



Get in on the act

CUCKFIELD DRAMATIC SOCIETY

By David Tingley

Have you ever watched those 'making of' documentaries and thought it looks like fun being an actor? Or just been in the audience and secretly wished you could get up there on stage?

Well, Cuckfield resident Kirsty Bishopp thought exactly that and then, crucially, she did something about it!

"I literally just sent an email to the address on the Cuckfield Dramatic Society (CDS) website and said I was interested in being part of a future show," Kirsty told me. "The next thing I knew, I was meeting the cast after a performance of 'Murder in Company' last year."

Kirsty doesn't come from an acting background, she didn't study at RADA and isn't even particularly outgoing as a personality – but she knew she wanted to try it. She recently starred as Jane in CDS's production of a little-known play 'Anyone for Breakfast?'

When I asked her what the audition process was like, she said it wasn't too daunting. "On the night I auditioned there was a group of about 12 people all reading through the script. Some knew what parts they were reading for but others (like me) didn't mind. It was nice and informal; fun almost!"

Harriët Sheldon, the director, cast Kirsty as Jane soon after and rehearsals started two evenings a week in the room at the back of The White Hart.

Kirsty, who works shifts in Brighton as a surgical nurse, said that, although the rehearsal schedule was quite hectic, she loved the process of refining the performance over three months. "Didn't your husband mind?", I asked. "Steve was very supportive of me trying this. He's been great. I don't think he felt getting an evening to watch a film he wanted to see was too much of a chore!

"When we got closer to the show week a third

practice was introduced at the Queen's Hall using the stage. I found that really exciting," Kirsty explained. She also admitted to her phone being full of voice recordings of the script, which she used to test herself right up until the last week of rehearsals.

But when that week came and the audience walked in, Kirsty found that she got less and less nervous as she closed each performance. "My favourite bit was when they laughed at the jokes," she went on. "The cast and crew work really hard to put on these productions and it was so nice to be part of it. When the final applause comes we all accept it with gratitude, but really it's a joy to be part of a local society like CDS."



Cuckfield Dramatic Society's 'Anyone for Breakfast' cast line up