

SAVOYARDS NEWS

FEBRUARY 2011

Dear Members and Friends,

This News Letter regrettably brings more bad news than good in that it informs those of you that are not already aware that our production of THE MIKADO scheduled for June 2011 will not take place. At the Auditions for principal roles held on Jan 24th Andy, Julie and Maggi did have some choice in the female roles but were presented with only 2 men for 5 male roles. It also was obvious that at most there would be only 2 of each voice in the male chorus. They worked long and hard to attempt to attract more men from other sources but to little avail. Then came the news that Andy would have to undergo prolonged medical treatment and that Julie would have to look after him during that time so they had no choice but to resign as Producers of the show. Faced with these circumstances it was decided that those Members taking part in the production should be allowed their voice on the matter. After discussion and a vote taken at the rehearsal on Friday Feb 4th it was decided that, regrettably, the production was no longer viable. Andy wishes it to be known that his condition is not life-threatening but consists of surgery that may have to take place intermittently over a number of months.

Following this bombshell we now return to the usual format, with its usual mix of past triumphs and news of, hopefully, happier times to come.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is a pity that this years Summer Production has had to be cancelled but I am sure the decision was inevitable and the right one to take in the circumstances. There is little point in trying to analyse the reasons for this happening -“ never mind the why or wherefore”. Lack of new young male supporters is a chronic hazard in most local amateur activities, theatrical or otherwise, and seems to be more marked now than even a few years ago. We have flourished for 32 years and I see no reason why we shouldn't survive this mini-crisis and go on for another 32 at least. In the short term we need to recruit new members and welcome back some former ones- there are a lot of them about- who may be agog to return! All systems go then for the Autumn Show – may it prove to be “a sturdy fellow after all, this latest Ruddigore”.

I join in the tributes to David Sanders, the “gentle giant”, whom we miss greatly.

Alan

THINGS PAST

NOVEMBER 2010

Once again Sheringham Savoyards produced a “first” for Little Theatre audiences in the shape of “THE ZOO”, followed by the known favourite “TRIAL BY JURY”. Although we did not play to capacity houses the very substantial audiences seem suitably entertained by our efforts. By persuading cast members to provide their own costumes and props and by minimal use of anything not owned by the Society the show turned a tidy profit of £750. Patrick is to be congratulated on producing a happy and entertaining show as his first foray into production, and it was a suitable ending to Karen’s time with us. The NODA critique was available at MIKADO rehearsals and is available to read on our web-site. I think it is fair to say that it doesn’t entirely match the cast’s view of things -but there you go!

DECEMBER 2010

Unfortunately snow and ice caused the cancellation of the “Cakes and Choruses” evening on 3rd, which was designed to attract more members to join us for MIKADO. – possibly the first intimation of fate intervening to sabotage this show? However by Saturday 11th the weather had improved enough for Savoyards to entertain the Christmas shoppers in Sheringham once again with carols sung outside the Old Post Office. An impressive total of £350 was collected and forwarded to East Anglian Air Ambulance.

JANUARY 2011

MIKADO rehearsals started on 7th when we welcomed Maggi Warren as our MD. The subsequent events you already know.

FEBRUARY 2011

Our intrepid Town Quiz team, now with our President back in the fray, did battle again on Wed 2nd, this time against The Cromer & Sheringham Rotary Club. They won convincingly by 190 to 130 points and now contest a Semi-Final on March 16th, again at the Morley Club. They had a few more supporters this time – lets hope for still more next time!

THINGS TO COME

Your committee is keen to keep the Society functioning, on a social level at least, until our next production, so has arranged a couple of “pub evenings” to get together for a chat and a drink or two at the usual post rehearsal “watering hole”, to wit the Burlington Hotel, Sheringham. These will be on Fridays 25th Feb and 25th March – time not critical -but as rehearsals are usually 7.30 blunt, rather than sharp, this seems as good a time as any. This invitation goes out to Friends as well as Members – and if anyone can persuade any possible new recruits to join us, please do!

MAY 2011

Following the success of last years Greek themed evening at the Wyndham Arms it is proposed that this be repeated, as our Annual Dinner, on 14th - more details in due course.

