

Wisbech Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society presents

"Calamity Jane"



**Empire
Theatre**
Wisbech

Directed by
Ray Jeffery
Musical direction by
Mark A J Checkley

6 March 2001 to
10 March 2001

Behind The Scenes

No show could ever be ready for a performance without an army of people behind the scenes - producer, lighting and sound technicians, stage-manager, choreographer, make-up and many, many more. It is impossible to say which is more important. If any one of the roles is missing, the show could not go on. Here is just a small insight (and thank you) into one of the roles, that of make-up artist.

For many years the society was fortunate to have the talents of Alec Brett. He joined W.A.O.D.S in 1950 working under 'Bert of London' for the show Lilac Domino and then after with 'Jules'. After 17 years he took full charge. He was responsible for the make-up and wigs of all the productions as well as being involved with various drama groups in the area - Kings Lynn and Wisbech Players, M.A.O.D.S and various companies all over the U.K. In between all this he found time to be involved from 1970 with Mr Jeffery's own company 'Players Anonymous' and to be in charge of make-up at Ripon College for 8 years. A man of distinction, he has received the N.O.D.A make-up award at the Waterford Festival no less than 4 times and still managed to give many demonstrations and workshops as well as being an active performer on stage. It was with much sadness that he decided to retire from the theatre so the hunt was on to find a replacement, someone who would have a hard act to follow.

Here entereth our current artist Kerry Speed (now Ketteringham since her marriage last year). She was very highly recommended whilst being involved with the Angles Theatre and working with other groups in the area. Kerry assisted Alec with the 1999 productions and took over full control from our millennium production last year. As you can see, she has made an excellent job of stepping into Alec's shoes. Lets hope our association proves to be as long and successful as with Alec.

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Jane



Act Two

Scene One	The Main Street in Deadwood City
Scene Two	Calamity Jane's Cabin in the Mountains
Scene Three	The Pine Forest on the way to the Fort
Scene Four	The Reception Room at Fort Scully
Scene Five	The Main Street in Deadwood City
Scene Six	The "Golden Garter" - a few evenings later
Scene Seven	Deadwood City Street
Scene Eight	The "Golden Garter"

Act Two

Windy City	Calamity and ensemble
Keep it under your hat	Katie
Keep it under your hat	Katie and ensemble
Higher than a hawk	Wild Bill and ensemble
A woman's touch	Calamity and Katie
Love you dearly	Katie and Danny
The Black Hills of Dakota	The full company
Polka	Those at the Fort
Men (reprise)	Calamity and Wild Bill
It's Harry I'm planning to marry	Katie and saloon girls
My secret love	Calamity and Wild Bill
Finale	The entire company

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"Calamity"

Synopsis of Scenes

Set in 1876

Act One

Scene One	Outside the "Golden Garter"
Scene Two	The "Golden Garter Combination Depot, Hotel Bar and Theatre - at noon
Scene Three	The same - at night
Scene Four	The same - the following morning
Scene Five	The Stage of the Bijou Theatre, Chicago
Scene Six	Adelaide Adam's Dressing Room at the Bijou Theatre
Scene Seven	Outside the "Golden Garter"
Scene Eight	Katie's Dressing Room at the "Golden Garter"
Scene Nine	The "Golden Garter"

Musical Numbers

Act One

Prologue	The Prologue
The Deadwood Stage	Calamity Jane and ensemble
Adelaide	Wild Bill and men
Everyone complains about the weather	Francis Frye
Men	Calamity and saloon girls
Careless with the truth	Calamity and ensemble
Can-Can	The saloon girls
Hive full of honey	Francis Frye
The Weather Dance lesson	Susan and Francis
I can do without you	Calamity and Wild Bill
It's Harry I'm planning to marry	Adelaide and her show-ladies
Adelaide (reprise)	Wild Bill, Danny and men

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Assistant Stage manager:	Derek Mews
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PATRONS INVITATION

If you would like to become a Patron of the Society and enjoy priority advance bookings, please write to the Patrons' Secretary, Mrs Jenny Sirett, Komanan, 7 Gosmoor Lane, Elm, Wisbech, Cambs PE14 0AH, Tel: 01945 860589. The minimum subscription is £5 payable annually.

Ray Jeffery (Director & Choreographer) writes.....

