

Oxted Operatic Society

During the last two shows over twenty new performing faces, as well as several 'behind the scenes' contributors have joined us. The result is a fantastic boost to the society – just take the men's chorus in South Pacific. Amanda Jakes, our diligent Membership Secretary would be delighted to hear from any new members who would like to join our ranks, and is happy to deal with any membership queries. She can be contacted on 01732 740371.

It has been a joy to have you all working with us during South Pacific. Clearly the dressing rooms were fun places to be, particularly from the reported antics of Guy and Rock who seemed desperate to become Showgirls and do the high kicks at the opening of Act 2! All in all it was a great show but unfortunately it wasn't so great financially due to lack of bums on seats.

As to the future, we are planning to produce a two-night 'Old Tyme Music Hall' in September depending on time and whether enough members wish to participate. On to the November production which is Guys and Dolls with Drew and Carrie Brooke-Mellor directing, and David Clubb producing. There is a run-through of audition pieces on Tuesday 22nd June, 7.45pm at St Peters Hall. Auditions are on 27 June. Please remember you have to be a member to audition.

Our Spring 2005 production will be The Music Man directed by Janette White. Other proposed future productions are Jack the Ripper, Meet Me In St Louis and Kiss Me Kate.

Noda review of South Pacific

The score of this magical show by Rodgers and Hammerstein is so well known that it has a lot of appeal to audiences and this popularity may influence amateur musical societies when thinking about their forthcoming programmes. However, in my experience, it is not chosen as often as one would expect and this may be due to anticipated casting difficulties because of the large number of males required to make it look credible, especially if presented on a large stage where a shortage of participants might be very noticeable. For your production your society was able to enlist plenty of members willing to take part whether as Seabees or nurses so that the stage was adequately filled at all times.

The backcloths depicting the Pacific island scenery including one of the forbidden islands of Bali Ha'i were wonderfully painted. The lighting was most appropriate to time of day and some very effective sound effects were introduced. Generally costumes were suitable for the climate and make up was convincing. The orchestra was led by Steve Rhind, whose energetic conducting inspired his musicians and, although rousing when required, never drowned the vocal efforts of those on stage.

The production team of Nigel Kemp (Director), Steve Rhind (MD) and Sarah Gillender (Choreographer) had assembled a most satisfactory and competent cast, many of whom had considerable performing experience. The male chorus seemed high-spirited as they introduced themselves lustily with a particularly energetic rendering of "There Ain't Nothing Like a Dame". Throughout they acted noisily and spontaneously to the situations that were presented to them. The young girls playing the nurses were particularly lively especially when dancing in the company's show.

John Speller was very credible as Emile de Becque and Alison Redford gave a sympathetic interpretation of the part of Nellie Forbush. Sam Beams was an excellent Bloody Mary and to an untutored ear her intonation, accent and phrasing sounded exactly as one would expect from a Tonkinese with limited knowl-

edge of English. Chris Bassett was first class as Luther Billis; his grass-skirted dance in the "Thanksgiving Follies" provided one of the hotspots of the show. Tim Wray played the upright, serious officer with great assurance. Particularly charming were Abigail and Justin Thomas-Verweij playing the parts of de Becque's two young children.

From the comments we heard as we left the theatre we are sure that the audience enjoyed South Pacific as much as we did. Full credit to the Production Team for a most entertaining evening.

Reg Humby

Fundraising

The Barn Theatre are always on the look out for new fundraising ideas that put the fun into fundraising. There have already been two very successful race nights and quiz evenings with more to come. As we go to press we are waiting to hear whether we are to be invited to take part in this year's Oxted Carnival. The Carnival has always been an opportunity for the Barn Theatre not only to raise funds but to go out into the community to forge closer links with the community and other voluntary organisations.

If any of our readers have good fundraising ideas the editor would be delighted to hear from you. One suggestion recently was for a Murder Mystery Evening, which is a distinct possibility. Please get those ideas rolling in.

Gotta Sing Gotta Dance

The Barn Theatre is joining forces with Melinda Cherrett to raise money for the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Care and Marie Curie. Melinda is well known for running a number of local Stagecoach Schools. Pupils from these schools will join other talented youngsters to stage a spectacular show of song and dance. This production takes place from 10th - 12th June and tickets are available from 01883 730336. Do come and support these youngsters and enjoy a thoroughly entertaining evening while helping to raise money for cancer care and research.

In brief

The Barn Theatre will be closed for July, to allow for annual maintenance to take place, all lamps will have to be pat tested, and well as a number of repairs and cleaning.

Play Out

Lerner and Loewe had lunch together one day at the Savoy. Afterwards they went for a walk across the Park, and on their way passed a shop displaying a sky blue Rolls Royce. The limousine was irresistible and they decided to purchase one each. As Lerner reached for his cheque book, Loewe put a hand out to stop him. "No, no. Let me. You paid for the lunch"