

MILTON KEYNES
THEATRE OF
COMEDY

www.mktoc.co.uk

H.M. PRISON SLADE

at The Carlton House Club, 38 High St, Olney MK46 4BB

for three servings of

PORRIDGE

by arrangement with Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais

24th - 26th March 2022

SHOW PROGRAMME

From the team
that brought you
"Down with Love"
in 2020!

MILTON KEYNES
THEATRE OF
COMEDY

WHOSE TURN?

COMEDY IMPROVISATION SHOW

One team of comic performers, one compere and musical accompaniment from a live pianist (more effective than a stuffed one) - in an evening of improvised comedy where the only rule is that there are no rules! Except for some rules. The audience give suggestions (or just sit and laugh - we're all here to have fun!)

**Saturday 30th
April 2022**

Yardley Arts

The Old School Hall,
The Square, Yardley Hastings,
Northamptonshire NN7 1EU

Games start at 8.00pm

(Get here for 7.30pm!)

Tickets £10

This event is unsuitable for anybody,
but particularly under 16s.



THE AUDIENCE PROVIDE THE SUGGESTIONS... THE PERFORMERS PROVIDE THE COMEDY!

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM YARDLEYARTS.ORG MORE INFO WHOSETURN.ORG.UK

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



To secure the rights to perform Porridge I needed to get hold of the writers Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais who live in the US so it was proving tricky. However they came over to the UK to open a film festival in Newcastle and I popped up there. I introduced myself and like most creative people they were delightful and invited me to the BFI Southbank a few months later when they were over here again promoting their autobiography. They even told me the cheapest place to park. We had a few drinks, discussed it and it was yes, see how it goes with your stage version and we can have another chat to see if it can go further.

Then came the pandemic which 'naffed' it up for a couple of years but here we are with a fine cast and crew and on stage for three nights, and it's great to be at The Carlton House Club.

As I'm in it, I should point out that although I am technically the director, this was a very ensemble piece and everyone threw in ideas, and that's how it should be. Perfect teamwork.

This comedy stands alongside 'Fawlty Towers', 'Blackadder' and 'Yus, My Dear'...sorry...'Yes, Minister'.

We have been faithful to the script of course, and a few sentences may draw an 'Oooh' from certain sections of the audience, but it is set in a prison, and it is a comedy.

The programmes will be sponsored by The Arches Theatre, and all programme donations will be given to the Ukraine via Olney's Naomi Brock who is doing such good work for that - and many other causes.

See you in the Screws' Mess afterwards...

David Pibworth
Prisoner 2215



More info
on future
productions
and services at

www.mktoc.co.uk

CAST AND CREW

The Cast

The Lags

Normal Stanley Fletcher David Pibworth
Lenny Godber Chris Tennant
'Orrible Harris Iain Wood
'Bunny' Warren Keith Lennox
'Jock' McClaren John Drinkwater
Steven Rawley Peter Swallow
Other Lags Howard Potten & Roger Mann

The Establishment

The Governor Robert Lindsay
Mr McKay Jon Davies
Mr Barrowclough Steve Clark

Prison Visitors

Ingrid Fletcher Charlotte Pask
Mrs Godber (*Lenny's mum*) Sue Whyte
Other Visitors Pam Buckle &
Natalie Stephenson

Production Team

Director David Pibworth
Marketing & Publicity David Lovesy
Stage Management..... Jade Johnson &
Mac McCann
Sound Mark Luckin &
Peter Lawson
Lighting Neill Elliott
Props Pam Buckle
Costumes MKTOC & Admiral Costumes
Poster & Programme Design David Lovesy
Theme Tune arranged & recorded
by James Clark
(www.sound-board.com)

*Show performed by kind permission of the
writers, Ian la Frenais and Dick Clement*

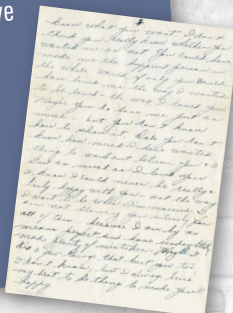


TONIGHT'S EPISODES

The Setting: HMP Slade - the Mid-1970s

Heart Break Hotel

Fletcher tries to support Godber who has just received a 'Dear John' breakup letter from his fiancé Denise, but his words of encouragement for Godber to move on have unforeseen consequences as Godber's roving eye is attracted to Fletcher's daughter, Ingrid.



Poetic Justice

Fletcher is incensed to discover that he is getting a new cellmate. To make matters worse, it turns out that the cellmate is the judge that sentenced him.



Rough Justice

After the judge's watch is stolen, everyone is convinced that another inmate, Harris, is the culprit, and so a kangaroo court is set up in an effort to convict him of the crime.



NOTICE TO PATRONS

Photography, video and tape recording are strictly forbidden during the performance.

Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off whilst the show is on. Any breaking of the rules could mean a lengthy sentence behind bars!

There will be an interval of 15 minutes after each of the first two stories, during which refreshments will be available in the bar!



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PORRIDGE - FASCINATING FACTS

Starring Ronnie Barker as Norman Stanley Fletcher and Richard Beckinsale as Lennie Godber, *Porridge* was written by Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais and broadcast on BBC1 from 1974 to 1977. The programme ran for three series and included two Christmas specials and a feature film of the same name.

Porridge originated with a 1973 project commissioned by the BBC, *Seven of One*, which would see Ronnie Barker star in seven different situation comedy pilot episodes. The most successful would then be made into a full series. One of the episodes was "Prisoner and Escort", about a newly sentenced habitual criminal being escorted to prison by two warders. Despite Barker's initial preference for another of the pilots, "Prisoner and Escort" was selected and launched as *Porridge*. The show's title is a reference to both the traditional breakfast that used to be served in British prisons, and a 1950s British slang term for a prison sentence.

In their research, Clement and La Frenais spoke to Jonathan Marshall, a former prisoner who had written a book, "How to Survive in the Nick", and he advised them about prison slang, dress and routines. Struggling to think up plots and humour for such a downbeat, confined environment, a particular phrase used by Marshall - "little victories" - struck a chord and convinced them to base the series on an inmate who made his daily life in prison more bearable by beating the system, even in trivial ways.

The BBC was forced to look around for locations because the Home Office refused permission for any production filming inside or outside a real prison. These included a psychiatric hospital and a old water tank, used at Ealing Studios for underwater filming converted into the main prison interior multi-storey set.

The series was followed by a 1978 sequel, *Going Straight*, which saw Barker reprise his character as he tries to avoid going back to prison. *Porridge* was revived in 2016 under the same name, with Fletcher's grandson beginning a prison sentence.

Porridge was critically acclaimed and is widely considered to be one of the greatest British sitcoms of all time. It is ranked No. 35 on the 100 Greatest British Television Programmes compiled by the British Film Institute in 2000. In 2004, *Porridge* placed seventh in a poll to find Britain's Best Sitcom.



Summer
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**Richard Digance
& Guests**
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Dan Evans
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Local musical celebrity



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The Wet Mariners
are back!



The Jungle Book
21 AUGUST
Family adventure

PLUS:

21 AUGUST **Pygmalion**
27/28 AUGUST **The Merry Wives of Windsor** (matinee)
27/28 AUGUST **Dracula** (evening)
1-3 SEPTEMBER **Even More Ripping Yarns**
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