



EAST NORFOLK OPERATIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Established 1958 (Affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association)

SUMMER 2011

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Gennie Plunkett, Victoria Seals, Paddy Wildman

Editor's Note

Hello Everybody, and welcome to another ENOS Newsletter.

Thanks to everyone who has helped me by contributing stories, articles and information.

Best Wishes,

Victoria "Tod" Seals.

Iolanthe

Huge congratulations to the cast and crew of this last show, Iolanthe.

Though there was almost as much drama off-stage as there was on, the show was a huge success with a rave NODA review and high praise from the audiences.

All reviews and pictures are available to see on the ENOS website:

<http://www.enosoc.co.uk/>



New Arrival

Congratulations to Sally-Anne Davies on the arrival of her adorable son, Felix Davies, born on 7th May weighing 7lbs 15.

He is the first grandchild of Lesley Clarke & great grandchild of Sheila Tuffield.



Princess Ida

ENOS' next production, Princess Ida will be performed at the Maddermarket Theatre in May 2012, Our stage Director will be Patrick Monk, and our Musical Director will be Karen Smith.

Auditions for the Principal roles will be held on Sunday 9th October 2011, starting at around 2pm. All details of audition pieces and characterisations are available on the ENOS website (see above).

Please could all auditioning hopefuls make sure that Subs have been paid before auditioning!

IRENE AND GILBERT & SULLIVAN: THE STORY

Irene Mowat, our current and longest serving Tea Lady, and a Patron of the Society for many years, celebrated her 90th birthday on the 29th March. Marion, Patrons' Secretary for the Society, delivered a card and basket of flowers to her from everyone at East Norfolk Operatic Society and took the opportunity to have a chat with Irene about her amateur singing career and how she became a fan of Gilbert & Sullivan operettas.

Read on:

In the Beginning

Irene was born in Stratford in the East End of London on the 29th March 1921. When she was nineteen she married Jack Newman, who was an RAF Navigator. Tragically, he was killed in action in the war just two years later. Irene chose to join the army and met her second husband, Bill, who was a Research Engineer for the RAF and MOD. He had a very good Bass singing voice and had been a member of Farnborough Operatic Society in Hampshire, before the War.

First Introduction to Gilbert & Sullivan

Bill realised that Irene also had a pleasant singing voice and suggested that she joined the Farnborough Operatic Society when he rejoined after the war was over. This is where she had her first taste of Gilbert & Sullivan, and never looked back.

First Show Performed

Her first show was as a chorus member in *Pirates of Penzance*. She embarked on some singing lessons and this resulted in her voice changing from a light soprano to a rich mezzo soprano/ contralto.

First Principal Role

The second show was *Gondoliers* and she was given her first principal role, as Tessa, which she enjoyed immensely. Many principal roles followed including The Queen, in *Merry England*.

Subsequent Roles

Some friends of theirs, who lived near Farnborough, in Camberley, Surrey, wanted to start up a singing group to perform the Gilbert & Sullivan Operettas. They asked Irene & Bill to be Founder Members of the Camberley Savoy Singers, and they agreed. The first show was *Gondoliers* and Irene was cast in the role of the Duchess of Plaza-Toro. A role she really enjoyed because of its humour. She also played Dame Caruthers in *Yeoman of the Guard* on several occasions. It is one of her favourites because of the humorous nature of that role and also the songs.

Favourite Operetta

Iolanthe stands out clearly as Irene's favourite of all the Gilbert & Sullivan Operettas. Her first role in the show was as Iolanthe. She remembers having to wear a long blond wig, which she didn't think suited her. She has played the Fairy Queen several times and it is her favourite role because of the amusing dialogue and the songs. *Iolanthe* also proved to be the last show she performed in before moving to Hoveton, and then to Horning a few years later. This time she was in the chorus.

Most Memorable Moment

A professional makeup artist was brought in for the shows and gave Irene, playing the Queen in *Iolanthe*, false eyelashes. In the Finale Act I, something came loose and was irritating her left eye so much that it was visibly streaming. She had to complete the finale in great discomfort. During the interval a First Aider was called and had to roll her eyelid back to remove the offending item. The second act was delayed by fifteen minutes to enable Irene to recover and have fresh makeup applied. Thankfully, Irene was able to carry on with the show without any further problems.

The Story Continues In Norfolk

Irene moved to Two Saints Close in Hoveton in 1987 and mentioned to a neighbour that she was a singer and her love of Gilbert & Sullivan. They suggested she went along to East Norfolk Operatic Society. She remembers being taken along to a rehearsal of *Yeoman of the Guard* by a member of the cast, but can't remember her name. Unfortunately the Society was already well into rehearsals and Irene was just sat down and left. which made her feel rather uncomfortable.