What fun it has been to recreate this wonderful musical which I staged for the company way back in 1980. It is a very great favourite of mine and with a good selection of new faces and established performers I know this will be a special show.

The story is loosely based on the Black Hills gold rush of 1875, which created the development of many rough mining settlements, and Deadwood Gulch was one of the roughest. Within a year of the first tents being pitched, followed by the first clapboard frontages the population soon reached 25,000, with enough gaming houses, saloons and bordellos for all.

Famous visitors, apart from Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok included Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Sam Bass, who all no doubt frequented the Green Front Sporting House, or any or all of the terrifyingly named saloons - Bucket of Blood, Montana, Nuttall and Mann's Number Ten Saloon, the scene of Wild Bill's final and fatal game of cards.

For those who drank less, or simply preferred a show along with their liquor, there was the Gem Theatre. The stage of the Belle Union also had variety shows, but each evening, once the curtain had fallen, the real business of the night began. 'Ladies' would cruise the aisles and retire with their customers to any of the seventeen private boxes that ringed the auditorium.

It has been a pleasure to work with Mark, the society's new Musical Director. Also with Barbara Mews, who had the arduous task of taking rehearsals between my setting weeks and 'cleaning' the show. What would we do without her?

For this production we have been lucky to have our costumes from Theatrical Costume House, the principal costumiers in the U.K. and the specially designed set for our presentation from Stage Productions.

Wishing you a very enjoyable evening.

Ray Jeffery.

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The Company

Calamity Jane (Guard on the Deadwood Stage)	Michele Larkin
Wild Bill Hickok (Professional gambler and ex-peace officer)	David Brammer
Lt Danny Filmartin (Second Lieutenant attached to Fort Scully).....	Christian Slingsby
Katie Brown (a stage struck young lady).....	Joanne Richards
Francis Fryer (an East Coast song and dance man).....	Adrian Bell
Susan (niece of Henry Miller).....	Sarah Gallichan
Henry Miller (owner of the Golden Garter hotel)	Colin Male
Adelaide Adams (a famous Vaudeville star)	Cynthia Maxey
Rattlesnake (the Deadwood Stagecoach driver)	Ron Thurston
Doc Pierce (an improvised doctor).....	Gordon Ringrose
Tame indian.....	George Frost
His squaw.....	Brenda Richmond
Their braves	Ryan Ogden and Conan Nicholas
Hank and Pete (Scouts from Fort Scully)	Alan Payne and Phillip Ashman
Flo (the madame at the Golden Garter)	Louise Smart
Colonel Starkey (Commanding Officer at Fort Scully)	George Frost
Black Mammy.....	Sheila Petch
Sambo (her son)	Joseph Gallichan
Charlie (a prospector from Nantucket)	Philip Griggs

Saloon girls, show-ladies, prospectors, soldiers, stage door Jonnies and citizens of Deadwood

Rachel Shepherd	Claire Shippey	Joanne Hanley
Teresa Hudson	Karen Ogden	Kelly Grimmitt
Hannah Claxton	Annalise Bellamy	Nicola Key
Laura Claxton	Mandy Nuccall	Josie Bellamy
Carol Dear	Wendy Mitcham	Sheila Petch
Doreen Kowalewsky	Brenda Richmond	Amy Martel
Philip Griggs	Gareth Mole	Alan Payne
Graham Seaton	Andy Key	Phillip Ashman
Giles Maythan	Ryan Ogden	Conan Nicholas
Mark Haestier	Simon Want	

The Orchestra

Keyboards and Musical Director	Mark A J Checkley
Keyboards	Simon Pearce
Percussion	Andy Cox
Musical Director's assistant	Charmaine Wood

**Michele Larkin**

I've played so many varied parts with WAODS, through the years, From dancer, fairy, Opera Star to cockney girl in tears.

In Annie, Lily - what a tart!
In Pirates, Mabel - fair.
In panto, principal girls and a boy!
And accents - I've had my share.

Performing is what I really love for career or fun - its just the same.
So I hope, this year, that you'll enjoy my performance as Calamity Jane.

David Brammer

David began performing three years ago, as a hobby. He has appeared in Oliver, Magical Moments and Dick Whittington. Calamity Jane is his first lead role in his favourite musical.

