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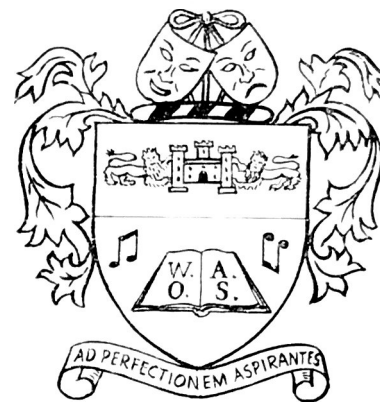
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presents

The Merry Widow

(by arrangement with N.O.D.A. Ltd. on behalf of Messrs. Glocken Verlag Ltd.)

Music by
FRANZ LEHAR

Adapted and arranged by
RONALD HANMER

Original Book and Lyrics by VICTOR LEON and LEO STEIN

New Book and Lyrics by PHIL PARK

Producer:
BERTRAM DOBSON

Musical Director:
BRIAN LONGTHORNE

FRIDAY, MAY 4th to SATURDAY, MAY 12th, 1973

Junior Schools, May 4th Senior Schools, May 7th Curtain up 6.45 p.m.

Matinee Saturday, May 12th Curtain up 2.30 p.m.

Evening Performances Curtain up 7.15 p.m.

at the

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DR. RONALD GIBSON, C.B.E.



It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Winchester Amateur Operatic Society to this, the 49th "Opera Week."

This year, after our Diamond Jubilee year production of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Utopia Limited," the Society is pleased to present the popular version of Franz Lehar's "The Merry Widow," the music of which must surely be well-known to you.

It is the Committee's wish to keep abreast of changing tastes in opera and it may well be, if patrons approve (and this can be judged from the size of audiences) that an occasional break from the traditional Gilbert and Sullivan presen-

tation in favour of a lighter type musical or even an experiment with more serious opera would be a refreshing experience both for those taking part and for those listening and watching.

The annual Autumn Concert, now in its eighth year, also gives the Society an opportunity to expand its repertoire alongside the Gilbert and Sullivan favourites. Potential principals, too, have a chance to test their stage-legs, for singing solo "in concert" is as, if not more demanding than singing with actions in a stage production.

But it is to give and derive fun and enjoyment that members become involved in the first place, whether on stage in period costume, backstage in somewhat older costume or front of stage in more conventional costume!

This enjoyment is further enhanced if they know their efforts to please are well received. So it is to you, the audience, the Society give thanks for your continued support. If you like what you see please tell your friends — the endeavour will be to please them, too; for the Society now has a proud motto which gives all members a clear lead in whatever they attempt.

"Ad Perfectionem Aspirantes" — "Ever striving for Perfection."

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THE SOCIETY gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement given by our Patrons each year.

Would you like to become more closely associated with the Winchester Amateur Operatic Society and enrol as a Patron?

Further details will be gladly supplied by the Patrons' Secretary: Richard Steel, 65, Christchurch Road, Winchester.

The Widow who set the World Waltzing

It would be difficult to think of an operetta that has had such a success and swept the world so completely as "The Merry Widow." It has been translated into Chinese and Hindustani and there was the time when it was being performed in 400 European theatres in one evening. Yet this popular lady could hardly have been more reticent in her debut.

The composer, Franz Lehar, was at the time a small-time band leader at an ice rink in Vienna. The Director of Vienna's famous Theater an der Wien, knowing his abilities, invited him to write the music for a stage version of a book called "The Attache." Nobody thought very much of the result. Yet when it opened, the immediate success of "The Merry Widow" filled the theatre for many months to come.

George Edwardes, of the Gaiety and Daly's in London, went to see it. He, too, was not impressed, but decided to put it on at Daly's as a six-week stop-gap. Edwardes did not like the translation made for him and he called in another man, Basil Hood, but could not steel himself to tell the first author and pay him off. So he invented a series of wiles to keep him away and it was a surprised and infuriated author who heard a completely different version on the first night. He brought an action and was awarded a handsome royalty.

Edwardes also did not dare tell the composer, Lehar, that Joseph Coyne, who was playing the hero, could not sing a note but was being coached to "talk" the words to music. The first time Lehar heard him sing was at the dress rehearsal. Lehar expostulated vigorously. Even George Graves, who played the comedy lead was almost in despair at the lack of humour.

There was even trouble over "the Widow" herself. Edwardes had signed up an Austrian actress, Mizzi Miller, without having seen her. When she eventually presented herself, it became clear that though she might have a very beautiful voice the same could not be said about her figure. She was sent home, but all the same she drew her salary according to contract, all through the London run.

