

OXTED OPERATIC

The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas
21-24 November 2006

The musical tells the true story of The Chicken Ranch that flourished until 1973 when it was closed down by crusading television reporter Marvin Zindler. An idealised, sterile, classy house of not quite so ill repute where every hooker has a heart of gold, it was known locally as The Chicken Ranch because during The Depression when money was short, poultry was accepted in payment for, er, services!!

Made famous by the movie version starring Dolly Parton and Burt Reynolds, this is a fast-moving story with great song and dance numbers, and it is best seen live on stage.

We have a particularly strong cast led by Teresa Skinner as Miss Mona, Bob Wilson as the Sheriff and newcomer Paul Bailey-Smith as Melvin P. Thorpe. Other leading roles are Chris Bassett as the Narrator, Katherine Jones as Angel, Catherine Osborne as Shy, Christine White as Doatsey Mae and David Clubb as the Governor. There is also a troupe or is it a gaggle(?) of whorehouse girls to be played by Andrea Allen, Claire Crowther, Ann Lovell, newcomer Sophie MacTavish, Jane Maisey and Debbie Skipper.

We will be holding open auditions for one female role, Jewel, and four male cameo roles, Senator Wingwoah, Edsel Mackey, Rufus Poindexter and CJ Scruggs, as well as the Aggie Boys!

If you would like to know more about these auditions, please contact The Secretary (Tel 01883 712428) or email: secretary@oxtedoperatic.co.uk.

We are all looking forward to starting rehearsals – the first will be on Tues 5 September at St Peter's Hall, 7.45pm. Directed by Nigel Kemp, with Steve Rhind as MD and Dawn as choreographer, it promises to be a most enjoyable show both to take part in and watch!

FOBS

We had thought it would be a good idea to thank all those people, whether Fobs members or not, who, as requested in our last issue, telephoned or e-mailed Pippa Bridges to volunteer for Front of House duties for one or more of the numerous performances we are now covering. Unfortunately there was a problem. Nobody volunteered!! Not one. Come on, gentle readers, we need you and it is fun.

Undeterred, Pippa herself has already staffed various shows with efficiency, so this centralised system which she herself suggested, is working well and is a boon to Front of House managers. However, we would still be glad to hear from those of you willing to volunteer for specific shows so please read the 'What's On' or handbills and telephone Pippa on 01883 712459 or e-mail: judith.bridges@btinternet.com

We know there are lot of good people out there since so many of you were kind enough to bake a cake or cakes for sale at the Oxted Carnival. Thank you, well done. By the way, I wonder if you agree with me that the mixing of cakes is therapeutic?

We have seen the number of theatre seats available for sale decline as people have bought them, usually in memory of a loved one. We are now down to the last one and it has been decided at the suggestion of Terry Rolph (who first instigated the sales) that it should be auctioned on the occasion of the Silver Anniversary of our founding, probably at the Xmas Drinks party. Watch this space.

We are having a busy time at present and, perhaps due to the increased space in the extension and the hot weather, the

consumption of both alcoholic and soft drinks has shown a marked rise. We note that dancing schools consume more lager than most. No, it's not the tots in tutus, it's their Dads dropping them off and heading for the bar. Mums tend to go for white wine. Winter and play audiences see more red wine downed whilst the present heat is making holes in the stock of J20's and bottled water.

We now have 273 members and hope as many as possible will call Pippa.
DPW

'THIS IS MY SONG'

Saturday 30 September

Is a celebration of the life, laughter and music of Sir Harry and tickets are already selling well. Harry Secombe was one of Britain's best loved comic entertainers. Born in Swansea, South Wales he began singing as a child in local church choirs. His first job was as a clerk al-



though he had considered a career in opera. During World War Two he served in the Army in North Africa and Italy. He met the comedian Spike Milligan while on duty in the Western desert and their common bond was a unique brand of humour. Secombe appeared in many troop concerts where he was known for his trademark high pitched laugh and blowing raspberries. After the war he appeared as a comic at London's famous Windmill Theatre and in 1945 became one of the stalwarts of the hugely successful radio series Educating Archie. His greatest popularity began in 1951 with the birth of radio's Crazy People, later to be renamed The Goon Show. One of the most famous radio comedy programmes of all time it helped launch the careers of Secombe, Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Michael Bentine.

Order your tickets now for Saturday 30. September, before the SOLD OUT notices appear. Box office 01959 561811

AQUARIAN OPERA

are presenting a *Come and Sing the Mozart Requiem* at the Barn on the 24th of September at 7pm.

Singers are asked to provide their own copies of the Requiem in Latin and also the Mozart Ave Verum if they have it. There will be copies of both available on the night.

Robyn Sevastos will be conducting and singers are asked to be at the theatre and in their seats for 6pm so that Robyn can run quickly through the score before the audience arrives for 7pm. Singers will sit in the main body of the Barn in their voice parts, while the audience will be in the gallery. Wheelchair access will be at the front of the theatre as usual.

There will be a short first half to the Concert when you will sing the Ave Verum and one or two of Mozart's Opera Choruses which everybody will be encouraged to join in. Some of the past soloists for Aquarian will entertain us with popular Mozart arias and ensembles.

After the interval we will sing the Requiem and it is hoped that the whole of the downstairs of the Barn will be one great big choir!

Please ring Barbara O'Neill on 01732 867310 for tickets which are available now, £10 for Adults and £8 for Concessions. Or send a stamp addressed envelope to Aquarian Opera, 9 Highfields Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6JN.