

# **THE EARLY YEARS**

**1934 to 1968**

- The Newtown Amateur Dramatics Society was first formed on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1934.
- It's first meetings were held in Room 5 of Community House, Severn Place
- The first play was The Barretts of Wimpole Street, performed on three nights in the Victoria Hall (now the site of Ladywell House)
- Early scenery (1936) purchased from the Welsh Society
- Grey velvet curtains made by members, 1937, still in use in the costume store

# The first production, The Barrets of Wimpole Street, 1935



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# Fresh Fields, 1936

(J. Griffith Jones married  
Sheila M Clarke and she  
was a teacher at Newtown  
High School until the  
late 60's/early 70's)

Lena Davies was the Society's  
President until 1984

## THE CAST OF "FRESH FIELDS" AT NEWTOWN



E. IRENE WILLIAMS.



J. GRIFFITH JONES.



SHEILA M. CLARKE.



IVOR RICHARDS.



MISSIE CLAYTON



ETHEL M. DANIEL.



W. J. HIGSON.



LENA DAVIES.



MARY E. MORGAN.



MR. GWILYM H. REES (Producer).



MAJOR W. J. BURDON EVANS  
(President and Chairman).



MR. A. S. M. HAWKINS  
(Hon. Secretary).

## THE EARLY YEARS, continued

- 1938, new scenery flats made by Mr Eric Savage, teacher,(centre of picture below). Used until 2002!



# WAR YEARS, 1939 - 1945

- Very few productions but several one act plays.
- “Guest” actors were members of forces billeted at Crescent House.
- Booking tickets were made by perforating a paper plan of the venue. The perforations were created with a sewing machine!



# THE EARLY YEARS, continued

- Early Producers – Ken Williams, Physics Teacher, Miss Viv Cutting, Headmistress
- Early Lighting – Old car headlamps housed in boxes made by Eric Savage, assisted by Idris Owen
- (Photo, 1947)
- Early advertising – carrying a “wire netting” whale, 4m by 1m around town in an Austin 8, squirting a 6m high jet of water (Jonah and the Whale, 1951)



## **EARLY YEARS, continued**

- Performances were in the Church House, New Road or the Drill Hall (behind the Regent Cinema). Some were put on in the Pavilion (now the site of Pavilion Court)
- “Hut” bought in 1954 and used for rehearsals, meetings and storage of scenery and props

# **A Soldier for Christmas, 1949**

Performed in the Church House, now modified and part of Coleg Powys

- Cast included Ken and Nancy Williams seated extreme left and down left; Lena Davies, seated front right and Kath Arthur standing third from right





# Dear Octopus, 1952



# Gioconda Smile, 1954

(entered in competition and won)

Ken Williams, Norman Arthur, Betty Morgan and Mavis Oakes



# Gioconda Smile, 1954

(entered in competition and won)

Ken Williams, Norman Arthur, Betty Morgan, Mavis Oakes,  
Sheila Griffith Jones





# Blythe Spirit, 1954

The Hut was purchased in 1954 and this play was the first play rehearsed there.  
Scenery flats were made for the play and were used until 2002.

**(Norman Arthur and Nancy Williams)**



# Romance in Grey, 1955



# The Holly and the Ivy, 1955

Lena Davies, Marjorie Lumsden(Meredith),  
Marion Underhill(Pryce), Betty Morgan





# **The Holly and The Ivy, 1955**

Betty Morgan, Norman Arthur, Lena Davies, Marion Underhill(Pryce)



# The Holly and the Ivy, 1955

Stanley Turner and Marjorie Lumsden(Meredith), Lena Davies  
William Jones, Marion Underhill



# **The Holly and the Ivy, 1955**

Norman Arthur and Stanley Turner





# The Importance of Being Ernest, 1956



# **Dangerous Corner, 1958**

Frank Capener, Cliff Ponting, Marjorie Meredith  
Margery Benbow, Topsy Evans, Mavis Williams