Edwardes next approached Edna May and then Marie Tempest: both refused the offer. Eventually, much against his will, he cast the fresh and graceful 21-year-old Lily Elsie. Lehar said: "She is more like the Merry Widow's daughter than the Merry Widow." Lily herself was unhappy about it all and begged to be released. But Edwardes wouldn't hear of it — and Lily Elsie made a personal smash-hit, while the piece ran so long she had five successors in the part.

The highlight of the first night, June 8th, 1907, was the waltz scene. It was danced anti-clockwise in the Austrian way. To begin with, Joseph Coyne held Lily Elsie round the waist and then, later, round the neck. The waltz became a sort of popular fever.

One of the surest signs of "the Widow's" success, however, was the way it set ladies' fashions. The most obvious was the enormous Gainsborough hats. Actually, they were never in the original Continental production but were purely the inspiration of the British designer, Wilhelm.

When "The Merry Widow" eventually closed, after a run of more than two years, the last night was definitely more sensational than the first. The audience were bidding goodbye to an old friend. Fans had seen it literally dozens of times — one old lady boasting a total of 112. Since then "the Widow's" triumphant progress has continued. Of the London revivals, one of the most successful was at Daly's in 1923 with Evelyn Laye and Carl Brisson.

There was another at His Majesty's in 1943 with Madge Elliot and Cyril Ritchard. The part of Baron Popoff was so closely built up round the inimitable humour of George Graves that he figured in every revival right up until 1943.

When the time came to celebrate "the Widow's" millionth European production, there was a special performance at her birthplace, the Theater an der Wien. The entire audience was composed of actresses who had played the title role. A strange celebration for a show that was very nearly never put on at all!

The Story of the Opera

A Ball is in progress at the Pontevedrian Embassy in Paris and everyone awaits the arrival of Anna Glavari, a fabulously wealthy young widow.

Baron Zeta, the ambassador, tries to persuade his attache, Count Danilo Danilovitch, to either marry the "Widow," or to find a fellow-countryman to do so, as the loss of her millions will mean bankruptcy for Pontevedro.

Unknown to the Baron, Anna and Danilo were once in love, but Danilo's aristocratic family would not agree to the match so, when the two meet again, the flame of their old love is soon rekindled. But Anna waits in vain for Danilo's proposal, his reticence being due solely to her newly acquired wealth.

During the ball several "affaires" are brought to light, the most serious being that between Valencienne, the Baron's wife, and Camille, Count de Rosillon, a French nobleman.

To divert suspicion from herself, Valencienne suggests that Camille proposes to Anna. When the Baron perceives this intention, knowing of Camille's association with a married woman, but not knowing who the lady is, he determines to discredit Camille in the eyes of the "Widow," and thus prevent her marrying the Frenchman and taking her money out of Pontevedro.

The Baron's opportunity occurs when he learns from his factotum Njegus that Camille and a lady are in the summerhouse, but Anna cleverly substitutes herself for Valencienne and, when the door is opened, announces her engagement to Camille.

The Baron is shattered and Danilo is furious, leaving immediately for "Maxim's," his favourite night spot and the consolation of "Les Grisettes."

Later that evening Anna throws a party in her garden, which is transformed "a la Maxim's" and Danilo is tricked into attending. He persuades Anna to renounce Camille and on learning that she loses her fortune on re-marrying, immediately proposes, only to learn that, on re-marrying, her fortune becomes the property of her husband.

The Merry Widow

CAST

ANNA (Madame Glavari — "The Merry Widow")
 DANILO (Count Danilovitch — Attache at the Pontevedrian Embassy in Paris)
 BARON ZETA (Pontevedrian Ambassador in Paris)
 VALENCIENNE (Zeta's wife)
 CAMILLE (Count de Rosillon)
 NJEGUS (Baron Zeta's factotum)
 ST. BRIOCHE } (Diplomat guests at the Embassy)
 CASCADA }
 KROMOV (an Attache)
 OLGA (Kromov's wife)
 BOGDANOVITSCH } (Attaches)
 PRITSCH }
 SYLVIA } (Lady guests at the Embassy)
 PRASKOVIA }
 LO-LO }
 DO-DO }
 JOU-JOU } (Grisettes at Maxim's)
 FROU-FROU }
 CLO-CLO }
 MARGOT }

Phyllis Hamblin
 Richard Steel
 Richard Chisnell
 Sue Harris
 David Edwards
 Ian Crowe
 Robin Phillips
 Austen Hooker
 Robert Dobson
 Sue Potts
 Brian Hurst
 Richard Trower
 Heather Hunter
 Margery Penton
 Sheila Stiling
 Muriel Fisher
 Barbara Welch
 Margaret Bone
 Deborah Barker
 Valerie Bell

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 Assistant Stage Manager
 Stage Assistants