However, she didn't get put off but became the Prompt for the show. She also joined the chorus for a concert. She became very friendly with Hilda Good, wife of Ernie Good. Hilda made the teas and coffees for members during rehearsals and Irene joined her in the kitchen. This was a partnership that lasted many years. Irene's Granddaughter, Emma, joined ENOS for the production of *Princess Ida* in 2000 and stayed with the Society until 2004, taking on several principal roles. Irene and Bill introduced Emma to Gilbert & Sullivan operettas at a young age.

To Conclude

Irene and her daughter, Linda (Lin), who is also a Patron, make the teas and coffees each week at rehearsal in St. Mary's Church Hall. They find ENOS a lovely friendly Society and enjoy being part of it. "Even making tea and coffee and washing up". They are always greeted on arrival and thanked as they leave, which means a lot to them both.

How fitting that the Society is performing Irene's favourite show, *Iolanthe*, this year. She will be along to watch one of the performances and she and Lin will also be helping with Front of House. Irene may now be 90 but has no intention of taking it easy.

Marion Jackson

Sylvia Coward

Our Front Of House Manager, Mrs Sylvia Coward, has decided that it is time to retire from the role after many years doing a superb job for us. She wrote:

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed the many years that I have been involved in FOH, first as a helper and flower arranger, and for my years as FOH Manager.
I wish ENOS every success for the future."*

Sylvia.

All at ENOS would like to thank Sylvia for her hard work and dedication.

Chorus Lines

Our own Derek Cousins has been kind enough to concoct some rather witty limericks about the strange happenings of the Chorus line. Here are a few examples:

Its a sad life inside the men's chorus
For audiences tend to ignore us.
What we want, don't ye know
Is to sing the WHOLE show
With no-one behind or before us.

Said a cad to a girl in the chorus,
"Let's disrobe, go backstage and explore us."
But she put down this rake,
"My honour's at stake
- What would Margaret say if she saw us!"

A rain-sodden lad in the chorus
Was given a coat by Dolorus.
It had no arms at all
Was in fact far too small
And, saddest of all, was porous.

Can chorus decline into chorum
As in say omnibus/omniborum
I may look absurd
If I misuse this word
So I need to proceed with decorum.

Said Trevor "I'll cut the Peers' Chorus,
Read your notes!" every week he'd implore us.
But we said with a yawn
"Your hopes are forlorn
These notes, quite simply, they bore us!"

MEMBER PROFILE- Luke Davey

1. What was your first show with ENOS?

Princess Ida 2000

2. What was or is your favourite ENOS show and why?

Gondoliers as it was my first G & S, aged 14 when I played Luiz. I had to sing the tenor part in soprano level as my voice hadn't broken!

3. Your most disliked food.

Sprouts

4. Your favourite film or TV show.

Law Abiding Citizen

5. The part you would most like to play on stage (not necessarily G&S but anything, anyhow, anywhere).

I'd like to have a go at playing a Dame in a Panto one day.

6. Any irritating habits, that is - your own.

Things have to be level – it's an engineer thing, but not so good when you have an old house!

7. Most embarrassing moment.

Walking round a packed hotel swimming pool in Benidorm in a bright green Mankini!

8. Favourite animal.

Misty, my fluffy black and white cat.

9. First musical memory.

My Nan bought me my first record – the sound track to Beverly Hills Cop. I loved Axel F by Harold Faltermeyer!

10. What did you have for breakfast (day not specified).

Porridge and a banana.



Diary Dates

- TEA CONCERT FOR A SUMMER AFTERNOON WITH *VOCALITY* (a new group of experienced singers based in North Norfolk) on Sunday, 17th July, 4.00 pm at The Priory Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross, Binham.

Programme to include a *cappella* gems from Lassus to Gershwin and music for soprano and organ (and trumpet) by Vivaldi and Handel with guest soloist Jayne May Sysum.

- Great Yarmouth Maritime Festival on 10th and 11th September. (This will potentially be an ENOS event as we are hoping to get a slot in the morning and in the afternoon on both days. If this is the case it would mean two rehearsals before our AGM on the 23rd and 30th August and then 8th September).

Upcoming ENOS Events

-ENOS AGM on Tuesday 6th September 2011 at 7:30pm in Wroxham Church Hall.

-Concert at Trunch Church on Saturday 15th October 2011 at 7:30pm. Rehearsals for this will take place on Thursdays, 29th Sept. 6th Oct. and 13th Oct.

ENOS Autumn Newsletter available on 17th October 2011.

Please could anybody who has any interesting stories, diary dates or any relative information please email them to

Victoria Seals at toddy_rox@yahoo.co.uk by 3rd October 2011.

NOTE: The contents of this newsletter do not reflect the views or opinions of the Society as a whole, or those of its Committee.

THANKYOU