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Banbury Operatic Society

The Lions Club of Banbury — Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell

present

An amateur production of

Merrie England

By
Edward German
by arrangement with Warner/Chappell Music Limited

Devised & Directed by	Andrew Wilson-Jenner
Associate Directors	Janet Bishop
	Jo Markham
	Ian Preece
Musical Director	Goff Hales
Associate Musical Directors	Andrew Johnson
	Philip Shaw
Choreographer	Sue Taylor
Associate Choreographer	Sharon Ulla

By Kind Permission of Lord & Lady Saye and Sele

Broughton Castle

The Castle is open on Wednesdays and Sundays between 18th May & 14th September.
It is also open on Thursdays in July & August, and Bank Holiday Sundays & Bank Holiday Mondays (including Easter).
It is open from 2 - 5pm

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Message from the Chairman

Welcome to this Celebration of the Millennium and Merrie England. What you see tonight is the culmination of four years of blood , sweat, and tears by a committed group of people who have found themselves on a steep learning curve. During this time all of us have experienced the extremes of emotion, from disappointment and disillusionment, to satisfaction and excitement, and finally to success and fulfillment.

This project would not have succeeded without the total support of Lord and Lady Saye and Sele, who have given us everything we have asked for and more. Our sincere and grateful thanks to them is only a small recognition of what we really owe them.

Our sincere thanks also go to all those who have participated in this scheme, and particularly to the Lions Club of Banbury, and the Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell, who have contributed greatly to the success of this event.

We are deeply indebted too, to our sponsors and advertisers, and we hope that what we have achieved together will give them great satisfaction and enjoyment.

As you will see elsewhere in this programme, many groups of performers from far and near have seized the chance of getting involved. We thank them all for their friendship and talented contributions. I am sure you will echo our thanks to those people who have done the unseen and unsung tasks in the vital areas of backstage and front of house.

And finally to my committee, who have done all the work and made my life reasonably bearable. To them I give my sincere thanks and hope that the experience will not leave them totally scarred for life.

We welcome in our audience Mr & Mrs Ian Wells - National President of NODA, Dorothy Lawson - NODA London Area Councillor, Joe Burgh - NODA Membership Secretary & Mr & Mrs M Sear - NODA representative of Region 11a.

We hope that tonight you will enjoy the fruits of our labours, and this will give us the satisfaction of knowing that it has all been worthwhile.

Millennium Committee Chairman

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Broughton Castle

The original house, of which much remains, was built in about 1300 by Sir John de Broughton. He also built the church.

The Castle was greatly enlarged between 1550 and 1600, when magnificent plaster ceilings, panelling and fine fireplaces were added.

In the 17th century William, 8th Lord Saye & Sele, was one of the leading opponents of King Charles 1 and Broughton became a secure meeting place for those who opposed the King.

The Castle was besieged and captured in 1642 after the Battle of Edge Hill.

The Castle has been extensively restored in recent years and remains the family home of Lord & Lady Saye & Sele

The Project

" You've got to see a job finished before you start it"
If ever there was a project to prove the wisdom of that old adage it is this one!
It began as an idea in the mind of one Andrew Wilson-Jenner , about four years ago, but how long the seed had lain dormant we may never know. Suffice to say, when Andrew broached the scheme at a Society AGM, it received nominal approval. That was enough.
Lord Saye and Sele was approached to seek permission for us to perform the show in the castle grounds, and he readily agreed, provided that we made it a community project, involving other organisations in the area. This was no obstacle, since to do justice to the grand design, we would need to enlist a lot of help, particularly in view of the fact that Lord Saye and Sele also offered the use of the parkland for additional attractions and entertainments.
A sub committee was set up, which rapidly took on a persona of its own, and representatives were co-opted from The Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell and The Lions Club of Banbury. Both organisations were keen to be involved and assumed responsibility for the organisation of all the activities and amenities in the parkland, even becoming conscripted into the ranks of Yeomen!
At this point it was clear that funding the project would be a major problem, and it was decided to seek the support of sponsors, large and small. We had a product and it needed to be effectively marketed.
With the consent of Lord Saye and Sele, a presentation evening was organised in the Great Hall of the castle, to which a large number of local and national companies were invited to send their representatives. They were treated to a short extract from the show, in full costume, and were able to discuss aspects of the project at the various display stands and with committee members. The response was very encouraging and a number of offers of help were forthcoming, not least from Chiltern Railways, who became a major sponsor , and Cherwell District Council, who have assisted us with partnership funding. Both organisations have taken an active interest in the scheme's progress ever since.

A similar evening was organised at a later date at the Carrdus School at Overthorpe. On this occasion it was to attract and inform those organisations we hoped would help with the production, and quite a number of music and drama groups in the area took the trouble to attend. As a result, members from Banbury Cross Players, Banbury Choral Society, Banbury Symphony Orchestra, Bodicote Youth Drama Group, The Sue Taylor Dance Academy, and The Ulla Academy of Arts, are all swelling the ranks of the cast and orchestra.

Furthermore, such has been the interest in this imaginative production, that a number of ex-members have re-joined us, along with members of Leicester Operatic Players, Knowle Operatic Society, and Rugby Operatic Society. And if you're talking imaginative, the cast also includes scuba divers and dog handlers!

