

MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2020



CLARENCE GILL

President of the Wolverton Gilbert
and Sullivan Society

We're sad to announce that our dear friend and President, Clarence Gill, has passed away after a very long battle with cancer. He is remembered as a lovely singer and showman, but especially as a true gentleman with always an entertaining story to tell. As a resident of Wolverton he became a Founder Member of the society in 1974 (along with a few employees of the Wolverton Rail Works and McCorquodales—a Wolverton-based printer).

Clarence performed as a sailor in the chorus in the Society's first show, HMS Pinafore in 1975. Since then, he had performed in many, many other shows (not necessarily always G&S). From 1975 he performed as a member of the chorus before playing Francesco in 'the Gondoliers' in 1980 and the Pirate King in 'the Pirates of Penzance' in 1984. From then on he starred in many a role, both chorus and principal, and with other societies too, some of his proudest moments being when he was specifically requested to sing at private parties. How he would regale us over these.

Many people have responded to the news, Sue Wookey being just one **of them. She said, "So sad to hear this. I knew him from Luton Amateurs back in the day. We did Showboat together and he sang a wonderful Old Man River. He was a truly lovely man and generous to everybody."**

A view shared by us all and we shall miss him. To have not met him is an experience missed.

YOUR CHAIRMAN SPEAKING

As always I hope that this Newsletter finds you and your families in good health. Covid 19 has dumped us all into strange times and placed many restrictions upon us. No performances, no rehearsals, no get-togethers. And, of **course, even limited attendances at events, like Clarence's** funeral. No-one deserved a better send off, but we are unable to provide the strength of chorus he would have liked.



Please, however, watch out for up to-date news on the route of the funeral cortège (on 16th September) and for where members may be meeting to provide him with a suitable farewell. It has been suggested that we sing, **“He is an Englishman ” from HMS Pinafore. Most apt as this was his first** WG&SS show in 1975.

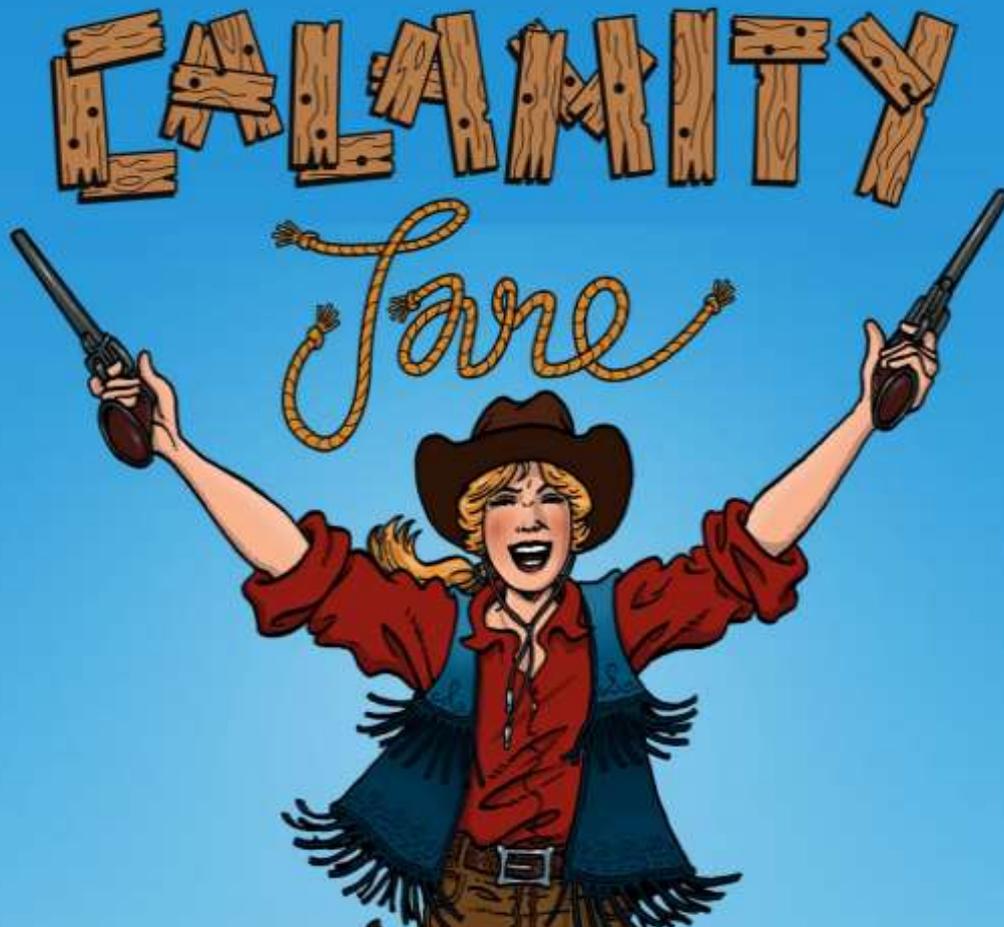
Sadly, in these difficult times, I have to move on and update you with other news as well. You may have seen my video to you all earlier and I will not repeat myself here as the Newsletter will do that but in more detail to assist you. But the headlines remain:

‘Calamity Jane’ has been moved to 5th—8th May 2021 at Stantonbury Theatre; we are still considering ‘Pirates of Penzance’ and Godspell during 2021 at a later stage; our major project for the rest of this year is to produce a professional quality Christmas audio CD to be on sale to the public from November ; members will continue to provide you with social Zooming meetings and gatherings; the Committee and the Publicity and Marketing Committees are still meeting on-line; and should you have not visited them recently, our Facebook and official website continue to add interesting items for your perusal; and, finally, we will be giving notice of reduced membership fees for 2020/21 due to the inactivity of the society.

It just leaves me to thank all of those who have given their time to keep the **society an attraction in the community’s eye.**

General Data Protection Regulation

**If you no longer wish to receive the Wolverton G & S Society Newsletter,
please email secretary@wolvertongands.co.uk**



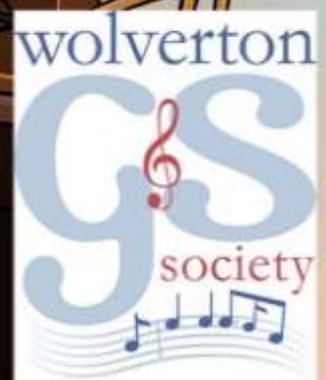
It's a bit sore hanging around inside this stagecoach for months, but I hope to be released on 5th May 2021 for 4 nights only.

Put it in to your diary and plan for a possible January return to rehearsals. Those with vouchers or those who have kindly donated their ticket money from the 2020 show will be given priority booking time.

YIPPEEEEE! Stantonbury Theatre here I come! Covid willing.

Note: we will make a final decision by 18th December .

Sadly there may be some cast changes, but if you have friends who may now be interested then please bring them along when rehearsals start.



YOUR SOCIAL CALENDAR



Thanks to Annie Parker, Karen Elliott, Chris Worton, Jo

Bigg, Linda Davy and Wayne Oakes for organising earlier social nights.

Here is your latest calendar, but also look at our Facebook pages for updates:

Friday 11th September

Not a BBQ gathering

(to make up for the BBQ we couldn't have)

Friday 2nd October

BINGO

Friday 23rd October

QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 13th November

Not an after the show party

(to make up for the after the show party for the November show)

Friday 4th December

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

You will receive invites via your email so look out for these and don't be afraid to take part or ask for more information.

W G & S S COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Under the Chairmanship of Graham Mitchell, the Committee meetings are still taking place by Zoom once a month. Of course it is difficult to plan too far ahead as we can only follow Government advice as and when it is delivered, but if there are any major changes affecting us, we will inform you of our new plans as soon as we can.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

As local Parish and Town Councils are themselves restricting their Christmas lights celebrations we are finding it more difficult to organise some festive outside carol singing.



However, as always, we will persevere and let you know should anything come up. Thank you for your patience.

facebook



Clarence Gill in HMS Pinafore 2015

FACEBOOK IMAGES OF W G & S S PAST PERFORMANCES

For those of you who follow our Facebook pages you will have noticed the images from some of our old shows, some in photo form, others on video. These have been kindly included by our Publicity Officer, Ruth Martin, and have been assisted by

Cat' Lee and John Bailes.

A REMINDER ABOUT OUR FACEBOOK

We have two pages on Facebook



THE CLOSED GROUP PAGE

facebook.com/groups/wolvertongands

This is solely for members, cast, orchestra, crew and close friends of WGSS.



THE PUBLIC PAGE

facebook.com/wolvertongands

This is where we promote our shows and try to get our audience involved with posts about the cast, rehearsals, and other things we're up to. The posts also duplicate on Twitter and Instagram.

It's very helpful if you share these posts on your own wall, ideally with a comment. That spreads the message to a wider audience and your friends will be more interested if you let them know about your involvement in the society.

