

Oxted Players

Dick Whittington has given us an excellent start to 2003. With nine performances of mostly full houses, the Cast and Production Team worked exceptionally hard to make this a truly memorable Pantomime. Our grateful thanks go to Peter Reid and to Rick Hein for their skilful artistic and musical direction, to Nicky Roberts and Neila Dawes for their choreography and to all the Cast and Crew.

In his favourable review, Reg Humby from NODA expressed his amazement at the competence of the scene painters who serve The Barn and whom he felt had surpassed themselves with the back cloths to represent the village of Upsidown, Highgate Hill and an especially splendid one used for the coast of Morocco. The artistry on the Guildhall set was very much appreciated and the full stage sets for King Neptune's Grotto and the Emperor's Palace were first class. The wonderful facial make up and a black leotard allowed Freya Finch to be a most delectable Tom who took every opportunity to amuse herself in catlike antics whenever not completely involved in the action. The speed and ease with which she despatched the rats including their King was quite breathtaking. Reg also praised the singing talents of Vicki Stanbury and Sam Beams and complimented the choreography, particularly the ballet for Neptune's Grotto which included Nick Zabilowicz whom he described as our "local Billy Elliot". Reg also complimented Barrie Ward as an excellent Dame whose experience proved that he was completely at home on stage, treating its space as a personal domain over which he had complete command.

A treat on the last night was the unexpected appearance of Bunny Ross's famous motorised rat which last made its appearance in Pantomime on The Barn stage in our 1996 production of Dick Whittington.

With Panto done and dusted, we turn our attentions to the Betchworth Festival of One Act Plays. This year our entry is *The Lover* by Harold Pinter, directed by Chris Hopher and featuring Steve Palmer, Marie Cousins and Guy Hudson. This will be Marie's first appearance for us but she has appeared in numerous plays for other Societies, including *Midsummer Nights Dream* for RATS at the Harlequin. The Festival begins on Wednesday, 26th February, and our play will be performed on Friday 28th February. Tickets are £6.00 for the evening and can be obtained from June Brown on 01883 714460. Please come and support us.

We are also beginning preparations for our May production of *Alphabetical Order* by Michael Frayn another hilarious comedy by the author of *Noises Off*. Directed by Ken Nicholson the play is set in the library office of a provincial newspaper where chaos reigns supreme. There is permanent and utter confusion matching the lives of Lucy, the Manageress, and her associates until the arrival of Lesley, a new young assistant with a passion for organisation. Disorder is quickly transformed into order in the office and into the lives of its inhabitants and visitors but at the expense of its character until an announcement that the newspaper is to close leads to an orgy of destruction and a

return to chaos. The read through for the play is on Friday 7th February 2003 at 8.00 p.m. with auditions on Sunday 16th February 2003. We are looking for 4 men and 3 women and further details of the characters can be found on the information sheet accompanying this Barn Theatre News or can be obtained from June Brown on 01883 714460. Everyone is welcome to attend and if you know of anyone else who may be interested please give them the details. We will also need assistance backstage. If anyone has an old kneehole desk, any four draw filing cabinets and also two large high steel filing cabinets with roll down blinds that they no longer need or that we could borrow for two/three weeks in May please let June know. Our play runs from 14th to 17th May 2003 at 7.45 p.m. Tickets are from £5.00 obtainable by telephoning 01883 724852.

The Barn Bande

Oxted's newly formed chamber orchestra got their New Year off to a terrific start Saturday evening, January 25th. In the words of Derrick Graham of the Surrey Mirror "This wonderful orchestra...performed brilliantly."

"The program was exciting and filled with gorgeous music," says Johan Michael Katz, Founder and Music Director, "one in which we could present milestone works in our repertoire" (Bartok - Romanian Dances, Suk - Serenade and Dvorak -



The Barn Bande - Photo Jim Pattison
Serenade). Many people are aware of these beautiful masterpieces but had never actually heard them in the concert hall. It is exceptional to be able to perform all three in one concert. We continue to try to present our audience with as rich a variety of works as our limited funds allow.

Early indications are that we will have a large and enthusiastic audience again for the March 15th concert which starts at 7:45 in The Barn Theatre and will include a J.C.Bach Sinfonia, Pastoral D'Ete of Honegger, Pavane by Faure and Symphony 40 of Mozart. It will be quite crowded on stage as well since we will be adding winds especially for this concert.

The Barn Bande's final concert of this season will be Saturday May 31, (Arvo Paert, Dello Joio, and JS Bach) also at the Barn Theatre 7:45PM.