

The background of the cover features a blue curtain with a central opening, through which a solid blue rectangular area is visible. Two white diagonal lines cross each other in the lower half of the image, forming an 'X' shape that frames the bottom text.

*noda*

Be inspired by amateur theatre

**NODA SCOTLAND**

*Magazine*

National Operatic and Dramatic Association  
Registered Charity no: 1171216. Registered Company no: 241572.  
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Since the last NODA Scotland Magazine our world has changed in so many ways and what the future holds for amateur theatre, certainly in the short term, is still very uncertain.

What has struck me during lockdown, however, has been the way members have come together as clubs, districts and a region to support each other. The variety of ways clubs have engaged with both members and audience alike, set about raising funds to ensure their survival or to help good causes has been fun, engaging, inventive and inspiring. Well done to everyone – keep up the good work. You can read about some of these activities throughout the magazine and I would encourage you to share what you have been up to on the NODA Scotland Facebook page.

On members' behalf I have written to the Scottish Government to ensure that when a route map for the reopening of theatre is finally produced, amateur theatre is not forgotten. I also made a submission to the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee's inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on Scotland's culture and tourism sectors and a copy of this has been included in the Magazine.

During lockdown NODA has organised a number of online training events, both live interactive and pre-recorded workshops. The recorded sessions are available to view on the NODA website – [www.noda.org.uk/training](http://www.noda.org.uk/training) NODA Scotland is planning to hold a series of our own workshops online over the coming months and full details can be found later in the Magazine.

Like so many events this year's NODA Summer School has sadly had to be cancelled. The Summer School committee have worked hard to come up with an alternative and have put together an online e-school running over 5 days at the beginning of August. Details of this are contained later in the Magazine or can be found on the NODA website – [www.noda.org.uk/events/noda-theatre-summer-e-school-2020/summerschool](http://www.noda.org.uk/events/noda-theatre-summer-e-school-2020/summerschool)

A number of clubs have been in touch to ask about holding committee meetings and AGMs online. This has highlighted that many club constitutions don't actually provide for this to happen and I have suggested that, whilst the pressure to rearrange shows has started to subside, now would be a good time for all clubs to review their constitution as well as their policies and procedures to ensure they are up to date and fit for purpose.

With so many shows cancelled and uncertainty about when we will be able to return to performing, NODA has decided to extend the current Programme and Poster Competition to cover two years. For NODA Scotland this means the closing date will now be 30 June 2021. The proposed update of the rules will now come into effect from 1 July 2021 and further details of the changes will be published in Spring 2021.

Now that many clubs have managed to rearrange productions, don't forget to update the listing on the NODA website. Clubs can do this themselves or simply send me the details and I can do it for you.

Whilst we have all done our best to stay in touch with each other online, you can't beat the fun of the rehearsal room, the buzz of opening night or the many happy memories created by taking part or watching live theatre. Until we are able to return safely to the hobby we all love, stay safe, look after each other and listen out for "beginners Act 1 to the stage please" because it will be heard once again.

*Stuart McCue-Dick, Councillor*

## INQUIRY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCOTLAND'S CULTURE AND TOURISM SECTORS

## SUBMISSION FROM Stuart McCue-Dick

The National Operatic & Dramatic Association is a UK wide charity that represents 2000 amateur dramatics clubs. As Councillor for Scotland I head a committee of 11 local representatives who between them look after 170 clubs. These clubs stretch from the Shetland Islands to the Scottish borders.

These clubs put on over 250 productions, which are watched by over 250,000 people, each year including pantomimes, plays and musicals. The combined membership of the clubs is over 10,000 across the age spectrum from 8-80.

The clubs generate over £10m in ticket sales with at least the same generated in additional spend including food, drink, travel and accommodation. The vast majority of this £20m+ spend is within the Scottish economy supporting a wide range of businesses including theatres, village and community halls, theatrical suppliers, restaurants, musicians, bars and hotels. Many clubs also raise significant sums for local and national charities with post show collections and specific fundraising events.

Amateur theatre plays a significant part in the cultural life of Scotland as well as helping with both physical and mental health. Amateur theatre in many smaller communities is very often the focus of cultural activity as well as helping to bring communities together.

At the present time all amateur theatre productions have been cancelled across the country and given the lead time for productions it is unlikely there will be any productions before 2021. This is a great loss to the cultural and economic life of Scotland. Many member clubs have been making use of technology to keep in touch, rehearse or put together videos to entertain their audiences via social media channels.



The one question I have been asked more than any during the past 3 or 4 months has been “Is Peebles happening?”

At our NODA Scotland Committee meeting on Saturday 27 June this question formed a large part of our discussions. The Committee are determined to do all we can to make the weekend happen but our number one priority has to be the safety of our members.

I am pleased to say that Peebles Hydro, subject to final Scottish Government approval, will be reopening on 15 July. I have had an initial discussion with Caroline Raeburn, the General Manager, about what might be possible. These discussions will continue over the coming weeks as we continue along the route map out of lockdown and guidance is updated by the Scottish Government.

I plan to update members on a regular basis over the coming weeks as plans are developed and the committee hope to be in a position to finalise details by 31 August.

*Stuart McCue-Dick, Councillor*

**NODA supports the education and information needs of individuals and organisations with high quality services and products that contribute to the success of amateur theatre, as well as encouraging appreciation of the sector by participants and audiences alike.**

*NODA Scotland Magazine* is published in March, July and November. The March edition includes reviews on shows which had performances in November, December, January and February; the July edition covers shows performed in March, April, May and June; and reviews of shows performed in July, August, September and October appear in the November edition.

Generally, reviews are written by the Regional Representatives whose names appear later on this page. Where the review has not been written by the appropriate Regional Representative, the author's name is given.

Advertisements are invited from societies and theatrical rights holders, traders and suppliers.

### Advertising rates

- The rate for a show advertisement is £25 per edition.
- The rate for advertisements by theatrical rights holders, traders and suppliers is £50 for three successive editions.

Please send advertising material to the Editor.

All copy for the November edition of the *NODA Scotland Magazine* should be with the Editor not later than **Saturday 31 October 2020**. Earlier receipt of material will be welcome.

## NODA SCOTLAND COMMITTEE

Generic e-mail address: [firstname.secondname@noda.org.uk](mailto:firstname.secondname@noda.org.uk)

Councillor	Stuart McCue-Dick
District No 1 (Glasgow Area)	Elizabeth Daniels
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District No 3 (Central Scotland)	Elizabeth Donald
District No 4 (Renfrewshire, Ayrshire & Bute)	Craig Inglis
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District No 8 (Borders Area)	Deborah Lyons
District No 9 (Grampian & Highland)	Douglas Clark
District No 10 (Angus & Kincardine) & Awards Secretary	Gordon Smith
District No 11 (South West Scotland) & Treasurer	Stewart Cameron
Youth Adviser	Calum Campbell
Web Manager	Vacancy (covered by Councillor)
Editor	Alan C Jones

## NODA TODAY

*NODA Today* is a UK-wide magazine published in March, July and November.

The content of the magazine comprises features about societies, individuals, shows, NODA corporate activities and any outstanding achievements or activities in the region. NODA Head Office has asked that Regional Editors provide no more than 1,200 words collectively for all of the region's content. All jpeg pictures sent for inclusion should be at least 150dpi, with the ideal being 300dpi. Articles for the November edition are welcomed from societies and individual members and should be submitted by e-mail to the NODA Scotland Editor by **Friday 25 September 2020**. Earlier receipt of material will be welcome.

### **Note to Secretaries:**

**Please send a copy of the *NODA Scotland Magazine* to all members of your society to ensure that everyone is up to date.**



## LONG SERVICE AWARDS: CELEBRATE YOUR TIME IN AMATEUR THEATRE!

How long have you been in amateur theatre?

Did you know you can purchase long service awards from NODA to celebrate your dedication?

From 10 years all the way up to 70 years, we have pins, badges and medals that you can wear with pride.

Check out our long service awards on the NODA website.

**Further details from the NODA Scotland Awards Secretary:  
Gordon Smith (Regional Representative, District No 10).**



10 years



15 years



20 years



25 years



25 years



30 years



35 years



40 years



45 years



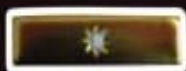
50 years



50 years



55 years



60 years



65 years



70 years



Society Life  
Member



# noda

## Training

[noda.org.uk/training](http://noda.org.uk/training)

Over the past few months of lockdown NODA with the support of practitioners from across the UK has created a number of online training opportunities. Covering a range of topics the videos are available to download from the NODA website - [www.noda.org.uk/training](http://www.noda.org.uk/training)

In addition to these videos NODA Scotland is looking to organise a number of Business of Amateur Theatre workshops. These are designed for those tasked with running amateur theatre clubs. The workshop will look at club and show management as well as the support available from NODA to member clubs. The workshop will provide the opportunity to ask questions throughout the evening and there will be follow up support available as well. To register your interest please email - [stuart.dick@noda.org.uk](mailto:stuart.dick@noda.org.uk) (mob: 07710 487385) and a suitable date or dates can be agreed.

In conjunction with the Business of Amateur Theatre workshop NODA Scotland plan to offer a Licensing of Children in Theatre workshop with Liz Daniels (Regional Rep, District 1). To register your interest in this workshop please email [stuart.dick@noda.org.uk](mailto:stuart.dick@noda.org.uk) and a suitable date can be agreed.

### **NODASafe**

**NODASafe is run by people who understand theatre and have personal activity in the community theatre environment, so we know what pressures and challenges face NODA societies on a show-to-show basis. Support includes - telephone and email support with production safety queries, general advice on all health and safety queries, dealing with serious accidents, generic risk assessments and coming soon will be online training.**



Here is your chance to attend NODA Theatre Summer e-School which will take place online from Monday 3 to Saturday 7 August 2020 – don't miss out!

NODA Theatre Summer School 2020 is now an E-School due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in keeping with the Government guidelines. Many of the students who were attending have now booked on their chosen 'Pathways' but we have some spaces left which are now available to all NODA members on a first come first served basis. If you have ever thought you would like to attend Summer School, this is your opportunity to do so without leaving the comfort of your own home. We guarantee you won't be disappointed and you will achieve so much in the course of five days!