By now, the publicity machine was gathering momentum. One notable publicity event came to us courtesy of Chiltern Railways. On the Saturday of the Lords Test Match, they allowed us to travel on two of their trains, in full Elizabethan costume (!), and accost the unsuspecting passengers with leaflets and information about the show. But that was not all. Once at Marylebone Station we set up a display, complete with musical accompaniment, and spent two hours promoting Merrie England to anyone and everyone who passed through the concourse. Some with typical British reserve, remained stoically unmoved, as if this was an everyday occurence. To others we were a curiosity or a nuisance, or destined to appear in Japanese photo albums. But a lot of people were genuinely interested, and we hope are among those of you reading this.
Local businesses were canvassed for support and all manner of leads were being followed up.
At the same time, the set and properties were being designed and constructed, costume plots were being prepared, auditions and rehearsals were being planned in detail.
On top of all this, there were important matters to be addressed in the organisation of the total event. A series of meetings took place with Cherwell District Council, Fire Service, St. Johns Ambulance, and other related services, to hammer out the requirements of health and safety, emergency services, access to and from the event, and a whole list of legal and other requirements, relating to the parkland and the production itself.

Needless to say ,the committee at this point was at full stretch, and every member was called upon to put in maximum effort. As well as seeking sponsorship, we felt it incumbent upon us to raise funds ourselves.
As a result, a number of fund raising events were organised, which also served to raise the profile of the project in the area.
A Gala Dinner at the Banbury House Hotel, a Fashion Show, an Auction of Pledges, a Progressive Meal, and a Musical Evening raised over £5000, and thanks are due to everyone involved, especially Gareth and Thelma Jeremy for being the driving force behind most of these events. There have also been many generous donations and supporting gestures, all helping us towards our target.

And then, after more than three years of planning and working, the Presentation Evening on April 3rd 2000 was the occasion to introduce to everyone the Production Team of Andrew Wilson-Jenner (Director), Goff Hales (Musical Director), and Sue Taylor (Choreographer), and for them to introduce the show to the augmented Society.
Rehearsals got under way, auditions were held in May to select the principal characters, and Andrew's original vision began to manifest itself to every member of the Company. The rehearsals, although intensive, have been enjoyable, especially those held at the Castle, where the setting itself has inspired the cast.
This has been an ambitious, imaginative, exciting project, which has challenged each and every person who has become involved in it, and which will live in their memory for years to come. It has confounded the sceptics who said it couldn't be done, and no obstacle has proved greater than the determination to overcome it.
Merrie England 2000 deserves an honoured place in the history, not only of Banbury Operatic Society, but of Banbury itself.

The Project

Participating Organisations

Banbury Cross Players

The Banbury Cross Players has existed for over 50 years and has presented over 200 plays in and around the town. From the start of the 1990's we have been based at **The Mill Theatre, Spiceball Park, Banbury** where most of our meetings, rehearsals and productions take place. We currently have 80 **Active Members** who are involved in play readings and selection, preparation of a newsletter, social events, business management, costumes, lights, props, sound, set design and construction, makeup and, of course, acting and directing.

Our aim is to study, promote and perform drama in and around Banbury. In addition to our four main productions each year, from time to time, we stage "studio" productions and contribute to charity functions and provide help and facilities to other similar organisations.

We are always pleased to have new members who will enjoy contributing to any of our activities. You can start by coming along to our regular Tuesday evening meetings at **The Mill**, or by contacting our **Membership Secretary, Anne Bloor, 10 Barnett Close, Woodford Halse, Daventry, NN11 3SP - telephone: 01327 261198 - e mail: anne.bloor@equestrianet.co.uk.**

Our **Theatre Members** ensure a firm nucleus of support for our four productions each Season. In return we give a substantial discount which currently amounts to 25% over the Season. In addition Theatre Members receive a copy of our information bulletin, *Prompt Please*, and they are very welcome to attend most of our meetings and functions including our social evenings each Tuesday at the Mill.

Banbury Choral Society

Banbury Choral Society are pleased to have been asked to assist in the production of 'Merrie England', where we are helping in the static chorus. We have enjoyed preparing the music which is a little different from our usual repertoire.
Banbury Choral Society was founded in the 1940's and during its life it has had only three musical directors, Geoffrey Furnish, Malcolm Sargent, and Edward Palmer. Eddie, as he is affectionately known, has been our musical director since 1977, and under his baton we have sung many of the great choral works, such as Dream of Gerontius, Bach's B Minor Mass, and latterly Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Much of the success of the Society is also due to our nimble fingered accompanist Tony Swift.
We are about 80 strong, and are always pleased to welcome new members, especially tenors and basses. We meet throughout the year on Monday evenings at 7.30pm in Marlborough Road Methodist Church, and if you are interested in joining us please ring Tony Lawford on 01295 721792, or Mary Walker on 01295 738108, who will be pleased to give you details. Our next rehearsal will be on September 11th.

Bodicote Youth Drama Group

The Bodicote Youth Drama Group came into being just over 5 years ago after a successful celebration of Bodicote Church's 150th anniversary when a group of children from the village school and church staged Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. Since then, the group - numbering approximately 45 members aged between 8 and 13 - have successfully put on various musicals, plus three variety shows written by the committee.
The group has 6 leaders who between them share the roles of director, producer, musical director and choreographer, but are assisted by a large number of volunteers. Our next production, ' Little Shop of Horrors', is a story about a talking plant who eats people, so something completely different and which will appeal to all ages. This show will take place at Bishop Loveday School on November 23rd, 24th and 25th.

