



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

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## THE ADVENTURES OF STOKE MANDEVILLE

### Adelaide University Fringe Club

Until 6 Mar 2009

Review by Michael Feast

This is the story of a man time-travelling to stop the French from taking over the Empire, all the while keeping a stiff upper lip. Look out Doctor Who! It's the Adventures of Stoke Mandeville – Astronaut and Gentleman.

Graham Pennyworth (James Moffatt) finds himself in a parallel dimension. He is joined by the eccentric, pipe smoking Stoke Mandeville (played with gusto by Matthew Taylor). Pennyworth is seen by Stoke as Carstairs MacDonald, a right hand man equal to the task of saving Victorian England when the Empire is thrown into a state of panic by French spies. From royalty to convicts, Stoke is able to take it all in his stride to demonstrate the perfect example of manhood as only a good Englishman can.

Director Christian Reynolds has done well with the casting, but a snappier pace would be welcome.

Mateo Szlapek-Sewillo and Simon Walsh were delightful as Bruce and Bruce, employing authentic "convict" accents. Christian Reynolds, Sam Tully, Stacey Goodwin, Christopher Kemp and Katherine Edmond ably performed various supporting roles. The strong script is by Nikolas Lloyd and Fraser Charlton.

This play is a must for any science fiction fan, particularly 'Doctor Who' lovers. With the current talk of David Tennant's replacement, this reviewer would suggest Stoke Mandeville – Astronaut and Gentleman.

A good debut performance from Adelaide University Fringe Club.

Rating: 3 stars (out of 5)