To see the Pathway options available and to book a place: [www.noda.org.uk/SummerSchool](http://www.noda.org.uk/SummerSchool)

**Note to Committees:**

**If you have a youth society or section, invite the Youth Adviser as well as the Regional Representative to their shows.**

**Facebook [www.facebook.com/NationalOperaticDramaticAssociation/](https://www.facebook.com/NationalOperaticDramaticAssociation/)**



# NODA Pantomimes

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[pantoscripts.org.uk](http://pantoscripts.org.uk)



### WHAT LOCKDOWN HAS MEANT TO SCENERY HIRE SCOTLAND

It's been a rollercoaster of a year for all of us at Scenery Hire Scotland: we had been rapidly growing as a new business only for it to come to a grinding halt with the lockdown. Last January we acquired the scenery hire business as it felt like a natural expansion of Prop Hire Scotland which we started in 2013. However, it became obvious early on that we had outgrown the three small industrial units we occupied at Springburn in Glasgow.





We secured new premises in Maryhill but were then faced with the huge challenge of moving during an extremely busy Autumn season. We had one week in October without any shows and we successfully moved the majority of our business over in that week.

The new warehouse has made our set production easier. We have a larger workshop, we can have carpenters working at the same time as scenic artists, and we are able to put up new sets during construction allowing customers to see the work in progress. We have more room to display our props and our stock is more accessible to customers who visit our premises. Since our move we've built five new sets including *Made in Dagenham*, *HMS Pinafore* and *9 to 5*.



During lockdown we've been able to catalogue and sort out our stock and we'll soon start production on new sets for 2021.

We're open for business – just get in touch with us ([info@sceneryhirescotland.co.uk](mailto:info@sceneryhirescotland.co.uk)) and find out how we can help you with your next production.

### THIS AND THAT – WHAT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING OVER LOCKDOWN

#### The Cecilian Society, University of Glasgow

As a society that is centred around live performances and doing activities together, we Cecilians have definitely found the lockdown challenging. Many of the spring events that we looked forward to the most had to be cancelled, and we did not get to meet up to say goodbye to our departing members. That being said, our members were still eager to interact with one another and to celebrate musical theatre, which meant that we had to get creative and find new ways to be together.

One of the events that we put on this spring was our virtual cabaret. There is usually a fundraising cabaret held around April where Cecilians can perform songs that are special to them. Since this couldn't be done live, we asked people to send in videos of them performing in their homes. The theme for the cabaret was "Half the World

Away - Songs about Distance, Togetherness, and Love" and we got to see some truly impressive performances, set in the many living rooms of our members.

Another social that we organized this spring was the Zoom Dinner Dance. This event has traditionally been an opportunity for our membership to come together and celebrate the end of a successful year with a formal dinner and a ceilidh. Not wanting to miss out on this final hurrah, we decided to host the evening over Zoom, complete with speeches from alumni and the president, as well as some nice awards. The format lent itself very well to the atmosphere we wanted to create and in the end we managed to achieve a nice wrap-up of the year.

Our society is also keeping members busy every week with our Sunday dance classes, taught by past choreographers to anyone who wants to keep dancing, even in the lockdown! The classes are held on our Instagram (@ceciliansociety) every Sunday at 6pm. They feature many different songs, from 'Rain on Me' by Ariana Grande and Lady Gaga to 'Candy Store' from Heathers, so everyone can find something they like.

So what are our plans for the rest of summer? We have every intention of keeping ourselves as busy as possible, even if it is from a distance. The interactive classes will continue, and we will potentially expand them to other areas of theatre, such as tech and acting. There has also been rumours about a pub quiz being organized by one of our alumni, so there will be plenty of things going on until we can all see each other in person. Nothing can stop us from celebrating the world of musical theatre!



### The Minerva Club

Daily challenges on Facebook page which have ranged from questions about dream roles, emoji challenges, custom made crosswords and even photo challenges, where members have had to recreate their favourite scenes from shows! Our biggest challenge to date has to have been our Virtual Bake Off Challenge, where participants had to create cakes with a musical theatre theme – though the judges did miss getting to taste all of the amazing looking entries!

Although lockdown has stopped us meeting up in person, it hasn't stopped us from using technology to let us audition new members and we are delighted to have welcomed 19 new members to the Minerva family this year!



In addition to our daily challenges, we have run at least one live event per week – usually on Wednesday evenings, when we should have been rehearsing. We have had quiz nights, musical bingo events, dance workshops, themed nights, scavenger hunts and even a virtual karaoke night! It has been lovely to watch ‘old’ and new members alike enjoying these events and getting to know one another. We are a very inclusive club and have welcomed friends of members to join in with our events too – the more the merrier we say!

Our members have loved taking part in all of our events and we have tried as hard as we can to bring our members fun and laughter during this difficult time. We can’t wait until we are finally allowed to put on our dancing shoes, blast out some harmonies and act our little hearts out at rehearsals again. Bring on those lights, that stage and that all important audience – The Minerva Club will be ready for you!

### **SHOW REVIEWS**

#### **Clydebank Musical Society: Our House**

**Director: Marie-Ann McGrattan; Musical Director: Craig Hart; Choreographer: Carolyn Anderson**

From start to finish this company of young people brought energy, vitality and lots of talent to the stage. A fun musical based on the music of Madness, told the story of Joe Casey who on the night of his 16th birthday makes a decision that will change his life. The way in which the storyline in this musical unfolded showed the many talents of the young people involved. Joe, played by Ben Anderson, while rarely off the stage, showed a strong ability in singing and acting as he played out two very different roles as he follows the paths that his life could take. Ben displayed a great understanding of both sides of the role and coped well with the drama and vocal ability required of the part. Morgan Fleming, playing the role of Sarah, and Iona McHugh, in the role of Kath both gave solid performances. Bringing the story lines together, William Bruce, playing the role of Dad displayed strong vocal ability and each one of the supporting cast of principals gave an excellent performance showing their talents with their triple threat of singing, acting and dance. Every one of the young people involved in this production were able to hold their own, and at all times we experienced their commitment and hard work on the stage, coming together well as a team. The production team ensured that this show moved on with great pace and the technical aspects of the show worked particularly well. The simple but effective set clearly defined the differences between good and bad Joe. The onstage band lent itself well to the style of the show and the direction and choreography were slick and detailed, ensuring the jerky madness moves were not missed. Working in a town hall, rather than a theatre, can bring its challenges. However, this company really know how to make it work, with a creative set and excellent lighting. The work of the backstage team must also be credited, and the work that went into the overall look of the show with costumes, make-up and hair paid off. It is a real pleasure to see so many young people and their families committed to CMS Junior Section, and as I note from the programme some of the young people are already involved in the adult productions. Talent like this moving into the adult section keeps the entire company alive. A great show well done, and thanks to the front of house team for their warm welcome.

#### **Glasgow Light Opera Club: All Shook Up**

**Director: Alasdair Hawthorn; Musical Director: Alan Stewart Fraser; Choreographer: Claire Brown**

From the very beginning of the show, I knew the audience were in for a real treat. Straight into *Jailhouse Rock* we could feel the energy from the cast. I attended the show on the opening performance, which unusually for Glasgow Light was a matinee performance. It was obvious from the very start that the energy from the cast was ready to rock the stage of the King’s Theatre Glasgow. The music of Elvis is infectious, and the lyrics of the songs played out by the cast, through this light hearted jukebox musical brought laughter and joy to the theatre. We were immediately introduced to the strong line up of principals and Chad, played by David Yates, took us straight into his “Jailhouse Rock” supported by a competent ensemble displaying a well choreographed number. The strong line up of principals each brought their own strength to the roles and playing opposite Chad Natalie, Mhairi Caulfield, showed her versatility in the characterisations she portrayed throughout the storyline with strong vocal ability and acting in equal measure. Dennis, played by Michael Donaghy was funny, witty and vocally he was perfectly suited to the role. Without listing everyone individually, I would like to congratulate each of the principals who displayed their theatrical talents in the roles they played, noting that each one of them were appropriately cast. This show is busy not only for the principals, but for the ensemble and dancers. Using the entire cast in the larger ensemble numbers gave everyone a great opportunity to display the range of talent on stage. It was good to see the whole company being involved in the larger ensemble pieces. Technical aspects of the show worked well, with excellent lighting design enhancing the set and moods for the range of scenes in the production. The sound was well balanced and there was good communication between the stage and pit under the musical direction of Alan Stewart Fraser. Congratulations also go to Choreographer Claire Brown and to Director Alasdair Hawthorn for their commitment and detail to the overall production. Stage manager, Crawford Gray and his team along with Stephen Haggis, deputy stage manager, ensured that the show ran smoothly.

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## LEAVE A LIGHT ON

On Sunday 15 March, *Strictly Come Dancing* star Giovanni Pernice had just graced the Whitehall Theatre stage in Dundee. The atmosphere was electric as the curtain fell. Little did the staff, patrons and volunteers in attendance know at the time, but they had just witnessed the unofficial end to, what was set to be a record-breaking Spring/Summer season for the Theatre. Just five days later theatres were ordered to close by the Government and then a further three days after that, the entire country had been placed in lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The mandatory lockdown has had a massive effect on theatres and concert halls across the UK and further afield. As yet there is no end in sight for the beleaguered industry. The sad fact is some venues will not survive this crisis. Musical societies the length and breadth of the country have seen shows postponed, some until 2022, some indefinitely. It really is incumbent on us all to do what we can to help ensure that our theatres survive this pandemic.

This is where the Whitehall Theatre is fortunate: it is the jewel in the crown of the amateur companies of Dundee and is a real hub for the community. This year the Theatre is celebrating its 50th anniversary in its current form. The building has stood on the site since the 1890s when it opened as The Alhambra Theatre; it later became a cinema and a bingo hall before it became The Whitehall Theatre in 1969. The venue was run by the City Council until 1982 when the local musical societies raised £50,000 to purchase and upgrade the venue, reopening it as a charity under the new ownership of The Whitehall Theatre Trust.

In the last decade the venue has been under constant transformation, with refurbishment works a constant to bring the venue up to modern standards, fit to accommodate professional touring shows and celebrities from all over the world. This transformation has also enhanced the offer to the many local musical societies and dance groups who use the venue regularly. This in turn has seen the venue blossom as its own destination, with 40,000 patrons passing through the doors of the theatre in the last calendar year.

The venue receives no formal funding and every penny raised through rentals, bar and confectionery sales goes right back into the continued improvement of the Theatre.





Lockdown has taught us all the importance of community; human beings are a social species and with the very nature of lockdown being one of isolation, we have all found new ways to socialise, to maintain bonds and see friends and family, albeit virtually.

