



Newsletter Autumn 2022

Welcome to our autumn 2022 newsletter, keeping you in touch with what's happening at Stewartby Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society and our friends in other societies.

This is an electronic newsletter which can be delivered automatically to your email inbox or downloaded from the website. To sign up, go to

www.saods.org.uk, scroll to the bottom of the page and enter your email address. We promise that we will not use your email address for any purpose other than the delivery of the newsletter.

It's good to be back!

The autumn newsletter last year started with a section entitled "It's good to be back!" because that was the title of the concert we were putting on in November last year - our first venture onto the stage following the ending of the coronavirus restrictions.

This year's autumn newsletter begins with the same title because the Society is in final rehearsals for *The Mikado*, our first full production since 2019, and it is good to be back on stage with music, dialogue and movement.

It is to be hoped that most readers of this newsletter will be familiar with our *Mikado* poster (shown right) either in paper form or digitally via our Facebook advertising. If not, do you have any suggestions as to how we can improve our show advertising? The Committee are always happy to hear how to do things better! If you have any ideas please speak to any member of the Committee or email stewartbyoperatic@saods.org.uk.

Tickets for *The Mikado* are priced at £15 for adults and £7.50 for children and are available to buy online - go to our web site - or through our business manager Mike Cocke on 07557 670703, at boxoffice@saods.org.uk or in person at rehearsals. We will be running a licensed bar serving a limited range of drinks.

STEWARTBY AMATEUR OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY
presents:
The Mikado
or "The Town of Titipu"
by
W.S. Gilbert & Sir Arthur Sullivan
**16th-19th
November 2022**
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7:30pm
Saturday 2:30pm
Stewartby Village Hall
Stewartby Way MK43 9LX
Tickets £15 (adults) £7.50 (children 16 and under)
BOX OFFICE: www.saods.org.uk
Telephone: 07557 670703
Email: boxoffice@saods.org.uk
Find us on Facebook @StewartbyOperaticSociety

The Mikado

The story

(adapted from a summary by Andrew Lister of University of Warwick G&S Society)

photos courtesy of Jessica Hallett

In the town of Titipu, Nanki-Poo is looking for Yum-Yum, the girl he had fallen in love with a year ago. Yum-Yum had been betrothed to her guardian Ko-Ko, but on learning that Ko-Ko was condemned to death for flirting, Nanki-Poo has hurried back to try to claim Yum-Yum. On his return he finds that Ko-Ko has, in fact, been let out on bail and appointed Lord High Executioner. Worse still, Yum-Yum and Ko-Ko are to be married that very day. When they eventually meet, Nanki-Poo reveals that he is the son of the Mikado and Yum-Yum admits she does not love Ko-Ko. The two realise that their cause is hopeless and Yum-Yum leaves Nanki-Poo who then tries to kill himself. Meanwhile, Ko-Ko has received a letter from the Mikado instructing that a beheading must take place within a month. On seeing Nanki-Poo about to 'terminate an unendurable existence,' Ko-Ko offers to do the job professionally. Nanki-Poo agrees, on condition that he can marry Yum-Yum and enjoy one month of married life before he is beheaded, after which Ko-Ko will then be able to marry the widowed Yum-Yum. Amidst the celebrations, in storms Katisha, having tracked down the object of her affections, Nanki-Poo, and threatens to reveal his true identity. The town dwellers are not to be deterred, however, and 'joy reigns everywhere around.'



the three little maids (plus Gordon)



Act two opens with Yum-Yum being prepared for her wedding. Soon the awful fact is out that under the Mikado's law the widow of a beheaded man must be buried alive. This places Nanki-Poo in a dilemma, if he holds Yum-Yum to this marriage, she dies a hideous death, and if he releases her she must marry Ko-Ko. The marriage

is off, and Nanki-Poo determines to do away with himself that afternoon unless Ko-Ko will execute him. To make matters worse, the Mikado is approaching the town to arrive shortly. Ko-Ko, in desperation, arranges to draw up an affidavit of Nanki-Poo's execution without actually executing him.

The Mikado arrives with Katisha. Ko-Ko presents the certificate of execution and the Mikado calmly declares that they 'appear to have beheaded the heir to the throne of Japan!' Ko-Ko finds Nanki-Poo and begs him to present himself, alive, to his father, thereby absolving them of his death. But Nanki-Poo, now married to Yum-Yum, is afraid of Katisha's wrath. Ko-Ko, somewhat reluctantly, finds the solution to the quandary and almost everyone lives happily ever after!



Parking at the village hall

If you are attending a performance at Stewartby Village Hall please remember that there is a car park next to the shop on Stewartby Way. This should be used in preference to blocking local roads and to damaging the grass verges. Please also remember to leave the village hall quietly so as not to disturb local residents. Thank you.