**Christian Slingsby**

Christian has played in many amateur productions over the years, in a variety of roles. This is his first lead role with WAODS, who are grateful to him for stepping in at a late date to fill the role of Danny.

**Joanne Richards**

Its great to be back, treading the boards, after a five year break.
Hope you all enjoy the show as much as I am.

Adrian Bell

Adrian has been involved with WAODS since 1983. His most memorable roles were Bill in Me and My Girl and Jesus in Superstar. In 1992 he was with the National Youth Theatre in a revival of Bill the Musical, followed by a tour of the Wizard of Oz. Adrian has since directed, choreographed and won awards for local theatre groups.





Cynthia Maxey

Cyn joined WAOCG for Showboat, in 1975. She has danced and choreographed her way through 28 shows including setting many special dance sequences for Ray.



Colin Male

Equally at home on stage and back stage, Colin's claim to fame is winning Best Supporting Actor - TWICE - for Fiddler on the Roof and for Pirates of Penzance.



Sarah Gallichan

This is Sarah's debut and despite the hard work and steep learning curve she has thoroughly enjoyed her experiences and hopes to do alot more.



Ron Thurston



Gordon Ringrose



Chris Ketteringham



Joseph Gallichan



Ryan Ogden



Conan Nicholas



Rachel Shepherd



Claire Shippey



Jo Handley



Teresa Hudson



Karen Ogden



Sharon Ashman



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Gareth Mole



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Brenda Richmond



Louise Smart

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Calamity for actor Colin

Story by:
SUE IRVING

THE supposedly lucky showbiz saying 'break a leg' took on a whole new meaning for Wisbech Operatic Society member Colin Male when he was involved in a road accident with another member of the cast.

The unfortunate accident happened last Tuesday after the opening night performance of "Calamity Jane" at the Empire Theatre.

Pedestrian Colin, who injured his hip in the accident involving a car, missed out on performances until Saturday.

After weeks of rehearsals Colin was unable to perform on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and the Saturday matinee show because of injuries sustained.

He did, however, take to the stage in his wheelchair for the final Saturday performance and received a good reception from the audience.

His place was taken by Norfolk man Colin Harris, who stepped in to read the role of Henry Miller, owner of the Golden Garter Hotel.

Assistant to the producer, Barbara Mews, said this week it was a "very, very unfortunate accident which was purely accidental".

She said she felt very sorry for both cast members involved and paid tribute to Mr Harris for standing in at the last minute and Colin for performing in his wheelchair.

She said Colin "wanted so much" to take part in the show after all his work at rehearsals.

In the years Barbara has been involved with the society, she believes this is the first time an actor has taken to the stage in his wheelchair.

Colin is no stranger to the stage and back stage and has been the society's best supporting actor on two occasions.



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TAKING THE LEAD: Michelle Larkin and Adrian Bell set off the dancing in the saloon



TOUGH COMPANY: David Brammer as Wild Bill Hickok (left) in the Deadwood saloon



CENTRE OF ATTENTION: Cynthia Maxey, as Adelaide, surrounded by admirers



GREAT OUTDOORS: A scene from the streets of Deadwood



IN DRAG: Adrian Bell, here with 16-year-old Sarah Gallichan



STYLISH DUO: Two of the dancers



SHOWING A LEG: The can-can in furious flight in the saloon

...THE LEAD. Michelle Larkin and Adrian Bell set off the dancing in



...THE LEAD. Michelle Larkin and Adrian Bell set off the dancing in
...THE LEAD. Michelle Larkin and Adrian Bell set off the dancing in

Making a success of a Calamity...

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YEE-HA!

The rip-roaring musical Calamity Jane has taken the stage of the Empire Theatre at Wisbech by storm this week - and is already proving a popular success.

The show, which opened last night (Tuesday), is being staged by the Wisbech Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society and has been directed and choreographed by Ray Jeffery.

