

## **NOVEMBER THEATRE OUTING.**

**"Absurd Person Singular"** at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley.

"Absurd Person Singular" is undeniably one of Alan Ayckbourn's funniest plays and has been very popular since its first showing in 1972. This Bill Kenwright production at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley on 26<sup>th</sup> November had a cast stuffed full of television favourites. Nowadays it seems impossible to put on a show without someone recognisable from the "Soaps". There was Lisa Kay, Nurse Cassidy in "Heartbeat", Elizabeth Carling who is in Casualty and Stephen Beckett from "Coronation Street".

It was a very apt subject for the run up to Christmas as the story takes place over a period of two years, always during the Festive Party season and always in someone's kitchen. Apparently Alan Ayckbourn decided, quite rightly, that acting off stage in the kitchen had more potential than setting it in the sitting room.

The first couple start the abortive drinks parties off but it is clear from the start that they are not so much interested in being hospitable, party hosts as they are in climbing the social ladder. The party starts to disintegrate when the wife is locked out in the rain after trying to buy tonic water.

The timing of the slapstick comedy in all three acts was very expert but, as with all Alan Ayckbourn's plays, there was a streak of pathos running through the plot. The wife who intends to commit suicide by gassing herself is mistakenly thought to be cleaning the oven. The portrayal of the drunken woman in the last act was very dark.

We all had a really good evening, having enjoyed the play on lots of different levels.

Norna Munson.