Like many others, focusing on coming out of the pandemic in a better place, mentally and physically has been a focus of mine. It's one that has helped me to cope with the daily struggles that each of us will have faced throughout lockdown. Fitness has been something that I have thrown myself into over the last few years and it has been a godsend throughout this crisis. A group of my close friends and I, all theatre people, had taken up running as one of the ways that we can improve our fitness and we had set up a private group on Facebook that has been a bit of a support network, encouraging us to go out on runs and sharing our improved times with each other. A few weeks ago, through a chance conversation on the groups thread, we decided to set ourselves the goal of running 500 miles in a month. The conversation then turned to fundraising for the Theatre, something that is extremely close to all of our hearts with almost all of us growing up there, meeting friends, future family members, in fact, it's a place I took my (now) wife on our first date! From that chance conversation *Rock the Road Run*, our fundraising drive, was born. Our group is made up of 12 runners, some of whom are total beginners and some that are more advanced but we all agreed to the goal and that was it! We are now just past the half way point in the month but we have already collectively run well over 350 miles and have raised £2461.00 for the Theatre. On Saturday 20 June 2020, the team set out on a 10k run from Broughty Ferry Castle to the Theatre and were cheered on by a large number of supporters along the route, which just reinforces how important the Whitehall is to the community.



The fundraising hasn't stopped there. The Theatre have designed a bespoke "Leave A Light On" T shirt that is being sold to raise funds. The sale of these T-shirts has only just begun a few days ago but we have already sold upwards of 70 units, which is just fantastic. We have also seen local business owners run raffles for their produce with the profits being donated back to the fundraising efforts. Our community has never been stronger.

At some point in the future, theatres will be allowed to reopen and we will get back to doing the things we love, but, in the interim, we all have a responsibility to do as much as we can to support our theatres and concert halls through this extremely difficult time. This could be as simple as sharing a Facebook post or sponsoring someone raising money for a venue. These venues have given us all so much over the years; to lose one due to this crisis would be an absolute travesty – to lose more would be unthinkable.



To donate to *Rock the Road Run* please follow the following link  
[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/whitehalltheatre?utm\\_term=rBYkKXxeq](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/whitehalltheatre?utm_term=rBYkKXxeq)

To order a "Leave A Light On" t-shirt, please visit the Theatre's Facebook page –  
[Facebook.com/whitehall.theatre.dundee](https://www.facebook.com/whitehall.theatre.dundee)

*Scott McRuvie, Whitehall Theatre Venue Co-ordinator*

### **Legal Advice**

**NODA provides extensive advice on a wide range of contractual issues and guidance on subjects that would benefit from the advice of a qualified solicitor who understands the specific requirements of amateur theatre.**

**Email [info@noda.org.uk](mailto:info@noda.org.uk) with a clear description of the advice required.**

**Visit the NODA website for up to date factsheets on Child Protection Guidelines (Scotland), Model Child Protection Policies, GDPR Privacy Policy for Children.**



## SOCIAL QUIZTANCING! – IT'S ALL HAPPENING IN DISTRICT 2



Jen and I ran a weekly musical theatre quiz for all societies in District Two. This quickly grew to include other Angus, Fife, Glasgow, and more. In the end we had 400+ members taking part, others dipping in or just watching the night unfold.

On the surface the quiz seemed simple. Testing knowledge of MT, stars, songs and theatres. Then we introduced "bonus rounds".. These consisted of a task, the end result was either a picture or video that contestants would post on the page. These bonus rounds would challenge people's ingenuity, imagination, resourcefulness and knowledge. For instance we asked "Let us see you defying gravity".

*Stoo Whyte (TADAMS) defying gravity*

The resulting images and videos of various witches, dogs, and people on household cleaning items was impressive, as was a drunken flop onto a bed, and a few people on top of sheds! All produced and uploaded in 5 minutes! One classic opening scene was recreated by a family, animal masks, music and the family cat was "lion kinged" up a ladder! Their hastily constructed barricade in the garden with flags and flames was a rousing finale to the quiz.

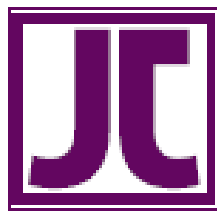
Other bonus rounds didn't quite go according to our plan... after being asked to "decorate a cake", after a waitress based question, one contestant decided to decorate "his buns" candle and all. We have not included this picture as we are a family based organisation!

*Craig and Jen Shearer*

*Richard Waghorn (Downfield MS) as a drag queen*







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**SHOW REVIEW****Alloa Musical Players: Chicago****Director & Choreographer: Kaye Finlay; Musical Director: Lesley Easton**

In a 1920s Chicago nightclub scenario, with a new MD bringing pace and a well timed musicality and a director interpreting with insight, vaudeville, prison conditions and celebrity hype, the company came together in an all singing, toe tapping show. The cast burst on to stage with “All That Jazz”, captured the audience and never looked back taking “Tap Dance”, “Razzle Dazzle” and other big numbers in their stride. The simple set with fixed scaffold platform and doors below created the dark and brooding ambience for murder, speakeasy and prison. Lesley Kettles as the red-haired Roxie who murdered her lover and was sent to prison, captured the self-seeking chorus girl lead and sang and moved as if she owned it. She was well matched with her counterpart Laura McPherson as the nightclub star Velma, also in prison for murder and jealous of Roxie’s celebrity, who oozed frustration and resentment at her lack of recognition. In this she had affinity with Gavin Orr as Amos who excelled in the portrayal of Roxie’s husband – ignored, sidelined, used, and whose rendering of “Mr Cellophane” was one of the highlights. Equally embracing her role was Kirsty Gillies whose combined seductiveness and ruthlessness as jailhouse Mama proved a powerful mix. Likewise, Alan Musgrave grasped the ruthless aspects of his role as Billy Flynn the smooth talking, pragmatic and manipulative lawyer while Michael Coyne with high pitched voice and women’s mannerisms rejoiced in the role of Mary Sunshine. The leads were well supported by the minor principals, Richard Cook as Fred Casely and lithe dancer, Rob McDermott as Judge, Chris Cairns as Sgt Fogarty and Louise Stephenson as Go-to-hell Kitty. A memorable highlight was the Cell Block Tango gloriously performed by Madelyn Schoonover, Lesley Drury, Victoria Stephenson Lesley Caldwell and Jennie Spowage. Everyone gelled together, with great singing and well directed choreography. The ladies’ costumes, all black intimate nightwear complemented the sleaziness of the speakeasy and along with judicious lighting, especially the focus on the art deco motifs, set and maintained the vibrancy and darkness of the times. The performances were a sell out and the one I saw was a performance to be proud of.

## DISTRICT No 4: Renfrewshire, Ayrshire &amp; Bute

**SHOW REVIEWS****Ayr Amateur Opera Company Shrek the Musical****Director: Martin Christie; Musical Director: Grant Welsh; Choreographer: Lynne Christie**

I was very excited to see how AAOC would present the complex production of *Shrek* in their home theatre, The Gaiety in Ayr, which has a smaller and challenging stage space. They managed this with ease, although I know this will not have been as easy as it seemed, and achieved by the backstage crew’s hard work, sweat and (happy) tears. It was very impressive how the production team used visual backdrop projections and minimal set pieces to bring the magic of this show to life, to a fantastic result. The characterisation, musical numbers and choreography were all fantastically executed by every member of the cast and it was clear to see everyone was having the best time. This energy spread through the auditorium which allowed the audience to feel part of the story, a benefit of the more intimate theatre space. When the audience are cheering from the first voiceover, you know you are onto a winner. The characterisation from every cast member was well executed and they handled the challenge of transferring the movements from the characters in the animated film to live theatre seamlessly. Leading the show in the title character role of Shrek was Mikey McCabe. Mikey’s strong physicality, clear accent and powerful vocals really set the tone of the character from the start and he balanced the softer, warm side of the character perfectly. This was highlighted in his number “Who I’d Be”, which was just lovely. Shrek’s sidekick who we meet as the show progresses, is his ‘loyal noble steed’ Donkey. Paul Hume showed flawless comedy timing, facial expressions and energetic physicality in his role which was infectious and had the audience enthralled. I was tired from just watching him perform “Don’t Let Me Go”! Adding more comedy to the show and completing the leading trio of characters was Ciara Brady as Princess Fiona. Ciara’s characterisation was fantastic. She confidently balanced the princess and ogre sides of the Fiona character, showed off her beautiful voice, and used her comic timing to produce the strong-minded princess the audience fell for. Mikey, Ciara and Paul worked outstandingly well together with a natural interaction on stage. Supporting Ciara in the role of Fiona were Darcie Magee and Nancy Vollam (Young Fiona), and Beth Donaldson and Kiera Capstick (Teen Fiona). The talent in their performances was very impressive. The “baddie”, a word I use loosely as you just can’t help but love him, of the show Lord Farquaad was captured brilliantly by Greg Philip. Greg gave a well-rounded performance, mastering the use of the costume and character’s trademark knee walking to produce hilarity in all of his scenes. In particular his interaction with Shrek on their first meeting was “perfect” (I can still hear Greg’s voice saying that line). A standout vocal performance was Lynne Kenmuir as Dragon. It was simply outstanding to see Lynne perform the big belt numbers in an effortless style. The puppetry of Dragon was cleverly done and allowed Lynne to be on stage with the operators as Dragon flew across the stage. It meant her attitude and acting was aiding the main puppetry and brought another dynamic to the scenes. The main principal line up was supported by a strong and talented ensemble of Fairy-tale characters who

cleverly jumped between roles as the show progressed. All brought individual characterisation to their roles and it was lovely to see a variety of ages in the ensemble encompassing the full range of club members. I couldn't list everyone in this report, and wouldn't want to miss anyone out, so I would say a huge congratulations to everyone for their energy and enthusiasm. Behind the scenes the wardrobe and make-up team should be commended for fantastic input. Congrats to everyone at AAOC on a brilliant show once again. A great one to add to your repertoire. I would also like to commend the club on their programme design which was very endearing and fitted with the storybook theme of the show exceptionally well. Finally, I would like to add extra congratulations to Mikey and Ciara, Shrek and Fiona, on their real-life engagement as Mikey took to bended knee on the last night of the show run – Go You Two!

