

Woodley Players Theatre Group



<http://www.woodleyplayers.co.uk>

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Members of the Greater Manchester Drama Federation

Newsletter No.58 - November 2003

Editorial

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2003-2004 season. And it has certainly started with a bang!

On Saturday 11th October close to 50 singers took part in our "G&S Extravaganza" workshop culminating in a concert that evening. It was a wonderful success - a testament to the hard work of the organizers who had laboured tirelessly on our behalf. With Roger wielding the baton the time flew past and 6 hours of singing was over in the blink of an eye. The evening was an intimate affair with around 40 of our friends and family joining us for the finished performance. John Humphreys was our Master of Ceremonies weaving the selection from Ruddigore, Yeomen of the Guard and The Mikado into a coherent whole by explaining the plots for the audience as we went along.

I think it has had the dual purpose of being a fun day for Woodley Players members and bringing in some new faces to boost our membership for the coming year. Who knows? Perhaps we will make it a regular event?

With hardly time to draw breath, we have moved onto the rehearsals for next Spring's production of "The Mikado". This is a favourite of many and excitement is already building as we anticipate a colourful spectacle set in old Titipu. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find details of the audition for "The Mikado". Please consider auditioning for a part, even if it is your first time. Otherwise, join us in the chorus for what is promising to be a great production. This will be my first "Mikado" and I can hardly wait!

We hope to see you at rehearsals or on the production nights. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support.

Kate Holt
Assistant Secretary

The Mikado - Auditions

Sunday 23rd November between 2pm and 5pm (by appointment) at Hatherlow Church Hall

The Plot :

Nanki-Poo, the son of the Mikado arrives in Titipu disguised as a minstrel to seek Yum-Yum with whom he has fallen in love. Yum-Yum is betrothed to her guardian, Ko-Ko, but he has been condemned to death for flirting and Nanki-Poo has returned to claim her for himself. Unfortunately on his return he finds that far from being dead, Ko-Ko has in fact appointed Lord High Executioner and is to marry Yum-Yum that very day.

Yum-Yum and her sisters arrive and she reveals to Nanki-Poo that she does not love her guardian. The two lovers realise that their cause is hopeless, and Yum-Yum leaves Nanki-Poo who then tries to kill himself. Meanwhile, Ko-Ko has received a letter from the Mikado threatening dire consequences unless there is a public execution in Titipu, whereupon Ko-Ko offers to help Nanki-Poo by beheading him ! Nanki-Poo agrees on condition that he marry Yum-Yum and have one months happiness before the execution. Amid the celebrations, Katisha appears having tracked down Nanki-Poo and attempts to reveal his true identity.

Yum-Yum prepares for her wedding but soon realizes that the law dictates that a wife must be buried alive if her husband is beheaded. The marriage is off and Nanki-Poo determines to kill himself that afternoon with Ko-Ko's help. But Ko-Ko is incapable of killing anything and in desperation draws up an affidavit of Nanki-Poo's execution.

The Mikado arrives with Katisha and is presented with the certificate of execution but tells Ko-Ko that he has executed the heir to the throne. Ko-Ko and Pooh-Bah find Nanki-Poo and beg him to present himself, alive, to his father, thereby absolving them of his death. But Nanki-Poo, now married to Yum-Yum, is afraid of Katisha's wrath. Ko-Ko, reluctantly agrees to woo Katisha and succeeds using flattery and a lovelorn song. Katisha adds her powerful pleas to the Mikado for everyone to be pardoned. The Mikado, a bit bewildered by it all, nonetheless agrees.

Voices :

The Mikado of Japan	(Bass)
Nanki-Poo	(Mikado's son, disguised as a wandering minstrel - Tenor)
Ko-Ko	(Lord High Executioner - Baritone)
Pooh-Bah	(Lord High Everything Else - Bass/Baritone)
Pish-Tush	(A noble lord - Baritone)
Yum-Yum	(A ward of Ko-Ko - Soprano)
Pitti-Sing	(A ward of Ko-Ko - Mezzo Soprano)
Peep-Bo	(A ward of Ko-Ko - Alto)
Katisha	(An "elderly" lady, in love with Nanki-Poo - Alto)

Contact David Parkinson (0161) 406 6132 or Kate Holt (01625) 614505 to register interest and receive a copy of the audition pieces.

Roger Bowler

It was with great sadness that we received the news about Roger's death in June. He hadn't been ill for long, so it was a huge shock to us to hear first how seriously ill he was, and then to learn of his death soon afterwards.

Both Roger have been members of the society and taken part in both plays and shows for many years. More recently Roger became a management committee member and took his duties seriously - always there to help and support and always cheerful with a tale to tell.

He organised several most enjoyable walks - and there is no better way to get to know a person than to walk with them.

He was a lovely gentleman, in the true sense of the word, who will be sadly missed. His gentle, unassuming smile and lilting voice have become an integral part of the Players. Our thoughts and prayers are with Audrey, Chris and family at this time.

Lesley Parkinson

New Membership Secretary

I am very pleased to announce that Margaret Bailey has agreed to take over the position of Membership Secretary from Jenny Davies. May I take this opportunity to thank Jenny for all her hard work and commitment.

If your membership is still outstanding please contact Margaret/Mike Bailey at 54 Fernwood, Marple Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5BE. Tel: 0161 427 5352.

Bryony Somers

Play Reading "Blithe Spirit"

On 4th September we enjoyed a most entertaining evening thanks to the hard work and excellent hospitality of Miranda Nichols and John Thewlis. Miranda will be directing our 2004 production of Blithe Spirit.

The event was very well supported, not only by those considering trying for a part, but also by those who thoroughly enjoyed "*a good do*".

New Year Sunday Lunch and Walk on Sunday January 4th 2004

There are two optional walks on this day -
either - around Etherow (families with buggies)
or - Lantern Pike for the *walkers*

Meet at 11:30am for both walks - either outside the café at Etherow, or at the Lantern Pike Inn.

The New Year Lunch follows on at The Lantern Pike Inn, Little Hayfield. For those not walking, meet at 1:45pm, for 2pm start.

Cost is £5.25 for 1 course (main), or £6.85 for 2 courses (main course and sweet) from the Sunday Carvery menu, with a choice of Roast Turkey or Roast Beef. Or

Children's menu available.

Separate a la carte menu also available, giving a wide choice for individual dishes, including vegetarian - let me know if you want a copy.

Contact David Parkinson, before December 15th, on (0161) 406 6132, to register interest, or to get a menu. A £5 deposit cheque is required, made payable to Woodley Players Theatre Group, with the order for your meal. Don't delay in reserving your place though, there are limited places available - so it is first come, first served!

Talk and Walk on the History of Theatre in Manchester

Saturday January 24th 2004 11am at the Library Theatre Manchester.

Meet at the Library Theatre in Saint Peter's Square for an illustrated talk and walk about the history of the theatres of Manchester (including a peek inside the Theatre Royal, Manchester's oldest surviving theatre) includes illustrated notes, tea, coffee and biscuits.

We have been on this type of walk before, and they are always very interesting and informative.

Cost £10 this event is organised by the University of Manchester.

If you fancy joining us, phone Lesley and David Parkinson on 406 6132 to register your interest asap.



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