

Bawtree & Sons Solicitors

Since before 1895

FOR ALL
LEGAL
SERVICES



CAR PARK
AT REAR
OF OFFICE

65 Newland Street
Witham

Witham (01376) 513491

*All Vilians can find me down
at Maxim's*

**J.R. SLADE Esq.
SOLICITOR**

Tel: Maldon 828397

- Conveyancing from £200 } Ex. VAT & Disbs
- Wills from £25
- Matrimonial / Divorce
- Crime / Traffic
- Litigation
- Probate / Trusts
- Evening Visits by Appointment



R. Pipe

INSURANCE CONSULTANT

*For all your
Insurance
Needs*

Newland Court, Newland Street,
Witham, Essex
Tel: 01376 501105 Fax: 01376 502205

83 High Street, Maldon, Essex
Tel: 01621 855666

20 Coggeshall Road, Braintree, Essex
Tel: 01376 326575

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7am - 6pm



SPEAK TO
MARGARET LOCKE
or ROBYN O'BRIEN

Prime Appointments Ltd

(01376) 502999

Fax: (01376) 502846
CHRISTMAS HOUSE, 98B NEWLAND STREET
WITHAM, ESSEX CM8 1AH

**FOR
PERMANENT & TEMPORARY
APPOINTMENTS**

**IN
INDUSTRY, COMMERCE
OR ONE OF THE PROFESSIONS**

We Provide A Cost Effective, Professional Service, Covering Central Essex.
Backed By Excellent Local Business Knowledge



Presents

THE MERRY WIDOW



WITHAM PUBLIC HALL

MONDAY 26TH TO SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER 1998



PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS OF THE SOCIETY

1922 HMS Pinafore	1955 Rose Marie	1972 The Merry Widow	1986 Yeomen of the Guard
1923 The Pirates of Penzance	1956 Tulp Time	The Gondoliers	The Sound of Music
1924 Ruddigore	1957 The White Horse Inn	1973 Carousel	1987 The Merry Widow
1925 Patience	1958 The Gipsy Princess	Iolanthe	Trial by Jury &
1926 Yeomen of the Guard	1959 The Merry Widow	1974 The Pajama Game	HMS Pinafore
1927 Dorothy	1960 Bless the Bride	Yeomen of the Guard	1988 Kismet
1928 Les Cloches de Corneville	1961 The Boy Friend	1975 Pink Champagne	Half a Sixpence
1929 Mikado	1962 Grab Me a Gondola	Patience	1989 Fiddler on the Roof
1930 The Gondoliers	1963 The Quaker Girl	1976 South Pacific	The Gondoliers
1931 Falka	1964 The New Moon	Ruddigore	1990 Die Fledermaus
1932 HMS Pinafore	Mikado (CV)	1977 Guys & Dolls	The King and I
1933 Merrie England	1965 The Maid of the Mountains	Utopia Ltd	1991 Carousel
1934 Tom Jones	Pirates of Penzance (CV)	1978 The White Horse Inn	Patience
1935 The Geisha	1966 Gipsy Love	Mikado	1992 Annie Get Your Gun
1936 Dorothy	HMS Pinafore (CV)	1979 Brigadoon	Bless the Bride
1937 The Maid of the Mountains	1967 Call Me Madam	Princess Ida	1993 Brigadoon
1938 The Street Singer	Iolanthe (CV)	1980 Orpheus in the Underworld	Ruddigore
1939 Goodnight Vienna	1968 The Desert Song	Iolanthe	1994 My Fair Lady
1947 Miss Hook of Holland	Patience (CV)	1981 Summer Song	South Pacific
1948 Maritza	1969 Rose Marie	The Quaker Girl	1995 Kiss Me, Kate
1949 Katinka	Mikado	1982 The Desert Song	Oliver!
1950 The Lilac Domino	1970 Free As Air	Cox & Box & The Sorcerer	1996 Anything Goes
1951 Rio Rita	1971 Oklahoma!	1983 Oklahoma!	Guys & Dolls
1952 Wild Violets	The Pirates of Penzance	The Pirates of Penzance	1997 Orpheus in the Underworld
1953 Magyar Melody	1971 Trial by Jury &	1984 My Fair Lady	Pirates of Penzance
1954 Carissima	HMS Pinafore	Free As Air	1998 The Pajama Game
		1985 Showboat	
		La Vie Parisienne	

CV = Concert Version

Witham Amateur Operatic Society

proudly presents

THE MERRY WIDOW



(Performances given by arrangement with Glocken Verlag Ltd.)

