



## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Sole and Heel Public House for providing the bar, and to St. John Ambulance (Thorpe Division) for First Aid Cover.

We would also like to thank the Maddermarket Theatre for providing the antique push chair, Livewire Operatic Society for loan of the playground bench, Sophie Marks for providing the drawings that adorn Alberts bedroom wall, Frettenham Village Hall for loan of staging and also to Old Catton Middle School for recordings of children singing as well as for the loan of school chairs and to all other unsung heroes who have helped bring *Albert* to stage.

License provided by Samuel French Ltd.,

We regret that the use of video or other recording technology is not permitted. We would also like you to refrain from flash photography during the performance, and to turn off or silence mobile phones and pagers.

On a more serious matter, we would also like you to respect current Alcohol Licensing Laws and not allow people under the age of 18 to consume alcohol.

meets Children's Favourites!

This is the first full length Jimmy Chinn play to be presented by Rackheath Players although we had success with two of his one act plays, *Pity About Kitty* and *Room Five Hundred and Four* in 1989. *Room Five Hundred and Four* subsequently went on to win the Amdram Play Festival in 1990.

Finally a sincere thank you to my co-director, Emma Cliffe for keeping me in check, and the cast and backstage crew involved in this production for their hard work and patience. A particularly large thank you is also in order to Julie Dignum who, having not only taken a part in the play, has produced the costumes having only just finished costuming Rackheath Youth Theatre's production *Pick'n'Mix* at the beginning of the month.

Invariably the humour in a play tends to get a bit thin with the cast after a couple of months of rehearsal but everyone has been laughing throughout Albert's preparation - usually the sign of a good play. We hope he makes you laugh too.

*Richard Clayton, May 2004*

## Directors Notes

For me to like a play, it has to have a "sense of theatre" - meaning it has to be something that belongs on a stage as opposed to being equally at home on television.

*Albert Make Us Laugh* has that "sense of theatre" and, when I first saw the play, I was impressed by its energy as it constantly changed mood from nostalgia through comedy to sadness and tragedy but leaving the audience "uplifted".

Staging *Albert* has been interesting. When I saw the play it was in a theatre with an acting area nearly three times larger than the Rackheath stage. The challenge was to stage a play without the stage crew spending as much time on stage as the cast or having to resort to pantomime style front-of-curtain scenes. Hopefully, this is a challenge that we have met.

A further problem was that the play calls for music but leaves the choice to the director. The solution appeared to be to use music appropriate to the time of the play. As the play spanned ten years, beginning circa 1953, the idea was to include music from the hit parade of the time. This was good in theory but some of the Number Ones of the 1950's have not lasted the test of time. It was then that someone suggested a compromise - the Hit Parade

## About the play

Meet Albert Nuttall – an eleven year old on his first day at Belmont Fields Secondary Modern School. Some would say he is a little backward but really he is very special and just a little bit talented - but children can be so very cruel to each other...

This funny, touching and uplifting story told entirely by adults may well remind you of your own schooldays – and you'll not be sorry that you laughed.

## About the Author

Jimmie Chinn was born in Middleton, Manchester and moved to London to train at RADA in 1959. A short, undistinguished career as an actor resulted in him training as a teacher of English and Drama and he taught in Middlesex until 1984 when he took up writing full-time.

Success with radio plays led him to write for the stage and his first West End production came in 1992 with *Straight and Narrow* which starred Nicholas Lyndhurst. Jimmie Chinn has also written for television including some episodes of *Emmerdale*.

*Albert Make Us Laugh* is based upon his childhood experiences at school in the north of England

## Cast

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Albert Nuttall<br>Enid Nuttall   | Dave Marks<br>Diane Goldsmith   |
| Headmaster Tope  | Tony Stone  |
| Barbara Batch<br>Lobelia Bottomley<br>Daisy Taylor<br>Nora Tooley<br>Shane Butterworth<br>Marigold Tucker<br>Charlie Shorrocks<br>Primrose Macaveney | Julie Atkins<br>Julie Butcher<br>Angela Smith<br>Laura Dignum<br>Michael Hall<br>Julie Dignum<br>Robert Lamacraft<br>Deborah Dignum |
| Eric Smallshaw   | Stephen Dunstan   |
| Miss Mint<br>Miss Hemsley<br>Miss Partington<br>Mr. Leatherbottle  | Julie Dignum<br>Jenny Howard<br>Angela Smith<br>Jeff Granger  |

## Crew

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Directors                                | Richard Clayton<br>Emma Cliffe  |
| Assistant to the Directors               | Stephen Dunstan   |
| Stage Manager<br>Assistant Stage Manager | Laura Daynes<br>Jeff Granger  |
| Prompt                                   | Eddie Allison   |
| Costume                                  | Julie Dignum  |
| Lighting Director<br>Lighting<br>Sound   | Richard Clayton<br>Neil MacPhail<br>Andrew Cliffe                               |
| Set Design and Construction              | Jeff Granger<br>and the Players   |
| Front of House                           | Emma Cliffe<br>Laura Dignum<br>Linda Marks<br>Richard Clayton<br>Linda Phillips |
| Raffle                                   | Diane Goldsmith   |
| Programme & Website                      | Andrew Cliffe   |