only requires people on stage, but also involves a great deal of hard work behind the scenes. We design and build our own sets, paint our own scenery, find and make our own props, make many of our own costumes and use 'in house' musicians whenever possible.

We would welcome any new members, so if you have any aspirations to act, sing, dance or play a musical instrument, we would like to hear from you. If you prefer to remain out of the spotlight - building scenery, lighting, painting, making costumes, making props, doing 'Front of House' or simply would like to make a cup of tea for the team, we would still like to hear from you.

Most of our rehearsals take place at the Old Mid Whitgiftian Association Clubhouse in Sanderstead. The bar facilities at the Clubhouse lend a social and convivial atmosphere to our rehearsals and all members are encouraged to use the facilities at Sanderstead as often as possible.

For further information about the Mitre Players please contact our Membership Secretary: Julia Ascott on 020 8239 1010 or visit our Web Site at [www.themitreplayers.com](http://www.themitreplayers.com)

**President:** Chris Tarrant    **Past President:** Robin Wilson  
**Vice-Presidents:** Gillian Bartle, John Bartle, Alan Bishop,  
Martin Garnett, Jack Griffin, Warwick Jones, Peter Stockwell,  
Martin Tyrrell, Colin Warnock

**Chairman:** Andy Thompson  
**Secretary:** Julia Gibbs  
**Treasurer:** Alan Bishop  
**Membership Secretary:** Julia Ascott  
**Additional Members:** Kelly Beard, Ian Brown,  
Dave Price, Anna Warnock

# CAST & CREW

David, <i>The Chairman</i>	Alex Greenslade
Angela, <i>The Chairman's Wife</i>	Julia Gibbs
Richard, <i>The Ladies' Man</i>	Nick Lawson
Suzanne, <i>His pregnant &amp; jealous wife</i>	Katherine Bottomley
Clive, <i>The quiet one</i>	James Smoker
Avril, <i>The one with low morals</i>	Lorraine Titchener
Peter, <i>The deposed Ex-Chairman</i>	Alan Merricks
Janice, <i>The sensible one</i>	Lindsay Szekeres
Edward, <i>The backstage man</i>	Dennis Coombs
Bernice, <i>The luvvie</i>	Eileen Coombs
Graham, <i>The new member</i>	Chris Bassett
Charlie, <i>His friend</i>	Fiona Rae

*The setting is the stage of a community hall in South Croydon, where the Selsdon Amateur Dramatic Society (The S.A.D. Society) are in rehearsal for a public performance of "Table Manners" by Alan Ayckbourn.*

*The half-finished set is the interior of a run down Victorian vicarage-type house.*

**ACT I Friday 7.20 pm**

**20 minute Interval**

**Refreshments will be available in the foyer**

**ACT II Scene I Friday 11.45 pm**

**ACT II Scene 2 Saturday 4.30 am**

Director	Paul Beard
Stage Manager	Dave Price
Costumes	Anna Warnock
Lighting	Alan Bishop
Sound	James McLeod
Props	Mary Holton
Furniture	Julia Ascott
Backstage & Technical Team	Gillian Bartle, Alan Collins, Diana Dobson, Julia Gibbs, Mary Holton, Julian Parsons, Dave Price, Pat Price, Dave Richards, Andy Thompson, Lorraine Titchener & Anna Warnock
Prompt	Julia Beard
Programme	Alan Bishop & Anna Warnock
Photography	Charles Marriott
Foyer Display	Diana Dobson
Box Office	Sheila Garnett
Front of House	Martin Garnett and Friends of The Mitre Players
Refreshments	Gillian Bartle and Friends of The Mitre Players

*The Mitre Players would like to thank the Governors and Headmaster of Trinity School for the hire of the school facilities. We would also like to thank Eyre Maunsell, John Bertram and his team, Eric Jones and other members of the school staff for their invaluable help.*

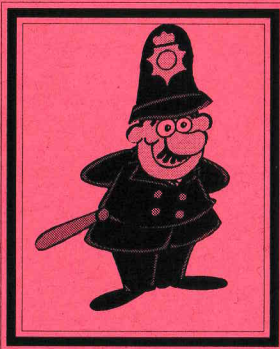
# The Players

## Chris Bassett (Graham) playing Sergeant Phittup

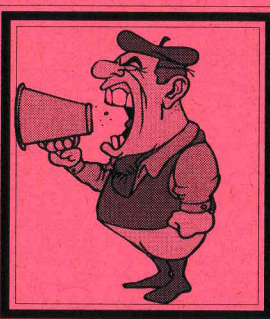
Occupation: Open to offers.

Hobbies: Golf and am dram (obviously!).

Previous: Played Billy Crocker in Cole Porter's 'Anything Goes', chorus in 'Sound of Music', 'Pirates of Penzance' Harrie Ritchie in 'Brigadoon', the plant in 'Little Shop of Horrors' at the Minack, currently rehearsing Oliver at Oxted. Most memorable dinner party: This year's after show dinner at Dawlish, where at least he got his grub unlike some others. Other info: Used to be type-cast as policemen at school – this takes the biscuit! This is his first Mitre production.