Original book and lyrics by
VICTOR LÉON and LEO STEIN

Music by FRANZ LEHÁR

New book and lyrics by
PHIL PARK

Music adapted and arranged by
RONALD HANMER

At the Witham Public Hall

Monday 26th to Saturday 31st October 1998

WITHAM AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY was inaugurated in 1921, is a registered charity (number 265029), and is affiliated to the National Operatic & Dramatic Association (NODA).



Witham Amateur Operatic Society

President: Mrs Anne Sheppard **Hon. Life members:** Mrs K.M. Adams, Miss A. R. Brewer Mrs N. Hinchliffe, J.E. Gunson Esq, G. H. Coverdale Esq, Mrs A. Sheppard

Vice Presidents

Mrs K. Adams	Mrs Veronica Crane	Mr & Mrs D. A. Hunt	Miss G. Rose
Mr & Mrs S. Adkins	Mrs I.F. Dewdney	Mr & Mrs S.B. Jones	R. Shakespeare Esq.
T. Barnes Esq.	Mrs C.M. Draper	Mrs A. King	Mr & Mrs T.J. Sheppard
Mrs G. Beckett	S.E. Draper Esq.	L.E. King Esq.	Mrs P. Slugocki
Mr & Mrs S.J.E. Briggs	M. Dunion Esq.	Mrs K. Lewis	Miss M. Smith
H. Brooks Esq.	R. Enfield Esq.	Joan Lyon, MBE	Mrs K. Stevenson
Mrs S. Carpenter	Mr & Mrs K. Ferris	Mr & Mrs E. Maltby	Mr & Mrs P. Swann
N.H.O. Clough Esq.	Mrs D. Gann	M.R. Murton Esq.	Mrs N. Taylor
Mrs M. Clouting	J.E. Gunson Esq.	Mrs R. Nelmes	Mr & Mrs C. Turner
Derek Collins Esq.	Cllr & Mrs M. Hall	D Page Esq.	Dr A.M. Wood
Mr & Mrs G.H. Coverdale	Mr & Mrs S. Hinchliffe	Mrs M. Parvin	Mrs M.J. Wood.

For Further details about becoming a Vice President, please contact our Hon. Membership Secretary.

Officers Of The Society

Hon Chairman:	Stewart Adkins
Hon Secretary:	Pam Whelan
Hon Business Manager:	Kathryn Adkins
Hon Treasurer:	Julia Reed
Hon Membership Sec.:	Anne Marsden, 161 Honeysuckle Way, Witham
Hon Social Secretaries:	Steve and Sue Rogers
Hon Publicity Manager:	Elisabeth Ladd

Executive Committee

Nicholas Clough (WOW Representative), Vin Farmer, Sue Rogers, Paul Chittleborough



Parker Knoll
PROPOSALS

RELAX IT'S A PARKER KNOLL

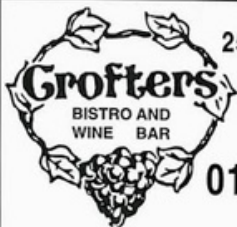


Proposals, our latest collection, features all the quality and comfort you would expect from Parker

Knoll plus a few extras. Scatter cushions, a storage drawer for magazines and newspapers, a stowaway footstall and a pocket for the remote control - all innovative and practical features designed to make your life more comfortable. And, Proposals is available in a choice of over 200 beautiful fitted or loose covers

F. BYFORD & SON

90/92 High Street, Witham
Telephone • Fax (01376) 513386



25 MALDON ROAD
WITHAM

01376 511068

- VALUE FOR MONEY BISTRO MENU •
- FULL ON-LICENCE •
- PRIVATE ROOM AVAILABLE FOR HIRE •
- TWO LUXURY EN-SUITE BEDROOMS •
- SECLUDED GARDEN •
- CAR PARKING •

ALSO DIRECT PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO GROVE ROAD CAR PARK

ONLY 5
MINUTES
WALK FROM
THIS THEATRE



A Message from the President



Welcome to our fourth production of *The Merry Widow*. Cynthia Stead did the choreography last time but on this occasion has taken on the roles of both Producer and Choreographer. I can claim to have been around for three productions, and several members were in our last production (1987), however the gentleman presently playing Njegus has been in all four!