Leicester Operatic Players

The players were founded in 1952 and produced their first show (coincidentally Merrie England) in the spring of 1953. The society performs operettas annually at Leicester's Little Theatre, alternating each year between Gilbert & Sullivan and other composers. Recent years have seen shows ranging from favourites such as The Pirates of Penzance and Die Fledermaus, to Gilbert & Sullivan's rarely-seen final work The Grand Duke, which was performed in 1999 and was the British premiere of a new performing edition.
In 1996 & 1997 several members of the Players travelled to the USA to participate in the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festivals. Also in 1997 the Players took their production of Pirates of Penzance to Buxton Opera House, Derbyshire, for the UK leg of the Festival and were delighted to be awarded the Sir Arthur Sullivan rose bowl for the best choral performance in all legs of the Festival.

The Susan Taylor Dancing Academy

The school will celebrate 30 years in Banbury next year! Pupils regularly appear in local society shows as well as the schools own productions. Many pupils enter local dance competitions and several have danced in The All England Competition including the finals at Sadlers Wells. In 1989 six pupils won the Intermediate Caberet Group Final.
Past pupils include Debbie Garvey who appeared in Evita in the West End, Ruth Sullivan who has her own dance company in London, John Heath who is a professional choreographer, Saskia Butler who in currently appearing in 'Singing in the Rain' at the National Theatre, London and Emma Cannon who will star in 'Grease' on tour for a year from September. Suzi Dack is studying for a degree at The Royal Academy and Simon Adkins is studying for a Musical Theatre degree at The Doreen Bird College.

Ulla Academy of Arts

All the girls have performed in numerous shows, working with Leamington Operatic Society, BOS and other Societies. As well as taking part in their school shows and competing in festivals, they are taking dance exams. Throughout they have really enjoyed working with all the Merrie England cast. It's been a great experience for them.

We would like to thank our many sponsors for all their support for this project

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Banbury Operatic Society

Banbury Amateur Operatic Society was formed in 1961. In recent years we have dropped the 'Amateur' from the title to reflect our increasingly professional (but still unpaid!) approach to providing entertainment for Banbury audiences.

By the time we celebrate our 40th anniversary next year, we shall have staged 64 full productions, with only a handful of repeats. This says much for the continuing motivation and enthusiasm of the membership, and our readiness to respond to a new challenge. Evidence of this was in 1970, when we took part in the Waterford Music Festival in Ireland, presenting a production of Orpheus in the Underworld.

In our quest to take our love of musical theatre ever further afield, we accepted with relish the chance to perform in Hennef, Banbury's twin town in Germany. That was in 1984, and we have been back many times since. As a result we have made many friends over there, and enjoyed some intoxicating German hospitality. Our next visit is planned for October 2001.

This production of Merrie England is yet another memorable milestone in our history, and the interest and enthusiasm which it has generated augurs well for our next production in February 2001, which is Me And My Girl, and for the future of Banbury Operatic Society.

We are always looking for new members, anyone interested please phone the secretary on 01295 251716.

The Lions Club of Banbury

The Lions Club is part of the largest service club organisation in the world. Lions Club International, which was founded in the USA in1917, has almost 1.5 million members belonging to 42,500 clubs in 178 countries.

The Banbury Club was founded in 1969, and in the last 30 years has raised over half a million pounds for the benefit of the local community. The club currently has 35 members, drawn from all walks of life and backgrounds, united by a common aim to help those less fortunate than themselves.

The club meets twice monthly to discuss programmes of service to the community , fund raising and social activities.

This year alone, the club has raised well over £10,000 for local causes at events ranging from the highly successful Millennium of Voices concerts at St Mary's Church, which featured local school choirs, members of the Banbury Symphony Orchestra and the Banbury and Warriner Choral Societies, to a charity horse ride which attracted almost 200 riders.

The Club is always looking for new members, and anyone interested can contact the secretary Peter Helmore on Banbury (01295) 690009.

Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell

The Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell was only officially chartered in November 1997 so a relatively 'young' club. Banbury Cherwell was helped into existence by the long established Banbury Rotary Club and has received help and support from them during their first years. Now this new club with its male and female membership and evening meetings at the Banbury Cricket Club is developing a character of its own and a presence in the community.

As a club, Banbury Cherwell follows the Rotary tradition of Social and Community Service activities. Although establishing its fund raising and charitable activities, the Club has already raised funds and run events for Banbury's elderly, contributed to the Sight Savers International Charity and produced several disaster relief Aquaboxes as well as suporting Rotary's National activities.

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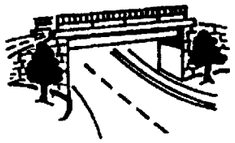

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The Production Team

Andrew Wilson-Jenner - Director

This production of Merrie England coincides with Andrew's 30th year of directing productions and his 35th year of Operatic involvement. He has directed such diverse shows as 'Hello Dolly', 'Annie', 'My Fair Lady', 'Chess', ' Pickwick', 'Die Fledermaus', 'King and I' and many more. Andrew has worked for many years in full-time theatre at Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds; Playhouse, Bournemouth; The National Theatre and before its closure, The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and now owns a successful costumiers in Leamington Spa. His last performance with BOS was as Ko Ko in their highly acclaimed production of 'Mikado'. Andrew's production of 'Merrie England' is his first open air extravaganza but hopes, not his last, especially at this beautiful venue.

Goff Hales - Musical Director

Goff has been the Musical Director for Banbury Operatic Society on a number of occasions and was pleased to be invited to be MD for this very exciting millennium production of 'Merrie England'. He has worked with other Operatic Societies in Daventry, Solihull, Leamington Spa and Birmingham and has been involved with over thirty productions. A music teacher by profession, Goff has worked in Primary, Secondary and Higher Education and has lectured on music education to post graduate students at Westminster College, Oxford. At present he is working at the other end of the spectrum with a pre-school group in Warwick. He holds the post of Education Co-ordinator for Warwick Arts Society and is also working with young students on "Music Theatre" with Playbox Theatre, at The Dream Factory in Warwick.

