

Noda South-West Magazine Spring 2010  
District 11 – West Dorset – Peter Wheeldon

***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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**PETER WHEELDON reports on District 11**

Oklahoma!	Weymouth Operatic Society
Murdered to Death	Sturminster Newton A. D. S.
The Railway Children	Swanage MTC & Purbeck Players
Hotel Paradiso	Encore Theatre Club
Tons of Money	Amateur Players of Sherborne
Anything Goes	WOW Youth Musical Theatre
Jack & the Beanstalk	Bridport Pantomime Players
Arabian Knights	Sturminster Newton A. D. S.
Summer Holiday	M.A.D.

<b>OKLAHOMA!</b>	<b>Weymouth Operatic Society</b>	<b>Pavilion Theatre, Weymouth</b>
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*Director/Choreographer: Julie Storey    Musical Director: Matthew Read*

*23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009*

From the start, it was crystal clear that this was going to be a first-rate production -and so it proved to be. Every aspect – music, movement, acting – was of the highest quality and combined to produce the best show from WOS that I have yet seen. Best of all, the interaction between Laurey and Curly, exquisitely played by Naomi Riglar and Paul Brewster, was pure magic and it was hard to believe that we were not watching accomplished professionals. They were superbly supported by all other lead parts, notably Sophie McAlister-Bell as scatty Ado Annie, Dave Pickard as sinister Jud Fry, Claire Bool as Aunt Eller and Geoff King as the manipulative Ali. The group numbers were nicely structured and very well presented by the ensemble, thereby adding greatly to the overall enjoyment of the show. The 10-piece orchestra, under the expert guidance of musical director, Matthew Reed, were in fine form complementing and enhancing those performances on stage. A colourful suite of costumes put the icing on the cake, while the backstage team kept the action moving along at cracking pace. Everything came together so well to produce yet another triumph for Director and Choreographer, Julie Storey.

**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 01454 773145*

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**THE RAILWAY CHILDREN [adapted Peter Thompson]**

**Swanage Musical Theatre Company & The Purbeck Players Mowlem Theatre, Swanage**

*Director: Brenda Ridout*

*31<sup>st</sup> October 2009*

Despite a relatively thin house, attributable largely to Halloween, the combined talents of these two societies presented a delightful, most engaging version of this well-told tale to an appreciative audience. Aided by an ingenious, superbly executed set, the predominantly young cast delivered their lines with a fluency, clarity and momentum that would have been the envy of many elders. Giving an endearing portrayal of a friendly, North Country stationmaster, Nick Clarke provided the narration, while Emma Whiting, as Roberta, gave a strong lead to the youth contingent, ably supported by her stage siblings Ben Sharpe and Tara Clarke / Sophie Buckle. The small group of very young children were totally at home on stage and added much to the charm of the show. A railway line at stage centre divided the cottage setting at one side from the station platform at the other, and then disappeared into a tunnel mouth at the rear of the set. This arrangement facilitated scene changes with barely a pause, thereby keeping the action moving along nicely. Costumes of the period, realistic railway engine sound effects and puffs of steam completed the picture. This accomplished production had the indelible stamp of director Brenda Ridout all over.

**MURDERED TO DEATH**

**Sturminster Newton Amateur Dramatic Society**

**The Exchange**

*Director: David Cake*

*October 2009*

**Councillor Gerry Branton reports:-**

How lovely, a first visit to a society, a play I have not seen before and a brand new performing venue in a delightful Dorset town. I was welcomed to this production by Ann and Graham Baseden, recent recipients of SW Summer School bursaries and what a splendid evening we had. The comedy, which bordered on farce at times, was set in a Country Manor House in the 1930's. SNADS had excelled in a superb Drawing-room set and all cast members were suitably attired in the period, including hairstyles and footwear. As each cast member was either killed off or taken in by the long arm of the law, we became more deeply engrossed, with semi-recognisable characters from past whodunits. I particularly commend Miss Maple, superbly played and delivered by Val Atkinson, the most grossly inept Inspector Pratt (aka Stephen Fry) as played by Joe Dimmer and the sinister butler, Bunting, played by Winston Fane-Bailey, in true Cluedo style. The remaining cast members added their own contribution with unique style and delivery. I was not able to guess the murderer either – well done.