This delightful operetta is one of Franz Lehár's most popular works. I am sure you will recognise much of the music. "Vita" is probably the most well-known song, but "You'll Find me at Maxim's" runs it a close second. You will surely walk out humming one of these tunes.

I wish you an entertaining evening with the patriotic citizens of Pontevedro.

The Producer — Cynthia Stead



Cynthia has been associated with the Society for 23 years since she choreographed and took part in *Pink Champagne* in 1975. Since then she has taken part in, choreographed or directed eighteen Witham shows. Her first venture into directing was as assistant producer in *Free as Air* (1984). She has directed for WAOS *Bless the Bride* (1992), *Oliver!* (1995), *Anything Goes* (1996), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1997), and *The Pajama Game* this spring. In Cynthia's own words:

"I would like to take this opportunity of thanking our Musical Director Jerry Martin for his valuable help and enthusiasm - a pleasure and a force to be reckoned with! Thanks also to Anne Dobinson for her more than helpful contribution to the production. Our production team and performing members wish you an enjoyable evening of romantic music and charming dialogue".

The Musical Director — Jerry Martin



Jerry Martin kindled his love of Opera and Musical Theatre in the early 1970s, taking part in works as diverse as *La Clemenza di Tito* and *Paint Your Wagon* with the Surrey Light Opera Company. During this period he also regularly attended performances at our own Royal Opera House and E.N.O., and at many of the major European Houses.

He turned down places to study at Trinity College London and Leeds College of Music to join H.M. Forces as a working musician. Whilst serving in Germany he continued his vocal studies with the "Hagen Opera House" who offered him a permanent position, but this was declined in order to fulfil ambitions in conducting. By 1986 he had graduated from the "Royal Military School of Music" as a Bandmaster after completing a three-year course in conducting, orchestration, performance, composition, and harmony. He was awarded a Fellowship from the Trinity College of Music, London, one of the highest honours any performer can receive.

As a conductor he has toured the world and directed at many of the best concert venues, including the Royal Albert Hall, Festival Hall and Snape Maltings, working with artists as diverse as Vera Lynn, Kenny Ball, The Bach Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Since leaving his position in H.M. Forces, he has worked as a freelance instrumentalist, teacher and conductor throughout the U.K. and Europe. While not involved in his many musical activities, he is an enthusiastic cross-country cyclist, skier, and collector of classic Italian motorcycles.



Max

headroom

Telephone:
01376 512600

Maldon Road, Witham CM8 2AB

Franz Lehár and The Merry Widow

There are two reasons why this WAOS production of *The Merry Widow* is an appropriate and a fitting tribute to the genius of Franz Lehár. First, because Lehár died precisely 50 years ago last Thursday (24th October 1948). Second, and extraordinarily, the show opens with a party to celebrate the Pontevedrian Duke's 93rd birthday, and this year is the the 93rd birthday of *The Merry Widow* (premiered in 1905). Hands up anybody who still believes in coincidences!

Franz Lehár was born in Hungary on 30th April 1870 in the Danube port of Komárom (now the Slovakian town of Komárno). Like Arthur Sullivan, Lehár was the son of a military bandsman, and had a thorough musical education, entering the Prague Conservatory at the age of 12. When called up on military service he followed in his father's footsteps by serving as military bandmaster from 1890 to 1902. In 1899 he composed his first operetta, the unsuccessful *Kukuska*. However, his military duties brought him back to Vienna, where, in 1902, he performed his charming *Gold and Silver* Waltz at a Viennese Society ball, and left the army to concentrate on a career as a conductor and composer. (*Gold and Silver* is occasionally inserted into *Merry Widow*). The risk of leaving a steady job paid off in 1905 with the production of *Die lustige Witwe* ("*The Merry Widow*") which was to prove one of the most successful stage musicals of all time.

