

Noda South-West Magazine Spring 2010
District 12 – East Dorset – Brian Oliver

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

“Open a New Window”

SPRING 2010

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BRIAN OLIVER reports on District 12

The Gondoliers	Christchurch G&S Society
Show Wagon of the West	Zenith Theatre Company
Fame Forever	BOS Musical Company
Back to the Future	P. & P. Productions
The Hollow	KCA Players
Annual Christmas Concert	West Moor Singers
Aladdin	Highcliffe Charity Players
Scrooge – the Musical	Ferdown Phoenix Musical Society

THE GONDOLIERS Christchurch Gilbert & Sullivan Society The Regent Centre

Music & Staging: Nigel Finch

29th September 2009

Peter Wheeldon reports:-

This was my third visit since 2006 and, looking back over the previous programmes, I note that neither cast nor direction has changed much in that time. With all this wealth of experience at hand, it is hardly surprising that the company displays a professional touch in its productions and, with Nigel Finch directing operations both on stage and in the pit, success is almost guaranteed. True to form, Christchurch G&S delivered an excellent 'Gondoliers'. Colourful, disciplined and neatly choreographed, every scene was easy on the eye and, thanks to a fine group of principals, the music was very easy on the ear. The highlight for me was 'Sparkling Eyes' beautifully sung by Robert Eshelby. It was nice to see some new blood in the form of Robbie Bowering as Luiz who, at seventeen, is clearly principal material in the making. Cora Hardy was a delightful Casilda, and is maturing well into a major asset for the future. The costumes and scenery were really very good and added much to the authenticity of the action. The orchestra, as ever, was superb both in its own right and in the support it provided to the voices. Yet another very creditable production

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Palace Hotel, Torquay

Saturday 25th September 2010 @ 2:00 p.m.

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SHOW WAGON OF THE WEST Zenith Theatre Company St. Aldheims Church Hall

Written & Directed by: Ann Whitaker

24th October 2009

Ann Whitaker, the matriarch of this group, once again created another excellent production. This time she chose a Cowboy theme that meant she could utilize popular musical numbers from the many Broadway & Hollywood cowboy musicals. From “*Rosie Marie*” to “*Pocahontas*” and linking the musical numbers were two excellent short melodramas. It was clear that some of Zenith's long-term members were missing from the line-up, but some very talented new young members filled their places. They were certainly full of energy and enthusiasm. In my opinion a star in the making was Leah Jane, a very talent comedy actress with a beautiful singing voice. Unfortunately, once again this group had a few technical problems with their backing tracks and microphones, which was such a shame. My heart goes out to the performers who are left stranded and have to try and carry on regardless.

BACK TO THE FUTURE P. & P. Productions Lighthouse Theatre, Poole

Director/Choreographer: Sarah Cooper Musical Director: John Stringer

21st November 2009

To quote Chairman James White, “Back to Future celebrates P&P’s wonderful 90 year history, in the only way that we know how; with an all singing, all dancing, stage spectacular” and that was exactly what it was. My partner and I were totally overwhelmed and left stunned by the high standard of this fabulous “spectacular” concert. Yes, there were a couple of hiccups with the sound, but this production was equal to, and possibly better than, many professional touring companies that visit this theatre. We were treated to a selection of musical numbers from shows that the company has produced in the past, together with those from shows that the company would hope to be able to present in the future. It was slick, full of enthusiasm and with the full cast of 70 plus on stage, the sound was superb.

SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL AGM & AWARD CEREMONY

18th July 2010

Holiday Inn, Taunton 10:45 a.m.

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

Lunch also available at £12 a head.