Miss Susan Taylor - Choreographer

M.I.D.T.A., I.S.T.D. (AssDip)

Sue Taylor has been a local dance teacher for 30 years and has choreographed many productions in and around Banbury for local societies and schools. These include - 'Cabaret' for Banbury Cross Players and the Lynden Players, 'Fiddler on the Roof', 'Hello Dolly', 'Annie', and 'Calamity Jane' for Banbury Operatic Society, 'Peter Pan', 'Guys & Dolls', 'Calamity Jane', and 'Oliver ' for The Lynden Players as well as numerous pantomimes and charity shows.

Janet Bishop - Associate Director

Janet joined BOS 27 years ago and has been in Chorus, a principal role or director in most of the productions since then. And as Janet is also the Project Co-ordinator this demanding project will undoubtedly lead to her early retirement!!- but not before she directs BOS's next production in February 2001, 'Me and My Girl'.

Jo Markham - Associate Director

Jo joined BOS in 1985 and since then has been in the chorus and played some principal roles. She has also fulfilled the difficult job of Production Manager as well as serving on the committee.

Ian Preece - Associate Director

Belonging to BOS conjures up for Ian memories of 20 odd years, singing in chorus, sundry principal roles, and directing - and now associate director for a unique open air production. One to remember!

Andrew Johnson - Associate Musical Director

Andrew is studying music at Nottingham University. He has musically directed a number of shows and concerts in Solihull and Birmingham including 'Calamity Jane' and 'Godspell'. Most recently he was MD of Nottingham University Gilbert and Sullivan Society for their production of 'Yeoman of the Guard'.

Philip Shaw - Associate Musical Director

Philip Shaw conducted all BOS's performances between 1980 and 1987 until appointment as Senior County Music adviser to Suffolk County Council. He returns regularly to Banbury to work with BOS, for which he holds a special affection.

Sharon Ulla - Associate Choreographer

M.I.D.T.A (Bt)(T)(MD) A.I.D.T.A Freestyle Dance ex. Diploma

Sharon has been dancing herself since the age of 2 and is still working to further her career. Sharon directs and choreographs for Bodicote Players. She has also choreographed BOS's last 2 shows and is looking forward to working with them again for their next production 'Me and My Girl'.

Synopsis

Act 1

Set in the reign of Elizabeth I, the day is May Day and the citizens of Windsor are enacting their May Day ceremonies as the curtain rises. They welcome the May Queen in song and dance and she calls for two men who are best marksmen to guard her throne and chooses Long Tom and Big Ben. They tell us about themselves in song *We are two proper men*.

They agree on all things except that Tom is in love with Jill-all-alone who Ben and everyone else believe to be a witch. She arrives from her home in the forest, which she sings about in *Oh where the deer do lie*.

Then a stranger from London arrives with a company of players, the actor Walter Wilkins and his sidekick Silas Simkins. He thinks that no play, even one by Shakespeare, is complete without a song and dance, and proceeds to illustrate this with the chorus in *I do counsel that your playtime* which ends with a hornpipe.

Sir Walter Raleigh arrives, discourages talk of witchcraft and leads a drinking song *That every Jack should have his Jill* using the pun Jill for gill. The company then leaves the stage (some determined on a witch hunt of Jill) and we discover Bessie Throckmorton, Lady in Waiting to Queen Elizabeth and beloved of Raleigh. She sings of a letter he has sent to her but which she has mislaid.

Bessie is afraid that the letter will be found and shown to the Queen, who herself is in love with Raleigh and unaware of the love affair between Bessie and Raleigh. He appears and they sing of their love in the duet *When true love hath found a man*. Enter the Earl of Essex, rival to Raleigh for the Queen's favours and affections, who sings the praise of the *Yeomen of England*. This in turn leads to the arrival of Queen Elizabeth, joined by her entourage and accompanied by the entire cast singing *Long Live Elizabeth*. She responds to this greeting with *Oh Peaceful England*.

Meanwhile the townspeople have for various reasons thrown the actor Walter Wilkins into the river, but coming out, he makes the best of his wet state with a song *King Neptune sat on his lonely throne*, with a catalogue of fish and tribute to the Queen as Mistress of the Sea.

Finale Act 1 - Bessie heralds the coming entertainment with the song *It is a tale of Robin Hood* with the company joining in. Then Long Tom steps forward to plead for the Queen's protection for Jill-all-alone. Four tradesmen of Windsor side against him and then Jill herself arrives and sings mysteriously of the power of love. The May Queen also accuses Jill of witchcraft and then Essex hands the Queen the letter lost by Bessie but found by Jill. The Queen at first assumes the letter is written to her because of the acrostic spelling Bessie, and recognises the writing as that of Raleigh so is delighted, until Raleigh confesses that he wrote it to Bessie Throckmorton and the Queen in her fury condemns Jill to be burned as a witch, Bessie to be imprisoned in the castle and Raleigh banished to his country home.

Act 2

Act 2 commences in Windsor forest, where the villagers and townsfolk are singing in the background *The Month of May has come Today* and then we find Jill, having escaped from her prison, singing to her cat. Bessie who has also escaped through a secret passsage once used by King Henry VIII or King Hal joins her. The two ladies along with Long Tom and Big Ben sing in celebration of King Hal's escapades *In England, Merrie England*.

