

Productions in 2008

Autumn 2008 - Calamity Jane

The Deadwood Stage has now left Beccles! After many months of hard work it was gratifying to have the opening night of 'Calamity Jane' on 14th October so well received by an enthusiastic near-capacity audience. Things just built from there, with House Full signs out three times in the next four days as we sped towards the crescendo that was Saturday night. Principals and chorus alike really rose to the occasion, with their sheer enjoyment of the show being clear for all to see.

Under the skilful baton of our Musical Director, Stella Brownsea, the band were in sparkling form as they enjoyed with us such timeless classics as 'Black Hills of Dakota', 'Just Blew In from the Windy City' and 'Secret Love'. Philip Allum's imaginative direction and Katie Steed's choreography ensured a lively evening's entertainment for all and the stage crew yet again produced a wonderful setting for us to amuse and delight as we steered a path through the intricacies of the Golden Garter saloon and the old Wild West before headin' off over the hills in the triumphant finale.

The Preview Night gave us a chance to hear about the plot, characters & sets and sing along to some of the well-known songs from this iconic story of the Wild West. We then held a general Read-Through (well, it is a good idea to know what it's all about before you start rehearsing!), and the next milestone was the Principals' Auditions. These produced some wonderful performances and left the panel with a number of interesting challenges! Tracking down a Wild Bill proved a little tricky but we came up trumps eventually and arms were then twisted sufficiently persuasively that even all the "bit part" roles got filled very quickly! The cast was thus:-

Calamity Jane - Sarah Cook

Wild Bill Hickock - Bob Sharman

Katie Brown - Helen Roscoe

Danny Gilmartin - Ian Cook

Henry Miller - John Cushing

Francis Fryer - Mike Catling

Susan - Jenni Newman

Adelaide Adams - Anne Burlington

Doc Pierce - David Ludlow

We started off with several weeks of music rehearsals, which resulted in some of the cast getting the hang of some of the harmonies (even if not in the right places!) before moving on to block out

the early scenes of Act 1 - the first scene is actually longer than all of Act 2! Everyone worked really hard so things began to fall nicely into place just in time for us to see what the real scenery looked like as we transferred to the Public Hall. Mind you, the stage manager did have his work cut out wondering how to get that stagecoach through the narrow doors onto the stage

Like all good stories though, everything came right in the end so we're justly pleased that we've given the people of Beccles yet another fantastic show to enjoy - onwards and upwards to 2009!