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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

FAME FOREVER

BOS Musical Company

Regent Centre, Christchurch

Director: Ian Roth Musical Director: Stuart Darling

19th November 2009

I am always eager to see a show for the first time, and I applaud any group who are prepared to try the unknown. As always one hears a variety of advance reports and rumours about how things are going through the rehearsal period so my expectations were high. However, although overall it was well done and had several excellent individual performances, with the highlight of the show being a superb tango number, it was let down in places and sadly it fell flat and lacked spark. I am sure that the many scene changes, poor script and storyline was a major cause of this. There was some very good talent amongst this mainly young cast. However, many of them looked too young for the character that they were portraying and there seemed to have been no attempts to age these characters using stage make-up. A lack of male cast members left the sound unbalanced and even though mics were used I felt some were forcing their voice which lead to them singing off key. The Orchestra produced a good balanced sound throughout under the control of the young and talented musical director. In the opening number I was very surprised and disappointed to note that the male character was miming, and very badly too. There was further miming in Act 2 by a female character, but it did at least look more convincing than earlier, even though it sounded somewhat strange. Unfortunately the entire production appeared to lack direction and therefore a little more attention to detail by the production team, could have made this into a top class show.

Thank you to all of you who promptly paid your 2010 subscriptions

If you haven't got around to settling your membership with Peterborough.

Please remind your Treasurer for prompt payment.

Unpaid subscriptions by 31st March will lead to your membership lapsing.

THE HOLLOW

KCA Players

Kinson Community College

Director: Anne Robertson

28th November 2009

This was a typical Agatha Christie who dun-it play. After been warned as we took our seats that it was a very long play I was a little apprehensive, but because of good delivery and timing, the pace was not allowed to drag and therefore one forgot how long it was. As ever the standard of performance was very good throughout and, once again, the set was superb, even if it was built slightly off centre. Although it was a thriller there were some excellent comic moments. Many due to the fine character acting of Ginny Harrington, who I personally had never seen with KCA before.

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

SOUTH-WEST REGIONAL WEB SITE 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 to register your web-site & email

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

West Moor Singers Barrington Theatre, Ferndown

Director: Sue Oldrey

5th December 2009

For many years now I have always regarded the West Moors Christmas concert as the start of the festive season. As usual a very nice selection of seasonal numbers was sung by the choir interspersed with trios, duets and solos, and of course it is a good opportunity to exercise one's vocal chords by singing a selection of traditional carols. This year the audience were also asked to join in with the singing of the Hallelujah chorus from Handel's "The Messiah", which was performed as part of a BBC Radio 3 project "Sing Hallelujah" a nationwide attempt to get as many people as possible singing Handel's famous work during the festive season.

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ALADDIN

Highcliffe Charity Players

Regent Centre, Christchurch

Director: Pete Whiticker

28th January 2010

With exquisite costumes, innovative projected scenery, a script written for television, a very talented cast and a company with a history of producing top class pantomimes, one would have thought that the combination would make a fantastic show. However, at the performance I saw, it didn't quite work.

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From the start we were blown away by a superb band that was greatly over amplified, particularly the bass guitar. I was sat on the third row and in most of the musical numbers the cast, even with radio mics, were not heard, which was such a shame. After the interval we were able to move to the back row of the theatre where although the band was still loud I was able to hear some of the singing. Many of the cast gave excellent performances, particularly the Princess, Aladdin and Abanazer. However, the gags and slapstick routines seem old and laboured. The dame's ad libs were far too many and because we have seen and heard them all before, they are no longer funny. I read in programme that script was written with certain television stars and characters in mind, perhaps that's why it this production didn't seemed to live up expectations.

SCROOGE – THE MUSICAL Ferndown Phoenix Musical Society Barrington Theatre

Director: Sharon Percy

30th January 2010

This festive musical has long been a favourite of mine, and I will hold up my hand and say that I thought that, because of the limitations of this small theatre, this company were very brave to consider putting on a production of it. The end result that I was privileged to see was, in my opinion, one of their finest productions for several years. First time Director, Sharon Percy, did an absolutely superb job. Yes, there were one or two minor faults, but the overall the effect she created was excellent and very moving at times. I understand that earlier in the week there had been problems with sound, but by Saturday evening it was near perfect. The accompaniment came from the keyboards of the very talented teenager, Lee Redwood, who having been a cast member in the past, was very sympathetic to the company and never once overpowered any of the singing. The enthusiast cast gave their all and there was some fine performances, but credit must be given to Phil Evans, who I though was magnificent throughout as Ebenezer Scrooge.

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Please note the unusual date – moved to accommodate the National Conference.

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