

New Mills & District
Amateur Operatic
&
Dramatic Society



News and Views

February 2009

No. 60

CHAIRMANS REMARKS

It is a little late to wish our readers a Happy New Year and in most cases the news is not good, but with our theatre and coming events I think we can brush aside some of the gloom and look forward to a happy and successful fiftieth year at the Art Theatre. Since our last edition of N&V the societies' production of 'Sweet Charity' in November saw the welcome return of Dianne Aspinall as the production director. The resulting production reflected how much the company enjoy working with her. Just to prove that she is back to full speed Dianne joined forces with Carolyn Hawkins, M.D. and Nicola Clayton, Choreographer to direct the F.O.A.T. pantomime 'Snow White'. Once again the pantomime proved to be an outstanding success for which congratulations are due to all those involved.

And what about 'Last Night of The Proms' with the High Peak Orchestra, what a good event, definitely to be repeated on this years programme. Now the societies are directed to our 2009 production, Oklahoma` one of the great Rogers & Hammerstein Musicals, which I am sure will attract a lot of interest at the get together, hopefully including good numbers of men for whom this show offers so much scope.

The very good news is of course that the N.M.A.O.D.S. are after a long absence in the drama section, going to present a play, details elsewhere in this edition.

Geoff Lunn the society secretary who has for many years been involved with stage drama productions has volunteered to produce what promises to be a hilarious comedy farce and it is hoped that the response from audience numbers will be such that we can look forward to more productions in the future.

A new idea for the theatre use that we would like to try this year is the use of the stalls only for certain events where an audience of three hundred or less are are anticipated. It is far better for those on stage if the audience are more concentrated and intimate with the performance than spread throughout the stalls and circle, and a play production will give an ideal opportunity for this idea to be tried out.

From the list of coming events it looks as if the theatre will have a busy year and we hope all our readers will give as much support as possible to ensure that they are a success, and of course if you want participate come along you will be very welcome.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

Annual Membership Rates of the New Mills Amateur Operatic Society from 1st April 2008

Members	£15-00
Vice Presidents	£17-50
Patrons	£25-00
Juniors (under 16)	£2-00

Membership is due on the 1st April

www.arttheatre.co.uk

OKLAHOMA!

This year's New Mills AODS Musical is the Rodgers and Hammerstein favourite 'Oklahoma!' - one of the great American musicals. In 1999 the American Drama League ranked it as the most important musical theatre work of the 20th Century.

Performances are from Tuesday 24th to Saturday 28th November, with a matinee on the 28th.

Dianne Aspinall is the Director, David Chapman the Musical Director, Dawn Wilde the Choreographer and Tim Walker the rehearsal pianist.

The **Get-Together is on March 16th at 7.30 pm at the Art Theatre New Mills**, when the production team will be present to describe the plot and the characters, and play examples of the numbers and dance music. This is the time when anyone can register their interest in being in the show, and ask for the auditions pieces that they want.

The Auditions for Principles and Chorus are set for Sunday 29th March.

The Auditions for Dancers are set for Thursday 26th March, with a dancing workshop with Dawn from 7.30 to 8.30 pm, and the Auditions at 8.30pm.

There's something new this year, however. Established members – which means those who have been in New Mills shows before – who want to be in the chorus only will not have to do an Audition. But they will need to register their interest, either at the Get-Together or to a Committee Member.

New Chorus Members will be auditioned, as will all those interested in a Principal Part.

F.O.A.T

Another very successful Panto under our belts. You may recall in our last News and Views that we had auditioned over 90 people for 17 principal roles – I can assure you things didn't get any better when it came to the dancing and chorus auditions. We had 57 dancers and 49 chorus to audition – another very long day! However difficult it was we did finally choose 19 dancers and 14 chorus and those of you who saw the Panto will agree that they were excellent.

A privilege for us this year was being invited to switch on the Christmas Lights in New Mills. What a great night that was. Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs parading through Market Street in their costumes and then going on the Fair rides. They certainly enjoyed it and the public were very interested in finding out about the Panto.

As Dianne was also directing 'Sweet Charity' principal rehearsals didn't start until the beginning of December. Allowing for the Christmas break we only had approximately 6/7 weeks to put the Panto on. It was a very intense rehearsal period but also a very successful one. We had two capacity audiences for the matinees and the overall figures were excellent with an average 85% attendance overall.

