

The Pirates of Penzance

and 'Trial By Jury'

Our joint production for Spring 2005, 'The Pirates of Penzance' and 'Trial By Jury', opened splendidly to an almost full house and continued in like vein for the duration of its run. We treated our audiences to a wonderful evening's entertainment which clearly delighted them, judging by the generous applause and comments heard afterwards. The various coughs & colds took their toll, but the great optimism in the air that we had a really fun show carried everyone through. Seems we have another success on our hands!

Our decision to go for a new version of 'The Pirates of Penzance', specially adapted for younger performers by simplifying the dialogue and recitative sections and streamlining the musical numbers while retaining the essential elements and charm of the original, was fully vindicated. The superb line-up of principal players worked hard to bring a little calm to the proceedings, and with so many named parts across the two shows there were opportunities for starring roles to be offered to several less-experienced singers as well as those more established. The presence of young ladies in our midst this year allowed us the luxury of having Major-General's daughters and plaintiff's bridesmaids who really could be on the lookout for husbands, just for once. This lack of men also dictated another innovation in 'Pirates', in that the policemen weren't! The ladies' chorus rose manfully to the task though (if "manfully" is the right term!) so the result was decidedly hilarious!!

Congratulations are due to the (three!) Stage Directors - Di Dentith, Rainie Read & Pam Martin - for coping so well with a cast of such varied age and experience and to Musical Director Chris Steed and the "band" for ensuring that at least most of the notes we sang were the right ones!! Stage Manager Terry Dentith and his team dealt with the scenery like Trojans; the makeup team led by Stella Brownsea worked wonders in cramped conditions, and the Front-of-House and backstage teams all contributed to an excellent production and a very enjoyable week.