

Night of surprises from the Playgoers

By BARBARA HAGAN

BEDROOM frolics in a busy French hotel provided plenty of surprises at Workington's Theatre Royal this week.

On Wednesday night a seven strong cast from the town's Playgoers took to the stage with the latest production.

Though not quite up to the standard of the three previous shows - in particular "Educating Rita," this May performance is nonetheless worth a visit.

Dave Freeman's "Bedfull of Foreigners" was somewhat slow to start and it was a good half hour before the audience - unfortunately sparse - was rocking in the aisles with laughter.

DOUBLE BED

Ably produced by long standing member Brian Nutter, himself an accomplished actor, the play was set some 14 years ago in a double bedroom in a seedy French hotel near the German border.

Stanley and Brenda Parker (Mike Hoggarth and Helen Ivison) have shunned Blackpool or Skegness to take a late continental touring holiday.

All goes well until they reach the Hotel Heinze with its romantic owner manager come failed medical student (Derek Thompson) and the ex Foreign Legionnaire porter Karak (Geoff Hool).

Imagine, if you can, a bedroom with two double beds, a festival in the town bringing in the crowds and overbooking everywhere!

From then on it is a night of surprises for Stanley - some pleasant, some not so pleasant and others downright alluring.

Stanley comes face to face with irritable Claude (Frank Yearsley) who has arranged to meet his cabaret stripping mistress Simone (Gill Vaughan) little realising his wife (Jenni Rushton) has arrived to give him a birthday surprise....

When Brenda finally makes it back to the hotel, all hell breaks loose and beds are barely warmed...but at least there is one reunion.

DRY HUMOUR

Star of the show without doubt is Geoff Hool whose blank expressions and dry humour is a joy to watch while Frank Yearsley gave an excellent portrayal of a man with "a cold wife" not averse to the charms of others.

Both are well supported by an accomplished cast, there was very little evidence of first night nerves and the setting, as always, was first class.

The show, at the Theatre Royal, runs until next Tuesday.