#### **Kilmarnock Amateur Operatic Society: 9-5 The Musical**

**Director: Liz Daniels; Musical Director: Tom Daniels; Choreographer: Marie-Anne McGrattan**

Daniel and I enjoyed another warm welcome to Kilmarnock, thank you Liz and Robin for this. *9 to 5 The Musical*, based on the 1980 movie of the same name features music from Dolly Parton, focuses on the stories of three women, working under a boss that does not appreciate them. The roles of the three leading ladies were exceptionally performed by: Lyndsey Campbell as Violet Newstead, Cassidy Murray as Doralee Rhodes and Rachel Howat as Judy Bernly. All three portrayed strong individual characters bringing the audience into their stories with warmth and comedy. Lyndsey perfectly balanced Violet's confident and determined side with a more vulnerable personality. Cassidy's Doralee had excellent comic timing and never lost her excellent Texan accent even when singing. Rachael's Judy captured the quiet, old fashioned newbie with comedy and let her character blossom into a confident independent woman in the end. Every time Rachel said "fun fact" I was laughing before the rest of the line. Their individual songs: "One of the Boys" for Lyndsey, "Backwoods Barbie" for Cassidy and "Get Out and Stay Out" for Rachel were all equally outstanding with flawless vocals, and great characterisation. As a trio they all worked brilliantly and conveyed a very real friendship. Congratulations to Lyndsey, Cassidy and Rachel for their superb performances. Their boss, the sleazy Franklin Hart Jr, was played wonderfully by Neil Warrander. Neil presented a slimy character that the audience just loved to loathe and combined great character acting with confident vocals. A comedy highlight in the principal line-up was Natalie MacKenzie's performance of Franklin Hart's devoted and passionate assistant Roz Keith. Natalie's characterisation was brilliant, comedy timing perfect and she had the audience in stitches. Her number "Heart to Hart" in particular was hysterical. The handsome love interest for Violet is Joe, who was played by Calum Peter. Calum brought this shy character to life with a lovely singing voice and added some humour in there too. There are a lot of minor characters in the story which gives the ensemble a lot to do. Highlights of these minor principal roles were: Maria (Pauline Ferguson), Dwayne (Neil Kerr), Dick (Colin McDonald), and Tinsworthy (Robert Fyfe). All were great, complemented each other and helped the story move along well. Special mention should be made to Colette Dunsmore as 'the office lush' Margaret, who only needed to walk across the stage to earn a full auditorium filled with laughter. The full ensemble filled the stage and auditorium with infectious energy, and the enjoyment on stage was clear to see. Director Liz should be proud of the characterisation throughout the principal cast and for the clever staging / scenery design and planning slick scene changes. The big choreography numbers were very fantastic, allowed everyone to be involved and worked well around the set pieces. A huge well done to choreographer Marie-Anne for this success. Another of the key highlights to the show were the impressive vocals during all principal and ensemble numbers under the clever leadership of Musical Director Tom. This show was bright, vibrant and lively from start to finish which made it a joy to watch. A huge well done to the club for another successful production.

#### **Paisley Musical & Operatic Society: Shrek the Musical**

**Director: Blair Ledgerwood-Cruikshank; Musical Director: Sean Stirling; Choreographer: Greg Robertson**

As one of the newest shows on the am-dram circuit, a show of *Shrek's* scale brings with it a lot of expectation from the audience who most, if not all, have seen the film. A further challenge is transferring the magic from screen to stage, especially in a big theatre setting like the Theatre Royal Glasgow. With that said it was a challenge that PMOS took on, revelled in and executed remarkably well. From the club's management team, production team, through all backstage departments and finally the cast, it was evident that everyone was passionate, focused and working hard on this production. I can confidently vouch for this as it was evident from meeting the club backstage for their annual NODA award evening and feeling the emotion and bond. The production team of Blair, Sean and Greg worked their magic once again in bringing the show to life and I have no doubt that their enthusiasm was a catalyst for what transferred to the stage. Their staging, use of the large set pieces, lighting, special effects, energetic choreography and impressive vocals all complemented each other to fill the stage and auditorium with the magic and fantasy of the show. All backstage workers behind the scenes really should be congratulated, with special mentions to the costume and make-up teams who had exceptional jobs to do getting the cast on stage and managing the constant quick costume and make-up changes. The hard work and effort backstage was an attitude carried on to the performances on stage. A powerhouse ensemble cast gave strong performances throughout the show capturing fairy-tale characters, Duloc villagers, knights, guards and dancing rats. In a report of this scale I can't name everyone individually and don't want to single people out, as it very much was a team effort, so I would pass on a huge heartfelt congratulations to every member of the ensemble



for their limitless energy, enthusiasm and talent. Leading the ensemble were a fantastic principal line up. Johnny Collins executed the role of Shrek brilliantly with his impressive vocals, strong characterisation and cheeky comedy timing, all the while coping with a large costume and complex prosthetics. As we follow the story of Shrek's journey to save his swamp from an influx of fairy-tale creatures, we meet who will become Shrek's trusty side-kick Donkey. Ross Pollock used a fantastic accent, comedy timing and agile physicality to bring Donkey to life. He was a firm favourite with the audience and the relationship he and Johnny brought to their characters' journeys was great. A detour in the plan to save the swamp is introduced by Lord Farquaad who although he is the "baddie" of the piece, you can't help but love. Ross Nicol was just excellent. Spending the show in a costume that requires him to be on his knees for the entire performance, apart from a few dance moves, is a task in itself and this was flawless. The comedy Ross brought to the role was fantastic and had the audiences in stitches even before delivering a line. Lord Farquaad's detour leads Shrek and Donkey to meeting what will become the loves of their lives, Princess Fiona and Dragon. An example of pure comedy genius was the performance delivered by Zoe McFadyen as Princess Fiona. Zoe's beautiful voice, impeccable comic timing and extensive characterisation was a joy. In particular her facial expressions were just perfection and captured every emotion the character experienced. In the song "I Know it's Today" Zoe was joined by members of the younger cast: Emma McConnachie (Young Fiona) and Alannah Pollock (Teen Fiona). Both girls gave mature, strong and notable performances, and I am sure the girls on the alternate nights would have been equally excellent. The character of Dragon was voiced by Lindsey Ross who used her powerful, controlled and impressive voice to master the songs Dragon performed and seemed to do this with natural ease. Bringing this character to the stage also required a group of 5 operators, who along with clever lighting effects immersed the audience into the magic of this character. A musical comedy filled with laughter, lovable romance and fun, *Shrek* was a success from start to finish. To repeat what I said to the club at their presentation after the show, the club is going from strength to strength which is great to see, and this fantastic show was a beautiful, glittery gum drop button on a lovely ginger bread man which represents the entire PMOS family.

## NODA TODAY



**Does your society have something exciting to tell?**

We are looking for interesting articles for our November edition of NODA Today.

**Does your society have an exciting story to tell?**

**Have you pulled a show off completely out of your comfort zone?**

**Do you perform in a quirky venue?**

**Does your society have famous alumni?**

**Then let us know!**

We are always looking for stories for every edition of NODA Today and our online blog. If you think you have one of those stories then please get in touch.

***Please submit by e-mail to the Regional Editor by Friday 25 September 2020.***

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Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club

Weekly themed zoom video calls; our weekly quiz, participation in the District 5 video singalong and currently putting together a HODC Cookbook to help raise funds for both charity and the club during these times.

**SHOW REVIEWS**

**Cumbernauld Musical Theatre Society: Some Enchanted Evening  
Director & Musical Director: Fraser Morrison**

This was certainly an enchanted evening which provided a feast of numbers from the world of musical theatre spanning a broad range of shows, each one performed to the highest standard. The company opened the concert with a medley of songs by Richard Rodgers which concluded with “A Grand Night for Singing” which of course it was. This set the scene in context around the principle of “A Musical” (Sean Lewis & Adam Stewart from *Something Rotten*). Unfortunately, I cannot list each musical item or performer individually but particular highlights for me in Act I included an entertaining “Audition Medley / I Hope I Get It” (*A Chorus Line*) which featured most members of the cast; “I Don’t Remember You / Sometimes A Day Goes By” (Lewis Kerr & Adam Stewart from *And the World Goes Round*), “Someday” (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*) and “Always A Bridesmaid” (Amy Glover from *I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change*). The company opened Act II with a great arrangement of “Put On Your Sunday Clothes” (*Hello, Dolly!*) with further musical highlights including “Alone in the Universe” (Cameron Murray from *Seussical*); “The Grass is Always Greener” (Amy Glover & Marie Jo McCrossan from *Women of the Year*) and a dramatic “Unsettled Scores” (*Whistle Down the Wind*). The company must be commended for the way they transformed the function suite of the hotel into an auditorium. This was indeed a marvellous musical evening under the baton of Fraser Morrison, assisted by the highly accomplished accompanist, Ian Monteith-Mathie. Just like the final number, the whole evening was “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”. Well done!

**Ups and Downs Theatre Group: Take 25  
Directors: Nicole Murray, Alison Adam; Musical Director: Paul Devlin**

Celebrating their 25th Anniversary, the theatre group took us on a journey through some of the ‘Ups and Downs’ of life including a tour around the world. Act I opened with the full cast performing “Circle of Life” (*The Lion King*) followed by “When I Grow Up” (*Matilda*) and thereafter a range of fitting songs from the cast which featured selected soloists, and ensembles with interacts to help us on the journey. Act II then took us on an adventurous world tour stopping off at 16 countries through song, dance with some drama. In opening with “Rockin’ All Over The World” (Andrew & Samantha Pirie) immediately followed by “Samba De Janeiro” with Samba dancers (Lindsay Hughes, Scott McLelland and Abbie Smith) the platform was set radiating high energy and enthusiasm from the stage throughout the tour. “The Lonely Goatherd” (Nel Grady with Ethan Dunn, Eve O’Neill and Emma Smith) and the “All Blacks” (Sean Blair, Sean Craighead and Martin Russell) were particular entertaining highlights and I was also further impressed with the Swan Lake Ballet (Teighan McLean, Charlie Moffat with Angela Clemente, Melissa Keskin, Katy Maxwell and Hannah Quinn) and also the Flamenco Dancers (Taylor Milligan and Tanya O’Neil). The costume team must be commended for their creativity in designing and making all the cast costumes which added to the colourful spectacle of *Take 25*. Unfortunately, it is not possible to name each and every one performer individually and I commend one and all for the valuable contribution they made which was acknowledged by the audience. I look forward to *Take 26*.