# Dangerous Corner, 1958





## Quiet Wedding, 1958

Margery Benbow(Davis), Frank Capener, Barbara Smith,  
Marjorie Lumsden(Meredith), Reg Newman, Topsy Evans,  
Betty Newman, Sheila Griffith Jones, Lena Davies  
(Marion Underhill(Pryce), David Simon, Selwyn Williams and John Williams not in



# Quiet Wedding, 1958





# Ladies in Retirement, 1959

Sheila Griffith Jones, Betty Newman, Mavis Williams, Barbara Smith, Marjorie Meredith, John Williams, Margaret House (Hopkinson)





# **Ladies in Retirement, 1959**

Betty Newman(Maddocks) and Barbara Smith



# Ladies in Retirement, 1959

(behind the scenes)

Barbara Smith, Bill Bridgewater, John Williams,  
Margaret House (Hopkinson), Marjorie Meredith





# Sacred Flame, 1960

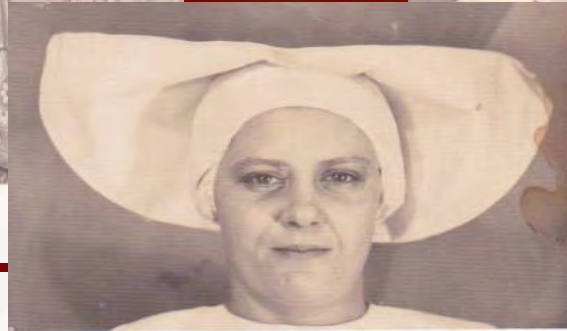
Sheila Griffith-Jones, Marjorie Meredith, Marion Underhill(Pryce),  
John Smith, David Simon, Barbara Smith, John Williams





# Bonaventure, 1960

Frank Capener, Marion Underhill(Pryce), Marjorie Meredith,  
Betty Morgan , Betty Newman(Maddocks), Betty Richards, Barbara Smith,



# Bonaventure, 1960

Barbara Smith, Sheila Griffith Jones,  
Marjorie Meredith, Betty Morgan





# Many Happy Returns, 1961

Marion Underhill, Basil Stott, Betty Richards, Betty Newman, Ruth Jones,  
David Foulkes, Stanley Turner, Roger Brunning,  
Sheila Griffith-Jones, Frank Capener, Lena Davies, Jane Astley, Norman Arthur





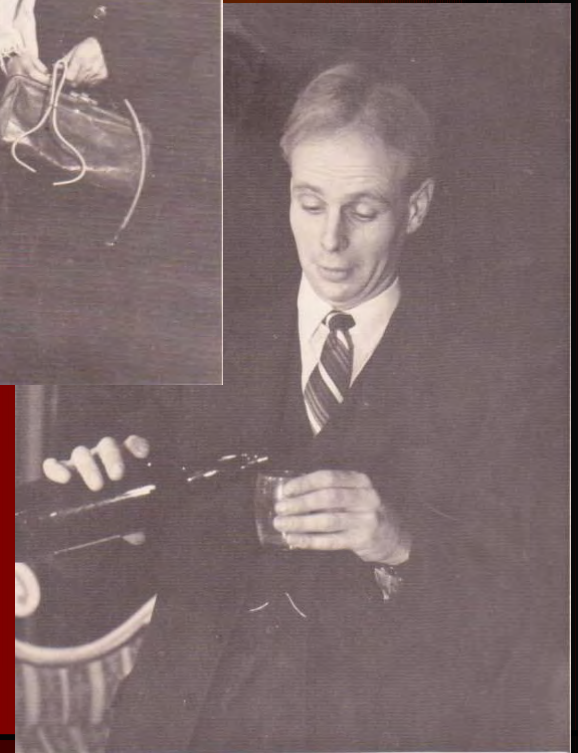
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Marion Underhill, Basil Stott, Betty Richards, Betty Newman, Ruth Jones,  
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# **The Infernal Machine, 1962**

