

Noda South-West Magazine Spring 2010  
District 1 – West Cornwall – Phil Barnett

***National Operatic & Dramatic  
Association  
South West Amateur Theatre  
Magazine***

**“Open a New Window”**

**SPRING 2010**

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· COSTUMES · LIGHTING · VOCAL SCORES · INSURANCE ·  
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## PHIL BARNETT reports on District 1

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### **OFF THE HOOK**

**Community Hall**

### **Threemilestone Amateur Dramatic Society**

*Director: Margaret Dawes*

*10<sup>th</sup> September 2009*

This was my first visit to this society and it was lovely to meet everyone and get such a warm welcome. The set that faced us as we entered the hall was really authentic and looked just right with lovely touches here and there. From the outset diction was excellent from all the performers and a good pace was achieved throughout the evening. Props, too, were tip-top and appropriate. There was a good contrast of characters between the two sisters. As each of the cast came on they established their characters well, but I did feel that some of them did not develop more depth to their roles as the play unfolded. The first half was *very* long. I think it is a three act play and the audience would be better off with a 10 minute break in the first half as I grew a little restless for the last 15 minutes. I admire the cast so much for learning such a wordy play. It was incredible how much you all had to retain – believe me, I know how difficult that was and I salute you all. The director is obviously very experienced and placed her cast well. Afterwards I had a tour of the small stage and backstage and met more of the company. It was obvious how everyone had pulled together and worked really hard for their theatre group and for their community, and I look forward to my next visit.

### **NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & AWARD CEREMONY**

**Palace Hotel, Torquay**

***Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010 @ 2:00 p.m.***

*Your attendance is expected*

*on the occasion of the inauguration of*

***our very own Gerry Branton as National President***

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**HOT MIKADO Truro Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society**

**Hall for Cornwall**

*Director/Choreographer: Trevor Hitchings Musical Director: Alistair Taylor*

*24<sup>th</sup> September 2009*

Wow! Wow! Wow! What a thrilling performance! Strong principal performances in singing, acting and dancing all round. This is what amateur theatre at its best is all about, achieved by hard work and attention to detail! It was lovely to see great support at this performance from so many members of RAOST. What a shame that the Hall was only half full. Costumes from *Costume Workshop Isle Of Wight*, were just right for the period setting, and the mix of colours was excellent. I do not have room in this report to mention everyone, but suffice to say that there wasn't a weak link. But the top honours must go to Michelle Moses as Katisha. I know it is a dream part but Michelle made the most of every second she was on stage. What an incredible voice she has! The orchestra was superb, but from where I was sitting they completely drowned out the chorus in almost every number. I hope it was sorted for future performances as the company had obviously worked very hard to produce their harmonies. I liked the scenery very much, but perhaps some of it could have been turned around for the second half to give us a slightly different contrast, particularly as there was a costume change at this time. I was blown away by this show and wanted to see it again, because I enjoyed it so much.

Is your society's web-site linked to Noda? **SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL WEB SITE**

**[www.nodasw.com](http://www.nodasw.com)**

*SW Noda activities and "What's on" page. Plus all the reports from this magazine online.*

**TROUBLE IN PANTOLAND**

**Rosudgeon S.C.A.D.S.**

**Village Hall, Rosudgeon**

*30<sup>th</sup> January 2010*

The panto started almost 20 minutes late for no obvious reason with no explanation to the audience. Costumes were bright and colourful. Scene changes were covered with appropriate music but occasionally there was no scenery to be changed, but we still had a musical interlude at the end of the scene. It is better to let the scenes flow if possible. Unfortunately, throughout the panto diction and voice production was very poor resulting in me only hearing 25% of the whole show's dialogue. What a shame as there were some good performances. Helen Kendall was excellent in every scene, as was Ravena Jelbert. Mark Hudson had loads of energy, but I couldn't hear hardly a word from him. Jenny Richards was really funny and clear. It is lovely to see so many different ages being given a chance to perform, and I would like to mention how lovely Jasmine Nicholls was. There were lots of prompts needed –

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please everyone learn your lines as a courtesy to your audience. I think with a few more improvements to the show from the director we could have enjoyed the show more. I keep in the negative comments to encourage you to improve in certain areas rather than to undermine your confidence, as it is very clear to me what a friendly society this is. I would also like to encourage your members to attend either the NODA Youth Academy, or for adults, the NODA Summer School. I have been eleven times to the Summer School and have learnt lots of very useful skills. There is even one this year on Directing Panto where the tutor is Dougie Squires of TV fame.