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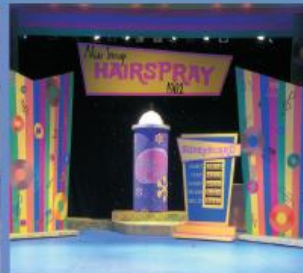
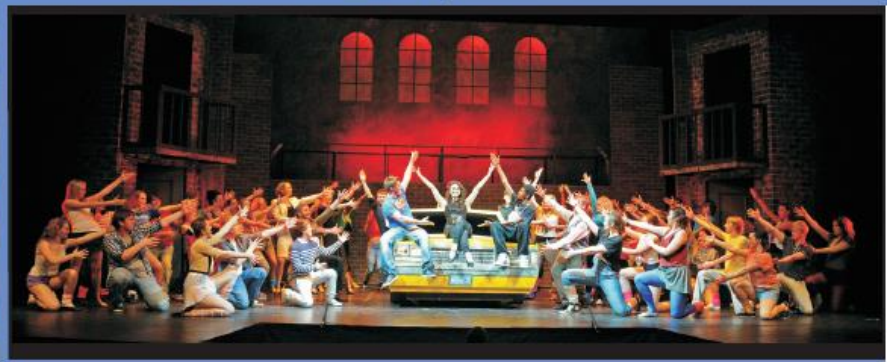
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**SHOW REVIEWS**

**Portobello and Joppa Church Drama Group Edinburgh: Carousel**  
**Director: Shona Cowie; Musical Director: Nancy Kent;**  
**Choreographers: Jane Coatham, Sylvia Cowie, Amber Kelly, Lynne Kelly**

*Carousel*, described as a truly classical musical about two star crossed lovers Billy Bigelow, a handsome but ill-mannered carousel barker and Julie Jordan, a naive and selfless young mill worker, is said to be one of the most lavish and celebrated scores of all time with wonderful music for leads and chorus. The storyline is quite dark and controversial and perhaps doesn't appeal to all but this emotionally charged production was very well staged indeed. The opening "Carousel Waltz" played by the orchestra brought the fairground to life. Bright coloured costumes, a dancing bear, balloon sellers and clowns entertaining the bustling crowd set the scene with all the fun of the fair. The contrasting emotions were well conveyed by the various characters. Aiden O'Brien played well as the young, rough and ready Billy delivering his soliloquy with real feeling and conviction. The contrast between the 'bully boy' Billy and the tender Billy when he realises the wrong he has done was put across with sincerity. Rachael Harvey was a delightfully innocent Julie singing well and so believably distraught in Billy's death scene. The partnership of the feisty Carrie (Mariel Main) and the ambitious Enoch Snow (Martijn van Waveren) worked well with both enjoying the fun and humour the parts demand and bringing light relief to this dramatic piece. The Snow family of youngsters were quite charming. Greg Holstead gave a strong performance as the 'baddy' Jigger with his gruff voice and intimidating actions as he tricks Billy into what turns out to be a fatal situation. Angela Bell portrayed a genuinely kind and caring Aunt Nettie as she gently sang "You'll Never Walk Alone". The widowed owner of the carousel Mrs. Mullin who has an eye for the barker was well characterised by Poppy Malone. Other supporting cameo roles were all well played with confidence. There is plenty for the chorus to do in *Carousel* and the lively, enthusiastic company sang and moved well especially in "June Is Bustin' Out All Over" and the "Clambake". The male chorus was in excellent voice in "Blow High, Blow Low" which was enhanced by a well choreographed hornpipe, while the female chorus sang beautifully with Julie in the sentimental "What's The Use Of Wond'rin'". There was some lovely choreography throughout with the dream ballet when Billy makes his return to earth simply but effectively portrayed. The finale "If I Loved You" and "You'll Never Walk Alone" were sung with real passion and emotion by the company bringing a tear to the eye. The small, well directed orchestra supported the singers well. This was a most enjoyable production which showcased what is arguably one of Rodgers and Hammerstein's best works. Very well done indeed.

**Southern Light Opera Company: Anything Goes**  
**Director: Andy Johnston; Musical Director: Crawford Moyes; Choreographer: Louise Williamson**

When attending a company like the Southern Light, whose shows, year on year are a joy to review, it is always (very briefly!) at the back of your mind "Can this show match up to previous years"? The answer, very quickly, is "Yes, of course it can!". What is there to go wrong when the show is in the hands of the supremely competent production team of Andy Johnston, Crawford Moyes and Louise Williamson? Crawford's orchestra situated right upstage on the upper deck of the SS American aided the singers of this large company, without ever becoming overpowering. I have experienced problems when orchestras are taken out of the pit and relocated elsewhere – the conductor being seen on a TV monitor rather than appearing in the pit. However, no such problems tonight! Louise, I am sure, must count herself extremely lucky to have a team of young, vibrant dancers, on stage tonight. It is always a pleasure to watch the skill and talents of these people, especially when it is something that I would (or could!) not ever attempt! Andy's direction magically appears to go from strength to strength every year, in every aspect of production, in which, of course, he has the final say. Not taking anything away from the heads of the following departments, but lighting, sound, sets and wardrobe all gelled within Andy's first class artistic direction. And now to the principals! *Anything Goes* has been blessed with a fantastic leading lady – Toni MacFarlane in the role of Reno Sweeney. Toni commandeered the stage with fine acting and exceptional vocal abilities. Hope Harcourt was attractively portrayed by the ever-smiling Rebekah Lansley, whose duet "It's De-lovely" with love interest Billy Crocker (Matt McDonagh) was first class! The part of Erma was played with consummate squeakiness by Tanya Williamson. Her rendition of "Buddy Beware" was a joy to listen to. Aristocratic Lord Evelyn Oakleigh (Kerr-Alexander Syme) brought comedy to the fore in this bumptious gem of a part! As Moonface Martin, Peter Tomassi was a delight to behold! Anyone considering playing this part could learn so much by watching Peter's take on it. John Bruce gave us a brilliant Elisha J Whitney both in delivery and stage presence, while his pairing with Evangeline Harcourt (Dorothy Johnstone) was totally convincing (with the aid of some hair greying on John's part!). Dorothy's experience of treading the boards (she played Evangeline in 2005 with SLO) is always a pleasure to watch – her faint in this production was a perfect lesson in stagecraft (and trust!). I look forward to seeing Dorothy in many more SLO productions – not just because she is my colleague NODA Rep – but when she is performing in the show, she kindly invites me along to review! Many more minor principal and cameo roles made for a delightful evening with SLO. Many thanks for inviting me along to review your show and for the interval hospitality shown to us!

Mike Pendlowski

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## WELL DONE, ROBIN!



Robin Ozog of Kirkcaldy Gilbert & Sullivan Society is pictured below receiving a Commemorative Shield from Stuart McCue-Dick, NODA Scotland Councillor, to mark the occasion of a rather unusual feat! In March 2020, Robin achieved the hat-trick of having played every male role in *The Gondoliers*. Some roles he has played more than once as can be seen on the shield below. In March he played both the role of Don Alhambra del Bolero (featured in photo) and was also the Director. Many Congratulations.



**SHOW REVIEWS**

**Kirkcaldy Gilbert & Sullivan Society: The Gondoliers**  
**Director: Robin O'zóg; Musical Director: John Howden**

*The Gondoliers* has long been in my top three favourite G&S operettas. In particular, *Gondoliers* arguably boasts some of the happiest and most entertaining music from the pen of Sir Arthur. Tonight, a bright open set welcomed us to the first act. A nod towards one of Kirkcaldy's well-known family run takeaway businesses was given in the café stage right! The chorus supported by minor principals Antonio (Jack Archibald), Francesco (Paul Graham), Fiametta (Sinead Black) and Vittoria (Sharon Edgar), all acquitted themselves well, in what is probably Sullivan's longest opening chorus. In this opening sequence we also meet the two leading Gondoliers in the story Marco (Nick Temperley) and Giuseppe (Tom Kelman), the latter obviously suffering voice problems this evening – but, nevertheless struggled through. Their wives, by choice (or luck!) resulted, of course, in Gianetta (Jilly Martin) and Tessa (Caroline Warburton). These two young ladies gave wonderful presentations of the new wives, both vocally and in their stage presence, Caroline's "When a Merry Maiden Marries" and Jilly's "Kind Sir You Cannot have the Heart", being just two memorable cases in point. The Ducal Party aka The Duke of Plaza-Toro (Michael McFarlane), The Duchess (Elaine Young), Casilda (Eliza Twaddle) and Luiz (Craig Rose) had unfortunately found the need to park their gondola some distance away from the set, allowing them some time to recover from canal-sickness before appearing in the Piazzetta! With a considerable number of years of experience within this Ducal Party, it is not surprising that the performances were all of a very high standard. Casilda and Luiz' duet was a delight to listen to, while, especially in Act II, the Duke and Duchess's comedy duet added to a wealth of fun in this Italian / Spanish romp. Elaine's stentorian voice when (attempting!) to keep her spouse under control was not unexpected, but definitely welcome! Michael's on-stage direction of Marco and Giuseppe in "I am a Courtier" was well-timed and generated some well-deserved audience reaction. As Don Alhambra del Bolero, Robin O'zóg appeared in the garb of a Cardinal – appropriately, since over the centuries in Spain several Grand Inquisitors (aka Torturers) have indeed been Roman Catholic Cardinals. Robin, who also directed, sang and performed well, "There Lived a King" being an example of his experience on the stage. BTW, Robin has now performed all the male principal roles in this operetta! Last but not least, we have the minor principal parts of Giulia (Amanda Gear) and Inez (Eleanor Hubbard). Both ladies made the most of these cameo roles, Inez, of course, bringing tonight's entertainment to an end, by describing the mix-up of babies in their formative years. One can't help thinking that childcare in the days of Messrs Gilbert & Sullivan left much to be desired! Many thanks KGASS, for your invite to *Gondoliers* 2020.

