

The Shakespeare Club of Stratford-upon-Avon

The 913th meeting of the Shakespeare Club took place on Tuesday 12 December 2017. As a special Christmas treat Mark Carey presented his Shakespearean one-man show, *Into the Breach*. The truly horrendous winter weather trapped many members at home but a small and enthusiastic audience delighted in the show and Mark Carey's performance which spanned farce, melodrama and some magnificent speeches from *Henry V*. The central character was handyman George Crocker, veteran of the battlefields of the First World War, who finds himself playing not Mother Goose or even Rumour but King Henry himself in an amateur production of Shakespeare's play.

Getting to grips with Shakespeare's verse George learns from director Simon Trottley Barnes and his best mate, Ticker, how to make Shakespeare's words his own and also how to use them to come to terms with his own tragic experiences in the trenches. Mark played all seventeen characters in this portrait of life in a Devon village during the Second World War. On a bare stage supported with few props he created a moment in country society of the 1940s and he brought his audiences to think about love and war and Shakespeare. It was a moving and exhilarating evening.

After the performance the Secretary made few announcements: a call for prizes for the raffle to be held in February to be passed to Melissa Mailer Yates at January meeting; a request for help from members with cars to help others to get to meetings and for a volunteer to set up a Facebook page for the Club.

After drinks and mince pies the audience dispersed about 9.30.