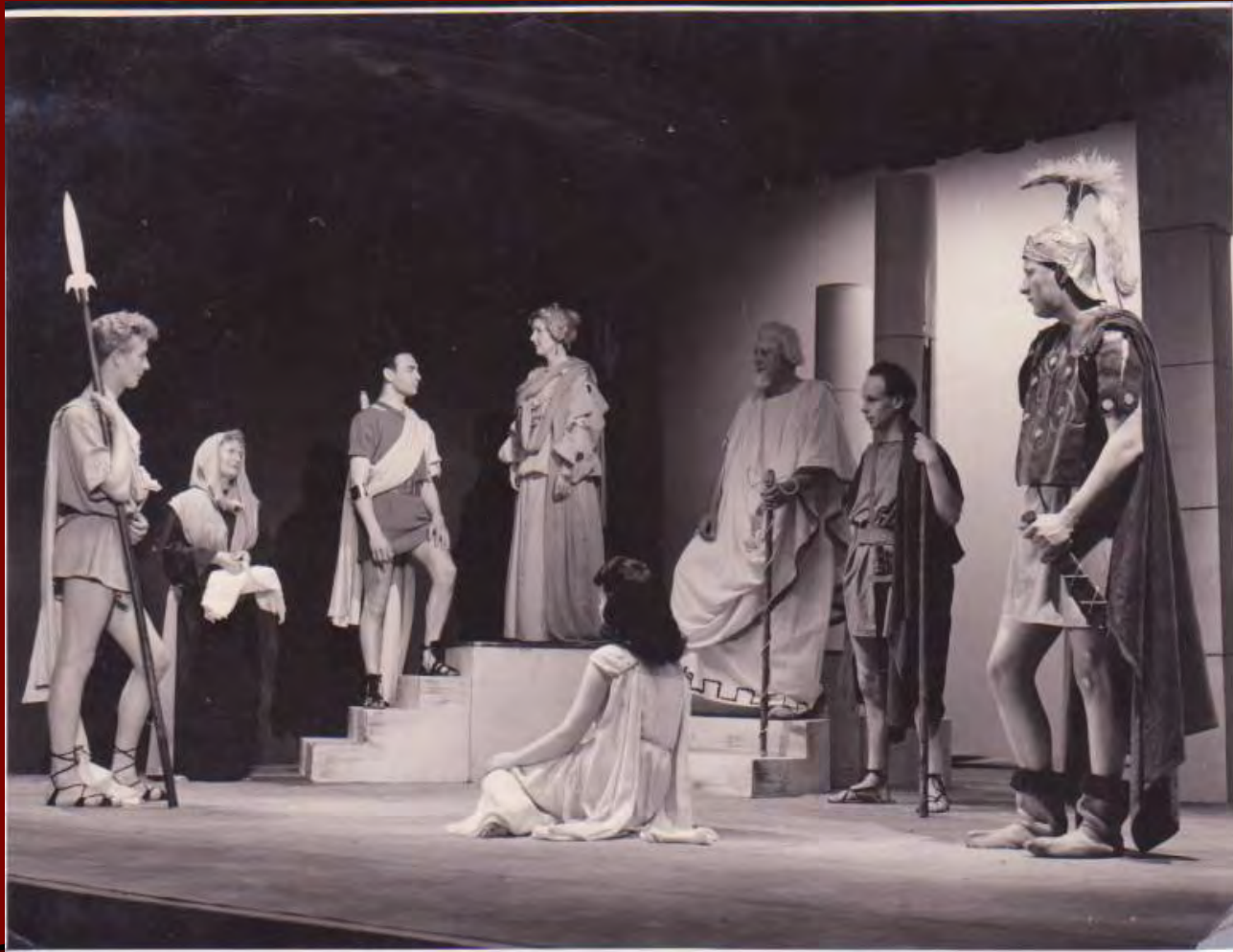
Alan Williams, Basil Stott, Norman Arthur, Kath Arthur, Stanley Turner, Val Morris (Capener), Frank Capener, Michael Jones.