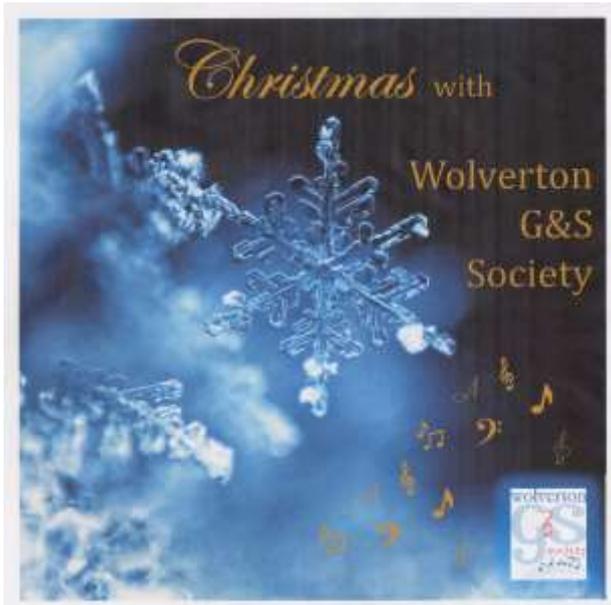
YOU CAN HELP

If you have any ideas for quirky facts and pictures (copyright free!) we can use on Facebook or if you know of other channels we can use to promote the society, then please contact Ruth Martin, who you will find at rehearsals and also on Facebook.

OUR OWN WG&SS CHRISTMAS CD

Our major project for the rest of this year is to produce a professional quality audio CD, to be on sale to the public from November and members and friends will be able to pre-order it before then.

We're doing regular Facebook and other social media posts to keep us in the public eye, and this is another way to do that keeping us all in good voice during the 'new norm'.



Thanks to Cat Lee for designing the front and back covers

We will make a recording of you singing and blend it with the other voices and instruments to produce the finished tracks.

If you have a reasonable quality usb microphone, you may be able to make **the recording yourself. It's just your voice we need, not the accompaniment so you'll need to use headphones. Make sure you're using the tracks on the website** so you can sing at the same tempo and in the same key (or close!) as everyone else.

If not, you can use the portable recording solution Mike has developed. This is a laptop, microphone and headphones all of which will be delivered to your door properly sanitised and ready for you to connect up.

OUR OWN WG&SS CHRISTMAS CD (continued 2)

All you need to do is connect the laptop to your home WiFi at a pre-arranged time and it will then automatically connect you to Mike Crofts who will guide you through the process of recording. A detailed step-by-step printed guide will be delivered with the equipment (this guide is also available on the website if you want to have a look).

We will collect the equipment from you, sanitise it and delete your WiFi password before taking it to the next performer.

The third option is to arrange for you to visit Mike's recording studio and make the recording there. The studio now has a new layout, making it possible for you to maintain social distancing by recording in a completely separate room. Which is a bit of a shame, but there we are..

There are rehearsal tracks for each number on the website. Take a look in **the members' section and you'll see a track for each vocal line, Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass,** and the music score.

The members' section password is 'gandspassword1' and you can register your interest there too, or you can simply call, pm or email Graham Mitchell

on: Landline: 01908 510452 Mobile: 07594 301107

Email: chair@wolvertongands.co.uk

Twitter: @groanmitchell

Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/wolvertongands](https://www.facebook.com/groups/wolvertongands)

Instructions for members:

[The page is https://www.wolvertongands.co.uk/box-office/christmas-cd-2020/](https://www.wolvertongands.co.uk/box-office/christmas-cd-2020/)

Everyone is invited and encouraged to take part – ideally the entire membership will be part of this ambitious project. We need both lead singers and **chorus members. Lead singers are the first to record their lines and we'll add** their voices to the accompaniment music so the chorus members can sing along with them.

OUR OWN WG&SS CHRISTMAS CD (continued 3)

If you are used to singing solos and feel reasonably confident about being recorded please be one of our lead singers. Ideally, we want at least two voices for each vocal line. If you have never sung on a recording or you are **not confident of singing by yourself, don't worry** – Mike will be the only person to hear your individual voice (and he's heard them all before!).

Between us we can make a glorious Christmas CD featuring our favourite G&S songs and Christmas music. It will of course include, our own Christmas anthem, Christ the King, probably the first time that will have been recorded anywhere. Apparently, we can have organ accompaniment!

Work has started on the CD. We have worked out how to do the actual recording and most of the music tracks are complete.

Finally.....phew!!.....we will dedicate the CD to Clarence.

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2020/21

As the Society has been inactive for most of the year, membership for the period 2020/21 (commencing August 2020) will be reduced to £25 for the full year.

Wayne Oakes, our Treasurer, will be updating the Membership **forms and the society's website will be amended accordingly.**

To help keep the society funds more secure, should members wish to pay more to the society there will also be scope for this.

THANK YOU.