As they depart, the troop of actors led by Wilkins and Simkins arrive, discussing the forthcoming entertainment for the Queen, and along with the chorus, sing that the content is immaterial as long as the tune is played by *The Big Brass Band*.

The Queen arrives and plans to buy poison to kill Bessie but Raleigh who has returned disguised as a forester overhears and begs the vendor not to sell her the potion. (In a further twist the vendor turns out to be the Queen's Fool disguised as an apothecary.)

The townsfolk and May Queen then arrive and enact the crowning of the May Queen with song and dance *The Queen of May is crowned today*.

Raleigh, still in disguise joins the actors group and plans to rescue Bessie whom he believes is still imprisoned. He sings of love in *Dan Cupid hath a garden*. The actors now rehearse their play Robin Hood with Raleigh as Robin, Wilkins as Friar Tuck and Long Tom as Little John and depart to perform the play and Masque.

As they exit Bessie and Jill arrive, the latter offers to find Raleigh for Bessie while she sings *Who shall say that love in cruel*. Jill returns with Raleigh but Essex also arrives, having followed Bessie. Essex however declares friendship with Raleigh for if he is in love with Bessie then it leaves the way to the Queen's favours open to Essex. He promises to fight their cause and that of Jill, with the Queen.

His plan is to introduce the apparition of Herne the Hunter (Long Tom in Disguise) into the entertainment with the help of the actors. All the audience are told to pretend they see nothing, the Queen will see and hear the Hunter and assume he appears to her alone and thus prick her conscience over the banishments and killings. The entertainment begins with the comic rendition of St. George and the Dragon including the song *Oh here's a to-do to die today* sung by Wilkins and the May Queen who is the Princess in the play. Just as this is ending Herne the Hunter appears but seemingly only to the Queen, who in her panic and fright demands Essex give her his hand which he willingly does, then the Fool arrives with the poison which she declines. She then pardons the prisoners, all of whom arrive back on the scene and they all join in the final song of Robin Hood's Wedding.

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Programme

Banbury Symphony Orchestra

Coronation March: Crown Imperial - William Walton (1902 - 1983)

Walton's grandiose Coronation March, Crown Imperial, although originally intended for Edward VII, was performed at the Coronation of King George VI in 1937. It is played thi**s evening in honour of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, whose 100th Birthday is celebrated on the fi**rst night of Merrie England, Friday 4th August 2000.The banner being paraded is that bearing the coat of arms of the Bowes Lyons in honour **of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.**

Merrie England

Edward German

The second of 5 children in a highly musical family, Edward German *Jones* was born in Shropshire in 1862. To avoid confusion with another Edward Jones whilst a student at the **Royal Academy of Music, he became known as J Edward German, before he adopted for his profess**ional career the form now familiar. His work as a theatre conductor and composer at the Globe Theatre put his name firmly befor**e the public. As a composer he showed a wonderful gift for charming melody and light orchestration. A li**bretto was written especially designed to his popular old English style, and *Merrie England* (1902) for many confirmed his stand**ing as Sullivan's successor. *Merrie England* is still a firm favourite with amateur companies and was** revived by Sadlers Wells Opera in 1960. Knighted in 1928 and awarded the gold medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 19**34, he died in London on 11th November 1936. We chose Merrie England as a fitting and** suitable piece for a Millennium Celebration and are delighted that Winifred German, a niece of Edward German, will be in the a**udience on one of our performance nights.**

Act 1

Fanfare
Sing a down, a down, a down
We are two proper men
Oh, where the deer do lie
I do counsel that your playtime
That every Jack should have his Jil
She had a letter from her love
When true love hath found a man
Who were the Yeomen
Long Live Elizabeth
O peaceful England
King Neptune sat on his lonely thr
It is a tale of Robin Hood

Act 2

The month o' May has come to-day	Jill & Chorus
In England, merrie England	Bessie, Jill,Long Tom & Big Ben
The Big Brass Band	Wilkins & Simkins
The Queen of May is crowned to-day	Chorus
Dan Cupid hath a garden	Raleigh
O who shall say that love is cruel	Bessie
Egyptian Dance	
Oh! here's a to-do to die to-day	Chorus
Robin Hood's Wedding	Company

Jerusalem - Huber

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Jer

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
fold!
On England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills?

March : Pomp and Circumstance No 1 in D - Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)

The melody in this march was used for the section Land of Hope and Glory in the setting of A. C. Benson's Coronation Ode for Edward VII, and has come into independent use as a patriotic community song.

Land of Hope and Glory

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the free,
How shall we extol thee, who are born of thee?
Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set;
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet,
God, who made thee mighty, make the mightier yet.

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Banbury Symphony Orchestra

1st Violins
Geoffrey Kent (Leader)
Emma Callery
Anna Croukamp
Maddy Evans
Peter Gorbing
Claire Hedges
Gill Walker
Rachel Saunders

2nd Violins
Penny Tolmic
Emma Blunt
Joanne Butler
Christine Morley
Jonathan Rowe
Eleanor Paine
Roy Shields
David Stean
Stephen Taylor
Bryony Yelloly

Violas
David Bolton-King
Stephen Betts
Claire Fox

Cellos
Miranda Ricardo
Chris Alcock
Jennifer Bishop
Stephen Jakeman
Nina Morgan
Elizabeth Paine
Alistair Thom