**Leven Amateur Musical Association: Betty Blue Eyes**  
**Director: Fiona Gallacher Stewart; Musical Director: Ronan Corkey; Choreography: Kirstin Stewart**

Set in post-war 1947, the Duke of Edinburgh and Princess Elizabeth are about to be married. However, food is still rationed and townsfolk are wondering where the next meal will come from. Chiropodist Gilbert Chilvers (Alastair More) has recently moved to the town with his wife Joyce (Laura Spence), with plans to open his own surgery. Both Alastair and Laura formed excellent characters – the wife, Laura, definitely wearing the trousers in this relationship – both exhibited first class singing voices. However, the third person in this family trio, Joyce's eccentric Mother Dear (Elinor Hay), gave an outstanding performance, capturing the elderly lady's mannerisms and misunderstandings perfectly. The three men with their sights set on capturing Betty – the pig in the title – all maintained their individual characters throughout. Dr Swaby (Gordon Taylor), Francis Lockwood (Craig Spence) and Henry Allardyce (Andrew Doig) all have a long list of theatrical credits – and their inherent experience was obvious, both in the consistency of character and singing. Tony Livingston, as Meat Inspector Wormold, formed an absolutely intimidating role. Completing the principal line-up, we had the Betty Puppeteer (Isla Sutton), a far from easy task, being on stage in control of Betty for each of the blue-eyed pig's numerous entrances. From the host of minor principals, the following ladies brought a distinct sense of realism to the acting line-up – Mrs Lester (Lorraine Tuft), Mrs Roach (Katy Holligan), Mrs Turnbull (Emma Gillespie), Mrs Tillbrook (Norma Walker), Mrs Allardyce (Lynsey Stuart) and Mrs Metcalf (Karen Richards). Finally, for accuracy of character as the Newscaster, Laurence Crowe deserves a definite credit. The LAMA chorus made the most of all opportunities in this show with fine singing and movement – congratulations to Director, Fiona Gallacher Stewart and MD Ronan Corkey, most obviously in control of an experienced group of musicians. Mention must also be made of the excellent choreography in the show in the very capable hands of Kirstin Stewart! Technically, the show called for a multitude of scenes, tonight moving between each with apparent ease, thanks in no small way to designer Duncan Milne. Lighting was generally fine (I could see everyone when they were supposed to be seen). Unfortunately, midway through the Act I Finale, the houselights appeared at full, with the cast manfully singing on in blackout! This however, was rectified after not too long! Sound was excellent, and costumes were all in period, putting the icing on an enjoyable evening!

**Encourage your society to enter the programmes and posters competitions.**  
**See the up to date information on the NODA website.**



CONGRATULATIONS

Galashiels AOS was one of three in my district who managed to get their productions to fruition before the lockdown. It was a very special occasion for Muriel Johnston who received her 70 Year Award.

In my 20th year as NODA rep for the Borders Area this is the first time I have presented a 70 year award, a high point for me in my 20th year on the NODA Scotland Committee. I also presented Muriel with her Diamond Award. She is an absolute trooper and was on stage this year... as an elderly passenger in *Anything Goes*. She is also still an active committee member. Amazing energy!

Those in the picture left to right are: Janet McDougall (25 years award), Deborah Lyons, Muriel Johnston (70 years award), Alaistar Waddell (55 years award). [Photos forwarded from Sheila Scott Photography]

*Deborah Lyons, Regional Representative, District No 8*



**THIS AND THAT – WHAT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING OVER LOCKDOWN**Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society

In normal times, we would have chosen our next show, be enjoying our summer break and looking forward to starting rehearsals for our 2020/21 season. But these are not normal times. Given the situation at present, we are unable to plan with any certainty, having no idea when we will be allowed to gather together to rehearse again, never mind actually putting on a production.

For a number of years now, the Society has had a close association with a local Borders charity – the Lavender Touch – which provides complimentary therapies for patients living with cancer in the Scottish Borders. During that time, we have worked together on several fund-raising projects. In the current situation, both organisations face uncertain times, as our normal activities are on hold, so Jeff Thomson, our Producer / Musical Director, set his mind to devising and orchestrating something that the Society members would enjoy, that would bring them together again through music, and at the same time would help raise some money for the Lavender Touch to assist them at a difficult time in their fund raising efforts. So, Gala Opera Virtual Choir was born. To view, listen and (should you wish) donate to a very worthy local charity follow the link <https://bit.ly/3cl75i2> or find it at [www.lavendertouch.co.uk](http://www.lavendertouch.co.uk), [www.galaopera.co.uk](http://www.galaopera.co.uk) or on our Facebook pages.

**SHOW REVIEWS****Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society GAOS: Anything Goes**

**Director & Musical Director: Jeff Thomson; Choreographer: Marie McCullough**

As the SS American sets sail once again after 20 years for this company, the new, wonderfully fresh set created the backdrop to slick scenes and kinetic atmosphere that, without doubt, launches another memorable production from this exceptional young company. The local press headline, It's Delicious, it's Delightful, it's De-lovely is right on the button. This comical shipboard romp, as it is described in the programme, is just that, giving each and every character their opportunity to shine. It features a score of Cole Porter's most popular and well known songs and the superb performances are certainly drawing the local audiences to sell out houses. Huge credit to Director and MD who has reawakened this version of *Anything Goes* for his second time and put together a fabulous orchestra to complement throughout. The unique and stylised choreography was perfectly on point and displayed a remarkable professionalism from all who donned their dancing shoes. Leading dancers in the form of Reno's Angels were Kara Roberts, Rosie Fletcher, Emily Balderston and Catriona Moore, who were particularly poised and stunning throughout. The overall attention to detail, excellent sets, gorgeous costumes, effective lighting and the fabulous harmonic choral work deserve special mention. In a predominantly youthful cast, Reno certainly proved to have what it takes, in taking this demanding vocal and dancing role, and truly making it her own. The title song "Anything Goes" had the 'wow!' factor with excellent singing, tapping, style and pizzazz, while "Blow, Gabriel Blow" was equally sensational, featuring the sexy red angels assisting Reno and the chorus. Both were Reno's show-stopping numbers and particular highlights, while her fun duets, "You're the Top" with Billy and "Friendship" with Moonface deserved equal credit. The busy role of Billy Crocker, alias Public Enemy No 1, awarded Jack McAuley top marks for stamina, humour and charisma. His relaxed ability to engage with all the shenanigans of the SS America and her passengers made him perfect for the role. His vocal and dancing prowess also shone throughout. "De-lovely", with Hope, was a superb, harmonic number which was also beautifully choreographed. "All Through The Night" also deserves a special mention. Hope was beautifully characterised by Catriona Young, whose poised and pretty image carried her delightfully through the show. She epitomised the loyal daughter, soon to be married to an English Lord, though not her true love. She played her role with natural ease which was highlighted by her beautiful, emotional rendition of "Goodbye, Little Dream, Goodbye". Her harmonious partnership with Billy worked perfectly. Evelyn Oakleigh's engaging performance by a youthful James Bennett raised many a giggle, with his haughty accent and mannerisms winning worthy applause, particularly in his hilarious solo, "Gypsy in Me". His participation in the bedroom antics with Reno and Moonface was a theatrical classic, having the audience in stitches. Well done, young man. The overbearing mother of Hope, Evangeline Harcourt, was in the very capable hands of stalwart Lorraine Kemp. She never ceases to come up trumps in whatever role she is given and this was no exception. The fact that this role didn't give her the opportunity to highlight her solo vocal ability didn't deter her from giving a brilliantly characterised performance. It was a revelation to see such a young man play the drunken, wealthy tycoon, Elisha Whitney, but Simon Thomson certainly put his heart and soul into his OTT portrayal with a larger than life performance of "The Crew Song". From opening to finale he was fully engaged, albeit most of the time haplessly looking for his stolen spectacles. Public Enemy No13, Moonface Martin, and his moll, Erma, were the perfect partnership played by Daniel Wilson and Jess Thomson. With well fashioned NY accents they both added to the mayhem which ensued during the plot and adding their own creative comedic interpretation to their roles with great aplomb. Moonface, in the atmospheric jail scene gave a gifted performance of "Be Like a Bluebird" while Erma flirtatiously sang and danced her way to top marks in a superbly choreographed "Buddy Beware". The dance lifts and



harmonic vocals from the sailors made this another truly superb number. In grand finale style the company had their audience enraptured to the toe tapping and hand clapping bows. With a "Friendship", "Blow, Gabriel Blow" and "Anything Goes" reprise, it's no wonder they also received a worthy standing ovation. A totally memorable voyage. Thank You Passengers!

**Hawick Amateur Operatic Society HAOS: Barnum**  
**Director & Musical Director: Derek Calder; Choreographer: Anne Anderson**

When Hawick announced that they had acquired the performing rights for the Border Premiere of *Barnum*, the excitement was palpable from day one. As a show which brings many challenges, it was evident that the company were unfazed. Producer and Musical Director quite openly admits that this is his favourite show; therefore, it was an immense gift, albeit mega hard work, to achieve his dream. There is no doubt that everyone involved in this production has every right to celebrate in its triumph. The whole venue was a feast for the eyes with an amazing set of decorations. The entrance hall, fun fair stalls with popcorn and drinks, auditorium and staging were all beautifully dressed and brought the audience right into the world of PT Barnum. The choreography was managed brilliantly, with tricks, acrobatics, stilt walking, juggling and high wire, not to mention action spilling into the auditorium, to the delight of the audience, especially the children. It was certainly a show that could easily have been experienced more than once to fully appreciate its complexity, spectacle, colour, atmospheric lighting and slick scene changes. The balance of a great band also complemented the show from start to finish. The title role of PT Barnum was a gift, truly fulfilled by Iain Scott. He moved into circus mode from the opening scene, portraying natural charm, which this mammoth role requires, and he did it in a wholehearted engaging way. He certainly made this a character to remember and I'm sure that he will feel that it was the pinnacle of his amateur career so far. Whether 'humbug', 'flimflam', 'hogwash', 'shilly-shally' or 'sucker' was on his agenda it was carried out with true conviction and similarly with very tricky, wordy songs. He scaled ropes, changed shoes and walked the line while singing, which was a challenge enough to have hearts in mouths! As a character that is hardly ever offstage and leads almost every well-known big number in the show, the vocal strength of Barnum was invaluable to be able to sustain seven, full on performances. This was a superb performance and deserves huge praise. Barnum's wife, advisory, soul-mate and conscience, Chairy, was perfectly cast in Ashley Wolf. Her secret control, in her coin-flipping way, guided the man whom she seemed to know better than he knew himself. Her natural portrayal and vocal strength shone throughout. She led the company number "One Brick at a Time", which featured clowns, acrobats and tricks with choral harmony and counterpoint, which was a colourful feast of movement and song. Chairy also shows her vulnerable side in a lovely, touching rendition of "The Colours of My Life", reprising later in a harmonic duet with Barnum. They also charmed us with a playful "I Like Your Style". The versatile and acrobatic Alexander Edwards played The Ringmaster with charismatic ease. Tumbling, climbing, juggling and unicycling were no trouble to this confident lithe young man. He assisted Barnum and full chorus in the two show-stopping highlights, "Come Follow the Band" and 'Join the Circus'. The role of Jenny Lind was excellently played and very competently sung by Kim Jeffrey. The Swedish nightingale who turned Barnum's head also managed to perfect her accent after her comical "Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen" introduction. This young lady not only excelled in her supporting role but she also managed the quick changes to participate as a juggling clown, proving her talented versatility and enthusiasm. The larger than life character Tom Thumb was perfectly sized for Charlie Marshall. His rendition of "Bigger Isn't Better" fully engaged his audience. Well sung and comically danced with his two, very capable, high stilted Beefeaters, who danced with him, won him loud applause. The 'humbug' centenarian Joyce Heth was very comically portrayed by Shelagh Duncan in a hugely padded fat suit. Her enthusiastic "Thank God I'm Old" solo and dance with the chorus was hilarious, as her high kicking tambourine antics and pirouettes displayed some rather large red knickers. Great fun! Blues Singer, Caroline Wilkinson, was in excellent voice once again and perfectly cast in her vocal role to feature in "Black and White" with Barnum, Chairy and Chorus – a really fabulous number which evolves from the dramatic two tones to a plethora of colour and activity. It remains to say that every single cameo role, clown and circus character had an integral part to play in this outstanding production. On stage, back stage and front of house must be so proud of their massive achievement with months of dedicated circus coaching and practice obviously resulting in many more strings to many more bows. Huge congratulations!