**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***  
*Please put this date in your diary and encourage your members to come along too.*

***You are also invited to join in the weekend of special celebratory events***  
*Official forms and notification to be included in the next edition of "Theatre Business"*

**HOTEL PARADISO**

**Encore Theatre Club**

**The Arts Centre, Bridport**

*Director: John Haylock*

*6<sup>th</sup> November 2009*

Farce has to be one of the most difficult of theatrical presentations for amateurs, and it takes a company with the experience and talent of Encore to pull it off – as indeed they certainly did with this production. Relentless pace and slick continuity are crucial for success, and all the players had clearly worked very hard to achieve this. Steve Scorey (Boniface) and Louisa Hardy (Marcelle) had the lion's share of the action, and they were extremely well supported by all other thirteen members of the cast, most of whom are familiar names in Encore programmes. Character parts by John Pownall (Anniello), Chris Bignall (Georges) and Stephan Gough (three guises) added much to the humour. A multi-room set is obligatory for farce, and the Miles Bell / Stuart Lovell team proved to be worthy successors to master set-builder the late Tony Anthony, with their superb portrayal of the sleazy hotel, even though the shortage of available stage area caused the other setting in the play to be a little cramped. This was a highly entertaining production, much appreciated by a capacity house, and it turned out to be a creditable directorial debut for long-time Encore member John Haylock.

**TONS OF MONEY**

**Amateur Players of Sherborne**

**Digby Hall, Sherborne**

*Director: Charles Napier*

*20<sup>th</sup> November 2009*

To mark an important anniversary, the Players chose to stage the same play, opening on the same day of the year as the very first APS production seventy-five years previously. Nowadays, the play is inclined to show its age, and without this connection, it might not have been chosen, but the latter-day Players embraced it with great enthusiasm and under the shrewd and competent directorship of Charles Napier, turned it into a very successful and entertaining production. The experienced cast made the most of the opportunities to master the wide range of distinctive roles, and their combined 'chemistry' created some hilarious situations. Jane Pitts (Louise) and Andrew Cross (Aubrey) worked well together in sharing the bulk of the action, and were solidly supported by their fellow players, including some fine character studies from Derek Williams (Chesterman), Adrian Thorpe (Sprules) and George Pearson (Giles). Special mention too for Jennie Ward's Miss Mullet which was exquisite. The setting was extremely

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good with much authenticity and attention to detail. Inclusion of external views to two elevations was a nice touch.

*Congratulations APS on a very good play – you deserved better audience support –and also on reaching such a ripe old age.*

**Is your society's web-site linked to Noda?**

**SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL WEB SITE [www.nodasw.com](http://www.nodasw.com)**

*Information about SW Noda activities and our own "What's on" page:*

*plus all the reports from this and previous magazines – online.*

*Contact our membership secretary: [nicklawrence@hotmail.com](mailto:nicklawrence@hotmail.com) to register your web-site & email*

**ANYTHING GOES WOW**

**Youth Musical Theatre**

**Pavilion Theatre, Weymouth**

*Director/choreographer: Jeremy Tustin Musical Director: Helen Read*

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

This company of young people, already 2009 NODA South West cup winners for best youth production, confirmed their entitlement to this award with a sparkling performance on opening night. Principals Shakira Brading (Reno) and Josh Rose (Billy), seasoned performers with WOW, were in fine form and were well supported by a talented cast. Girl leads Nikki Winter (Erma), Laura Addy (Hope), and Monika Brodowska (Evangeline) were all excellent, and there was some very good character work from Billy Matthews (Moonface), Femi Oriogun-Williams (Elisha), and Greg Ryall (Lord Evelyn). Four lead dancers, Laura-Kate Thomas, Lamorna Taylor, Jess Thurtell and Sallie-Beth Lawless were spectacular and added a whole new dimension to the show. The full cast song-and-dance set pieces were very sharp and indicative of the strength-in-depth ability in the company. Musical director Heather Reed, aided by her eleven-piece orchestra, played her customary 'blinder' in supporting the action on stage. All this, together with an eye-catching suite of costumes and the familiar liner-deck setting, made for a very visual show that bubbled along at a brisk pace. Director Jeremy Tustin should be pleased to add this production to his portfolio.

