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Gilbert & Sullivan's

The Yeomen of the Guard

Director : **June Redford**

Musical Director : **George Martin**

Choreographer : **Marjorie Corden**

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Wednesday 15th October to Saturday 18th October 1986

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The Story

The curtain rises on Tower Hill in the sixteenth century and Pheobe, daughter of Sergeant Meryll of the Yeomen of the Guard is at her spinning wheel singing. She admires Colonel Fairfax, a young soldier imprisoned in the Tower, who is to be beheaded that evening for witchcraft. Wilfred Shadbolt, the repulsive Head Jailer enters, and taunts her with the Colonel's approaching doom. Sergeant Meryll who has previously served under Colonel Fairfax and twice been saved from death by him is ready to do anything to keep his friend alive. His son, Leonard Meryll is due to arrive from Windsor to possibly bring a reprieve, but only brings a despatch for the Lieutenant of the Tower. Sergeant Meryll, however, has a plan to pass Fairfax off as his own son.

It transpires meanwhile that Fairfax has been falsely condemned by his cousin, Sir Clarence Poltwhistle, heir to his estate, and who has the right of succession provided the Colonel dies unmarried. A strolling singer Elsie and her betrothed, Jack Point, enter and after entertaining the crowd Elsie is persuaded to marry Fairfax, for only a few hours to thwart the plans of Poltwhistle. The plan to rescue Fairfax now moves quickly – Pheobe wheedles the cell key from Wilfred and Meryll introduces the Colonel as his son Leonard. Meanwhile the execution time approaches, the headsman arrives, the crowd assembles and some Yeomen go to bring Fairfax from his cell. They return empty handed and the Lieutenant, in his rage makes Wilfred's life forfeit instead, but Elsie is now the legal wife of a fugitive she has never seen.

Act II opens with Dame Caruthers mocking the Yeomen for allowing Fairfax to escape, whilst Jack Point and Wilfred enter, both in low spirits. The jester, looking for a way out of their troubles suggests Wilfred discharge an arquebus by the river bank, then rush in and say he has shot Fairfax as he tried to swim across the river. A shot is heard, and Wilfred and Point rush in and tell their cock and bull story of the killing. Fairfax, still disguised as Leonard offers to show the jester how to woo Elsie, but his demonstration is so ardent Point realises he will have to find another partner.

The real Leonard Meryll now reappears with the Colonel's reprieve and Fairfax is able to come to life again. Dame Carruthers, however, has got wind of Meryll's plot to save Fairfax and he promises to marry her as the price of her silence. Elsie is escorted on stage to meet her bridegroom, Leonard Meryll, but the Colonel enters to claim her. Elsie sings of her love for Leonard and raises her eyes to see there, the man who has wooed and won her. They embrace, and all would end happily, but for Jack Point who is heartbroken, and falls insensible at her feet as the curtain falls.

Cast (in order of appearance)

Pheobe Meryll (Sergeant Meryll's daughter)	Heather Sawney
Wilfred Shadbolt (Head Jailer)	Bill Bowden
Colonel Fairfax	Phillip Carter
Sergeant Meryll (Of the Yeomen of the Guard)	Doug Wells
Leonard Meryll (His son)	Bob Scarlett
Elsie Maynard (A strolling singer)	Jill Baxter
Jack Point (A strolling Jester)	John Baker
Dame Carruthers (Housekeeper of the Tower)	Margaret Bowden
Kate (Her Niece)	Sally Bowden
Sir Richard Cholmondeley (Lieutenant of the Tower)	Bill Bennett
1st Yeoman	Mitchell Kennington
2nd Yeoman	Cedric Winterton

Ladies Chorus

Delia Butterworth, Gwen Fuller, Eve Frampton, Betty Dale,
Ann Jones, Beverly Smith, Carla Dedman, Aldwyth Humphries,
Pauline Booker, Margaret Wisdom, Mary Patten, Margaret Woods,
Tricia Bryan, Betty Perry, Marjorie Butler, Pat Warren, Michelle Farr.

Gentlemens Chorus

Cedric Winterton, Mitchell Kennington, Bob Aird, Dennis Howdle,
Jim Connell, John Dixon, Simon Murphy, Michael Corden.