The Golden Age of Viennese Operetta was dominated by Suppé, Millocker (*The Beggar Student*) and Johann Strauss II (*Die Fledermaus*), who all died in the period 1895-1899. There was no obvious successor until 1905 when *The Merry Widow* premiered in the Theater an der Wien. The theatre manager Wilhelm Karczag was desperate for a new work to replace Fall's *The Rebel*. The choice fell upon the inexperienced Lehár. What Karczag wanted was a stop-gap for a couple of months until something really good came along, and he felt that *The Merry Widow* might just last that long. At first it appeared that he might be right - the new piece had discarded some of the formulas of the older operettas, the early audiences found it puzzling and even shocking. Through judicious use of complimentary tickets, the management kept the piece alive long enough for it to catch on, and the "House Full" signs started to appear.

euphony

communications Limited

Unlimited FREE LOCAL CALLS in the evenings and weekends

Would you like to reduce the size of your phone bills by up to 60% on international, 40% on regional and national calls and 20% on local calls daytime during the week?

Contact Tim Cooper-Cocks
(01376) 514220 (anytime)

OR

Mike Pursey (01376) 513733
Independent Distributor
euphony communications ltd

getting people better connected

The Merry Widow introduced a new Silver Age of Viennese Operetta in which new and successful shows were composed by Oscar Straus - *A Waltz Dream*, Fall - *The Dollar Princess*, and Kálmán - *The Gipsy Princess*. Lehár's own status was confirmed by such successes as *The Count of Luxembourg* (1909), *Gipsy Love* (1910: performed by WAOS in 1966), and *Eva* (1911).

The resurgence of operetta was halted by the outbreak of the First World War, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the decline of Vienna. The harsh realities of war brought to an end the Ruritanian fantasy world which operetta inhabited until that time. A few minor successes flowed from Lehár's pen in the post-war years, but his reputation was rescued by his association with the great tenor Richard Tauber, for whom he wrote several operettas. These included *Paganini* ("Girls were made to love and kiss": 1925) and *The Land of Smiles* ("You are my heart's delight": 1929).

In his later works, Lehár was swimming against the current tide of American song and dance musicals. His pieces became more intensely emotional in character, and almost operatic in scale. *Giuditta* (1934) is the essence of the later Lehár, as *Die lustige Witwe* is the essence of the young composer. By now in his sixties, Lehár had little incentive to compose, and concentrated on leaving for posterity definitive performance material of his works. The Second War was a time of tension for Lehár, whose wife was Jewish, and the couple were in constant fear of a knock on the door from the Gestapo. That it never came may have been due to the fact that *Die lustige Witwe* was Hitler's favourite work.

Dates for your Diary

Southend Operatic & Dramatic Society KING'S RHAPSODY

17th-21st November 1998
Cliffs Pavilion, Southend
Box office (01702) 351135

Witham Drama Club MORT

(adapted by Stephen Briggs
from Terry Pratchett Discworld novel)
18th-21st November 1998
Witham Public Hall
Nigel Northfield (01621) 892404

Sudbury LOS THE SOUND OF MUSIC

23rd - 28th November 1998
Quay Theatre, Sudbury
(01787) 374745 (Box office)

Springers AODS THE HIRED MAN

24th - 28th November 1998
Cramphorn Theatre, Chelmsford
Karen Petch (01245) 601058

Clacton Amateur Operatic Society GOLDLOCKS & THE THREE BEARS

December 29th 1998- 2nd January 1999
Westcliff Theatre, Clacton
(01255) 421479 Box Office

