



Newsletter Autumn 2023

Welcome to our autumn 2023 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.

November 2023

This year's Gilbert and Sullivan production is The Gondoliers and will be on stage on Wednesday 15th, Thursday 16th and Friday 17th November at 7.30pm each night and also on Saturday 18th November at 2.30pm.

Last year's experiment with a Saturday matinee instead of evening performance of The Mikado proved very successful. It seems that people like the afternoon performance as they can arrive in daylight and get home in good time for a cosy evening in front of the television (perhaps). It is also much more convenient for bringing younger people along to experience the fun and glorious music of Gilbert and Sullivan. The earlier finish on Saturday was also popular with members of the Society as it meant that everything could be dismantled and packed away well before bedtime!

With almost all the tickets sold in advance of the matinee performance last year, don't delay if you are thinking of seeing this year's production on Saturday. Indeed, don't delay for any day. Tickets for The Gondoliers 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 through cast members at rehearsals. We will be running a licensed bar serving a limited range of drinks.



The Gondoliers



The story (adapted from the Gilbert and Sullivan Archive)

All the contadine (country girls) in Venice are besotted by the gondoliers Marco and Giuseppe Palmieri who announce that they will pick their brides through a game of blind-man's-buff, and after some crafty play catch Gianetta and Tessa - just the girls they wanted! The remaining girls accept their fate, pair off with the other previously ignored gondoliers and hurry off to be married.



in rehearsal

The impoverished Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro, with their daughter Casilda and their 'suite', Luiz, arrive in Venice from Spain, to seek the husband whom Casilda married in infancy, the son of the King of Barataria. Following political upheaval and for his protection the young prince was taken from the court by Don Alhambra del Bolero, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain, and brought up ignorant of his true identity as one of the family by Mr Palmieri. Now it is time for the prince to ascend the throne with Casilda at his side. The difficulty is that the old man was very fond of the local wine and, as a result, couldn't remember which child was which. Only the woman who nursed the young prince can identify him and she has gone missing. The Grand Inquisitor is on the case, determined to locate the prince's foster mother and to extract the vital information from her.



The news that Casilda is married sends her and Luiz into despair, for they are secretly in love, but they have to conceal their anguish.

Don Alhambra reveals to the newly married Marco and Giuseppe that one of them is a King, and that they are both to be taken to Barataria immediately. Though they are both Republicans, they manage to overcome their political scruples and promise to give their friends places at court.

After a fond farewell to the girls - for Don Alhambra craftily tells them that ladies are not allowed in court - the men sail off to Barataria.

In Act II we see that the gondoliers have quickly set up a relaxed 'Republican Monarchy' where the only pleasure

missing is the company of their wives. This is soon remedied by the arrival of all the contadine. The situation gets complicated, however, when Don Alhambra reveals to Marco and Giuseppe that one of them is a bigamist, having been married to Casilda as a baby. This throws everyone into a state of anxiety, except for the Duke and Duchess, who have found a range of money-making methods. Finally Tessa and Gianetta encounter Casilda.

Only the arrival of Inez, the former nurse can throw light on the problem and reveal to all the rightful King of Barataria - will it be Marco or Giuseppe?



Jumble Sale

October's jumble sale raised over £400. Thanks go to Pam Massey and her helpers for organising, preparing, staging, catering and clearing up the event. Pam has asked that some of the money raised be donated to charity. She is already planning the next jumble sale for March 2024 so be sure to hang on to those unwanted items of clothing and surplus Christmas presents, ready for the call in the new year.



The Gondoliers

The background

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

Sullivan was tiring of composing for comic operas and found their last collaboration, the slightly more serious "The Yeomen of the Guard", more to his taste. Gilbert, however, was mindful of the relative lack of success of Yeomen and suggested the return to lighter works with "The Gondoliers". After some lively correspondence and the intervention of Richard D'Oyly Carte, Sullivan mellowed and agreed to compose for another comic opera. Gilbert also compromised by adapting his original plot to one set in Venice, where Sullivan had recently had an enjoyable holiday, and giving the composer fifteen minutes or so of uninterrupted music in the opening sequence.

