

Casting announced for The Mill at Sonning's sparkling new production of Alan Ayckbourn's 'Relatively Speaking'

"A beautifully constructed and very funny comedy" Noel Coward



Christopher Bonwell, Rachel Fielding, Lianne Harvey, James Simmons

'Relatively Speaking' was Alan Ayckbourn's first great West End success and turned him into a household name. Beautifully crafted, wonderfully funny and charmingly English, it's an enduringly funny comedy of mistaken identities and excruciating misunderstandings.

Greg only met Ginny a month ago, but he knows they're meant for each other. When she announces that she's going to visit her parents, Greg decides this is the moment to ask her father for his daughter's hand. Discovering a scribbled address, he follows her to Buckinghamshire where he finds Philip and Sheila enjoying a peaceful Sunday morning breakfast in the garden, but the only thing is – they're not Ginny's parents!

'Relatively Speaking' will run for 8 weeks from 27 February - 18 April.

Press are invited to review on Friday 6 March at 8.15pm
(tickets include a delicious two-course meal in the theatre's restaurant before the show served from 6.15pm)

Cast:

Christopher Bonwell (Greg) recently finished John Osbourne's 'The Entertainer' (UK tour).

Rachel Fielding (Sheila) was in Arcadia (Royal National Theatre) and 'Love Loss and What I Wore' and 'Father of the Bride' (The Mill Sonning).

Lianne Harvey (Ginny) was in 'An Inspector Calls' (UK and USA Tour).

James Simmons (Philip) in the West End he played Scar for three years in 'The Lion King' and starred in 'The Woman in Black'.

Creative team:

Directed by Robin Herford

Set Design by Michael Holt

Costume Design by Natalie Titchener

Alan Ayckbourn is an Olivier and Tony Award- winning playwright whose work has been translated into 35 languages. Knighted in 1997, he is the first British playwright to receive both Olivier and Tony Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Robin Herford has a long association with Ayckbourn's work, and was Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough. He directed 'The Woman in Black', which has run for 30 years in the West End.

This Mill at Sonning production will transfer to Jermyn Street Theatre, London from Tuesday 21 April - Saturday 16 May.

Set majestically on the banks of the River Thames, The Mill at Sonning Theatre is celebrating more than 30 years of entertainment. Uniquely, as the only dinner theatre in the United Kingdom, it has gained unrivalled praise both nationally and internationally.



The Mill at Sonning prides itself on offering customers a unique Dinner-Theatre experience. Every ticket at The Mill includes a delicious home-cooked pre-show two-course meal.

The riverside restaurant, which overlooks the beautiful river Thames, has recently been refurbished and is now the perfect place to indulge before a show.

The first main course is served buffet style before our friendly team of waiters and waitresses help you to your table and take your dessert and drink orders.



THE MILL AT SONNING

There has been a mill at Sonning for many centuries. In the Domesday Book of 1086 three mills at 'Sonninges and Berrocheshire' are mentioned. In the 1600s the rents for the mill went to the Royal Revenue.

During the Civil War when Cromwell had his headquarters in London and King Charles had his in Oxford, the troops met in the middle - Reading. It was Sonning which supplied the flour for the besieged garrison in the town. The site of the earliest Sonning mill could very well have been in a different place. Wooden buildings had a habit of burning down. The current one dates back to the 18th century but the main parts of the present theatre building are from around 1890. It was owned then by the Witherington family who added the top two storeys and the larger waterwheels for more power to drive the machinery. Around 1898 they put in a steam engine to supplement the water power.

The Phillimore family took over the mill in 1913 but they still traded under the name of C.H. Witherington and Sons Ltd. They remodelled the inside of the mill the following year. Up until 1950 the mill had its own fleet of barges which brought wheat from London right up to its door. In 1962, when the business was taken over by Associated British Foods Ltd., they remodelled yet again and introduced electric engines although the main source of power was still produced by the wheels.

When the mill closed in 1969, it was one of the last flour mills on the Thames driven by wheels. The new port mill at Tilbury had opened and Sonning, being much smaller could not compete economically. Also, one of Sonning's major customers, Huntley and Palmers, stopped making biscuits in Reading.

The mill remained empty until 1977. It was then that Tim and Eileen Richards, who had a great love of theatre, found the derelict building and decided to convert it into The Mill as it is today. Tim invited his brother Frank to join them and the transformation took four years to complete. THE MILL AT SONNING DINNER THEATRE opened on July 22nd 1982.

Sadly Frank Richards died in 1994, Tim Richards in 2002 and Eileen Richards in 2015. Her daughter Sally is now Managing Director of The Mill which continues to go from strength to strength thanks to its ever loyal staff and audience, having produced an abundance of plays and musicals.