Credit must go to our production team for their dedication and expertise. Without them we most certainly would not have a production. Although we haven't finally decided on next years Panto we are delighted that our production team of Dianne Aspinall (Director) Carolyn Hawkins (Musical Director) and Nicola Clayton (Choreographer) have all agreed to return. We haven't decided on our Panto for 2010 but we will keep you informed via News and Views and the local press.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN HOSPITAL

Not where one would choose to be , however, some people unfortunately have to stay in and this was brought home to us by a phone call from Barry Aspinall a few years ago. His request was to provide Stepping Hill Hospital with suitable outfits as Granada TV could no longer do this. My first thought was "Follow That"

Apparently Doctors, Nurses, Ancillary Workers and Volunteers go in, give 2 hours of their own time and join Santa and his helpers going round the wards singing carols, making smiles, creating laughter and giving all patients a gift each.

Normally when we costume a show or pantomime we work with individual Measurements but on this occasion we had no sizes to work from. A further phone call advised us that there would be children of various ages, adults both male and female of any size. Additionally more than one person would be wearing the outfit at different times due to a rota and shift system. These special Christmas Day Rounds take from 10 am till around 2 pm.

What a challenge – this called for "Our Creative One" – Pat Bradley – who decided, along with others, that from our own theatre wardrobe dress:

Female Children	-	Fairies – Elves – Princess's
Male Children		Elves – Clowns – Monkeys
Female Adults		Angels – Divas – Fairy tale Characters
Male Adults		Panto Dames – Solders – Elvis x 3

Wigs, Tiaras etc were also provided

We really had fun thinking of some of the Stepping Hill Consultants wearing these outfits.

The week prior to Christmas this year Sally Cassini, Voluntary Services Manager, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust and her young son called to collect some 35 outfits which we loaded into her estate car.

Early in January the outfits were brought back, refreshed, checked for any problems, before being put onto hangers and placed in plastic covers and returned to their rightful place in the wardrobe room. We now have the technology and with the nimble fingers of Moira Whiteford have a control system which

prints out data by location or by group and we can update the records when we make or receive a new outfit. Similarly when we scrap an outfit or say donate it to a playgroup our records are maintained. People's expectations have been raised over the years and we have to keep our standards high.

A further visit from Sally Cassini brought the outstanding outfits back, together with photographs of the day showing what a wonderful time everyone had enjoyed. Chocolates for the wardrobe team and a donation of £30 to Friends of the Art was also received. A WIN WIN SITUATION.

Ann Lyon

SNOW WHITE'S LITTLE HELPERS

Snow White had her Seven Dwarfs to help her on the night, but how many helpers do you think the other 42 members of the cast needed, to put on one performance each night?

Director	1	Programme Sellers	4
Musical Director	1	Usherettes	4
Choreographer	1	Props/Canteen	8
Musicians	2	Costumes	4
Sound	2	Stage Crew	9
Lighting	4	Dressing Room Assistants	8
Box Office	1	Make Up	2
Sweets	1	Raffle	3
Front of House	3	Prompt	1
Bar	3	Merchandise Sellers	2

TOTAL = 64

It is surprising just how many people give their time and skills to make this show a success. Well Done Friends of the Art Theatre for a wonderful production and here's to all, the Art Theatre members without who a show like this could not go on. Is there a job you could have done? Would you like to get more involved with your theatre?

Keith Clayton

ANNUAL DINNER

The Annual Dinner this year was held at the Royal Hotel, Hayfield, and I think all agreed it was a highly successful occasion. The venue proved to be very friendly and a good place to socialise. The food and service were excellent

During the evening the Chairman presented the following N.O.D.A. medals

Ann Radford	15 yr Badge
Joan Mays	20 yr Badge
Brian Beddows	25 yr Medal
Lesley Barber	35 yr Bar
Lou Hallam	55yr Stud

Also presented at a later date

Lynn Woodward	40 yr Bar
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We must again thank Joan and Judy for the excellent organisation

HOTBED HOTEL

This year, the society is doing something it hasn't done for quite a while. It's putting on a play at the Art Theatre. Geoff Lunn, who usually stages his Buxton Drama League productions at the Opera House, has put his head above the parapet for New Mills AODS this time and has chosen Michael Parker's 'Hotbed Hotel', to be performed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the 2nd week in June – that's the 11th to 13th.