Bass
Robert Gilchrist

Flute
Rachel McCubbin
Brian Collins

Oboe
Lyn Gosney
Rosie Herdman-Newton

Clarinet
Celia Bolton-King
Alice Palmer

Bassoon
Cathy Gray
Rachel James

Horn
Dave Settle
Charles Harrison
Richard Hartree

Trumpet
Ron Barnett
Thomas Bailey
Tim Newbold

Trombone
Paul Macey
Gary Clifton
Malcolm Saunders

Tuba
Alan Prickett

Tympani
James Hunt

Percussion
Mark Paine
David Pope

The Banbury Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1961 as an amateur society. Since then the orchestra has given local musicians the opportunity to play a wide range of orchestral music and has performed three or more concerts a year for local audiences to enjoy. There are 52 members, ranging in age from 14 to 90 years old.
Our programmes are varied and entertaining. We get great pleasure working hard to make music to a high standard and hope you will come and share our enjoyment at the concerts.
Our next concert is Saturday 25th November 7.30pm. St Peter and St Paul's Church, Deddington. Playing Massenet: Phaedre Overture, Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Tchaikovsky: Symphony No 6.

The Static Chorus

Soprano
Alison Curtis
Doreen Smith
Mary Hillier
Bridget Bauckham
Lisa Beevers
Muriel Cooper
Dorothy Humphris
Joan Blencowe
Sally Gale
Alice Pages

Contralto
Jane Sequira
Phillida Walker
Anne Whitwell
Jean Swift
Mary Ennis
Jean Garnett
Helen Johnson
Kathryn Brown

Tenor
Anthony Swift
Paul Craker
Leigh Caple
Paul Tooby
Jon Phillips

Bass
Stewart Maxwell
Tony Lawford
Roger Curtis
Tom Pratt
Alex Foster
Robin Bell
Matt Hemsley

The static chorus comprises of Banbury Choral Society, Members of the Nottingham University Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and friends of Banbury Operatic Society

Fanfare Trumpeters

Jason Glynn, Gary Keen, Peter Newbold, Les Sewell

The Cast

Philip Bloomfield - Sir Walter Raleigh

Philip originally hails from York, and most of his singing has been done in the North of England and Scotland. He has appeared as soloist in opera and choral works spanning six centuries, with recent roles including Bob Boles (*Peter Grimes*), Clem (*The Little Sweep*), Strephon (*Iolanthe*) and Jacquino (*Fidelio*). Since moving to the area earlier this year he has sung the roles of Monostatos (*The Magic Flute*) in Oxford and Embarrassed-looking-Bloke-At-The-Back-Of-The-Chorus in the B.O.S. production of *Annie Get Your Gun*.

Ann Sloan - Miss Bessie Throckmorton

Ann is an optometrist though taking a career break at the moment to look after her young daughter. She joined Banbury Operatic Society in 1986 and has progressed to principal roles, latterly that of Julie LaVerne in Showboat. Ann is delighted to be singing the role of Bessie Throckmorton. Ann studies singing with Janet Edmunds.

Ruth Anker - Jill-All-Alone

Since joining BOS, Ruth has enjoyed being in many shows as a member of the Chorus. Ruth's first principal role was as the tempetuous Lola in 'Viva Mexico'. She next played a very blonde Ellie in 'Showboat'. In 'Annie Get Your Gun' Ruth played the very 'catty' Dolly. Ruth is looking forward to getting her 'claws' into the role of Jill-All-Alone.

Stuart Esworthy - Long Tom

Stuart is well travelled theatrically with credits stretching back to the 70s and while living in London in the 80s he appeared in several Queen videos.
More recently singing has varied from Opera through Jazz a cappella to his first love - Rock Recent credits include: Capt. Tempest in 'Return to Forbidden Planet', The American in 'Chess Marco in 'The Gondoliers' and earlier this year Raleigh in 'Merrie England'. This will be his first descent to a Baritone role - he hopes to pop back up to the high tenor for 'Yeoman of the Guard with Rugby Operatic in 2001. By day he works as a management development consultant using theatre techniques in improving profit and performance for businesses.

Graham Nottingham - Big Ben

Graham joined the society in 1964. In the 1970s he played in the orchestra and has served on the committee as Treasurer & Membership Secretary. His principal roles on the stage include Nanki Pooh & Pish Tush in 'Mikado', Lieutenant in 'Yeomen of the Guard' and Icarus in 'Orpheus' - and who can forget when he gallantly stepped in as understudy to play Pluto. Graham has no excuse for not knowing his lines as in BOS's 1971 production of 'Merrie England' he also played Big Ben!!!!!!!

Chris Smith - A Butcher

Chris's performing career began almost 30 years ago appearing in many prestigious venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, Wembley Stadium, and Horse Guards Parade but alas these were with a Military Band. He started treading the boards in Germany in a production of My Fair Lady and his first role was in 'Larkrise to Candleford' when he played Old Prince. He joined BOS 2 years ago to take part in their production of My Fair Lady and now he is having great fun playing the Butcher of Windsor.

Richard Briggs - A Baker

As a founder member of BOS Dickie has played many and varied roles in nearly every production. Described as a 'stalwart' for many years the term 'geriatric' must surely be the next category, but the lure of the stage will probably keep him going for a few years yet - knowing that Graham Nottingham is in the wings ready to step into his costume!!!!

Gareth Jeremy - Earl of Essex

Gareth is a founder member of the Operatic Society. During the 39 years, he has only missed one show and has fulfilled most 'offices' in the society. (21 years as Chairman, Publicity, and now in the 7th year as Treasurer). During those years he has played countless principal roles such as The Mikado, Poo Bah, Jud Fry, Chief Sitting Bull, Jupiter etc.This is his second time round in Merrie England, the last time he played Long Tom. For the past 6 years he has been the NODA (London Area) Representative for Oxfordshire, looking after 16 Operatic and Dramatic societies in the area.