In 1984 The Mill at Sonning was given a conservation award by The Times newspaper and The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors for the design, restoration and conversion of the derelict mill into a dinner theatre.

It was named Most Welcoming Theatre by the Theatre Managers Association for the past three years running, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

by Alan Ayckbourn

directed by Robin Herford

The Mill at Sonning Theatre

Sonning Eye

Reading

RG4 6TY

Box Office: 0118 969 8000

www.millatsonning.com

27 February - 18 April

Evening shows: Tuesday - Saturday
at 8.15pm (dinner from 6.15pm)

Saturday and Sunday matinees
at 2.15pm
(lunch served from 12.15pm)

All tickets include a 2 course meal
with coffee, programme on your table
and the show

Tickets: from £61.50

Facebook
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Twitter
[@MillAtSonning](https://twitter.com/MillAtSonning)

Instagram
[@MillAtSonning](https://www.instagram.com/MillAtSonning)

Getting to The Mill at Sonning

Rail:

The Mill is a 10 minute taxi ride from Reading,
Twyford, Earley and Wargrave stations

Road:

From the M4 Junction 8/9:

Take the A404(M) to the A4, then follow the B478

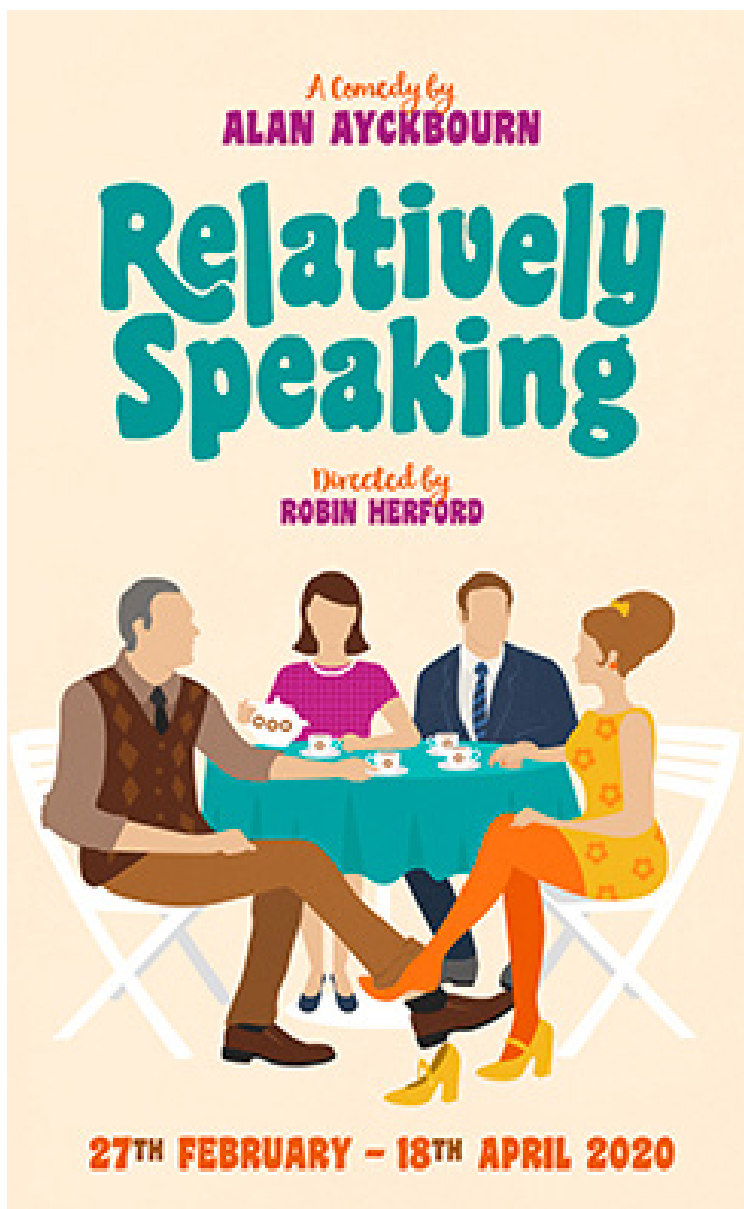
From the M4 Junction 10:

Take the A329(M) to the A4, then follow the B478

From the A4155: Take the B478

There is ample car parking space available

This Mill at Sonning production will transfer to
Jermyn Street Theatre, 16b Jermyn Street, London
SW1Y 6ST, 21 April - 16 May.



T H E M I L L
S O N N I N G



**UK'S MOST
WELCOMING
THEATRE**
2016, 2017 & 2018