

## **Crigglestone TC - Anything Goes**

Director Michael Kirkby

MD Brian Pearson

For their Golden Jubilee production Crigglestone made the ambitious decision to return to the Wakefield Theatre Royal to celebrate the landmark achievement. 'Anything Goes' was chosen and turned out to be an excellent choice. The casting was strong in all roles, with Pippa Slater excelling in the leading role of Reno Sweeny. Mike Kirkby's direction and choreography was much to be admired, as were the stage sets and costumes. Congratulations to all and best wishes for the next 50 years!

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## **Kids from Crigg - Red Riding Hood and Musical Mayhem**

Producer Jodi Ellis

Director Norma Warren

MD Emma Jeffreys

This was a double bill production – a pantomime type production (Red Riding Hood) in the first half and Musical Mayhem in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. The kids gave a splendid performance in the rather unusual version of the pantomime. I am sure there are a number of budding stars of the future amongst this group of youngsters. The Musical Mayhem was again a very well organised section, full of well sung and danced musical numbers by very enthusiastic youngsters. I thought the whole programme was very well selected for the children involved.

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## **Wakefield AOS - Sarah Redgwick and Friends**

I have long since run out of adjectives to describe the wonderful musical evenings that Wakefield AOS Chorus present. Sarah Redgwick and her friend accompanist Matthew Nichols have now become firm favourites with Wakefield audiences and, as always, Jeff Goldthorp came up with a super selection for the chorus to entertain us with. A Wonderful Night of Music!

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## **- Crazy For You**

Director Jane Griffin

MD David Hall

Choreographer Melanie Harrison

Band Conductor Ian Abbott

This is a show that has little in the way of story and relies so much on song and dance routines which were, in the main, well organised and executed. The entire cast worked very hard to make this difficult show come to life. Gareth Jones (Bobby Child) I felt found the party very hard work but was brilliantly supported by Melanie Harrison, who gave us a super portrayal in her role as Polly Baker. The excellent costumes and sets did much to enhance this production.

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## **The Elizabethans' Chorus and E.Chaos - Peace and Harmony at Christmas**

This was a Christmas concert in two parts. The first half was given by E.Chaos, who performed a play called 'The Peace Child'. There were a number of excellent performances amongst these young people, which would have been greatly enhanced by better amplification and perhaps a story of the show in the programme. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half was a programme of Christmas music, which contained a few unusual items, all extremely well sung by the chorus of the Elizabethans and E.Chaos. This was a most enjoyable evening's entertainment.

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## **5 Towns MTS - Little Red Riding Hood**

Director Colin Elsdon

MD Elaine Oakley

Choreographer Bernadette Cowley

This production of 'Little Red Riding Hood' was, I felt, a bit short of a good story line, which gave the very hard working cast a lot to do to make the show come alive. However, Dame Dolly Dishcloth (Colin Elsdon) and Simple Simon (Jack Oakley) did much to keep up a steady flow of comedy throughout the production and a few well sung musical numbers did much to enhance this production.

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## **St Austin's Players - Aladdin**

Director Geoff Haywood

MD Sarah de Tute

This production of Aladdin was, without doubt, one of the best this society has ever done. The new script by Keith Lowe and Stephen Waite was outstanding and much enhanced by excellent direction from Geoff Haywood. We had outstanding contributions from John de Tute (Widow Twanky) and Emma Walker (Aladdin) and a showstopping cameo performance from Father Tim Swinglehurst. The excellent sets and props, along with a super band, gave the audience a great night's entertainment.

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## **Castleford G&S - The Pirates of Penzance**

Director Graham Weston

MD Stuart Whitwell

Conductor Michael Williamson

The one sure way of giving an outstanding show is to assemble an outstanding cast and this production most certainly did have that. David Parker gave us an outstanding Pirate King – a part he was most assuredly born to play – and Anthony Farrimond (Frederic) and Catherine Nuttall (Mabel) gave two superb acting and singing performances.

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## **Wakefield West Riding OS - Looking Forward Looking Back**

Director Cevin Barker

MD Nicola Long

Choreographer Sarah Barker

This production was, as the programme notes tell us, a nostalgic look back at previous shows the Society have performed and some they may wish to consider in the future. The production team did a fine job of selecting and directing some 13 excerpts from various sketches and shows. I was particularly impressed with the ones from 'Spamalot' and 'Mary Poppins'. Regretfully the music, especially in the first half, was far too loud and distracted considerably from the fine production.

