

Suspicious and mystery surround Dulverton Players

THE Dulverton Players fed, watered and entertained a Town Hall full of diners to a complex 1930s Murder Mystery on Friday, September 20. It was the Players' third sell-out murder mystery.

It was Lord Crawley (Charlie Blanning) 'what done it'. The snobbish Chief Inspector Plick (Leslie Silverlock) and his rural sidekick Sergeant Meriwether (Nichola Smith) couldn't

find a motive themselves so their 80 dinner guests were enlisted as sleuths for the evening.

How did he do it? He had already loaded his wife Elizabeth's (Gwenda Bassett) shotgun with two mini cartridges, so that when she added the full-size proper ones, the gun backfired and she appeared to kill herself very effectively!

The audience had all of this - the guns, cartridges, press cuttings, and photographs of the toffee nosed

family - laid out with their inspection and detective work throughout the evening and either side of dinner.

Why did he do it? That's where the Gamekeeper (Robert Dubery), the superior Anne Throckmorton (Debbie Wright), her gentle sister Mary (Anne Ansell), and the libertine brother Julian (Christopher Dubery) all began to emerge as suspects. They had variously had affairs, financial complications and knew how to handle a shotgun.

But why kill her now? Well, as local amateur sleuth Ruth Thoroughgood (Ginny Brown) had discovered from her detailed files, he had already 'lost' his first wife in a shooting accident in Africa.

Suspicious also fell on the lugubrious Maid (Claire Govier) who sees all and plies the cast with alcohol, so that even the soft, not totally innocent, illegitimate Victoria Throckmorton (Kate Ansell) gets loquacious during cross-examination from the audience. Even the fami-

ly solicitor (Mary McMichael) comes under suspicion as she's been involved in the alterations to the will just prior to the shooting.

As their audiences expect these days, the Players were beautifully costumed in period outfits from their extensive wardrobe by Jean Verrall and Louise Parrish. The set was 'Downton Abbey', organised and lit by Steve Hall and Christine Dubery who, with her army of volunteer maids, had set

the hall to stately home standards, with tablecloths and decorated dinner tables, ready for the chicken and beef alternatives and a choice of 17 puddings. The atmosphere and hubbub in the hall was tumultuous all evening.

The whole idea, plot, script, guns, and characterisations were the brainchild of Nick and Sylvia Thwaites, Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Dulverton - both still alive after this triumph. LS