Witham Operatic Workshop (WOW) THE BOYFRIEND

16th-20th February 1999
Public Hall, Witham
Angie Crimmins (01376) 520473

Braintree & Bocking Music Society CABARET

19th-24th April 1999
The Institute, Braintree
Mrs Diane Long (01376) 330351

Witham Amateur Operatic Society KISMET

April 26th- 1st May 1999
Public Hall, Witham

The Plot of The Merry Widow

Act 1 A party is in progress at the Pontevedrian Embassy to mark the Duke's ninety-third birthday, and the guest of honour is ANNA GLAVARI - "The Merry Widow". The gentlemen are excited by the beautiful and rich widow, but it's vital to the national economy that Anna's fortune remains in Pontevedro. Ambassador BARON ZETA, determined to prevent her marrying a foreigner, has decided that COUNT DANILOVITSCH is the man to woo the Widow, and has sent his factotum NJEGUS to fetch him. Meanwhile, the preoccupied Zeta fails to notice that his young wife VALENCIENNE is being hotly pursued by CAMILLE DE ROSILLON. Camille writes "I love You" on Valenciennne's fan, which she promptly mislays. Dragged away from his favourite haunt (Maxim's), Danilo arrives the worse for wear and tries to sleep on a chair, but is brought back from his dreams by a real dream - his old love Anna standing before him. The two cannot resist taunting each other - she because his aristocratic family opposed their marriage when she was penniless, he because she lost no time in marrying a wealthy old banker. Zeta tells Danilo it is his duty to the Fatherland to marry the rich widow. He refuses, but promises to prevent her marrying a "foreigner". The men line up eagerly for "Ladies Choice", hoping to be chosen by Anna, but she chooses Danilo. He offers to sell the dance for charity, for ten thousand francs! The suitors storm off, but Camille, prompted by Valenciennne to propose to the Widow (to protect her own reputation) offers to pay. Valenciennne jealously steers him away, leaving Anna and Danilo alone, and Danilo claims from her the dance he previously declined.

ACT 2 Next evening, Anna hosts a traditional Pontevedrian party and leads the festivities ("*Vilia*"). Valenciennne's fan has come into Zeta's possession, and he asks Danilo to trace its owner. Recognising Camille's handwriting, they plan to confront him with the name of his "lady" to discredit him as an eligible suitor for the Widow. Anna finds the fan, and assumes that the words "I Love You" were written by Danilo for her to find, but she is determined that he must say the words to her. Valenciennne and Camille agree to part, but seek a last tender moment in the summerhouse. Learning that Camille is in the summerhouse with his mysterious "lady", Zeta sends Njegus to lock the back door and trap them. Spying through the keyhole, Zeta recognises his own wife, but in the ensuing commotion Njegus persuades Anna to take Valenciennne's place, and when the door is opened, out comes Camille with Anna. Danilo is naturally mortified, and when Anna announces her engagement to Camille, he makes a dramatic departure to Maxim's.

ACT 3 Later that night, Anna's garden has been decorated like Maxim's nightclub and the GRISSETTES entertain the guests. Danilo is brought, blindefolded, to the party, and, reminded by Zeta of impending state bankruptcy, forbids Anna to marry Camille. She agrees, confessing that the summerhouse affair was a subterfuge to protect another woman. Danilo still refuses to say the words she longs to hear, but Anna melts in his arms as the music speaks for him ("*The Merry Widow Waltz*"). When the fan is found again, Valenciennne claims it publicly: Zeta tells her to consider herself divorced, and proposes marriage to the Widow. Anna reveals that, if she remarries, she loses her entire fortune - at last Danilo can say "I love you!". Valenciennne is happily reinstated when she shows what she wrote on the fan - "I'm a highly respectable wife!" And as Anna now reveals that under her late husbands will, her entire fortune becomes the property of her new husband - Danilo! - Pontevedro is saved, honour satisfied, and love finally prevails. There, we knew it would, didn't we?

Characters

ANNA (*Madame Glavari*)
 DANILO (*Count Danilovitch*)
 BARON ZETA
 VALENCIENNE
 CAMILLE (*Count de Rosillon*)
 NJEGUS
 ST. BRIOCHE
 CASCADA
 KROMOV
 OLGA
 BOGDANOVITSCH
 PRITSCH
 SYLVIA
 PRASKOVIA
 LOLO
 DODO
 JOU-JOU
 FROU-FROU
 CLO-CLO
 MARGOT

The Merry Widow
 Attaché at the Pontevedrian Embassy in Paris
 Pontevedrian Ambassador in Paris
 The Ambassador's Wife
 Baron Zeta's Factotum
 Diplomatic Guest at the Embassy
 Diplomatic Guest at the Embassy
 An attaché
 Wife of Kromov
 Attaché
 Attaché
 Lady Guest at the Embassy
 Lady Guest at the Embassy

Grisettes at Maxim's

Alison Brewer
 Nicholas Clough
 Patrick O'Brien
 Valerie Ditchman
 David Holman
 Tim Sheppard
 Tim Clarke
 Colin Bellett
 Howard Brooks
 Peg Harker
 Tom Whelan
 Geoffrey Coverdale
 Sue Siddalls
 Sarah Wilson
 Marea Irving
 Anita Collings
 Caron Bradbury
 Natalie Hawkes
 Helen Clark
 Judy Henderson



Guests at Embassy, Pontevedrians, Dancers: Pamela Adams, Kathryn Adkins, Pat Briggs, Julie Edwards, Helene Jones, Muriel Loveridge, Anne Marsden, Julia Reed, Joyce Ryder, Alison Taylor, Janet Wash, Anne Wilson, Richard Cowen, Jim Crimmins, Alf Farmer, Tony Furnival, Graham Green, Richard Herring, Ron Howe, Danny Mullane, Darren White.

