

Stewartby Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society

“The Sorcerer”

Director of Production – Prue Gardiner

Tuesday 18th November 2014. Stewartby Village Hall

As I entered the Hall I was greeted with a colourful display of the production, and was presented with a programme which was full of detail and well worth the price the general public were charged. A very well established group who concentrate their attention to Gilbert and Sullivan’s Operettas once a year.

This year it was “The Sorcerer” one of the pair’s lesser known works. A very large orchestra considering the size of the venue, who were well groomed and sounded equally as good in their presentation of the musical score. It was also very good to see an orchestra being conducted by the Musical Director, which is quite a rarity nowadays. Alana Thackray did a splendid job especially as it was her first time at Stewartby as MD. Prue Gardiner, as always clearly understands what she expects from her company and in most cases was rewarded by some splendid performances. I am no expert on the works of G&S, but it was clear that most of the principal players were quite at home in their roles. Jenny Jackson had a clear and very rich voice, and her diction was such that every word was clearly understood. Colin Jones as the Rev. Daly did have a tendency to look at the MD during his songs which I found to be a little distracting: however he did bring a certain amount of comedy to the role. This production did have some very seasoned performers in the principal parts. Charles Mills and Peter Davis were totally convincing and clearly loved performing their roles. Charles particularly has a very strong clear tenor voice and was able to show this off to his best ability. I really enjoyed the performance of Stephen Hoath as John Wellington Wells (The Sorcerer) I thought he added some good comedic moments and as ever in G&S was a parody of Ko Ko, Captain Corcoran etc. With regard to the principal ladies, again they gave some polished performances, and whose voices were totally suitable to their roles. Carol Urwin, Linda Bowen and Shirley Hale all had excellent voices and with an impressive range, and were clearly very accustomed to the works of G&S. The set for the piece was basic,

but suited the stage it was made for, and was also colourful. Lots of hard work went into the show, as some members were not only in the production but helped out with props, wardrobe, programmes etc.

All in all a very pleasing production which was clearly enjoyed by the audience on Tuesday evening, and in these uncertain times as with some local theatre groups it is good to see a society that sticks together, and presents just what it's audience wants to see.

**Keith Pendall
District 2
NODA
Representative**