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MURDER AT DOOM MANOR

Daw Park Players

SPF Hall, Repatriation General Hospital
Until April 23

Review by Simon Slade

The Carruthers family gathers at Doom Manor, the family home, to receive some momentous news. Which of Celia's three sons will inherit the estate and the Doom Stone? But the arrival of an uninvited body and a pair of eccentric detectives interrupt the proceedings.

And so the scene is set for a jolly old murder mystery. This play contains some extremely funny lines. The best of them are worthy of George Bernard Shaw or Oscar Wilde. However the play does need a plot, some clues and a few red herrings to make it a murder mystery.

That is no reflection on the cast, though, as there are some fine actors here, and the direction brings out some good work from most of them.

Glen Christie, as Charles, plays the role of the jaded eldest son to a tee. Mollie Birch, as Celia, is in fine form as the widowed matriarch. Keith Manson, as Chester, the gormless lovable buffoon of the family, achieves the tricky balance of creating a character that grates on everyone, but is loved by the audience.

Philip Lyneton is physically and vocally perfect in the role of Ambrose Diligent, the senior partner in the detective agency of Diligent, Diligent, Diligent, and Careful. The comic highlight of the night is Damien White as Mrs Dubrovnik, the maid, whose culinary adventures strike fear into the family, and any passing animals as well!

In keeping with the setting, director Maris Caune, has chosen to use English accents. Nearly all the cast hold the accent well and it contributes nicely to the style of the show. The set is rich in detail, particularly where no designer is credited. Anyone who has built sets for a theatre company would welcome the credit for "Set Construction Catering!"

Daw Park Players continue to provide a valuable service raising funds for the Repatriation General Hospital. Between 1991 and 2003, they raised over \$28,000 – and they still manage to include free tea and coffee at interval!