

Additional Names and Information to the QEC 1974 Play “Sweeney Todd, the Barber”

My colleague and I were musing about our enjoyable years at QEC (he in the late 60’s; and I between 1972 -1975). On searching the internet for photographs of the Atkins building and the Queen Mary Hall, I came across the QEC web-site. Shockingly, I discovered the Atkins building was demolished for affordable housing! *Affordable*, Ha Ha!! I wonder if the cockroach infestation from the biological sciences department’s growth-rooms survived the demolition? A very pleasant surprise is the photograph of the actors and stage managers from the QEC 1974 production of “Sweeney Todd, The Barber”. I can add some history to the play and some names to persons shown in the photographs. There is one correction to the web-page in that the play was NOT staged in 1972 (which was my first year at QEC) but in early 1974; rehearsals began in late 1973.

I still have the full script, adapted by Brian J. Burton (1971 Edition; C. Combridge Ltd, Wrentham Street, Birmingham, B5 6QT) with the first names of the QEC cast annotated, at the time in 1973 / 1974, against the list of the play’s characters (see scanned attachment). After the final performance of the play, for posterity (now beckoning at this very moment in time, as you will see) I collected autographs (see scanned attachment) of the cast and the stage-managers, apparently though not of all the members, on the blank pages of the script.

I’m sure the play was produced and directed by Tony (Fletcher?), who also produced and directed other QEC staged plays. The Principal of QEC attended the Sweeney Todd production, and invited a friend who was a drama critic from a national newspaper to review the play’s second-night performance. This critic returned very favourable comments on the production and on the various actors’ performances.

I (David Dickson) played the part of Dr. Aminadab Lupin, the decadent rum-swiggling parson (seen in the photograph, sporting a dog collar and bottle in-hand).

The actors’ first names and their corresponding characters in the play are listed below (the list is developed from the annotations made to the script in 1973 while casting and reading / rehearsing the play: see the scanned attachments).

Brendon Neville and several others attended to the make-up.

Actors

Actor’s First Name (and when known, Surname)	Characters in the Play
Colin (Love)	Sweeney Todd - <i>the barber of Fleet Street</i>
Pete	Ezekiel Smith - <i>a mechanic; and a warden</i>
Jane (probably Pascoe) playing also Mrs Poorlean	Mrs Ragg - <i>a poor woman</i>
Meg	Tobias Ragg - <i>her son, an apprentice boy</i>
Martin	Mark Ingestre - <i>a mariner</i>
Paul	Jean Parmine - <i>a lapidary</i>
Sue	Joanna Oakley - <i>a young lady in love</i>
Colin (Colin number 2)	Colonel Eustace Jeffrey - <i>of the Indian Army</i>
Mike (probably Samarawyckrama)	Jasper Oakley - <i>a spectacle maker</i>
Hugh	Mrs Oakley - <i>his wife</i>
David (Dickson)	Dr. Aminadab Luoin - <i>a wolf in sheep’s clothing</i>
Chris (Christine)	Mrs. Lovett - <i>Todd’s accomplice in guilt</i>
Sue (Williams)	Jarvis Williams - <i>a lad with an appetite</i>
Pete	Jonas Fogg - <i>the keeper of the madhouse</i>
Paul	Sir William Branson - <i>a judge</i>
Jane (Pascoe)	Mrs Poorlean - <i>an unfortunate woman</i>
John	<i>A court usher; a warden; a keeper; a bystander.</i>

Returning to the photograph of the play's cast, I can add a few more first names, and sometimes surnames to the faces shown, and some kind comments. Considering the lapse of some 34 years since the performance in 1974, please forgive errors, which are entirely unintentional lapses of memory. Perhaps other cast members or stage managers of the production may return corrections and add further anecdotes. I apologise to persons whose faces I cannot match with their names. I could take calculated guesses, but somebody out there might be able to match the right name and face, with certainty.

Cast's Photograph on the Web

Actor / Stage Manager - <i>Sitting on Stage Floor Front: from Reader's Left to Right</i>	Character / Stage Management
Unsure (?)	
Meg (with cloth cap)	<i>Tobias Ragg</i>
Ron Wilkinson	<i>Stage Lighting</i>
Actor / Stage Manager - <i>Back Row: Reader's Left to Right</i>	
Jane Pascoe (1972-1975; Jane acted in several plays produced by "Tony", and had the wonderful gift of mimicking a range of accents)	<i>Mrs Poorlean</i> and probably also <i>Mrs Ragg</i>
Unsure (?; wearing "John Lennon" specs)	Unsure (?)
Heather Berlin (1972-1975: as Rag-week chairman in, 1973, she organised some memorable stunts)	<i>Stage Management</i>
Radwan Thomas	Unsure (?)
Unsure (? behind Radwan Thomas, view of head sideways)	Unsure (?)
Chris (Christine; sitting)	<i>Mrs Lovett</i>
Mike Samarawyckrama (with Frank Zappa moustache)	<i>Jasper Oakley</i>
Unsure (? sitting in front of Mike, with head turned sideways; perhaps Sue Williams)	Unsure (?)
Colin Love (sitting in front of stage fire-place)	<i>Sweeney Todd</i>
David Dickson (1972-1975; standing with bottle in hand)	<i>Dr Lupin</i>
Brendon Neville (the person looks very much like Brendon Neville; head showing behind David Dickson)	Make-Up
Colin (number 2; sporting deer-stalker hat)	<i>Colonel Eustace Jeffrey</i>
Sue (with white dress)	<i>Joanna Oakley</i>
Unsure (? standing by Sue's left arm)	Unsure (?)
Sue Williams (can't discern in photograph)	<i>Jarvis Williams</i>
John (can't discern in photograph)	<i>Warden; court usher; keeper; bystander</i>
Gerry McClean (can't discern in photograph)	<i>Stage Lighting</i>
Can't place faces in the photograph to the names of Peter, Martin, Hugh (?Robinson), and Paul (?Markham) in the photograph from the list of actors first names - sorry chaps	

Perhaps the above information may trigger recollections / corrections from others...Colin Love / Ron Wilkinson?

Bye
David Dickson (QEC 1972 - 1975; Biological Sciences)