



LADS in rehearsal at Longsdon Memorial Hall last week.

LADS cast of 23 tackle the Merry Wives

LONGSDON Amateur Dramatic Society take another walk with Shakespeare next week when they present an accessible and enjoyable rendition of the Merry Wives of Windsor.

Fielding a first-rate cast of 23, LADS have certainly risen to the challenge, building on their earlier success with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and working during the summer with Northern Broadsides. Director Conrad Nelson to ensure that the text is illustrated to best effect.

Their choice of *Merry Wives* is based on the fact the group has a stock of vibrant and well-rounded characters - a gift for any amateur group who want to enjoy what has been a lengthy rehearsal period. Furthermore the play is written almost entirely in prose which gives the language an authentic ring. Not only is *Merry Wives* a contemporary play, it is very much a play for today with its battle of the sexes routed in the rollicking pace of hilarious farce.

The central themes of *Merry Wives* are universal, they include sex, lies, status and social snobbery together with three ages of love and lust.

The comedy of status is also unchanging and is reflected in how we love to see those who set themselves in authority over us brought low. Today Falstaff would keep the Sunday papers in business. He is a knight, a confidant of royalty, one of the great and the good - he thinks he is deceiving everybody but the victim of his grossest deception is himself.

LADS have lifted the play out of the 16th century and set it in the 1950s. To illustrate this, a superb range of authentic costumes have been hired from the Royal Shakespeare Company. The accompanying music is also roughly from the

1950s.

Audience enjoying an evening out with LADS is always their priority. The licensed bar will be open from 7pm onwards with refreshments and coffee also available.

Longsdon Memorial Hall has ample parking at the rear and excellent facilities for the disabled. The hall is one of the first in the area to install disabled facilities and a hearing loop.

Merry Wives will be performed at Longsdon Memorial Hall from November 17-20 at 7.30pm. Tickets are £4 on Wednesday and £5 on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Ring 01538 373212 or 01782 503969 for reservations. For updates and information about the play visit the LADS website at www.members.lycos.co.uk/merrywives/index.htm