As time has become unexpectedly available it seems sensible to start chorus rehearsals for RUDDIGORE earlier than usual for an Autumn Show, so they will take place on every Friday in May and the first two of June. They will be held at the Friends' Meeting House, Cremer Street, Sheringham at the usual times. An early warning, however, ref car parking. It is VERY difficult in the immediate area so probably best to use Council Car Parks, free after 6pm, and then walk. Audition pieces for Principal roles will be available during this period.

Plans are also afoot for a possible "bring & sing" MIKADO sometime during the Summer – more news later.

SEPTEMBER 2011

Rehearsals start again on 9th for RUDDIGORE. As previously announced Hazel Randall is producing and we are pleased that Maggi Warren is, after a bit of a false start, not of her making, prepared to lead us as MD.

Our AGM will be held on Wed 14th – this time at the Wyndham Arms.

NOVEMBER 2011

RUDDIGORE is scheduled for 27th & 28th in the Little Theatre.

PEOPLE

As often is the case this section consists of a number of sad farewells – but first, on a happy note, we were pleased to see the award in the recent New Year's Honours List of MBE to Margaret Hunter, for her work at Thorpe Market Church, in which we have given a number of Concert version performances over the years.

In November 2010 the town of Sheringham was shocked by the sudden and unexpected death of another MBE, Bryan Pigott, who, among his many diverse activities, managed to fit in appearances in the Policemen's Chorus whenever we did PIRATES. He and Ruby have been Friends of the Savoyards for many years. The Society was well represented at his funeral in St Peters Church.

In December we were all saddened by the death of David Sanders, after an illness of some duration. David and Gwen joined us for GONDOLIERS in 1994 and subsequently, as well as taking various principals roles in productions, jointly produced PATIENCE in 1999, and PRINCESS IDA in 2003. David's funeral service was held at the Norwich City Crematorium, when Savoyards formed a substantial part of the congregation, but other musical societies were also well represented, signifying the high regard in which David was held. Sullivan's music was played during the service and as the mourners met outside it gradually seemed to become appropriate to sing "Hail Poetry" in his honour- so, after consultation with Gwen, that is what happened.

Gwen has asked for this note to be added to our News Letter.:-

Thank you so much for all the cards, messages and kind words I have received for David and myself. I have always loved the friendliness and artistry of the Savoyards and this recent period of time has confirmed these feelings for me- culminating in the singing of “Hail Poetry” after the funeral. That I shall never forget! David was very proud of being part of Sheringham Savoyards and had so much fun with you all. Thank you again. Gwen.

We learnt earlier in 2010 of the death of Hilda Johnson, who was a member of the Ladies chorus in the late 1980s.

To strike a different note, albeit still with regret, we bid farewell to Duncan and Pam McLaughlin. They have contributed greatly to our Society since joining us in 2005. Both have been hard working officers as well as making their mark on stage. Duncan has found working from the outpost of the Empire that is North Norfolk increasingly difficult and the news of the imminent arrival of a grandchild was the clincher in their decision to move closer to their family in the Home Counties. We wish them well and do thank them for all they have done for Sheringham Savoyards.

This brings us to another problem bedevilling our Society at present – lack of volunteers to help run the Society. Pam’s departure means we have no Social Secretary and Duncan’s means a further vacancy on the Committee- added to which we have to announce that Pat Dawson has had to resign from her post as Secretary. Thankfully Moira Weller has, yet again, stepped in to that post – but it must be stressed – only until next AGM at the latest, ideally not that long! PLEASE someone step forward and help us out in some role or other!

A O B

NODA Summer School. This enterprise has not been mentioned recently but is an annual event designed to “bring professional training to amateur theatre”. This year’s will be held at the University of Warwick 30th July to 6th August. Full details are available from the web-site: www.noda.org.

Holiday Cottage to Let in the South of France – only 5 miles from the Med. It is available at very reasonable terms between May and September. Sleeps 4
Contact Kath & Maurice on 01263 821185 or e-mail: kandm.whiting@virgin.net.

Another chronic problem we face is lack of storage space. Hazel is still looking for somewhere to store various archive material and sooner or later we will need to find suitable storage for the Society’s costumes as Nan is preparing to move house to somewhere smaller. Another plea then – PLEASE can you find some space!!