## Paul Beard (Writer/Director)



Occupation: Police Officer at New Addington & current 'Metropolitan Community Officer of the Year'

Hobbies: Writing, acting, yoga, meditation and chilling out on a beach as many times a year as he can.

Previous: A Mitre Player for about 11 years during which time they have produced 6 of his one-act plays/musicals & 2 pantomimes and he's still trying to twist their arm into doing a new full-length musical before he disappears for good!

Most memorable dinner party: A formal black tie function at a very prestigious location with extremely honoured guests at which he was carried out after fainting due to illness, but slanderously labelled a drunk! Other info: Been involved with pro and am theatre since the age of 14 when he joined The National Youth Theatre, trained at R.A.D.A and studied playwriting at Edinburgh University. In spite of all that he's managed to play-act as Mr Plod for 26 years!

## Katherine Bottomley (Suzanne/Ruth) playing Lady Bird

Occupation: Senior Sales Co-ordinator

Hobbies: White water rafting in Peru and travelling.

Previous: Mitre Player since 1994. Favourite role 'Dick' in The Millennium Dame.

Most memorable dinner party: Murder mystery dinner at 'The Beards'. Why?

Other info: Finds Act II places huge demands on her acting experience and talent.



## Dennis Coombs (Edward) playing Robin Banks, a financial advisor

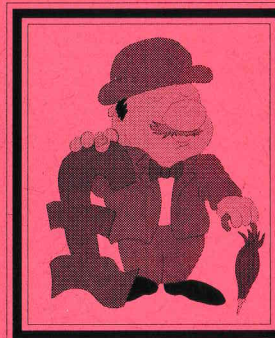
Occupation: Retired.

Hobbies: Lawn bowls, pottery, house & garden maintenance, travelling and looking after his wife.

Previous: Appeared in the first amateur show to be performed at the Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon in 1962 (The Man who came to Dinner), Quasimodo at the Minack, A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Globe theatre, innumerable butlers and policemen.

Most memorable dinner party: Fulfilling a secret custard pie fantasy at a tea party in Oxted several years ago.

Other info: Married to Eileen for 46 years.



## Eileen Coombs (Bernice) playing I. Penditt, crime novelist

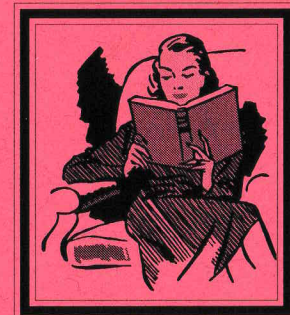
Occupation: Retired.

Hobbies: Pottery, gardening, bowls, philately, world travel, painting, needlework.

Previous: Shaw – Shakespeare – Beard and most other famous playwrights. Quite a few musicals of which her favourites include Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf and Cabaret.

Most memorable dinner party: Special Quasimodo dinner at the OMWA clubhouse when the men changed seats after every course. Enough said!

Other info: "I'm older than I ever intended to be" (quote from Chicago).



## Julia Gibbs (Angela) playing Topsy the Maid

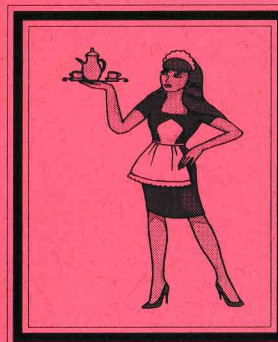
Occupation: Business Analyst

Hobbies: Swimming, talking about getting fit and decorating. Oh, and drama!

Previous: A Mitre Player since 1978. Regan in 'King Lear', Lady Fidget in 'The Country Wife', both at the Minack, Mrs Waters in 'Tom Jones' and an assortment of villagers and semi-clad dumb blondes and prostitutes.

Most memorable dinner party: The ones she can't remember and the ones with vague recollections of 'spin the bottle'.

Other info: Doesn't feel stretched enough in Act II.



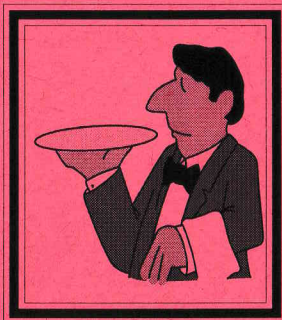
**Alex Greenslade (David/Reg) playing Lovitt the Butler**

**Occupation:** Market researcher and entrepreneur.

**Hobbies:** Only am dram – no time for anything else.

**Previous:** 16 years with The Mitre Players. Has also played the butler in 'Annie' (Croydon Stagers) Type-casting perhaps? Makes a change not to be playing a German!

**Most memorable dinner party:** At the Director's house when he turned out to be the murderer—which will not necessarily be the case tonight!