**SCROOGE – the musical      Redruth Amateur Operatic Society Trust      The Regal**

*Director/Choreographer: Trevor Hitchings Musical Director: Alistair Taylor*

*18<sup>th</sup> December 2009*

A mix up with tickets and a 15 minute delay to the start of the show did not help to put us in the best frame of mind, however as soon as the show started we were immediately taken back to the Victorian era due to the scenery and excellent costumes. Right from the start Trevor Hitchings gave us a fantastic Ebenezer Scrooge and performed brilliantly all night with strong energy and lovely tender moments contrasting beautifully. Trevor is one of the best directors around but I did feel that having such a large role had prevented him from seeing some of the chorus scenes as they were not as tight as some of his previous productions. Similarly in set changes, there were quite a few times when the spotlight on his character strayed into the scene changes. It was nice to see most of the crew in period costume, but occasionally this effect was spoiled by an odd member in modern day clothes. Lots of the chorus worked and sang well, but again a few let the side down with blank expressions and low energy. As usual chorus singing was of a high standard, but a little hard to hear – I can only put this down to the sound team as I know this society has some of the finest chorus singing in the county. Occasionally the tempo of musical numbers was a little laboured. Props were nicely designed and executed. There were strong performances from Tom Jenkins and the ghosts. Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit were excellent. The lovely snow was a great touch too. Front of house music was an abrupt change of atmosphere and did not fit with the show. Overall I really enjoyed the show and feel I may have been a little on the critical side as your standards are among the highest of any of the shows that I go and see, but on this occasion there were lots of little things that just stopped it being as slick as usual.

**SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL AGM & AWARD CEREMONY**

*18<sup>th</sup> July 2010*

**Holiday Inn, Taunton 10:45 a.m.**

**Special Guest: Mrs. Margaret Coltman, President of Noda.**

*Lunch also available at £12 a head.*

*Order in advance: send a cheque to Denis Branton made payable to Noda South-West.*

*“Holly Woods”, 89 Stone Lane, Winterbourne Down, South Gloucestershire BS36 1DH*

**CRAZY FOR YOU      Falmouth Theatre Company      Princess Pavilion, Falmouth**

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*Director: Jenny Brunsden-Brown Musical Director: Michael Teague*

*29<sup>th</sup> September 2009*

*Choreographers: Samantha Taylor, Dawn Holdroff & Trenton Spear*

I love Gershwin and it was a pleasure to hear the lovely melodies played at a strong tempo by the orchestra – well done Michael for not letting the tunes be played at a slow and boring pace. The costumes were lovely and fitted well. We were treated to a strong dance team, most of who were smiling in all the right places, but were unfortunately let down by one or two of the girls occasionally. The leads were also cast well. Alex Roberts as Polly Baker could have looked a lot happier at times. She is such a good dancer, actress and singer Alex that it is a shame this little bit was missing. Richard Matravers gave a sterling performance too. Having this lead part is very demanding as one has to dance, act, sing and be funny too! Every time Dawn Holdroff appeared she lit up the stage. The scenery was really nice, but on this the opening night, took a little too long to change, but I am sure this was rectified as the week progressed. I hope the audience numbers increased as the week went on.

### **Don't Forget**

You can *only* be nominated for one of the South-West Region's prestigious awards if you invite your Regional Representative and/or the Councillor to attend your show.

Contact your Representative as early as you can.

As volunteers to the Association they have other lives away from Noda.

**SONGS FROM THE SHOWS**

**Cornerstone Theatre**

**St. Ives Arts Club**

*Director: Jennifer Smith Musical Director: Brian Jay 11<sup>th</sup> October*

What a pleasure to visit my old society as their new NODA Rep. I loved the programme and poster design. I also loved the intimate atmosphere of the Arts Club, although it can be a bit daunting for those on stage to be so close to their audience. The choice of songs was excellent as there were lots that we knew well from a host of different genres of musical theatre. Well done to Jennifer for what I believe to be her first experience of producing this kind of revue. Brian Jay was our genial host, who, with a clear and calm voice, told us more facts about some of the musicals that were featured, enabling the cast to change costumes or add accessories. He also played all the music on the piano without a scrap of sheet music – well done Brian. For a lot of the songs the cast stood still on stage and whilst this was O.K. to start with, I felt the audience might have enjoyed the show a little more if occasionally the cast moved to a different pattern. Also, I know it is difficult with cast members coming into the show at the last minute, but there were too many of the cast who did not know the words of the songs. On a personal note, I was very proud to see Hannah Brownlee fulfilling her potential – what a lovely voice. The costumes in the first half reflected the choice of songs well and the second half showed us a bit of glitz, that again was just right for the songs. We all enjoyed joining in the singing of the medleys to finish and everyone left having had a great night out.

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