

Life of George

A comedy

by Dave Buchanan

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Life of George

CAST (in order of appearance):

George McWilliam, a pensioner

Willie McKie, a pensioner

Rev James Colquhoun, a minister, forties. (*His surname is pronounced 'co-hoon', with the second syllable stressed*)

Rosie Kean, church worker, forties

Miss Cahn, sheltered housing warden, fifties

Jessica, small girl, seven years old

Setting - the garden at the Manse

Time - 1997

The setting is the garden of the Manse. In the distance, a blue sky, and there is a backdrop of flowers, shrubs, and trees. CL is a bench, and R a low platform with a microphone on a stand. There is a waste paper basket L of the bench. Back stage is a large banner with the legend "Evergreen Club May Fayre"

FX: background music of a brass band

Enter R the Reverend James Colquhoun, who approaches the mike rather apprehensively. He switches on, and there is a cacophony of static noise

FX: static noises

He switches off, then back on. He touches the mike to see if it is live

Minister Hello, hello. Testing, one two three, testing. One two three. Can you hear me? Yes? Oh good.

FX: static noises

He puts his hands to his ears, and switches off, then on again

Oh dear oh dear. Can you hear me now? Are you sitting comfortably? Then I shall begin.

George and Willie, two pensioners, enter L. George is smartly dressed, Willie less so. George has his right wrist bandaged. They sit on the bench

Hello, everyone. What a gay day it's been! And only (*looks at his watch*) forty five and a half minutes to go.

The sound system has an attack of gremlins, the result of which is that occasional words are inaudible

I'm so delighted . . . enjoyed yourselves. . . our exciting programme. . . W.R.I. Ladies. . . barely concealed. . . with their bloomers on display. . .

George and Willie look at each other

At three thirty. . . judging. . . karaoke results. . . looking forward. . . I think I can say we have definitely had. . . the President of the W.I. Don't be. . . in fact have a go.

The minister spots Willie and George, and goes over to greet them

Hello there! Now I'm sure I know you gentlemen. Have I seen you at the church?

Willie We're regulars.

Minister I'm sorry, I just can't place you.

Willie We come to all your funerals, Reverend. Five this year. The last one was Jim McConnachie's. It was a great funeral, wasn't it, Geordie?

George I'm George McWilliam and my friend here is Willie McKie.

Minister (*shaking hands*) James Colquhoun.

Willie Cocoon?

Minister Colquhoun. Look. (*Hands him a card.*)

George (*reads*) "Rev James Colquhoun BD." BD, eh?

Minister Yes.

Willie My daughter's got one of them!

George One of what, Willie?

Willie A bidet! It's awful good for washing the feet, Mr Racoon!

Minister Colquhoun. That wrist of yours looks very painful, Mr McWilliam.

George Call me George. Aye well it's a long story. It happened at the ballroom dancing. I was clobbered

by one of the ladies.

Minister Clobbered?

George Aye. Miss Mutch. It was during a Paso Doble. She forgot she was carrying her handbag, she swung round, and before you could say Victor Sylvester - bang!

Minister Bang?

George She caught me with an uppercut, I keeled over and collided with the bandstand.

Minister Sounds awful.

George It was. I fractured my metacarpals.

Willie I thought it was your wrist, Geordie.

George It was my wrist, Willie.

Minister I see. Well you must look after yourself at your age - George. I mean, you must both be a fair age.

George Oh aye. I'm seventy seven and Willie's eighty four.

Minister Still enjoying life to the full?

George Oh aye.

Minister All your faculties fully functional?

George Oh aye. Well mine are. I don't know about Willie's. Willie, are all your facilities fully functional?

Willie My whit, Geordie?

George His hearing's gone a bit. And maybe his sex drive too. Do you want me to ask him about that?

Minister No that won't be necessary. I take it that you both have a good regimen.

George Oh aye.

Minister (*speaks more loudly*) What about your regimen, Mr McKie?

Willie What was that, Mr Macaroon?

Minister Colquhoun. I was talking about your regimen.

Willie Black Watch.

Minister What?

Willie Aye. Black Watch first. Then later the KOSBies.

Minister You fought with both regiments?

Willie Aye. But mainly I fought with the Black Watch.

George Aye, he didnae get on well with them at all!

Minister Oh I see. It's a joke. (*Weakly*) Ha ha! (*Beat*) But look, I was talking about your regimen, not regiment.

George By regimen, you mean -

Minister Your daily routine. Your leisure pursuits.

George Well we both go to the Probus -

Willie And the dominoes.

George Aye, good old dominoes. Like all geriatrics.

Minister Come come, I wouldn't use that word, George.

George It's how the community perceives us, Reverend. All washed up and waiting for God. That's where you come in, I suppose.

Minister (*a bit flustered*) Look, you must come to my Sunday services.

George I'm sorry but as per Victor Meldrew, "I don't believe it!"

Minister You're an atheist?

George No, I don't believe I am.

Minister An agnostic?

George No, I just don't know.

Minister I know what I'll do. I'll send along Mrs Kean to deal with you.

George Who's she?

Minister She's the church visitor. If anyone can persuade you, she can. Look, I must see some other parishioners. Hope to see you both again later. (*Exits R*)

Willie Hey, Geordie.

George What is it?

Willie Talking of funerals. .

George Do you have to, Willie?

Willie Johnny Barr's getting buried next Tuesday.

George Willie. It's the May Fayre. I've come here to enjoy myself. I've not come here to talk about funerals. We go to too many funerals. We'd be just as well to wear black ties permanently.

Willie I keep a black tie in my pocket, Geordie. For emergencies, like. Look. *(He shows a black tie)*

George That is morbid, Willie. Look, I'm giving this one a miss. *(Beat)* I mind we went to one last Easter and we were into the second hymn before we realised it was the wrong funeral! We didn't even know the deceased. And what made it worse, the man we thought was dead was sitting two rows away in the congregation! Mind you, the way he was looking, I thought he was dead! Look, I'm not going and that's my final word. There must be more to life than death and funerals! *(Beat)* Apart from which, Willie, it's a beautiful day. Look the sun's shining out of a cloudless sky, God's in his heaven, and well, as Her Madge would say, one's cup is simply overflowing.

Willie But you havenae got a cup, Geordie.

George Metaphorically speaking.

Willie Meta whit?

George Never mind. I'm just going to sit and enjoy the warmth. Bask a bit.

Willie I'm going to read my paper.

George Good.

Pause

FX: background music of a brass band

Willie nods off. George loosens his tie and beams. Then he takes out a Mars Bar from his pocket

George *(looking at the bar)* Ah, one of life's great delights. Bottles of Guinness, satellite football, and Mars Bars. Eh, Willie? *(No response)*

Life Of George

(Previous title "Evergreen")

George McWilliam, philosopher, wit and *raconteur*, is in love. The trouble is, he's seventy five years old, while the object of his affections, Rosie, is a mere forty. Is he up to the challenge? Follow George's adventures with his sidekick Willie, in this sequel to *Doon The Watter*. The play features parodies of classic Marx Brothers and Astaire/Rogers movies.

Plot Summary

The setting is the Evergreen Club's May Fayre. Pensioner George McWilliam is a modern-day Billy Liar, fantasising about the people he meets, especially two women, the domineering Miss Cahn and attractive widow Rosie Kean. But when he falls head-over-heels for Rosie, will his dreams be fulfilled?

Duration: approx. 40 minutes

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