'Hotbed Hotel' is a farce about a run-down hotel that the owners are keen to sell. They get the staff to masquerade as guests to convince the prospective buyer that all is busy and prosperous. But as the staff consists of a bibulous maintenance man and a curvaceous but vacant maid, and what guests there are include an eccentric Army Major, an Arab Sheik and Nymphomaniac dubbed the Barracuda, there's every chance of a laugh a minute merry go round that, according to the blurb, should leave audiences screaming with delight.

So make sure you book your tickets early. This is something you won't want to miss

LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS

Sunday 28th September saw the second visit of the High Peak Orchestra to the Art Theatre, for the New Mills Festival Finale – Last Night of the Proms.

In the first part of the Concert, the sizeable and appreciative audience heard an exhilarating performance of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 in E minor Op. 64. Under the excellent conducting of Andrew Hodkinson, the piece's various moods were well differentiated – the lilting waltz of the third movement contrasting with the brooding theme of Fate that pervades the Finale.

After the interval, the Orchestra demonstrated its versatility with a set of popular programme pieces: Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No. 5, On the Beautiful Blue Danube by Johann Strauss Jr and the Radetzky March by Strauss Sr.

The fine soloists for the Evening, Jane McNeil and Suzie Grewcock, were then introduced for an amusing performance of Rossini's Cat Duet.

Finally, the familiar music of the Last Night of the Proms filled the Theatre, with the audience encouraged to participate as they should by members of New Mills AODS singing from the Boxes. Jane was the soloist for Henry Wood's Fantasia on British Sea Songs, with its rousing finale of Rule Britannia, and for Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No 1, otherwise known as Land of Hope and Glory. To bring the Concert to an end, Jane led the audience in a stirring performance of Parry's Jerusalem.

A wonderful Evening at the Art Theatre! The High Peak Orchestra cannot return soon enough.

In fact, so popular was this event that in response to many requests we intend to repeat the evening on Sunday September 27th 2009. Together with High Peak Orchestra and their new summer programme we give you the opportunity to sing your heads off and wave your flags again. Keep the date open it will be a very enjoyable night out.

OBITUARIES

Sadly, this year, we have to report the deaths of too many of our past – present members

Mr Norman Hulley
Mrs Annie Arnfield
Mr Neville Holt
Mr Norman Parker
Mr Dennis Braithwaite
Mrs Millie Wilson

These are all people who have in their many ways been of great value to the Society, and we send our condolences to the bereaved.

Art Theatre Coming Soon

Saturday 21st March 2009 **Kinder Choirs and Friends in Concert**
Enquiries to 01663 744760

Saturday 28th March 2009 *A True Lancashire Hot Pot!*
An Evening of Songs and Stories from the North West
With
Norman Prince (*ex Houghton Weavers*) and **Paul Johnston** (*ex Fivepenny Piece*)
Tickets £7 from the Theatre Box Office 01663 742364 & The Derbyshire, Union Rd New Mills

Saturday 25th April 2009 Stage Door Productions presents
NOW That's What I Call Musicals!
Tickets £7 from the Theatre Box Office 01663 742364 & The Derbyshire, Union Rd New Mills

Wednesday 21st May 2009 **Royal Northern College of Music**
Jazz Collective
Enquiries to Theatre Box Office 01663 742364

Thursday to Saturday 11th - 12th & 13th June NMOADS presents the play
Hotbed Hotel
Enquiries to Theatre Box Office 01663 742364

Friday 10th and Saturday 11th July 2009 New Mills Dance & Theatre Centre presents
Dance Time Celebration
Enquiries to 01663 744609

Friday 31st July and Saturday 1st August 2009 PB Theatricals presents
The Pirates of Penzance
A young people's performance directed by the acclaimed American Director Pamela Bilik

Saturday 26th September 2009 Jennifer Shaw Promotions presents
Jimmy Cricket in concert

Sunday 27th September 2009 To conclude the New Mills Festival 2009
Last Night of the Proms with the High Peak Orchestra
Enquiries to Theatre Box Office 01663 742364

Tuesday to Saturday 25th to 29th November 2009
NMOADS presents the Musical
Oklahoma
Enquiries to Theatre Box Office 01663 742364