ORCHESTRA

1st Violins	Roger Pepperell Dave Arbos	Horn	Nick Morgan
2nd Violins	Janet Emptage Sandra Manning Natasia Da Costa	Trumpet	Sue Ross
Cello	Jemma Van Der Byl Susanne Altpeter	Oboe	John Harper
Flute	Howard Ling	Trombone	Martin Rawbone
		Percussion	John Bradban
		Clarinet	Vivian Bates

Musical Synopsis

Act I Tower Green

When maiden loves	Pheobe
Tower Warders under orders	
This the Autumn	Sergeant Meryll and Chorus
When our gallant Norman foes	Dame Carruthers and Chorus
Alas ! I waver to and fro	Pheobe, Leonard and Sergeant Meryll
Is life a boon	Fairfax
Here's a man of jollity	Chorus
I have a song to sing, O	Elsie and Point
How say maiden, will you wed	Elsie, Point and Lieutenant
I've jibe, joke and jollify	Point
T'is done I am a bride	Elsie
Were I thy bride	Pheobe
Oh, Sergeant Meryll, is it true	Finale Act I

Act II Tower Green by Moonlight

Night has spread her pall once more	
Warders are ye ?	Dame Carruthers and Chorus
A private buffoon is a lighthearted loon	Point
Hereupon we're both agreed	Point and Wilfred
Free from fetters grim	Fairfax
Strange adventure	Kate, Dame Carruthers, Fairfax and Meryll
Hark ! What was that Sir?	Elsie, Pheobe, Dame Carruthers, Fairfax, Point, Lieutenant, Sergeant Meryll and Chorus
A man who would woo a fair maid	Elsie, Pheobe and Fairfax
When a wooer goes a wooing	Elsie, Point, Pheobe and Fairfax
Comes the pretty young bride	Finale Act II

Ramsgate Amateur Operatic Society

1961 - 1986

Twenty five years ago a group of local Schoolteachers formed a Society with the object of performing the works of Gilbert and Sullivan.

The first ever production by the Ramsgate Amateur Operatic Society was 'The Mikado' performed in May 1961 here at the Granville Theatre. This was followed with productions of 'The Gondoliers', 'Pirates of Penzance', 'Iolanthe', 'Trial by Jury', 'HMS Pinafore' plus many more of the G & S favourites.

Under the guidance of John Hawes, our first chairman, the society expanded and branched out to perform the works of other composers such as Edward Germain's 'Merrie England', Offenbachs 'La Vie-Parisienne' and 'The Merry Widow' by Franz Lehar.

In 1974 the Society had increased in numbers and newer members were keen to try Musical Comedy and so 'The Desert Song' was performed. This was followed by 'My Fair Lady', 'Bless the Bride', 'Orpheus in the Underworld' to name but a few.

Many people have given much of their time and effort into the success of this Society — Producers, Musical Directors, Choreographers, Committee members — it is impossible to mention everyone, however one story should be told to show the dedication of one member — James Gillespie, a dedicated student of Gilbert & Sullivan. It was decided that the Society should stage 'The Mountebanks'. However the music for this operetta was unobtainable, James spent four years tracking down a score to Australia. At his own expense, James flew out there and returned with 700 pages of score for this little known work.

In recent years the RAOS has become very much a family affair — one big happy family, members come from all walks of life, Schoolchildren, Students, Teachers, Bricklayers, Solicitors, Estate Agents all brought together with one aim — to bring to the stage Musicals and Operettas for you the audience to enjoy with them.

This year, our Silver Jubilee Year, we present, perhaps with a little self-indulgence, two shows which we have found extremely popular with Society members and the Public. 'Carousel', which is probably Rodgers and Hammerstein's finest musical and later this year Gilbert & Sullivan's 'Yeoman of the Guard'. We hope you enjoy tonight's performance. You can be assured that the cast, having lived and slept 'Yeoman' for the past weeks will be doing their utmost to make you laugh, bring a lump to your throat but most of all, make you enjoy yourselves.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Society would like to thank the following for their help with the production of 'Yeomen of the Guard'.

Hogg Robinson for Box Office facilities, the Garwood-Young Studio, Sandwich, for the loan of the spinning wheel, our advertisers for their continued support of our programme. The staff of the Granville Theatre for their help and co-operation and finally we thank our Vice Presidents and YOU, our audience.

Membership

Are you interested in becoming a member or Vice President of the Ramsgate Amateur Operatic Society? if so, contact The Secretary, Mrs Delia Butterworth by telephone - Canterbury 711611 or fill in this form and post to

Mrs D. Butterworth, 'Little Orchard', Barnetts Lane, Broad Oak, Sturry, Nr. Canterbury, Kent.



Name

Address

.....

.....

.....

Telephone

I am interested in becoming an acting/non acting member/Vice President* of the Ramsgate Amateur Operatic Society, I have/have not* appeared on the stage before as an actor/singer* (If singer please state whether Alto, Soprano, Tenor, Bass etc.)

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