**JACK AND THE BEANSTALK**

**Bridport Pantomime Players**

**The Arts Centre**

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

It can sometimes be a little unfair to descend on the first night of a production, particularly one as logistically complex as a large, community pantomime, but that posed no problem for BPP. Everything went like clockwork as the Players staged possibly the best of their pantomimes that I have seen. Apart from backdrops that were sluggish to unroll, it all went with good pace and bags of vitality. This was a very colourful production in terms of costumes, scenery - and spirit. Countless hours must have gone into making the extensive suite of eye-catching costumes and creating the many settings. As for the spirit, that came in abundance from the experienced cast, anchored by Teresa Grintner (Jack) and Stephen Light (Dame Trott), with great support from all the other principal characters and the ensemble. Since the show is jointly presented with two local dance establishments, the narrative was delightfully punctuated with a series of nifty dance routines involving some eighty students from tots to late teenagers. The evergreen

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Pat and Roy provided the musical backing to the many well known songs included in the show. A highly entertaining evening much enjoyed by everyone on both sides of the footlights.

*18<sup>th</sup> July 2010 - Holiday Inn, Taunton*

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

**ARABIAN KNIGHTS – the panto**

**Sturminster Newton Amateur Dramatic Society**

**The Exchange, Sturminster Newton**

*Directors: Helen Lacey & Val Cox*

*12<sup>th</sup> February 2010*

Two giant balloon palm trees at each side of stage set the scene for this colourful and highly entertaining pantomime. The co-directors made a very good job of giving this tale a thorough airing. The intense colours of the Orient were represented in the well-conceived settings and a superb suite of costumes, designed and made in-house by Joy Cake and her team, to adorn a large cast of forty-four. Clearly, a great deal of work had provided the means for the players to ‘strut their stuff’ in style. On stage, the imposing figure of Ian Grieg as Dame Dollop spearheaded the comedy while romance was delivered by Tessa Cox (Tommy) and Anna Neville (Hasan). There was a generous sprinkling of clowns and villains, and a delightful camel animated by Jenny Hill and Tess White. Add to this a troupe of lithe belly dancers together with some nifty footwork from a group of crusading knights, and we had all the ingredients for an enjoyable evening. Music was in the experienced hands of Elaine Korman and her co-musicians, and the comprehensive facilities of this superb community centre were put to very good use.

**SUMMER HOLIDAY Marvellous Amateur Dramatics The Guildhall, Axminster**

*Director: Maria Herbert Choreographers: Jane Hutchins & Maria Proudlock Musical Director: Bernie Fallon*

*19<sup>th</sup> February 2010*

This newly-formed company got away to a flying start with a sparkling production of a favourite 1960’s, musical, and under the experienced guidance of Maria Herbert and Bernie Fallon, has immediately established itself as a theatrical force to be reckoned with in the area. The romantic leads, touchingly played by Tom Glover and Nicky Sweetland, were superbly supported by six talented young people, Tom Matthews, Lauren Antinoro, Greg Horton, Jodie Glover, Ben Kapur and Grace Keeler who, capturing completely the spirit and demeanour of the age, sang and danced themselves into the hearts of the audience. Rachel Hamblett, Gerry Bearpark and Peter Ward provided mature comedy with some very well portrayed character parts and, behind all this was an abundance of very young and enthusiastic ‘wannabees’. Lively accompaniment came from an excellent six-piece orchestra, and eye-catching dance routines were by courtesy of the choreographers. The centrepiece stage setting was the big red double-decker bus stretching the full width between wings, and frequent scene changes tested the unquestionable agility of Stage Manager Alan Smart and his team. A very creditable debut for MAD, and deserving of better weekday houses.

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