**Selkirk Musical Theatre Company: All Shook Up**  
**Director: Steve Oliver; Musical Director: Derek Calder; Choreographer: Stuart Mitchell**

This was the first outing for me in 2020 and also my first time of seeing *All Shook Up*. Having spoken to some of the cast beforehand who were really enjoying rehearsals, I was intrigued to say the least. Juke box type musicals may roll out numerous recognised songs but the storyline is often pretty weak so I was expecting the Elvis hits to win me over. So, to the Selkirk production. WOW! The town of Selkirk has truly been *All Shook Up* this week. The company threw their all into this show and certainly produced a resounding triumph. The excellent band and the superb musical arrangements of the many recognisable hits deserves their own special credits. The scenes were simple, but cleverly designed and constructed with lighting to give maximum effect, including backdrop projection. The few wipes that were used helped facilitate slick changes from start to finish. The costumes were well stylised to the 1950s and the girls in

particularly had some stunning outfits, not forgetting the many pairs of blue suede shoes. Leading man Chad and Choreographer, Stuart Mitchell, did a wonderful job in his pivotal role and showed off his prowess within the many slick dance numbers. A young man with huge talent and charisma, he was hardly ever off stage, and produced some of the show's vocal highlights, "I Don't Want To", in particular. Huge congratulations Stuart on a massive job, well done. Natalie played by Kirsty Cleland, a young motor mechanic, was superbly cast. In her love smitten ploy to attract the roustabout Chad, she plays the guise of Ed, with oil smudged face for most of the show until she is finally foiled and gets the chance to dress up. A girl, worth her weight in gold, who matched her leading man in moves and vocal ability. In "One Night With You", the perfectly timed stills worked a treat, as did the highlight with Chad in, "Follow That Dream", which she reprised beautifully as "Ed". She also sang from the heart, accompanied by the superb chorus, in "A Little Less Conversation" and "Fools Fall in Love" – a thoroughly deserved leading role. Nervous and love-struck for his long-time friend Natalie, was Dennis, superbly portrayed by Ross Aitkin. Another talented young man who has grown in confidence to become a very valuable member of this young company. His thoughtful characterisation and overall interaction with everyone throughout the show created a sterling performance. For me his solo highlight was "It Hurts Me" but he also made a major contribution during the impressive stellar hits, "Hound Dog/Teddy Bear" mash up, "That's All Right" and "Blue Suede Shoes". The new more mature male asset who joined the SMTC fold last year, Craig Douglas, put his stamp on the loveable father of Natalie, in the role of Jim. His silky voice added greatly to the company's male strength and was comically prepared to pour himself into a more than skinny pair of jeans to be part of the young crowd. His duet with Chad, "Don't be Cruel", and trio including Sandra, "The Power of My Love", proved that he's one to keep hold of. The apparently 'strong' character, widowed Sylvia, couldn't have been in better hands than those of Amanda Blacklock. She totally captured the nuances of a woman who never expected to find love again, until her 'friend' Jim started to make moves towards another woman. In her bid to save him and win him for herself, she beautifully and passionately proves her worth, in an emotional rendition of, "There's Always Me". Superb! The sexy, Marilyn Monroe-like siren, Miss Sandra, was superbly played by Ellen McFadzen. A woman desperate to be wooed by cultured sonnets, mistakenly falls for Ed in the museum garden, imploring (the disguised) Natalie to "Let Yourself Go". Clever use of moving garden statues set the scene for this fabulous number. Including Chad and Jim, she also highlighted her star status in "The Power of My Love". The newest youth of the company, Sam Johnston, was perfectly cast as Dean. Energetic and animated would describe this young man, whose excellent vocal range proved really valuable. His romantic partnership to the character Lorraine was also perfect and he hit the high notes with an excellent "It's Now Or Never". He also played his part in the fabulous numbers, "All Shook Up" and "If I Can Dream". Lorraine, the romantic female youth role, was excellently played by Rebecca Fernie. She and Dean were comfortably on top form throughout the show. Never deterred by the domineering mother of Dean to put her down, she showed true class in the Yellow Bus Stop scene and proved that The Tunnel of Love was the right place to be to make her dreams of true love come to fruition. Although the end of Act I played out like a finale showstopper, the enthusiastic audience were in full anticipation of an even more exciting Act II. Mayor Matilda, the overbearing mother of Dean, was superbly characterised by Amy Darrie. Having previously shown her star status in the Kelso society over the years, their loss is certainly Selkirk's gain. A massively versatile and talented young lady, who gets her big chance to shine and shock as she lets her hair down in "Devil in Disguise". The steady, easy going role of Sheriff Earl was in great hands. Raymond D'Agrosa, a true company stalwart, held his own in face of all the shenanigans that *All Shook Up* threw at him, including Mayor Matilda. With the sound of "Burning Love" and "C'Mon Everybody" ringing in our ears, their standing ovation was as well deserved as their hot review. Well Done and Thank You All for an excellent night's entertainment.

### **Note to Marketing Managers: FREE PUBLICITY!!!**

**Make sure that all your forthcoming productions are listed on the NODA website as far in advance as you know plans have been made.**

**Note to Secretaries:  
To make sure all your society's contact details are up to date,  
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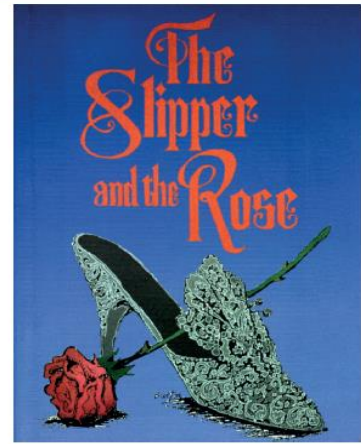
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**Past Forward** a full length drama by Carolyn Pertwee

(2m, 2f) Can the past ever let us go? Liz and Tom Fielding are poised to change their present life by selling up and moving to the coast for a brave new future, little knowing that a chance meeting with Sam Rutland, a long lost friend from their youthful past, will challenge the very foundations of their lives. What happened all those years ago when Sam shared their flat in those heady carefree days? Why is Liz so desperate to keep Sam and their daughter apart, and then so anxious when they not only meet at the family home, but become lovers?

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## THIS AND THAT – WHAT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING OVER LOCKDOWN

### The Florians

Viewing past productions; baby photograph competition; fortnightly quizzes; junior members' on-line show: *The Show Must Go On-line*.

### Inverness Musical Theatre

Marian Armstrong, a member of the wardrobe team for Inverness Musical Theatre, has been making scrubs for NHS out of donated sheets.



### Islesburgh Drama Group

A range of workshops: quizzes, movement sessions, readings (inc. plays, pantos and monologues)

[www.islesburghdramagroup.com](http://www.islesburghdramagroup.com)

[Facebook.com/IslesburghDramaGroup](https://www.facebook.com/IslesburghDramaGroup)

### Ury Players

Filming some short plays via Zoom which have been released on our You Tube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/uryplayers>

It's gone really well and so far we have released 5 plays and have 2 more in the pipeline. We've found it a great way to keep the club together while we can't meet in person and it's a fun thing to do. The local community seem to have enjoyed watching them as well.



**SHOW REVIEWS****Easter Ross Musical Theatre: All Shook Up****Director: Barbara More; Musical Director: Sharon Macleod; Choreographer: Kerry Russell**

This new musical certainly left the first night audience “all shook up” whether it was clapping and foot-tapping along to the well-known music of Elvis Presley or laughing at the many delightful comic moments. Shaun Cowan as Chad the rebel roustabout had the audience completely in his palms from his first appearance in black leather jacket, white tee-shirt and tight jeans astride a shining black motorbike. With a fine singing voice entirely suited to the style of music – from the hip-swivelling “Jailhouse Rock” to the more reflective “If I Can Dream” – he played the part with just the right cheeky-chappy air and twinkle in the eye. Rosanna Burton as Natalie/Ed gave an excellent portrayal of the small-town girl in pursuit of Chad. Her metamorphosis into biker boy “Ed” in her endeavour to get closer to Chad was hilarious. Andy Hurst was in superb comic form as Chad’s love-lorn sidekick Dennis. Leanne Swann as posh museum curator Miss Sandra too gave an excellent performance as the various menfolk tried to win her affections only for them to be ignored in favour of the unobtainable “Ed”. The quartet by Chad, Natalie, Miss Sandra and Dennis, “Teddy Bear/Hound Dog”, was exceptional. Catriona Macrae and Derek Brown as Lorraine and Dean were a well matched couple and their exploits towards true love added much to the comedy as shown in their rendition of “It’s Now or Never”. Another well-matched pairing was Sharon Macleod as Sylvia (the owner of the local diner) and Iain Mackenzie as Jim Haller (Natalie’s father and local garage owner). Strong support was given by Kerry Russell as Matilda the domineering Mayor and Alister Sutherland as Sheriff Earl. The chorus of Barflies and Townsfolk sang and moved well. I particularly liked their renditions of “Can’t Help Falling in Love”, “All Shook Up” and “Burning Love” complete with some delightful harmonies. The set was colourful and appropriate to the mid-1950s era as were the costumes. Congratulations to all at ERMT for a wonderfully entertaining evening.