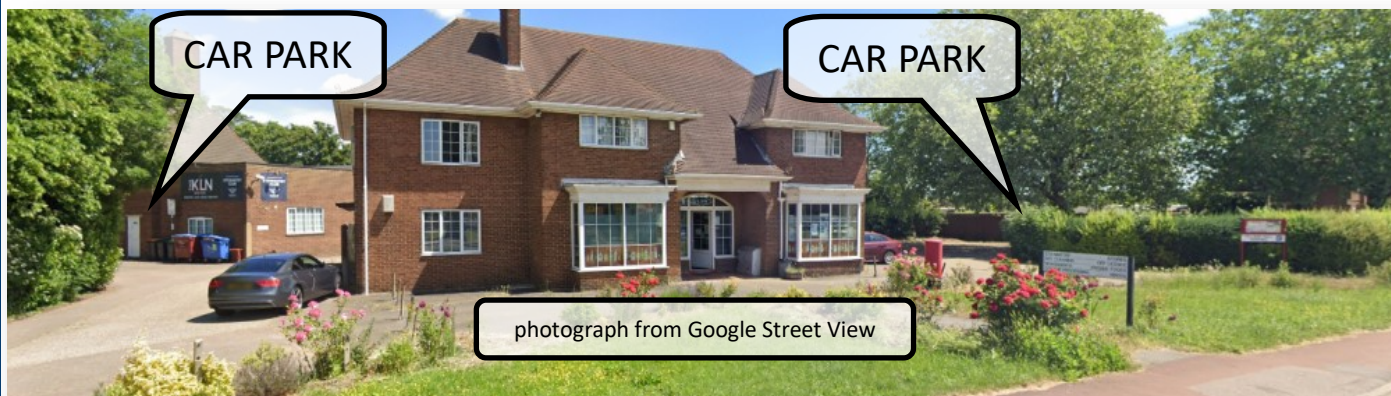
After several months preparation the first orchestra rehearsal took place only five days before the opening night, after which Sullivan stayed up most of the night composing the overture. It was only then that the pair agreed on the title "The Gondoliers".

"The Gondoliers" opened on 7th December 1889, ran for 559 performances until 20th June 1891 and met with almost universal acclaim from critics and public alike.

Our production of The Gondoliers is set in the 1950s to commemorate the Society's first production of this show in 1954 when we were still the Stewartby School Operatic and Dramatic Society

Parking at the Village Hall

If you are attending a performance or rehearsal at Stewartby Village Hall please remember that there is parking next to the shop on Stewartby Way and also in front of the Stewartby Club. If you park on the road please take care not to block driveways and to avoid



damaging the grass verges. Please also remember to leave the village hall quietly so as not to disturb local residents. Thank you.

Spring Concert

Our Spring Concert is booked for Friday 10th and Saturday 11th May, 2024, at Stewartby Village Hall. The concert has the theme of food and is provisionally titled "A Feast of Music". It will be masterminded and led by Chris Hodges. The arrangements are still in the early stages but, as in previous years, and appropriately for the theme of the concert, the plan is to include some food in the price of the ticket. If you would like to join us on stage, rehearsals will begin in January 2024. If you would like to join the audience look out for announcements nearer the time for ticket sales to open.



Leigh Harris

It was with much sadness that the Society learnt of the death of Leigh Harris. Leigh was one of the founding members of the Society. A quick look through past show programmes shows that he was a member of the chorus in 1953, played Strephon in Iolanthe in 1956 and was vice chairman of the Society in 1967.

Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and friends.



Stewartby & Kempston
Hardwick
PARISH COUNCIL

SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2023 13:00 - 18:00

AN EVENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY TO ENJOY!

CHRISTMAS FAIR

MEET SANTA - CHRISTMAS CRAFTS - REFRESHMENTS

Stewartby Village Hall

Stewartby Way, Stewartby, MK43 9LU

Christmas light switch on at 6pm

Sponsor a star for the Stewartby tree

Meet Santa for £5 per child, includes
a gift and craft activity

To book a stall or sponsor a star please email
clerk@stewartbykhparishcouncil.gov.uk



A Light in the Stable

by Alan Bullard

Join us for an afternoon of Christmas music
and sing along to your favourite carols

3pm, Sunday 10th December

Maulden Village Hall

Tickets: Adults £10, children £5, includes light refreshments
From: www.ticketsource.co.uk/ampthill-district-choral-society
or available on the door

www.ampthillchoral.wordpress.com

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