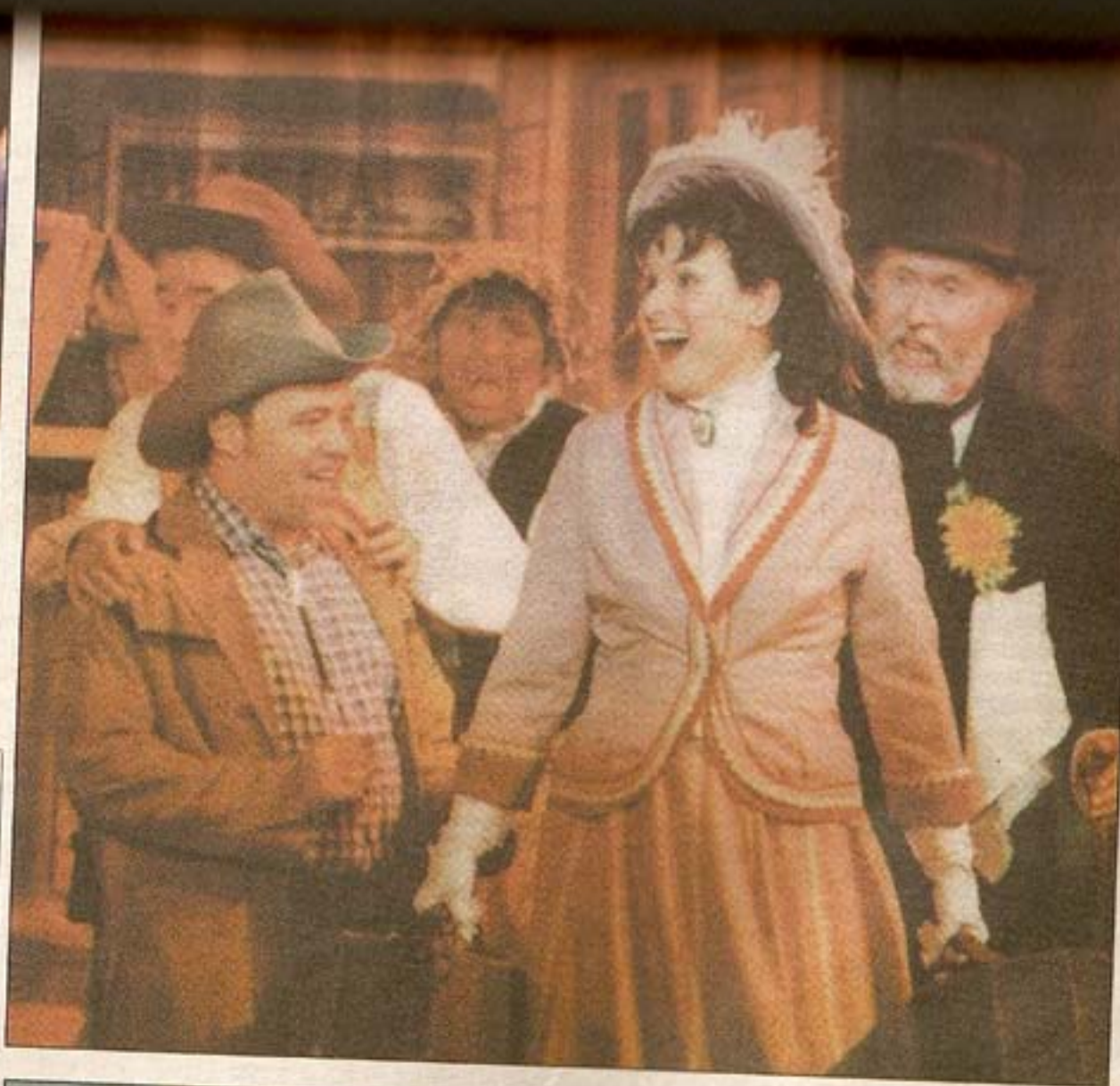
The show - which stars David Brammer, Michelle Larkin and Adrian Bell - includes favourite songs such as The Deadwood Stage and The Blackhills of Dakota.

It is set in the Wild West of 1876 and promises colour and action - plus a romantic storyline to boot.

● The show runs until Saturday (March 10) and all inquiries over tickets should be made to 01945-870393 between 6pm and 9pm.

Alternatively, you can ring the Empire box





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Calamity Gem...

CALAMITY Jane isn't the typical saloon girl of the Black Hills gold rush of the late 1800's.

Although she spends more than her fair share of time inside the saloons of Deadwood Gulch, she can hold her own in any fight, boasts at how many men she has shot, and her cowhide trousers, jacket and gun belt seem to be permanently attached to her.