**Elgin Musical Theatre: Betty Blue Eyes****Director: Beryl Duncan; Musical Director: Bob Garrity; Choreography: Chrissy Ashton**

I had heard a lot about this show, based on the film *A Private Function*, from various sources but had never had the chance to see it so was delighted when EMT announced it as their 2020 show and it did not disappoint. From the sung overture “Goodbye Austerity Britain” to the finale it was full of delightful music, comedy and some pathos. Huge congratulations must go to Rob Kenyon – in his first ever stage and singing role – who took on the huge lead role of Gilbert Chilvers. He imbued the role with both humour and pathos and had an excellent singing voice to boot (you could have heard a pin drop during his rendition of “The Kind of Man I Am”). Natalie Munro was excellent as his social climbing wife Joyce – always ready with an icy glance and withering put-down but with a softer side as shown in the number “Lionheart”. Leigh McLaggan gave a delightful performance as Mother Dear (“I’m 74 you know”) and her every facial expression and movement had the audience in stitches – well we all know someone just like her! The trio “Pig, No Pig” with Joyce, Mother Dear and Gilbert was magnificent fun. Sandy Duncan as accountant Henry Allardyce was a great character and his interaction with the pig he had named Betty Blue Eyes was a joy to behold. Strong support was given by Chris Hewett (Dr James Swaby) and Ken Smith (Frances Lockwood) as his fellow snobbish Town Councillors. Ian Duncan gave a very good portrayal as jobsworth meat inspector Mr Wormold, the villain of the piece, in which he was aided by Willie Duncan as Police Sergeant Noble. And of course, I can’t forget to mention the eponymous Betty (electronically controlled by her creator Eddie Pratt) whose big blue eyes melted the hearts of the characters and audience alike. The chorus singing and movement was very good and supported well by Bob Garrity and the 11 members of the orchestra. Special mention must be made of the beautiful singing of Laura Dee (Mrs Roach), Lauren Harper (Mrs Lester) and Julie Gray (Mrs Turnbull) in the “Magic Fingers” and “Lionheart” numbers – the harmonies were stunning. The set, designed and built by members of the company, was appropriate and good use was made of the various levels. The costuming was appropriate to the era and to the characters. Congratulations to all at Elgin Musical Theatre.

**THIS AND THAT – WHAT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING OVER LOCKDOWN**Carnoustie Musical Society

Singalongs with our MD, society quizzes, 'virtual pub' catch ups and the sharing and watching of old rehearsal footage and photographs which sparked much reminiscence. We even managed to successfully host our annual AGM via Zoom. The society hopes to continue these evenings until it is possible for us all to safely meet again in person.



**SHOW REVIEWS****Brechin Amateur Operatic Society: Lucky Stiff****Director: Graeme W Baird; Musical Director: Colin Grant; Choreographer: Liz Burns Smith**

I was delighted to be asked by Gordon Smith, the District 10 Regional Rep, to come along and do the report on the society's production of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Aherns' musical farce – and it certainly lived up to its billing being both filled with delightful musical numbers and hilarious comedy. The show is based on the novel by Michael Butterworth "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" and tells the tale of unassuming English shoe salesman Harry Witherspoon and his attempts at fulfilling the conditions laid down by his late uncle to enable him to inherit a huge fortune. The lead protagonist Harry Witherspoon, who was hardly ever off stage, was excellently played by Alan Matheson both vocal and acting wise. He was well matched by Laura Guthrie as his nemesis, and representative of the default legatee the Universal Dog Home of Brooklyn, Annabel Glick – their aggressive duet "Dogs Versus You" in Act I nicely contrasted with the beautifully delivered "Nice" in Act II. Gill Smith Matheson gave an outrageously comic performance as the short-sighted, conniving and murderous Rita LaPorta as she attempts to retrieve a cache of diamonds which Harry is unknowingly carrying. In these exploits she was greatly abetted by Graeme Baird as her optometrist brother Vinnie Di Ruzzio – another superb comic performance. The quartet "Him, Them, It, Her" by Harry, Annabel, Rita and Vinnie was a masterclass in comic timing! Strong support was provided by Jim Ramsay, whose character Luigi Gaudi provided the twist at the end of the tale and Ali Niven with a beautifully over-the-top portrayal of nightclub singer Dominique Du Monaco. And special mention must be made of Keith Cuthill who played Tony Hendon (deceased), the Lucky Stiff of the title, he never moved a muscle anytime he was on stage – a difficult thing to do when there is mayhem going on all around you! The ensemble sang and moved well in the limited amount they had to do. The set comprising a series of colourful truck mounted doors, moved with almost balletic precision by the hard working stage crew to form the various locations – including dreary shoe shop, Le Train Bleu, Monte Carlo Casino – all set against the backdrop of an ever-changing light wall. Colin Grant's four piece band played the various styles of music with precision and sympathy to the soloists. Well done to all at Brechin AOS for a delightful evening and for bringing a different show to the fore.

*Douglas J Clark***Carnoustie Musical Society: Sister Act****Director: John White; Musical Director: Colin Grant; Choreographer: Lynsey Ellen Faulkner**

With a completely black stage, no visible band and a striking video wall, centre and sides, providing colour and excitement, the audience's attention was riveted right from the start. Joanna Munro as the sassy Deloris Van Cartier introduced us to her life as a nightclub singer. Accompanied by her backing singers Tina and Michelle (Claire Smith and Kerry Mitchell) the three sang and moved with confidence and style. But the lively mood soon changed when Deloris witnessed her mob boss boyfriend Curtis (played with quiet malice) by Kevin Smith, murder one of his men. Knowing her own life was in danger she fled for help to good cop Sweaty Eddie, an old school mate – Gary Cavanagh gave a sympathetic performance. Eddie's answer was to "hide" her in a convent. As soon as she entered the convent and donned her nun's habit the entertainment grew. While her feisty behaviour soon antagonised Mother Superior the rest of the nuns took her to their hearts as she remoulded their disastrous choir into a sound fit for the Pope. Joanna Fitzgerald indeed gave a "superior" performance and brought dignity and polish to this role whilst Mark Masson also contributed to the humour as Monsignor O'Hara. In the company of approximately 29 nuns, Joanna as Deloris excelled. Sister Mary Patrick (Elaine Scougal), Sister Mary Lazarus (Violet Thomson) provided us with memorable comedy moments, while Sister Mary Theresa (Lesley Ritchie) and Sister Mary Martin-of-Tours (Laura Cameron) showed their characterisations skills. Deloris and the nuns were of course the stars of the show but a rising star amongst them, Natasha Davidson as postulant Sister Mary Robert shone brightly in both her voice and portrayal. On the eve of their concert for the Pope, Curtis and his goons, TJ, Joey and Pablo, (Grant Roach, Michael Burns and Gavin Burton) invade the convent to capture Deloris but not before the threesome provide some more fun with their rendition of "Lady With The Long Black Dress". But of course, the nuns save the day. A thoroughly enjoyable evening with effective choreography and characterisation, rousing singing and accompaniment. But will we ever recover from Roger Brunton's portrayal of the Pope? Congratulations to everyone involved.

**FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS: August 2020 and beyond****Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**

Theatre Guild Glasgow

Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow

Monday 5 to Saturday 10 October 2020 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**

St Patrick's Amateur Opera Group

Brian Duguid Theatre, Livingston

Tuesday 6 to Saturday 10 October 2020

**Chess**

Musselburgh Amateur Musical Association  
Brunton Theatre, Musselburgh  
Thursday 29 to Saturday 31 October 2020 (Matinee on Saturday)

**My Fair Lady**

Our Lady's Musical Society  
Motherwell Theatre  
Tuesday 3 to Saturday 7 November 2020 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Our House**

The Minerva Club  
Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow  
Tuesday 3 to Saturday 7 November 2020 (Matinee on Saturday)

**The Baker's Wife**

Dumfries Musical Theatre Company  
Brigend Theatre, Dumfries  
Saturday 21 to Saturday 28 November 2020 (Matinee on Sunday)

**Aladdin**

Larbert Amateur Operatic Society  
Dobbie Hall, Larbert  
Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 November 2020

**Mother Goose**

Runway Theatre Company  
Mitchell Theatre, Glasgow  
Wednesday 9 to Saturday 12 December 2020 (Matinee on Saturday)

**We Will Rock You (Young@part)**

Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company  
Falkirk Town Hall  
Tuesday 2 to Saturday 6 February 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**High School Musical**

Minerva Youth Theatre  
Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow  
Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 February 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Kinky Boots**

Hawick Amateur Operatic Society HAOS  
Hawick Town Hall  
Monday 8 to Saturday 13 March 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**The Wedding Singer**

Carnoustie Musical Society  
Carnoustie High School Theatre  
Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 March 2021

**Blitz!**

Tayport Amateur Dramatic & Musical Society  
Bonar Hall, Dundee  
Wednesday 24 to Saturday 27 March 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Hello, Dolly!**

Falkirk Operatic Society  
Falkirk Town Hall  
Tuesday 20 to Saturday 24 April 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)



**Sunshine on Leith**

Cumbernauld Musical Theatre Society

Venue: To be decided

Monday 26 April to Saturday 1 May 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Kinky Boots**

Larbert Amateur Operatic Society

Dobbie Hall, Larbert

Tuesday 4 to Saturday 8 May 2021

**Big Fish - The Musical**

Runway Theatre Company

Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow

Wednesday 12 to Saturday 15 May 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**The Steamie**

The Florians Dramatic Society

Florians Theatre, Inverness

Wednesday 9 to Saturday 12 June 2021

**Kinky Boots**

Loudoun Musical Society

Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock

Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 August 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Legally Blonde**

Leven Amateur Musical Association

The Centre, Leven

Thursday 16 to Saturday 18 September 2021

**Kiss Me Kate**

Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association

Roths Halls, Glenrothes

Tuesday 28 September to Saturday 2 October 2021 (Matinee on Sunday 26 September)

**9 to 5**

Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club

Motherwell Concert Hall

Tuesday 19 to Saturday 23 October 2021

**Carousel**

Cumbernauld Musical Theatre Society

Venue: To be decided

Tuesday 26 October to Saturday 30 October 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Sunshine on Leith**

The Minerva Club

Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow

Tuesday 2 to Saturday 6 November 2021 (Matinee on Saturday)

**The Pirates of Penzance**

Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society

Carnegie Hall, Dunfermline

Thursday 17 to Saturday 19 February 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)

**Shrek**

Loudoun Musical Society

Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock

Tuesday 27 September to Saturday 1 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)

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