Margaret Stear - Queen Elizabeth

Margaret has had a long association with the amateur stage, playing many principal parts. She joined BOS some 18 years ago and has taken part in most of their productions either on stage, or behind the scenes. Margaret is also a pianist and is often seen as the accompanist at Operatic concerts.

Miranda Walton - The May Queen

Miranda first met BOS when about 70 of them arrived at her house for a post-show party!! Until now she has resisted joining then on stage. Her previous roles include Elsie in 'Yeoman of the Guard', Lady Angela in 'Patience', Melissa in 'Princess Ida' and soprano leads in 2 obscure Mozart operas. However her main involvement with music is with the non vocal variety being by profession a violinist.

Bruce Walton - Walter Wilkins

As ever, Bruce finds himself playing the part of a lackwit who falls over a lot - just like his previous apperances with BOS as Jack Point (Yeoman of the Guard) and Pepe (Viva Mexico). He's not sure that he believes those who tell him that this is no reflection on his true character. A glutton for punishment, Bruce also directs music theatre - most recently 'The Magic Flute' and 'Show Boat', both in Oxford. He trained as a director at ARTTS International, North Yorkshire.

Michael Seeley - Silas Simkins

This is Michael's first production with BOS as he has only recently moved to the Banbury area. However Michael is no stranger to local theatre, and he was an active member of both drama and musical groups for over 15 years in Bedford. His roles ranged from Kipps in 'Half-a-Sixpence', Bunthorpe in 'Patience' to Donald Duck in 'Blue Remembered Hills' and the title role in 'Entertaining Mr Sloane'. He has also undertaken a range of backstage roles from lighting to set design.

Alan Martin - A Tinker

Alan first began in musical theatre as a 12 year old when he sang the part of Mabel in 'Pirates of Penzance'. Since that time he has sung in nearly all of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and also 'Orpheus in the Underworld', Merry Widow', 'La Vie Parisienne', 'Pink Champagne', 'White Horse Inn', and 'The Desert Song'. He has performed Merrie England three times. In many of these productions he has performed principal roles. He also entertains at dinners and charity functions. Alan was Chairman of the Rugby Operatic Society for ten years and was recently elected a Life Member.

Maurice Smith - A Tailor

Maurice is making his debut in 'Merrie England' with BOS. He has appeared for many years in both musicals and plays, and has also directed several productions. His appearances include 'Carousel', 'Oklahoma', 'Brigadoon', 'Die Fledermaus' and also Merrie England. His recent play appearances include 'Relative Values', 'Racing Demon', 'Don't Dress for Dinner' and 'Christmas Carol'.

The Cast

The Earl of Essex - Gareth Jeremy
Sir Walter Raleigh - Philip Bloomfield
Walter Wilkins - Bruce Walton
Silas Simkins - Michael Seeley
Long Tom - Stuart Esworthy
Big Ben - Graham Nottingham
A Butcher - Chris Smith
A Tinker - Alan Martin
Lord - James Harper
The Queens Fool - Nik Lester

Queen Elizabeth - Margaret Stear
Miss Bessie Thockmorton - Ann Sloan
'Jill-All-Alone' - Ruth Anker
The May Queen - Miranda Walton

A Baker - Richard Briggs
A Tailor - Maurice Smith
Lady-in-Waiting - Jenny Tustian

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School Teacher

Tricia Campbell

Children

James Bolton-King, Edward Bolton-King, Jack Mitchell, Paul Collins, Joe Nicklin, Catherine Anker, Rebecca Whelton, Ruth O'Connor, Laura Cox, Aimee Sanford, Abbi Sanford, Melanie Austin, Claire Blake, Katie Hempstock, Lisa Nicholls, Anna Hassell, Charlotte Mitchell, Lucy Nicklin, Benjamin Godfrey

Pages

Benjamin Godfrey, Jack Mitchell

Dancers

Rachel Bloomfield, Charlotte Harris, Katy Woodfield, Sarah Thorp, Sarah Ginn, Anna Dunkin, Mary Atkinson, Clare Thom, Gemma Allen, Ebony Arogundade, Jessica Clark, Ruth Thorp, Natalie O'Neil, Rose Wyatt, Rebecca Gilkes, Polly Hampshire, Charlane Taylor, Jacqueline Cambell, Stacey Crook, Holly Badby, Amy Breslin, Charlotte Price

Queens Attendant

Kate Wolstencroft

The Players

Jane Shanahan, Ann Westcott, June Ronson, Jan Batchelor, Sue May, Anne Bonner, Marilin Fairbairn, Jayne Buzzard, Anne Bloor, Dave Smith

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Our first production, planned for next summer, is to be **Benjamin Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream**, which will immediately allow the groups to perform together. Future plans include operas by composers as diverse as Richard Rodney Bennett, Wilfred Josephs, Mozart and Puccini. At the moment our biggest challenges are funding and establishing the group, and as such we are looking for patrons, and would encourage anybody interested to come forward and join with us. The annual subscription at present is just £7.50; patrons will receive regular information on Cygnet's activities, and be entitled to priority booking for all performances.

