

## NODA Report

PERFORMANCE OF 1ST NOVEMBER 2008

WITHAM A.O.S. - PIRATES OF PENZANCE

Director: Nicholas Clough, Assisted by: Angela Briley, Musical Director: Susannah Edom

Produced in traditional mode, but including many amusing touches this was a good evening. In the well lit and good looking settings of rocky beach and ruined chapel, the action duly unfolded, an early unusual highlight being Frederic's Aria to the daughters being sung, down on one knee, 'Elvis' style, with an upturned pistol as microphone, to instant and insistent attention from the girls: the byplay set an ongoing mood.

The major principals gave good overall performances, both in character and vocally, though Mabel did exhibit some tenseness in the upper register. Ruth suffered her range of emotions well, from rejection through revenge to consolation.

The Pirate King bullied and blustered in style, Frederic came across well as about the right age, but with an appropriate air of immaturity.

The Major General was fine, and fast, and understood! Other principals and chorus members played their part too, not only vocally, but also in the good reactions to what was going on around them.

One always looks forward to the Policemen's scenes and expectation was fully rewarded, led by a nimble and excellent Sergeant, complete with a respectable Cornish accent. The final confrontation between pirates and constabulary was very short indeed and nearer to representational than real. Perhaps the good quality of the costumes and swords was such that Health and Safety won the day.

I did so enjoy this production. Despite a few faults it was fun, the orchestra and music was fine and the atmosphere was great. Many thanks.

Report by John Warburton - Regional Councillor