

Noda South-West Magazine Spring 2010
District 8A – West Somerset – Jo Wilson-Hunt

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

“Open a New Window”

SPRING 2010

**. REVIEWS . STAGE MUSICALS . OPERETTAS . SCENERY .
. COSTUMES . LIGHTING . VOCAL SCORES . INSURANCE .
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JO WILSON-HUNT reports on District 8A

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The Creature Creeps!	Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society
Ruddigore	Chard Light Opera Society
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A Christmas Carol	Genesis Youth Theatre
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Snow White	Wellington Pantomime Group

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

Taunton Amateur Operatic Society

Brewhouse Theatre

Director: Alistair Donkin Musical Director: Elizabeth Hayley

October 2009

The overture set the scene and was enhanced by a dimly lit prelude of what was to come as the 'Guard' extinguished the fire in the 'Tower'. The sun was shining on this beautiful setting, with each character making their mark. There were no weak links on this Tower Green, smartly attired 'Yeomen' sang with aplomb, and each pretty maid, lady of rank or 'tart' of the gutter showed their character in small but defined ways. Of course Mr Donkin himself as Jack Point won the audience's affection on his first entrance but a poised and pretty Elsie matched him perfectly. Poor Phoebe tried her hardest to keep her place in Colonel Fairfax's affections but we were all hoping the doting dolt Shadbolt would win her in the end ...and strangely enough he did. These three played with confidence along with all the other principal characters. In fact this production was thoroughly enjoyable and clear and precise in everyway, and when Jack entered in the closing moments with a tear streaked face to declare his love for Elsie there was many a tear in the audiencehow often does that happen in G&SI loved every minute.

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.

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

THE CREATURE CREEPS!

Chardstock Amateur Dramatic Society

Community Hall

Director: Chris Williamson

October 2009

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The Creature Creeps! is described as a send-up of the horror story genre and needs to be presented with tongue-in-cheek spookiness and a quick pace. On opening night there was hesitation in line delivery, but once the major characters had been introduced the speed quickened and the sending up of the typical 'Spooky Castle' began. Act Two moved along at a better rate and in the process got much more of the humour over to the audience. There seemed to be some confusion over timeliness of this piece, and it clashed in places as the script (set in the late 19th Century) and costume/set (1930's –50's) didn't quite marry up but the 1930's PG Woodhouse acting style of particularly Babsy, Daisy and Frank really worked very well. One member of the audience to describe this production used the word endearing. This was very true, everyone left with a smile on their face...so CADS mission accomplished.

NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & AWARD CEREMONY

Palace Hotel, Torquay

Saturday 25th 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

RUDDIGORE

Chard Light Opera Society

The Warehouse Theatre, Ilminster

Music & Staging: Nick Lawrence Choreographer: Caroline Lee

October 2009

As it says in the programme 'Ruddigore' doesn't come around very often and I can't imagine why. This production was a joy to watch, beautifully dressed bridesmaids giggled their way through the 'Cranford' ladies, and smartly attired gentleman paid their respects. Robin Oakapple and Rose Maybud were a perfect match. How lucky CLOS are to have such a talented group of younger members so that they can actually share the roles on alternate nights (two gorgeous young ladies in this case: one night the bridesmaid the next the bride). Fun and laughter was the recipe for this frivolous piece with a comic jack tar, crazy ghosts and a very mad woman. But the serious singing was left to Dame Hannah and Sir Roderic who made us remember we were watching an operetta. What great diction and power they had together...all great stuff.

UNEXPECTED & WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

Bradford Players

Village Hall, Bradford on Tone

Unexpected Director: Freda Storey

What are you doing here? Directors: Jane Dyer & Lynn Henden

November 2009

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Although ‘Unexpected’ appears first in the title ‘What are you doing here?’ was the first piece to be performed on the eve before Halloween in Bradford on Tone. This small village company are proud to boast a senior and junior section. The latter opening the evening with a young Narrator, who built his rapport with the audience quickly and with maturity well beyond his years. The young company took control of the stage even down to changing the set themselves. They all exuded confidence and not a line was missed through bad diction or fluffing of lines. This was quite a short one-act play that did the trick in leaving the audience waiting for more. The interval included a very tasty ploughman’s supper, again served by the same young people, who showed their composure was not just an act. The final part began eerily. This collection of stories, poems and extracts that had been collated by the director. Her vision was at times scary, funny and poignant and this was realised by a group of extremely talented performers. The lighting and setting enhanced the mood of the piece and it all finished much too soon. Congratulations to all involved who wanted to try something new and succeeded admirably.

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.

DAISY PULLS IT OFF

Taunton Thespians

Tacchi-Morris Theatre, Taunton

Director: Michael Gilbert November

“Jubilate” what an absolutely spiffing production. The staff were there to greet us as we entered the grand hall (foyer) and we were ushered to our seats to see the fourth form's excellent presentation.....this play a parody of the those adventure stories set in boarding schools of the 1920's was set in the plain black box of the stage, with more black boxes used as desks and even a cliff. This worked extremely well mainly due to the totally believable acting talents of the cast. 3 large hangings of black and white pen drawings similar to the illustrations from the books themselves defined the theme of the production. The cast of pupils should be a touch too old but believable, and it should be played with the full vim and vigour of the period and Taunton Thespians met this head on with a great cast of ‘Gals’ led by a talented and sweet Daisy. Teaching staff were all believable and in control, with a firm but beautiful head mistress just as described. Costumes were in period and on the whole the girls were turned out smart and precise. How lovely to see hair under control with no dribbly bits dangling over eyes. Daisy and her friends led us through this adventure finding treasure and saving the school bully and companion from a terrible fall to their death. This scene was a highlight, physical theatre at its best...Well Done Gals 1000 House Points awarded for a truly ‘ripping’ evening of entertainment.