Musical Contents

ACT I

OVERTURE

1. "Pontevedro in Paree" Cascada, Zeta and Ensemble
2. Melos (Ballroom Music)
3. "A Highly Respectable Wife" Valencienne and Camille
4. "So Many Men Admire Me" Anna and Male Ensemble
5. Melos (Ballroom Music)
6. "You'll Find Me at Maxim's" Danilo and Ladies
7. "It Goes to Show" Anna and Danilo
8. Finale Act I Anna, Valencienne, Danilo, Camille, St. Brioche, Cascada and Chorus

Interval - 15 minutes

ACT II

9. Opening
10. "Vilia" Anna and Ensemble
- 10a. Reprise Chorus
11. "Driving in the Park with You" Anna and Danilo
12. "Women! Women! Women!" Danilo, Cascada, St. Brioche, Zeta, Kromov, Bogdanovitsch and Pritsch
13. Introduction to the Waltz Scene Anna and Danilo
14. The Waltz Scene Anna and Danilo
- 14a. Melos
15. Romance: "Flow'rs are Awakened in Maytime" Valencienne and Camille
16. Finale Act II: Part One Anna, Valencienne, Danilo, Camille, Zeta, Njegus
- 17-20. Finale Act II: Part Two-Five Ensemble

Interval - 15 minutes

ACT 3

21. Entr'Acte
22. Opening Dance
- 22a. Melos
23. The Grisettes' Song
- 23a. Reprise: "You'll Find Me at Maxim's" Valencienne and Grisettes, Ensemble
24. The Merry Widow Waltz Grisettes and Danilo
25. Finale Act III Anna, Danilo Ensemble
- 26-28. Curtain Calls & payout

Production Credits

Director and Choreographer: Cynthia Stead
Production Secretary: Lavinia Farmer
Producer's Assistant: Anne Dobinson
Stage Manager: Graham Green, assisted by: David Hunt; with Keith Radley, Mark Tinworth and Richard Thornelow
Scenery: Paul Lazell
Lighting: Designed and operated by Rhuddian Davies, assisted by Steve Draper.
Lighting equipment: Braintree District Arts Council, Tiptree Amateur Dramatic Society, Colchester Theatre Arts Action, RH Electrics, Kelvedon
Properties Manager: Julie Cockell, assisted by: Fitz Smith, Chris Willison, Kate Dawson, Charlotte Clough
Costume Hire: The Haslemere Wardrobe (Surrey)
Wardrobe Mistress: Jane Furnival, assisted by Pat Ladd
Make-up: Peg Harker and Marea Irving
Wigs: The Company
Prompt: Cynthia Draper
Box Office Manager: Tom Whelan
Front of House Manager: Richard Wash, assisted by Lydia Clough
Foyer Display: Audrey King
Bar Manager: Ron Howe, assisted by Tony Furnival
Flowers by: Michelle
Front of House & programme photography: Peter McKay
Programme Cover & Posters Artwork: Tim Sheppard
Publicity Team: Elisabeth Ladd, assisted by Tim Clarke, Mike Dunion, Nathalie Hawkes, Steve Rogers, Tim Sheppard

Orchestral Credits

Musical Director & Conductor: Jerry Martin
Violin: Bryony Rees, Sarah Crew (leaders) Tim Brockington
Viola: Jane Gould
Cello: Nick Tate
Double Bass: Phil Toms
Flute: Sandy McGinity
Clarinet: Carol Taylor Madhu Vidyarthi Claire Moore
Bassoon: Lucy Carroll
French Horn: Stewart Thorn
Trombone: Tony Ward
Percussion: Robert Ward
Rehearsal accompanist: Ruth le Poidevin



A Merry Widow Quiz

1. The Merry Widow was the favourite opera of which infamous character?
2. Apart from The Widow, name another Franz Lehár show presented by WAOS.
3. Who or what is ninety-three today?
4. Which show is the most frequently performed in Witham? Is it *The Widow*?