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## **Carlinghow Theatre Co – Sugar (Report by Jacqui Hartley)**

Director Jane Griffin

MD Jonathon Wilby

Choreographer Amanda Eyre

It gave me great pleasure to cover for my colleague, giving me this opportunity. Sugar is based on a very funny Screenplay 'Some Like It Hot' and this show was hot, with the two leads Jerry/Daphne (Chris Sheard) and Joe/Josephine (Kevin Mawson), hilariously changing clothes from boys to girls continually throughout the show, having the audience in stitches. Sharing the limelight was Batley's own Marilyn Monroe 'Sugar' (Amanda Eyre), who played the part to perfection. We had even more comedy from Sir Osgood and bags of personality from Sweet Sue. The stage crew worked very hard whipping the scenery on and off the small stage to keep the show flowing smoothly along. The dazzling colourful costumes were a credit to the Society.

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## **The Elizabethans' Chorus - Last Night of the Proms (Report by**

Jacqui Hartley)

MD Maureen Boocock.

Accompanist Garth Swift

West Yorkshire Brass MD Peter Hellawell

Once again I had the opportunity to cover for my colleague and visit a Society I had not previously seen before. The Elizabethans' provided an excellent evening of good chorus singing, with various types of melodies, ranging from Nursery Rhymes and The Carpenters, through to traditional American songs. These were interchanged with different selections from the band – 'West Yorkshire Brass' – and for the finale, they joined together, along with audience participation, for the usual 'Rule Britannia' and 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Lots of flag-waving, gave the Ossett audience a chance to show how patriotic they are. A very enjoyable evening's entertainment, my congratulations to all concerned.

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## **St Giles with St Mary's PS - The Snow Queen**

Producer/ Choreographer Barbara Arundell  
MD David Hookham

Another well organised pantomime from this long established pantomime society. The Snow Queen was a most appropriate choice for this year's production but it is perhaps not one that has all the well known and loved characters of other well known titles. I did feel the comedy and special effects were not as strong as usual. However, the excellent music, scenery and brilliant costumes did much to enhance this production.

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## **Carlinghow TC - Sleeping Beauty**

Director Kevin Mawson  
MD Jonathan Wilby  
Choreographer Amanda Eyre

This pantomime was one that had all the right ingredients. The script was very good and the casting strong. The Good Fairy Lilac (Christine Shoesmith) and the Bad Witch Hazel (Hazel Parson) really did spark one another with their cross talk banter and Chris Sheard kept the show bubbling along with his very easy style of comedy. The Principal Boy (Amanda Eyre) and Principal Girl (Sharon Armstrong) were delightful but the most eye-catching performance was by Nigel Dixon as Nurse Dottie Dettol, his sending up number of the song 'I Dreamed a Dream' from Les Miserables was outstanding by any standards. The show also benefitted from some very smart choreography. Congratulations to the production team.

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## **Dewsbury Collegians - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs**

Report by Jacqui Hartley  
Director Victoria Mitchell/Asst. John Coats  
Choreographer Robin Mitchell

A jolly evenings entertainment, with a brilliant performance from the beautiful, but oh so nasty Wicked Queen (Sarah Bullers), a charming performance from the Prince (Jodie Mitchell) and a very pretty Snow White. Comedy came from the trio Lock, Stock and Barrel who kept the audience in stitches and also conducted the sing song with two different songs going along at the same time. There was an extremely well spoken character part 'Mirror' (Kirsty Firth) each word was spoken so clearly. I thought the second Act was a little slow but I am sure it would pick up pace as the week progresses. The lovely costumes were bright and colourful, with simple scene changes to make it flow along. The small cast worked very hard to give their audience the opportunity for plenty of participation. Well done everyone.

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## **Kippax AOS : Cinderella** ((Report by Chris Ingram)

Director                      Mark Waters  
Musical Director        Ian Abbott  
Choreographer        Lorraine Harrison

I must initially comment on the dancers overall and the “tinies” in particular – aged from 5 to 8 and I have never seen a more accomplished nor better rehearsed group. They oozed confidence and both sang and danced their hearts out – well done. Strong cast with a delightful Cinderella (Hayley Harris) – no wonder Buttons (Darren Wakefield) and Prince Charming (Francesca Townsend) were head over heels in love with her. This panto is unique in that instead of a Dame, who is a bloke in a frock whom the audience love, here we have two Ugly Sisters – still blokes in frocks but in this case the audience hate them - Mona (David Firth) and Grizelda (Kevin Higgins) were wonderfully grotesque and just as despicable. Good comedy routines lead by Buttons. Good support from everyone – particularly liked the Stepmother (Anne Orr) – Cruella de Ville with an attitude problem. Well done everyone!