# **The Infernal Machine, 1962**

Lyndon Clark, Lena Davies, Stanley Turner, Kath Arthur, Val Morris (Capener),  
Norman Arthur, Frank Capener, Michael Jones.



# **Murder at the Vicarage, 1962**

**Margery Benbow, Frank Capener, Norman Arthur, Marion Underhill,  
Roger Brunning, Ruth Jones, Sheila Griffith Jones, Basil Stott,  
Betty Newman**





# **Murder at the Vicarage, 1962**

Roger Brunning, Margery Benbow, Frank Capener, Reg Newman, Irma Savage, Norman Arthur





# **Murder at the Vicarage, 1962**

Basil Stott, Frank Capener



# Man About the House, 1963

Ruth Jones, Jane Astley, Marion Underhill(?), David Foulkes,  
Stanley Turner, Kath Arthur, Margaret House(?)(Hopkinson) and  
Tess, the Newman's Cocker Spaniel



# Man About the House, 1963

Ruth Jones, Jane Astley, Marion Underhill(?), David Foulkes,  
Stanley Turner, Kath Arthur, Margaret House(?)(Hopkinson), Norman Arthur  
and Tess, the Newman's Cocker Spaniel





# Man About the House, 1963

Basil Stott, Stanley Turner, Norman Arthur



# **So Many Children, 1963**

Stan Turner, Meirion Roberts, Peter Lonsdale,  
Thelma Jones, Reg Newman, Basil Stott, Mavis Williams  
(and Betty Richards and Jane Astley)



# Breath of Spring, 1964

Malcolm Pryce, Ann Bradley, Betty Richards, Betty Newman(Maddocks)  
Peter Lonsdale, Bill Hopkins





# Breath of Spring, 1964

Marion Pryce, Betty Richards, Lena Davies, Ann Bradley, Peter Lonsdale  
Betty Newman



# Breath of Spring, 1964

Ann Bradley, Marion Pryce, Betty Richards





# Breath of Spring, 1964



# Pygmalion, 1964

Ann Bradley, Thelma Jones, Ruth Jones, Graham Harper, Jane Astley,  
Kath Arthur, Lena Davies, Norman Arthur, Meirion Roberts, Peter Lonsdale,  
Stanley Turner, Charles Arthur,





# Pygmalion, 1964

Norman Arthur, Thelma Jones, Ann Bradley, Peter Lonsdale  
Lena Davies, Meirion Roberts, Kath Arthur, Ruth Jones





# Pygmalion, 1964

Peter Lonsdale, Norman Arthur, Lena Davies, Jane Astley  
Kathleen Arthur, A... es



# **Sailor Beware, 1964**

Norman Arthur, Betty Newman, Anne Bradley, Ruth Jones, Peter Lonsdale,  
Gaynor Corfield, Graham Harper, Margaret House (Hopkinson)





# **Sailor Beware, 1964**

Peter Lonsdale, Margaret House (Hopkinson), Tony Riding,  
Anne Bradley, Betty Newman





# Sailor Beware, 1964

Ruth Jones. Peter Lonsdale, Tony Riding, Norman Arthur, Gaynor Corfield,  
Graham Harper, Anne Bradley.



# **Sailor Beware, 1964**

Betty Newman, Graham Harper, Margaret House (Hopkinson)  
Anne Bradley, Gaynor Corfield, Ruth Jones





# Sailor Beware, 1964

Norman Arthur, Betty Newman, Anne Bradley, Ruth Jones, Peter Lonsdale, Gaynor Corfield, Graham Harper, Margaret House (Hopkinson)



# All Things Bright and Beautiful, 1965

Betty Newman, Stanley Turner, Ruth Jones, Ken Dodd,  
Thelma Jones, Norman Arthur, John Lawrence, Frank Capener  
(Rehearsals taking place in "The Hut")





# All Things Bright and Beautiful, 1965

Thelma Jones, Ken Dodd, Norman Arthur, Ruth Jones, John Lawrence  
Frank Capener, Basil Stott, Betty Newman (Maddocks)