A TRANSPORT OF DELIGHT

Wellington Amateur Operatic Society, WAA

The Arts Centre

Devised and Directed by Susan (Swannie) Swan & Mary Lewis

Choreographers: Mary Lewis & Charlie Evans Musical Director: Joanne Buck

‘Welcome aboard Op Soc Airs flight to Barbados’ We were greeted by flight attendants and shown to our seats, complete with attached sick bags! Once the Health and Safety demonstration was completed we taxied down the runway and off we flew.....a combination of well known numbers all with a

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transportation theme were interspersed with visual and short sketch gags (created and often performed by 'Swannie' and Mary). They took us around the world and back again on a variety of different modes of transport some weird, some wonderful. Wellington Op Soc Autumn shows have become quite an institution in the town and this year 'Swannie' had taken the lead by letting loose an idea she had nurtured from hearing radio programme around this theme. It worked...a bit confusing at times but we all got there in the end. The older members of the company beamed down on us from the tiny stage, performing with lots of tuneful enthusiasm, but sadly a number of younger members seemed to have forgotten why they were there. In fact they looked very bored at times except for the youngest who sparkled her way through act one with enough enthusiasm for the whole company.... Just remember a smile goes a long way with your audience, if you smile at them they will forgive any blips or missed lines.....A fun night that could have taken us in to orbit but not quite.

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Genesis Youth Theatre

Wellington Arts Centre

Director: Charles Dyke

A simple box set depicting stone walls, doors and windows set the scene of this short but sweet production. The two narrators were politely spoken and diction was clear as they took us back in time to Dickensian London. Lighting moved us through the story, firstly to the interior of Scrooge's counting house and the main character of the play Scrooge and his assistant Bob Cratchet. The role of Scrooge is extremely demanding as he rarely leaves the stage and this young man took it all in his stride with believable characterisation. Cratchet showed such an understanding of his role that during the vision of what was yet to come he caused many a tear when he spoke of the death of his beloved Tiny Tim. All other roles were small but nicely portrayed, again with clear diction and understanding along with just the right amount of menace from the spirits. This was a first for this young director and it was a challenging piece to cut your teeth on and it went very smoothly, but why did so much of the action happen stage left? At times it was rather cramped especially when we visited Nephew Fred's home and those crinoline petticoats filled the space! But with that said congratulations Genesis this was a difficult piece of theatre that you handled with maturity and style.

Noda Summer School, Loughborough University

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ALADDIN	The Wayfarers Pantomime Society	The Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton
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Producer/Director: Brian Epps Choreographer: Sheila Driver Musical Director: Kathryn Stevens

23rd January 2010

As has come to be expected of this society this was a slick well-timed production, with a slightly more funky approach this year mainly due to Brian and Kathryn's injection of new ideas, complemented by Sheila's boundless choreographic techniques. Aladdin and his Princess complemented each other beautifully, with Widow Twankey and Wishee Washee causing much fun and laughter. The young talented Carl Bradley (Wishee) partnered in comedy with the experienced Stuart Lloyd (Twankey) took us through this adventure in true panto style...pupil and master getting every funny line and visual gag over to the predominantly young audience with the ease of true professionals. In fact, all the principals held their own, with the Genie of the Ring being another firm favourite due to her cheeky comedy style and gentle rapport with the tiny tots. No one flagged or missed a beat...the dancers and chorus all showed why this company is so well respected locally, not a smile is missed not a foot is out of place. The costumes, make-up, wigs and set were all of a high standard and complimented this oriental feast.....Well done, Wayfarers, you never let your audience down.

SNOW WHITE	Wellington Pantomime Group	The Wellesley Theatre, Wellington
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Director: Colin Marshall Choreographer: Maureen Leach Musical Director: Steve Bradnum January 2010

Opening in the Wicked Queen's lair, the balcony extension brought the totally evil Queen and her cheeky mirror much closer to the audience, making us realise this may be a rather different panto. This staging worked as a perfect barrier between the sweet village of 'Nice' and the evil and conniving world. The production was originally written for The Mitre Players, Surrey and had been adapted to bring in a more local flavour. This was a complex script and quite adult in content with little slap stick. Musical numbers were heavily influenced by West End and Broadway musicals, a highlight being a pastiche of '5 Guys Named Mo' in this case '7 Dwarfs Named Oi', which was delivered with panache and style. The rather tall (bar one) Dwarfs brought the show up to speed with the lovely Keira Veysey in the title role delighting us with her natural style and sweet voice. A 'Sound of Music' gag ran throughout the show mainly due to the fact that 'Dame Maria Von Trapp' was in residence. Des Atkinson is no 'novice' to the role of 'Dame' and worked really hard to get every joke across, but as they were rather clever and delivered at speed due to the lengthy script they didn't get the laughs they deserved. A young star in the making, Jack Granville in the dual role of Del Boy/Prince Charming caused the most hilarity as the young audience could snigger at 'Del' in his gold tracksuit and then laugh at the totally silly 'prince' on his hobby horse. It's always worth taking a risk by trying something new...you just need to hope the regular audience enjoys the experience.