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 Call Boy
 Prompt
 Make-up

Wardrobe
 Workshop Manager
 Set design
 Set construction

Set Painting
 Can-Can Sequence arranged by
 Props
 Accompanist at Rehearsal
 Publicity Manager
 House Manager
 Catering
 Costumes

Floral Decoration
 Programme Cover Design
 Hair Styles

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 Alan Perry, Don Small, Laurie George, David Hooker,
 Phil Beckwith
 David Harding, Simon Clegg, Graham Hill, John Sturgess
 Gerald Harding
 Christine Walters
 John Mobbs, Stanley Steel, Margaret Allen, Rosemary
 Bullock, Josephine Fulford, Joyce Mackereth, Jean
 Minchin, Vera Portsmouth
 Enid Baverstock, Ellen Day
 Richard Trower
 Tessa Orders
 Ronald Baverstock, David Edwards, Robert
 Dobson, David Hooker, Chris Rigby
 Deborah Barker, Rosemary Brown, Carol Read
 Sheila Stiling
 Carol Read, Chris Rigby
 Eileen Evans
 Richard Chisnell
 Barry Richardson
 Janet Richardson
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 Alison Evans, Rosemary Bullock

Can-Can Dancers — Veronica Davis, Carole Holloway, Kathryn Stocks

Ladies of the Chorus — Jo Burnaby, Elizabeth Duff, Stella Holt, Marjory
 Monro, Patricia Perry, Ruth Small, Christine Targett, Julia Wootton, Anne
 Quick. (Reserves: Pat Chick, Nancy Evans, Margaret Vickery)

Gentlemen of the Chorus — Richard Alexander, Brian Bullock, Geoffrey
 Burnaby, Peter Chew, David Evans, Norman Kemish, Bill Macey, Cecil
 Roberts, Tom Robinson, John Shoobridge, Geoffrey Smith

Stewards — Lewis Devonald, Sydney Forester

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

A Salon in the Pontevedrian Embassy in Paris

ACT II

The Gardens of Madame Glavari's Residence — Early the following evening

ACT III

The same — a la Maxim's — later that night

Period - The turn of the century

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MURIEL DRY
JOYCE McLEOD
BARBARA NOYCE
OLIVE WALKER

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GAVIN HULBERT
HORACE NEEDLE
ARTHUR PUNTER

Viola:
HAROLD POOLEY
ELSPETH COOPER
HILDA JEFFERY

Cello:
ANTHEA HANSON
ALAN TROTT
ISABEL YOUNG

Double Bass:
JOHN BURGESS

Flute:
JOHN CLARKE
VIRGINIA BROOKS

Oboe:
ALEC ORTON
IRENE PRAGNELL

Clarinet:
ROY HARWOOD
JUDITH BAILEY
JOHN MILNER

Orchestra Secretary: BARBARA HARDING

Bassoon:
PAULINE NEWTON

Trombone:
BRAM TAYLOR
GORDON CUTLER
MALCOLM DALRYMPLE

Horn:
DARRELL COX
THOMAS MEADOWS

Trumpet:
STANLEY PAYNE
CHARLES RHODES

Percussion:
BRYAN THOMAS
BRENDA HAYNES

Musical Numbers

ACT I

- OVERTURE
1. "Pontevedro in Patee" Cascada, Zeta and Ensemble
 2. Melos (Ballroom Music)
 3. "A Highly Respectable Wife" Valencienne and Camille
 4. "So Many Men Admire Me" Anna and Male Ensemble
 5. Melos (Ballroom Waltz)
 6. "You'll find me at Maxim's" Danilo and Ladies
 7. "It goes to Show" Anna and Danilo
 8. FINALE — ACT I Anna, Valencienne, Danilo, Camille, St. Brioché, Cascada and Chorus

ACT II

9. OPENING ACT II
10. "Vilia" Anna and Ensemble
- 10a. Reprise Chorus
11. "Driving in the Park with You" Anna and Danilo
12. "Women ! Women ! Women !" Danilo, Cascada, St. Brioché, Zeta, Kromov, Bogdanovitsch and Pritsch
13. Introduction to the Waltz Scene Anna and Danilo
14. The Waltz Scene Anna and Danilo
- 14a. Melos
15. Romance: "Flow'rs are awakened in Maytime" Valencienne and Camille
16. FINALE — ACT II — Part One Anna, Valencienne, Danilo, Camille, Zeta and Njegus
17. FINALE — ACT II — Part Two Ensemble
18. FINALE — ACT II — Part Three Anna, Valencienne, Danilo and Ensemble
19. FINALE — ACT II — Part Four Anna, Danilo and Ensemble
20. FINALE — ACT II — Part Five Ensemble

ACT III

21. Entr'acte
22. Opening Dance
- 22a. Melos
23. The Grisettes' Song Valencienne, Lo-Lo, Do-Do, Jou-Jou, Frou-Frou, Clo-Clo, Margot and Ensemble
- 23a. Reprise: "You'll find me at Maxim's" Lo-Lo, Do-Do, Jou-Jou, Frou-Frou, Clo-Clo, Margot and Danilo
24. The Merry Widow Waltz Anna and Danilo
25. FINALE — ACT III Ensemble

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE SOCIETY gratefully acknowledges the generous help given by

Members and friends who have acted as Stewards and Programme Sellers, and who have assisted with the catering.

