



A TRUNCHEON toting prostitute, drugged bank inspector and amorous vegetarian mother-in-law are just some of the ingredients in the chaotic comedy cocktail — *No Sex Please We're British*.

The West End classic is punctuated with slamming doors, as characters enter and exit, narrowly missing each other in the way that only ever happens on stage.

Workington Playgoers' version, now on at the town's Theatre Royal, is polished and entertaining.

When the play opens all is nauseously normal. Peter and Francis have just married and moved to their nice new flat above a bank, where Peter is manager.

Then wham — two unexpected arrivals in one morning. First, the dreaded vegetarian mother-in-law (who later turns out to be a closet carnivore), then a pile of pornographic pictures.

Chaotic comedy cocktail

Chaos ensues as Peter and Francis, with the help of Brian, the bank's chief cashier, attempt to get rid of the steady flow of porn being delivered to them, all the time desperately trying to conceal it from mother-in-law and two bank bosses who turn up to stay the night (as they do!).

Double entendres rule the racy farce — making Carry On classics look positively subtle. But smutty snippets aside, the dialogue is packed with witty one liners ("I swear it's been colder since we switched to centigrade").

The cast of ten sustained the snappy script throughout. Countless rapid entrances and exits were perfectly executed. Bells rang and doors slammed on

cue. And none of the actors lost their cool when a table unexpectedly toppled over amid all the action.

I never worked out why a supposed vegetarian was wearing a fur coat. And at points Peter (Philip Mackie making his Theatre Royal debut) spoke a little too fast, muffling his lines.

But otherwise the talented 10 worked well together.

The cross section of characters seemed perfectly cast, with a great mix of ages and types.

But boring old brown suited Brian must be given a special mention. For Jim Howson played the perfect overgrown boy scout and office wally, and the audience loved him.

No Sex Please We're British will be running until October 6.

TRACY WALKER

● Brian Rannicles (Jim Howson) hasn't a leg to stand on thanks to Barbara (Nicola Woodler) and Susan (Sarah Beattie) right.