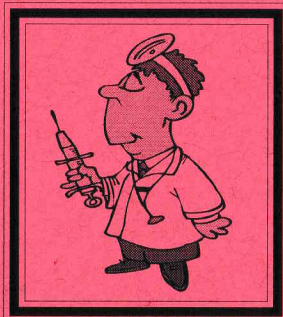
**Nick Lawson (Richard/Norman) playing Dr. Mal Practice**

**Occupation:** (nearly) Chartered Accountant

**Hobbies:** Curry and Beer

**Previous:** Mitre Player since 1997. Previous parts in The Boyfriend, Cherry Orchard, A Slice of Saturday Night

**Most memorable dinner party:** Murder mystery dinner at Hannah Wilberforce's house last week.



**Alan Merricks (Peter) playing Ivor Nalliby, family solicitor**

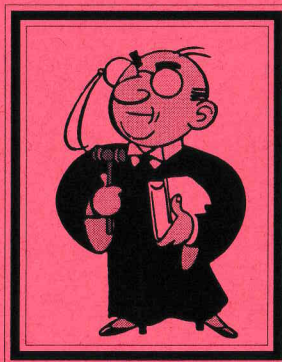
**Occupation:** Garden Designer

**Hobbies:** Mitre Players, rugby, football, politics, current affairs, fishing, travel, reading, cooking, gardening, aviation.

**Previous:** Numerous productions at Trinity. Favourite parts include Laertes in 'Hamlet' and Dan Dean in Cindy-Ella.

**Most memorable dinner party:** His brother Andy's stag night at which Indian food was delivered but due to the pre-dinner refreshments, four of the guests fell asleep with two of them resting their faces in their meals!

**Other info:** Hoping to carry on the Mitre dynasty—one daughter having performed in Cindy-Ella and one son dying to have a go (although he won't admit it).

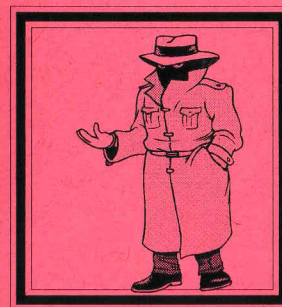


**Fiona Rae (Charlie) playing Det Insp C. King**

**Occupation:** Researcher for 'The Weakest Link'

**Hobbies:** Shopping in London, swimming, drinking vodka anywhere, socialising, singing and am dram.

**Previous:** Mitre Players – Anya in The Cherry Orchard, Cinderella in The Millennium Dame. CODA – Fiona in Salad Days, Blousy in Bugsy Malone and Maisie in The



Boyfriend. Also played Jane in Salad Days and Louis in The Fantasticks, both at The Barn, Oxted.

**Most memorable dinner party:** When her auntie Christine went to a dinner party at friends and she decided to put her make-up on in the car on the way there. She arrived with blue eye liner round her lips and red lip liner on her eyes!

**James Smoker (Clive/Tom) playing The Rev. Counter**

**Occupation:** A Level Student

**Hobbies:** Studying (!), singing, sweating profusely and playing dancing arcade games.

**Previous:** 'Bang!' Opera by John Rutter with Trinity 2000 and 'Guys & Dolls' with Mitre Players 2001.

**Most memorable dinner party:** Never been to one yet, awaits with trepidation Alex's after show 'sophisticated' party.

**Other info:** Resident young 'un/babyface/cast member, hence script altered from being Avril's lover to brother. He has gained an valuable insight into mature acting and actors (or lack of!)



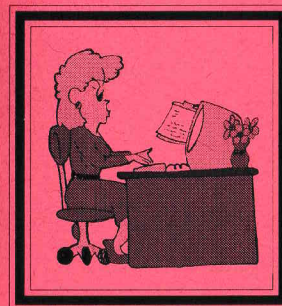
**Lindsay Szekeres (Janice/Sarah) playing Anita Desk, secretary**

**Occupation:** 3 part-time jobs keep her out of mischief!

**Hobbies:** Running round after teenagers and dogs.

**Previous:** 2<sup>nd</sup> production with Mitre Players but hadn't trodden the boards for 18 years before that. She has just finished performing in 'Death of a Salesman' at The Charles Cryer Theatre, Carshalton.

**Most memorable dinner party:** A murder mystery at which no-one was murdered but the hostess should have been for the awful food!



**Lorraine Titchener (Avril/Annie) playing Miranda (Randy) Allcock**

**Occupation:** Student teacher

**Hobbies:** Strangely enough amateur dramatics, singing lessons and socialising (getting drunk in other words!).

**Previous:** Numerous musicals. Most favourite – Lady Jacqueline in 'Me & My Girl' (CODA) Latest role 'Navigation Officer' in 'Return to the Forbidden Planet'

**Most memorable dinner party:** Her first Mitre Players' dinner party at which she was introduced to 'cross toasting'. Hmmm!

**Other info:** She wishes to point out that her character is purely fictitious and bears no resemblance to herself.....