Mrs. S. J. Humphrey and Mrs. F. C. Chisnell for foyer flowers.

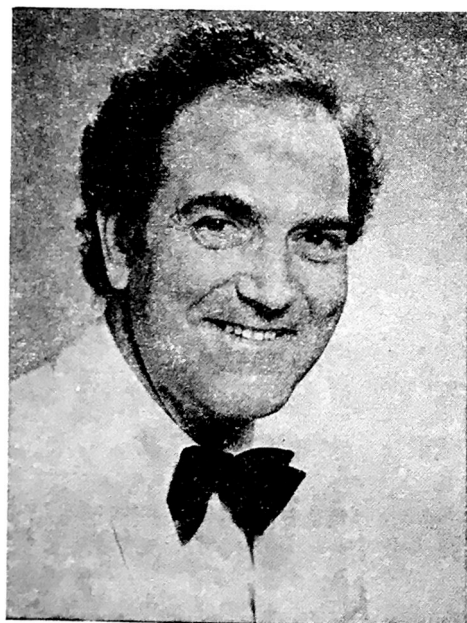
June Heard and Joan Doudney for loan of garden furniture.

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As usual we are indebted to all those who have assisted with publicity.

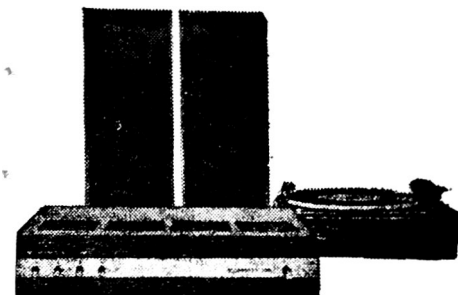
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Musical Director
BRIAN LONGTHORNE

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"The Pirates of Penzance"	1913	"Patience"	1950
"The Mikado"	1914	"Trial by Jury" and	
"Iolanthe"	1920	"The Pirates of Penzance"	1951
"The Yeomen of the Guard"	1921	"Princess Ida"	1952
"The Gondoliers"	1922	"The Mikado"	1953
"Patience"	1923	"Ruddigore"	1954
"Ruddigore"	1924	"The Yeomen of the Guard"	1955
"Trial by Jury" and		"Trial by Jury" and	
"H.M.S. Pinafore"	1925	"H.M.S. Pinafore"	1956
"Princess Ida"	1926	"The Gondoliers"	1957
"The Mikado"	1927	"Utopia Limited"	1958
"Iolanthe"	1928	"Patience"	1959
"Merrie England"	1929	"Die Fledermaus"	1960
"The Gondoliers"	1930	"The Gypsy Baron"	1961
"Utopia Limited"	1931	"The Mikado"	1962
"The Yeomen of the Guard"	1932	"Cox and Box" and	
"Cox and Box" and		"The Pirates of Penzance"	1963
"The Pirates of Penzance"	1933	"Merrie England"	1964
"Ruddigore"	1934	"Iolanthe"	1965
"Princess Ida"	1935	"Princess Ida"	1966
"The Mikado"	1936	"The Gondoliers"	1967
"Iolanthe"	1937	"Ruddigore"	1968
"Tom Jones"	1938	"La Vie Parisienne"	1969
"Monsieur Beaucaire"	1939	"The Yeomen of the Guard"	1970
"Merrie England" (Concert Version)	1947	"Trial by Jury" and	
"Iolanthe"	1948	"H.M.S. Pinafore"	1971
"The Gondoliers"	1949	"Utopia Limited"	1972

IN MEMORIAM

THE SOCIETY deeply regret the loss of :

MARIO ZOLLO whose contribution as a member for many years was immense. His leadership in set design and construction, stage management and props, together with his experience as a member of the Executive Committee and Social and Concert Sub-Committees are sadly missed. His many artistic abilities were matched only by his staggering capacity to involve himself in helping others.

CLARICE PHILLIPS (nee Portsmouth) who was an acting member of the Society from 1921—1959 and who continued to take a keen interest in all activities. She played the part of Kate in the Society's first production of "The Yeomen of the Guard" in 1921.

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