

## Productions in 2003

### The Gipsy Baron

- Intrigue in Hungary!

As the final chords of 'The Gipsy Baron', which we presented from 8th to 11th October 2003 in the Public Hall, Beccles, fade from our memory it's time to take a moment to reflect on this most successful production. It was the show that had everything - the colourful story of a Hungarian landowner (returned from exile) and a gypsy girl who is revealed as the daughter of a Turkish Pasha and the rightful owner of hidden treasure, this superb work, with music by Johann Strauss, involves a fortune-telling Romany Queen; an absurdly self-important Mayor; a rascally Commissioner; a Military Governor; a band of gypsies, and a troop of Hussars: something for every taste!! And so our appreciative audiences thought, if the enthusiastic applause each night was anything to go by.

Chorus and principals were all in fine voice as the curtain finally opened after many months of strenuous rehearsals. The younger players, in particular, responded magnificently to the occasion. Our orchestra, under the direction of Stella Brownsea, regaled us with their usual melodious tones and just for once the scene changes ran like clockwork. Stage Director John Cushing was probably the most relieved person in the hall, as his magnum opus finally came to fruition: we just hope his drinks cabinet has survived the strain!

To quote from the Beccles & Bungay Journal, we gave our public "a thoroughly entertaining evening that graced the Public Hall and could just as easily have graced the Theatre Royal". How true!

As ever, special thanks must go to Stage Manager Terry Dentith and his backstage crew for their excellent work in firstly constructing and then manipulating the complex set. Also to Front of House Managers Roger and Molly Bennett, whose teams ensured that arrangements within the Hall went smoothly (despite the extensive works being carried out); to Pat Langman and her make-up crew for good work in a confined space, and to Pam Martin and the wardrobe department for coping so well in difficult circumstances.

