

TOP NOTES



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W.A.O.S.



May/June 2008

Our next show!

Our next show will be Salad Days, which will run at the Rhoda McGaw from 28th October to 1st November. Rehearsals started on Monday 19th May, at the Old Woking Community Centre as usual, and are continuing on Mondays and Thursdays. The director is Jackie Shearer, who has worked with Epsom Light Opera, and MD is Ian Peters, who did such a great job with Moll.

Auditions will be held on Monday 2nd June. E-mail Jackie for further details on jackie.shearer@ntlworld.com

From our chairman:

Normally we try to produce Top Notes at the start of show week, but as many of you will have realised, we were even busier than usual this time due to the many demands of staging Moll. Attached elsewhere in this edition of Top Notes is the NODA report. You will see from the report that the extra work really paid off and we delivered an outstanding show. A big thank you then to everybody involved, whatever the capacity, however small a contribution you think you made. Without all the little contributions, the whole would not have reached the level it did. The show was an artistic and critical success; it was just a pity that the sales were only about 45%. Those that didn't come really missed something worth watching.

The loss made on the show now brings the finances to the position where we will have to actively fund raise in order to help the cash flow and cover the up-front costs of future productions. The committee would welcome any ideas for fund raising, and the reformation of a social/fund raising sub committee is a strong possibility, particularly if there are any volunteers to make it happen. So if you, or a group of you, are up to the challenge then let any member of the committee know in the next few weeks. Gillian Freeman has agreed to be the committee representative on this sub-committee if it is reformed. The committee will also be looking at other

ways of strengthening the finances - and remember, if you are a taxpayer and have not filled in a charity gift aid form, WAOS are missing out on the tax rebate on your membership fee (over £10 per member). Contact Roger Thomas who will give you the paperwork. You will find details of our forthcoming barbecue and quiz night later in this newsletter. Please come along and support them, and help us make the first steps towards financial stability.

Keith White
Chairman

Moll Flanders – Noda Report

I was delighted to be asked to attend a musical that I hadn't seen before and was very much looking forward to it. I wasn't disappointed. It was a most enjoyable evening's entertainment and a great pity that more people were not prepared to risk seeing a relatively unknown musical. They missed a treat. Martine's direction was once again exceptionally good and as always she set the chorus in interesting, attractive groupings and gave them plenty of business. I appreciate that in this show the company had to concentrate on some very difficult musical numbers but every scene came to life and I loved the way the stage-coach was set. It was so realistic.

The music in the first act was at times reminiscent of Sondheim and far more difficult to learn and sing than one of the better known 'pot boilers', but the company were well rehearsed by the musical director Ian Peters. His small band played beautifully and at no time did they overpower the performers, even during the underscoring. The unaccompanied singing was excellent. The opening scene created the atmosphere of Newgate Prison with its motley lot of prisoners, and Elizabeth's impregnation was depicted simply and without any awkwardness by Gillian Freeman and Keith White. Gillian gave her usual secure performance and was able to join the chorus for many of the numbers. Keith was kept busy with three roles and I didn't actually recognise him as the Fop so top marks to the make up team. The cast doubled and trebled up, which must have made it a particularly enjoyable show to take part in, and that's how it came across to the audience. Colin Attridge's Mayor was the best of his roles and Vanora Severs was suitably regal as Lady Constable. As her two sons, Robert and Cyril, Jonathan Batchelor and Brett Walker both performed well and Brett's singing was especially good. I don't know whether or not Amy Parker's speaking voice is normally so shrill, but it suited her fit of pique with Moll. In the title role, Tasha Bennett was excellent. Because of the nature of Moll it would have been easy to overplay the part but she didn't. She made a believable, very likeable Moll and her singing voice, whilst not a typical musical theatre style voice, was charming and clear. As

such a lot of the story is set to music, diction is important and her every word could be heard. The two young girls, Eleanor Hegarty and Kathryn Bartlett acquitted themselves well as young and older Moll.

A good characterisation from Samantha Moylen-Heydt, whose convincing Cockney accent was reminiscent of Pauline Quirke's, as the business like Mother Midnight, and an hysterically funny performance from Roger Thomas as Biggins the invalid. He did it brilliantly with some wonderful facial expressions, and I can only imagine the fun you must have all had in rehearsal with some of the scenes in this particular musical! Phil Scaife's debut was fine, he just tended to drop his voice a little so that some of his dialogue was lost when playing Mr. Honest.

A very good performance was from Mike Bartlett as he Irish rogue Jemmy, and his relationship and romp with Moll was delightfully staged. His singing was strong too. There are so many characters in this show that it would be impossible to cover them all but suffice it to say that everyone taking part contributed to the success of this unknown but most enjoyable musical.

The costumes and props were very good, and the lighting added much to the feel of the piece. Sound was good and the back stage crew worked quietly together on the scene changes.

You have produced another classic programme with all the information in the right place and the history of Moll Flanders was very interesting. Although her life was a roller coaster series of highs and lows, she dealt with it admirably and never gave up. Her final descent into poverty took her back to where it had all started, making a thought provoking end to the story.

Thank you for inviting me to come and see the show and also to Roger for his hospitality on the evening. It was a pleasure to meet the cast on stage afterwards and both Martine and Ian in the interval.