(Answers on page 15)

WOULD PATRONS KINDLY REFRAIN FROM TAKING VIDEOS, PHOTOGRAPHS OR SOUND RECORDINGS OF THIS PRODUCTION

Michelle Floral Design



Finest Belgian and also
Linden Lady Chocolates
Specialists in Silk & Dried Flowers

Exclusive Bears

Visa & Access welcome

13 Newland Street, Witham

Proprietor: Michelle A. Tabor

Established 23 years

Telephone: 01376 511318 / 512861

The Cellar

BAR & BISTRO

No. 4 Duke Street Chelmsford Essex
Tel: 01245 350353

The Cellar is available for private
functions on a Sunday



THE CELLAR BAR & BISTRO
Situated in the quaint alleyways in front of
Chelmsford's cathedral, the CELLAR
provides the highest quality of food and
drink in pleasant and modern surroundings.

OPENING HOURS
BAR
MON-FRI 12-11
SAT 6-11

BISTRO
MON-FRI 6.30-10.30
SAT 6.30-10.30

McLEOD WRIGHT

Residential Surveyors, Valuers, Commercial & Industrial Agents

**BUILDING SURVEYS UNDERTAKEN
TROUGHTOUT ESSEX & SUFFOLK**

Special interest in:-

Timber Frame • Thatch • Period Houses

Andrew R. McLeod F.R.I.C.S.

Tel: 01376 321151

The National Operatic and Dramatic Association

NODA, to which WAOS is affiliated, is the largest national amateur theatre association in the world, and has as its patron Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Next year it will be celebrating with large scale events at London's Albert Hall, and locally, the centenary of its formation in 1899, to protect and advance the interests of Operatic and Dramatic Art and Societies engaged therein. Currently with over 2,200 affiliated Societies, plus over 2,500 individual members it represents a powerful voice in the amateur theatre world, and provides a wide range of services to its members. These include discounts on insurance, makeup, scripts, scores, theatre books and a very large hire library of pantomime scripts. Training is provided at the annual summer school, now at the University of Warwick, and theatre courses covering a range of both artistic and technical subjects. A number of bursaries for this event are available each year. In addition, workshops can be arranged on a more local basis. The Association is organised so that some 150 NODA Representatives are each responsible for direct liaison with a small number of members, with backing provided by the full-time professional staff at NODA HQ in London. The Association produces four editions of its wide-ranging National Magazine each year, and twice-yearly local publications feature critiques on local productions. If you wish to know more or are interested in becoming a member, please contact your local Regional Representative John Warburton, on Tel (01206) 210488

Are you interested in joining the Society?

We are always looking out for new acting/singing members and backstage helpers. If you would like to join us, please write to our membership Secretary (address on page 2), or come to our first rehearsal for **KISMET** at Spring Lodge Community Centre, Chipping Hill on Wednesday 11th November at 7.30pm.

Please note - new acting/singing members will be required to audition.

Or are you young enough to be a WOW?

Witham Operatic Workshop (WOW) was formed in 1995 as a junior section of WAOS, with the long term aim of instructing members in all aspects of musical theatre. Members of WOW automatically become members of WAOS at the age of sixteen, and can join the senior group if they so desire. Rehearsals are already under way for *The Boyfriend* in mid-February 1999. If you would like to join WOW (and remember you must be **11 to 18 years old** inclusive) please contact Angie Crimmins on (01376) 520473.

WOW in Buxton, August 1998

Although only four years old, Witham Operatic Workshop came of age this August at The Buxton International Festival of Musical Theatre. The trip took the form of a Summer School with five days of rehearsals, a dress rehearsal and departure the following morning for the festival. The Company was thirty seven strong (average age fifteen), and was accompanied by a back-up team of twenty five adults. WOW arrived in Buxton on Saturday 22nd August (P.M.), took over the local Youth Hostel, explored the town and reconnoitred the Opera House. On Sunday the stage crew set off for the theatre to receive the scenery, which was due in at nine o'clock. Unfortunately, the van transporting it had broken down on the motorway and arrived at eleven. This severely restricted the preparation and rehearsal time, and the stage crew worked frantically alongside the resident stage staff through the rest of the morning and their lunch hour, and the dress rehearsal started at 3.15 pm. Of course, the musicians time was cast in stone so that our dress rehearsal was fragmented and incomplete. I sat in the audience that night and witnessed a vital, polished and enthusiastic performance. The cast surpassed themselves, and I was very proud of them all.