The Mikado

The background

(adapted from The Complete Annotated Gilbert & Sullivan by Ian Bradley)

“The Mikado” was the eighth of Gilbert and Sullivan’s collaborations but very nearly didn’t happen at all. Asked by Richard D’Oyly for a new work to replace the flagging “Princess Ida” Gilbert put forward an idea he had suggested before, which Sullivan rejected, telling Gilbert that he was fed up with ridiculous plots and topsy-turvy situations and wanted something where the music could stand on its own. Gilbert regarded this as a personal slight and both declined to cooperate further. The situation was saved, according to a story which may or may not be true, when, as Gilbert was pacing up and down in the library of his house, a large Japanese executioner’s sword fell from its mounting on the wall and crashed to the floor. This inspired Gilbert to set the story of his next opera in Japan and to make one of the leading characters an executioner. Apparently this was good enough for Sullivan and “The Mikado” was born.

Banned in 1907 lest it cause offence to the visiting Crown Prince of Japan, “The Mikado”, despite its setting, has little to do with Japanese culture but is actually a pastiche of British society. As G.K. Chesterton observed, “I doubt if there is a single joke in the whole play that fits the Japanese. But all the jokes in the play fit the English”.

Jumble Sale

October’s jumble sale at Houghton Conquest Village Hall raised a splendid £354. Thanks go to Pam Massey and her helpers for organising, preparing, staging, catering and clearing up the event. Pam is already planning the next jumble sale for March 2023 so be sure to hang on to those unwanted items of clothing and surplus Christmas presents, ready for the call in the new year.

JUMBLE
SALE

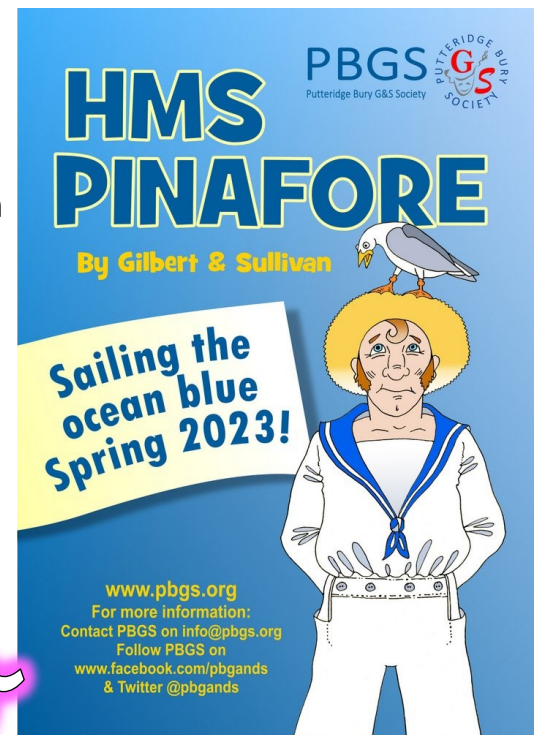
Spring Concert

Our Spring Concert is provisionally booked for Friday and Saturday 12th and 13th May, 2023, at Stewartby Village Hall. This concert is still in the early stages of planning but will celebrate some of the best and most popular songs and choruses from opera, operetta and musical theatre. A meal will be included in the price of the ticket. If you would like to join us on stage, rehearsals will begin in January 2023. If you would like to join the audience look out for announcements for ticket sales to open.



Quiz Night

Quiz Night, which emerged during the coronavirus lockdown and took place online only, twice, using Zoom (remember those days?), is set to make a glorious return early in 2023, this time in person, apart from this amazing trophy which is only virtual. Can you defeat the reigning champions (the Hodges family)? Details of where and when it will take place and how you can join in will be announced in the new year.



The Mikado

Variations on a theme

- 1927 - a jazz version of The Mikado featured Nanki-Poo doing the Charleston
- 1938 - an all black cast presented "The Swing Mikado" in Chicago
- 1939 - "The Hot Mikado" starred Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson as a tap-dancing Mikado
- 1962 - "The Cool Mikado" was filmed with Frankie Howerd as Ko-Ko
- 1986 - Jonathan Miller set his black and white production in the 1920s
- 1987 - "El Mikado" (in Catalan) increased the number of little maids from three to five
- 1992 - The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company production had both the Mikado and Ko-Ko on stilts and dressed Pish-Tush as a Keystone Cop

To stop receiving the newsletter please send an email to stewartbyoperatic@saods.org.uk with the word UNSUBSCRIBE as the subject.

If you wish to suggest items for or make contributions to future newsletters or to comment on this newsletter please email stewartbyoperatic@saods.org.uk

Information about Stewartby Operatic Society can be found at our web site at www.saods.org.uk and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/stewartbyoperaticsociety. Queries about tickets should be sent to boxoffice@saods.org.uk. Any other queries should be sent to information@saods.org.uk.