She sure looks out of place next to the feminine girls with their bows and frills "plying their trade" in the somewhat seedy saloon bars.

But boy can this rough, tough gun-toting girl sing! Even though "Calam's" mouth and nose seem to be in a permanent snarl, the voice that comes from within is probably the most powerful yet angelic voice ever heard in the original gold rush areas.

Michele Larkin, a familiar face with Wisbech Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, expertly and professionally brought Calamity Jane to life on the stage at the Empire, and con-

JAMES BISHOP reviews the latest offering from Wisbech Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society

sidering it was the first night performance, she showed no sign of nerves at all.

Her powerful voice belted out song after song, ranging from quiet melodies to foot tapping and thigh slapping saloon songs, showing just what a versatile actress she is.

The show got much better as it went on, with some of the cast obviously adding creosote to their wooden joints during the interval - but then it was the first night and, after all, even the most experienced can sometimes feel awkward perched on a stage in front of several hundred people.

Generally, the months and months of sheer dedication and hard work of the cast shone out like a beacon - the tightly choreographed dancing, fine singing, stunning costumes and scenery all played their individual parts to make the show an absolute

stunner, an absolute credit to director and choreographer Ray Jeffery.

The music was fantastic - again an absolute credit, this time to musical director Mark Checkley.

The cast were superb - a special mention must go to David Brammer, Christian Slingsby, Joanne Richards and Adrian Bell.

They were all magnificent in their roles, especially Adrian Bell, who provided one of the biggest laughs of the night with his appearance in drag as Francis Fryer. Yes, his name was Francis - which was mistook as Frances... say no more!

Calamity Jane - which closed on Saturday - was an absolute jewel in the crown for WAODS and was an excellent night out... and by the smiles on the faces of people as they were leaving, this seemed to be the general consensus of opinion.

Dates for your diary... Dates for your diary... Dates for your diary...

MUSICAL JOURNEY: "A life of Christ" - put together for Lent by Mrs Joan Glover, musical director of The Wakeland Singers and organist for Tydd St Giles Church - is being staged in Fenland.

The cost will be £3 at the door at Wimlington Church tonight.

Between Saturday and March 24 the museum in Museum Square, Wisbech, will be open free of charge from 11am-3pm for family activities.

CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY: At the Conservative Club in Alexandra Road, Wisbech, on Monday at 7.30pm.

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It will also assist in the transcription and preservation of archival material and aims to be engaged in field work such as recording monumental inscriptions from local churchyards.

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Operatic special

Pictures by PETER UPTON

Oh Calamity!

HOW COULD WE EVER RESIST A GAL LIKE YOU?

WHENEVER a Western appeared on television my late mother used to exclaim that she couldn't stand those "old big hats". And I had much sympathy with her.

However, the 'big hat' scenario of Calamity Jane, being performed currently by Wisbech Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society at Wisbech's Empire Theatre is an exception, not least because of its memorable songs, including The Deadwood Stage, The Black Hills of Dakota, and the tender, Oscar-winning Secret Love.

These prove very popular, along with the rip-roaring choral and choreographed Men, the acrobatic and saucy Can-Can, and the great gusto of The Windy City.

But, although the harmonious and energetic singing is an outstanding feature of this production (thanks to the expertise of musical director Mark Checkley), there are many other aspects which are impressive.

Directed and choreographed by Ray Jeffery, it boasts some sumptuous settings, vivid and colourful costumes, delightfully co-ordinated dance routines. And, though there is plenty of "yee-hawing" there are

many well-defined characterisations, mostly with fairly authentic western accents.

In the title role the diminutive Michele Larkin metaphorically towers above the rest. Her depiction of the unprepossessing, butch and rustic Calamity Jane is really superb. So is her singing.

However, there are several other performances of merit. Joanne Richards is absolutely delightful as the coy, stage-struck Katie, and, as Susan, 16-year-old Sarah Gallichan's sparkling stage presence shows exceptional promise.

Adrian Bell is, as usual, very professional as Francis Fryer and looks very pretty in an hilarious drag scene.

Other excellent performances come from David Brammer as Wild Bill Hickock, Colin Male as Henry Miller, and Cynthia Maxey as Adelaide. Wisbech can be proud of this really outstanding production, which continues tonight and tomorrow.

Review by REX MOUNTAIN

TAKING



Look!