# All Things Bright and Beautiful, 1965

Stanley Turner, Ruth Jones, Frank Capener  
(Rehearsing in the Hut)





## Secret Tent, 1966

The Cast rehearsing at Black Hall (the Newman home)  
Malcolm Pryce, Betty Richards, Betty Newman, Reg Newman,  
Marion Pryce, Frank Capener, Val Capener

(Malcolm and Val were standing in for John Lawrence and Gaynor Corfield respectively)



# Secret Tent, 1966

Dress rehearsals at Black Hall

Betty Richards, Betty Newman, Frank Capener, Marion Pryce, Malcolm Pryce  
Reg Newman





# Secret Tent, 1966

Dress rehearsals at Black Hall

Malcolm Pryce, Betty Richards, Betty Newman,  
Reg Newman, Val Capener, Frank Capener, Marion Pryce,



# **Secret Tent, 1966**

The Set for the performances





# When We Are Married, 1966

Ken Dodd, Norman Arthur, Frank Capener, Jane Astley, John Lawrence, Ivan Crone,  
Val Capener, Thelma Jones, Betty Richards, Kath Arthur, Betty Newman,  
Marion Underhill (Pryce), Stanley Turner



## The set of "When we are Married", 1966





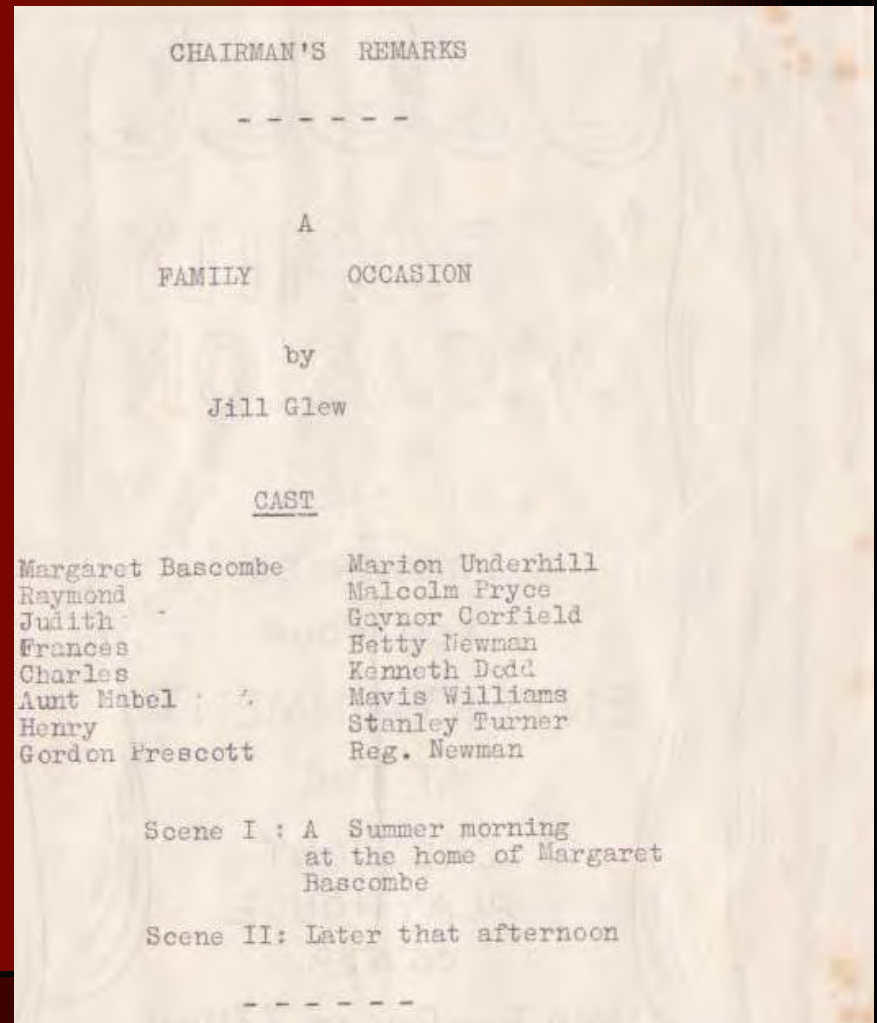
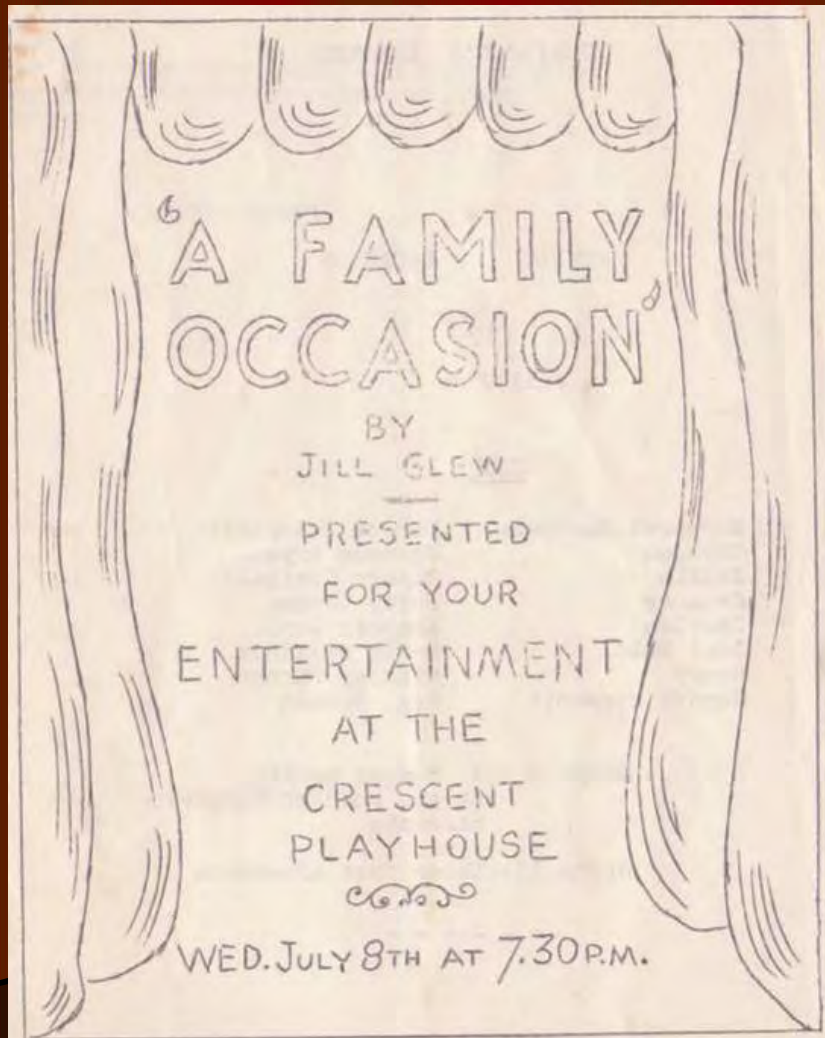
# **Shop at Sly Corner, 1966**

Lena Davies, Norman Arthur, Stanley Turner



## A Family Occasion

The only play performed IN the HUT – the Hut was used for meetings and rehearsals but without it Powys Theatre would never have come about. It was an Army hut and became known as the Crescent Playhouse, Newtown Amateur Dramatics Society's 2<sup>nd</sup> home





# 1967 & 1968

- Only 1 play in 1967, The Paragon performed at the High School
- Only one play in 1968 – Toad of Toad Hall performed at The Pavilion. It had a cast of over 20 plus children as Ferrets, Stoats and Weasels. There were 3 sets – and a pantomime horse!
- This was the last play to be performed outside the Society's new home