Good luck with your next production.

E. Gloria Smith

NODA Representative – Region 12

Diary Dates



Barbecue on Sunday 8th June.

Come along to the great WAOS summer barbecue, this year at Roger Thomas's house, 81, Kingsway. Woking on Sunday 8th June. You are welcome to arrive from 1pm onwards, and stay as long as you wish! Please bring along a chair or something to sit on, some meat or a veggie alternative for the barbecue and a bottle. We will

provide you with salads, bread, desserts and excellent company, all for the bargain price of £3 per head – and no charge for children, barbecued or otherwise! Please let Roger or one of the other committee members know the numbers to expect, by the evening of Thursday 6th June. You can contact him on 01483 770764 or at

dodger3427@aol.com

We look forward to seeing you there!

Depot day

On Sunday 15th June, your gallant committee will be toiling at the depot, continuing to catalogue and tidy all the treasures therein. All help would be gratefully received! We shall be commencing at 10.30am.

Quiz on June 28th

Now is the time to make a space in your diary for an evening of good company and tantalising questioning – the Woking Amateur Operatic Society quiz is taking place on Saturday 28th June. Tickets are only £8, which includes a slap-up supper. Bring your own glasses and drinks, and be at the Old Woking Community Centre in Sundridge Road for 7.30pm. Teams can be any number up to 8, so round up your smartest pals quickly, before they are snapped up by the opposition!

Call Gillian Freeman on 01932 342411 to register your team, or e-mail at gfreem@ntlworld.com

Woking Town Twinning Assoc trips

WAOS belongs to the Woking Town Twinning Association. Apart from a bit of Entente Cordiale, they also have trips to places of interest round and about.

In May there was a visit to Chatham Historic Dockyard, with our own guide who was a real character and made it very interesting. We got to go round 3 different boats as well as slipways and rope making plants which are still in use. Then we finished up with a trip on the last real paddleboat in service in the UK.

The next trip is to go behind the scenes at Tower Bridge and at the Bank of England, again with our own guides. This is on Wed 9th July so you may have to take a day off or throw a sickie. Cost is £17 inc coach from Woking. email Roger on dodger3427@aol.com or phone 01483 770764 if you want to go.

Saturday 12th July

The Arts Council for Woking is planning a special event in the town centre to showcase local organisations. We plan to man a table with a display about WAOS and offer face painting – a really useful way to get ourselves some extra publicity and maybe tempt some new

members along. We will need volunteers throughout the day to keep it ticking along, and beforehand to set up the display, so please keep that day free and have a word with one of the committee members if you can help out.

WAOS AGM

This year our AGM will be on Monday 14th July. As always, nominations for all roles are welcomed. More details will follow soon.

Into the Woods – May 2009

Great news for all Sondheim fans – the committee has decided that our May 09 show will be Into the Woods. Sam Clark will direct for us, and the Rhoda has been booked from Tues 5th May to Saturday 9th May.



Birth announcements

The last few weeks have seen a WAOS baby boom! Congratulations to all the proud parents, brothers, sisters and grandparents involved – and we look forward to seeing your new arrivals treading the boards with us soon! It is in the blood, after all....

Oliver James Clark

Lucy's little brother, Oliver James Clark was born at 7.15 pm on Sunday 13th April 2008 at Royal Surrey, weighing a huge 9lbs 6oz. Congratulations to Sam, Geoff and Lucy. Sam reports that, whilst she was walking around the wards, trying to encourage contractions, she bumped into Phil Street!

Oliver William George Street

Phil and Lara's baby (whose first stage appearance was in Carousel) was also born on 13th April, weighing in at 6lb 11oz. We all send them our very best wishes. Two Olivers on the same day!

Emily Grace Morris

Morna, Geoff and William have been celebrating the birth of their new baby on 23rd April. Emily weighed in at 8lb 1oz. Geoff kindly made the teas for practically all of the Moll rehearsals, and was seen practising holding the baby Moll on more than one occasion!

Phoebe Lynne Read

Lynda Lawrence is a proud grandmother for the first time, following the birth of Elizabeth's baby, Phoebe, on

28th April. She weighed 6lb 2oz. Congratulations to Lynda, David, and all the family!

More membership news

Moll Flanders saw the debut with us of several new WAOS members. They did a great job, and it seems only right and proper to belatedly welcome them on board. So, well done to Natasha, Sam, Laura, Phil, Hannah, Pete and Katherine – particularly to Natasha, without whom the show would not have been the same! Also, many thanks to Stephanie for her sterling work backstage. We hope that all of you will be with us for many shows to come!

Goodbye and good luck to Harriet

After a long spell of waiting for her house move to go through, Harriet Graves and family will be leaving the area in a week or two for a new beginning in Bedfordshire. We will miss her a lot and wish them all the very best of luck.



Your committee

If you have any complaints, these are the people to moan to (or just about!)

Chairman – Keith White
01483-725779

Treasurer – Roger Thomas
01483-770764

Secretary – Sylvie Petersen
01483-834414

Members

Gillian Freeman: 01932 342411 (Top Notes Editor – please send your contributions to gfreem@ntlworld.com)

Norman Holden: 01483-830282

Geoff Morris: 01483-827086

Stella Thacker: 01483-766296

