

CLASSIC FARCE TO GET ITS FIRST LOCAL AIRING

Rehearsals are well under way for the latest production of Stage 2 Downham.

'Love begins at 50' is a classic farce not seen locally before - 50ish Clive Debanks, played by Gerry Purchase, is keen for a last fling via a newspaper lonely hearts column.

His wife, Anita, played by Lesley Knight, has entered the same paper's ideal mature couple contest and, predictably, the two strands become inter-twined

Mrs Dorothy Cushing is the producer, and society officials feel that their level of urban Ribble Valley support, will help keep houses well-filled, despite the foot and mouth crisis.

The play goes on from MARCH 28TH-31ST at Dowham Village Hall.

Our picture show members of the cast, with fling-crazed-Mr Debanks unable to keep off the telephone, despite cameras pointed at him on and off stage.

AUTHOR PAYS SECRET VISIT TO SEE HIS PLAY

A secret was kept from the nine-strong cast of a village play on the final night.

Sitting in the audience at Downham village hall was author Raymond Hopkins.

He had travelled north from his home in Oxford to watch the play - the first time it had been performed in the North.

He joined the last of four sell-out audiences which rocked in the aisles at his farce 'Love begins at Fifty'.

His presence was kept from the nine-strong Downham Players' cast until the curtain came down, in case it made them nervous.

Their performance was appreciated by the playwright, who joined members of the cast for supper afterwards.

Society official Lesley Knight said: 'We thought it was wonderful that he should take so much trouble to come and watch us perform his play'.

Mr. Hopkins is a television engineer who has taken up writing plays as a hobby.

So far, he has written five plays, two of which have been published.