The stage crew were nominated for an award, as was Emma Sewell for her splendid portrayal of Miss Hannigan. The Company were awarded the Adjudicator's Special Award. A very suitable tribute for an extremely creditable team effort. The journey home the next day was muted and sleep was at a premium. An exhausted but happy group of children arrived back in Witham at 4.00 pm. In short, it was an enjoyable, worthwhile experience for both young and old.

Nicholas Clough (Chairman)



Danilo (George Flint)



Camille
(Harold Masding)



Cascada
Leroy Smith



Postvedrian Gentleman
Barney Ryder



Anna (Clare Robinson)



Valencienne
(June Gisby)



A Grizette



Kromov
(Tim Sheppard)



Zeta (Ray Dyke)

In the 1959 production, Barbara English was Prompt
As she had little to do, she made sketches of the performers
The sketches above are from her libretto now in our archives



The 1959 Cast of Merry Widow

Above and left of Anna (Alice Robinson) are Betty Etheridge, Betty Rew, Diane Lawson, Frances Masding, Nesta Hinchcliffe. To her right - Brian Etheridge, Tim Sheppard, Kath Adams, Maureen Turner, Len Simmonds, Roy Hazell, Pat Voigt, Joan Lyon, Judy Ryder. Seated - Hazell Ashby, Sally Carpenter, Janet Blake-Lobb, Jean Roberts. One of the back view dancers is Sheila Ferris.



The Grizettes in 1972

A few of our charming young stalwarts here. Left to right - Rinette Steed, Jo Wood, Freda Wynn, Cynthia Draper, Anne Sheppard, Carole Turner.



Merry Widow 1987 Cast

Many of you will recognise yourselves here. Centre is Patsy Page as the Widow, right is Simon Mitchell (Camille), left of Patsy is Pat Briggs (Valencienne), with Tim Sheppard (Zeta) to her left and Tony Court (Cascada) and Geoff Coverdale left again. Howard Brooks played Danilo.

Witham Letting Services

Residential Letting & Management Services

01376 - 502500

5 Collins Lane, Newland Street, Witham, Essex CM8 2EB
Tel: 01376 502500 Fax: 01376 515506



The 1998 Merry Widow Team

The Society's grateful thanks are extended to:

... not only the individuals and organisations credited in this programme, but also to the many others who have contributed in any way to the preparation or production of our show.

In particular:

- the media; those who have freely donated window space for the display of our posters;
- our advertisers - without whom the production of this programme would not have been possible;
- the Red Cross;
- Witham Dramatic Club for the use of the raised seating;
- Colin Etheridge and Derek Elliot at the Public Hall;
- Spring Lodge for their rehearsal facilities.
- those involved with box office, stewarding, programme and raffle ticket selling, refreshments and the bar; backstage, transportation, and all those who have made, designed, or provided costumes and properties;
- all our Vice Presidents for their financial support;
- Tim Sheppard for the programme cover and poster work.
- Howard thanks Tim Sheppard for the prompt book sketches, Anne Sheppard for the archival material and Nick Clough and Peg Harker for their help in gathering data for the programme
- ... and anyone else who has helped in any way.

Finally, we thank you, our audience, for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at the Public Hall next spring for our production of the magical musical *KISMET*, which features such well-known favourites as "*Stranger in Paradise*", and "*Baubles Bangles and Beads*".

Answers to Quiz
1. Adolf Hitler
2. Gipsy Love (1966)
3. Both the Duke of Pompadour, and The Merry Widow itself.
4. The Princes of Penzance and H.M.S. Pinafore have been performed on five occasions (including oneconcert version of each).
The Merry Widow four times, and The Mikado four times (including oneconcert version).

WORS

Wine Bar

Opening hours:

11am - 11pm Mon - Sat

Function Room available for

Weddings • Conferences

Parties etc.

MOULSHAM STREET,
CHELMSFORD, ESSEX

Tel: 01245 258733

RELIABLE SIGNS LTD
TOP SIGNS
8 The Street, Wickham Bishops, Witham, CM8 2HH
Tel: (01621) 891504 Fax: (01621) 892349