

## *A Ripping Yarn*

Well, the cast, crew and audience all came through it in one piece and we don't think any of them became another 'Ripper' victim, apart from getting hooked on what turned out to be a wonderful show!

'Jack the Ripper' was a bit of a departure for Oxted Operatic, being a million miles away from the incredibly popular although slightly sanitised versions of life depicted in many of our usual shows such as 'Oklahoma' and 'South Pacific'. More of a social commentary on Victorian London rather than a gruesome reconstruction of the Ripper murders, the show focused on the lives, loves and ambitions of several of the Ripper's victims and whilst it hints at who the culprit might be, you are still left guessing at the end. The action cleverly interweaves life on the streets of the East End and the acts in a local music hall, the Steampacket, with many of the performers doubling up roles in both.

So, something different, but did the audiences like it? Judging by the reaction each evening they loved it and ticket sales, despite being slow at first, picked up really well and by the end of the week we were playing to virtually full houses. At the time of writing financial results are not yet available, but we hope they will be good news.

Congratulations must go to the cast, crew and production team for another superb effort; the standard of OOS shows remains as high as ever and our reputation amongst other groups for high quality productions can only be enhanced by this latest effort. Well done!

So what's next? November's show will be a compilation of songs from shows released in the last forty years, enabling us to use material from Andrew Lloyd Webber, Stephen Sondheim and many other great modern shows such as Les Miserables, Chicago, Cabaret and so on. We'll be looking for soloists, a good chorus and a group of children for this production and auditions are likely to be in July, although no date has yet been set. The production team is Janette White (Director), Tony Stenson (Musical Director) and Tonia Porter (Choreographer). The production will run from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> November at 7.45pm each evening, and also with a 2.30pm matinee on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, our AGM will be held in July and quite a number of our Executive Committee will be standing down from their posts for a variety of reasons. Thanks must go to them for all their efforts in keeping the society going over the last year or more. This means that we need people to come forward to take their places, because without a committee the society will cease to exist and in the worst case, would have to fold. If you feel that you could spare some time to serve on the committee in any capacity, please do get in touch – **YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!**



## *RIP 'EM OFF*

11 June 2005

The Blag Theatre Company was formed in 1995. It has been responsible for the creation of several unique theatrical productions. This innovative company blends a mix of comedy, music, and satire and good old-fashioned theatre to create its own tongue-in-cheek parody style.

This particular show is a musical spoof that knows no bounds. From "Les Miserables" to "Oliver", from Manufactured Pop Bands to Dick Van Dyck, from Martine McCutcheon to Darth Vader: but you don't have to know these targets to enjoy the show.

The original show was a success at The Edinburgh Festival and has followed through in many theatres in the Home Counties. From the very first shows right through to the latest, discover what the critics had to say about this extraordinary company, and see a preview at [www.blagtheatre.com](http://www.blagtheatre.com)

**Profits to East Surrey Scouting**  
**Tickets £10 from 01883 714611/01342 843489**  
**From 1<sup>st</sup> June: 01883 712241**

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## *FOBS*

'May you live in interesting times' is, I understand, a Chinese curse. Well, we are in interesting times but enjoying them. Our Chairman, Heather Lloyd, was among those presented to the Duke during his visit, as was our President, Terry Rolph, who, never one to miss an opportunity, not only pinned a Fobs badge on him but, rumour has it, booked him for a stint behind the bar (or was it the car park?!). Heather and Bruce Reed were subsequently interviewed and aired by Radio Redhill, ostensibly because it is the Year of the Volunteer.

We held our 23<sup>rd</sup> AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> March and some salient points were: - Fobs had fronted for 17 shows making 35 performances during the year as well as the Christmas drinks and a private function. In the same year we had proved the theatre with a new cooker, coffee percolator, complete with cups, as well as a donation of £3200 for ongoing theatre needs. We were also able to give £2726 to Marie Curie Cancer Care, Caterham, which was our half share of proceeds from a Children's Variety Show co-hosted with Melinda Cherrett.

After years of driving to 'cash and carry' stores through flood, tempest and bandit country, we are now trying out direct deliveries of bar and sweet shop goods. After their initial attempt to deliver to Heather's home instead of the theatre, and then being unable to find said theatre, things have now improved. Deliveries have to be paid for however and our wine glasses are now bigger, tax has increased: the result is a price increase, the first for four years.

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## *Carnival Capers*

Since 1998, the Oxted Carnival has been one of our very successful events of the year when we go away from the theatre and out in to the community to do our bit. In recent years we have concentrated our efforts on stocking and manning a tea and cake stall, which has drawn queues of customers. Carnival goers can sit and rest their feet whilst enjoying a cup of tea and a piece of home-made cake and also take a cake home with them. We usually have about 300 cakes, large and small, made by you our supporters, we make lots of money for the Barn and obviously provide a most welcome service to the Carnival visitors. This year the Carnival is on Saturday July 2<sup>nd</sup> and in the weeks running up to that date Carolyn Rowley will be contacting as many of you as possible to ask for donations of home-made (preferably) cakes or biscuits that we can sell for 50p or more. She makes up to 300 phone calls but it is not possible to contact everyone so if you don't receive a call please do bring your cake along to the Little Barn on the morning of the Carnival between 10am and noon. If you would like to contact Carolyn please do so via the office on 01959 561811