I hope that you will take this opportunity to support us at the beginning of this worthy project. Cheques, made payable to "Cygnet Opera", and further enquiries should be addressed to Philip Bloomfield (Artistic Director) at:

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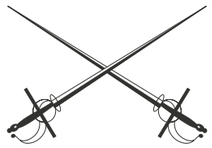

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Sword Fighting by Banbury Cross Players

We wish to thank the Rotary Club of Banbury Cherwell and the Lions Club of Banbury for all their hard work in organising the Elizabethan Village Fayre.

The Millennium Committee

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Janet Bishop - Project Co-ordinator

Marie Aston - Committee Secretary
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Goff Hales - Musical Director
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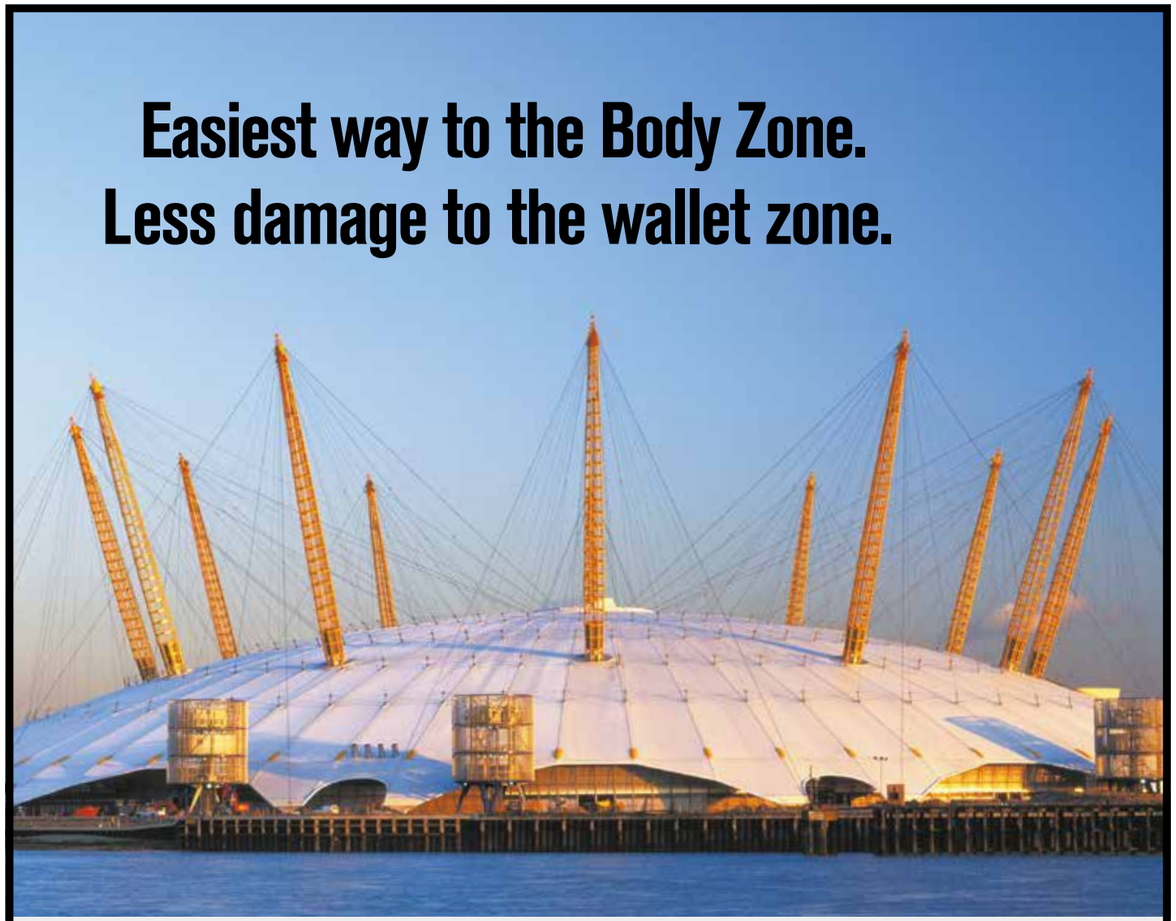

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Prices include underground travel fixed at £3.50 per adult and £1 per child. Excludes entrance fees.

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08705 165165

Chiltern Railways

DECLARATION

WE, BANKIER SLOAN, HEREBY DECLARE THAT WE WILL PROVIDE A PROFESSIONAL AND COST EFFECTIVE SERVICE TO OUR CLIENTS IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY, AS WE WOULD HAVE DONE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY HAD OUR SERVICES BEEN REQUIRED.

BANKIER SLOAN PROVIDES PROFESSIONAL ADVISE ON ALL ASPECTS OF INDUSTRIAL, RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY, AND HAVE IN THE LAST FEW YEARS BECOME THE LEADING PRACTICE IN THE REGION DEALING WITH THE CONVERSION OF RURAL PREMISIES TO BUSINESS USES.

ALTHOUGH PLANNING REGULATIONS ONLY CAME INTO EXISTENCE IN 1947, WE ARE SURE THAT HAD QUEEN ELIZABETH I SOUGHT ADVICE IN RESPECT OF HER LAND HOLDINGS, SHE WOULD HAVE TURNED TO BANKIER SLOAN.

BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS THROUGHOUT THE LAND HAVE COME TO APPRECIATE THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE. SHOULD YOU WISH ADVISE PLEASE VISIT OUR DEDDINGTON OFFICE OR TELEPHONE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

BANKIER SLOAN
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OX15 0SG

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Merrie England

We apologise to the following people who have been omitted from the programme

Helen Christie	-	Viola
Sue Christie	-	2nd Violin
Laurie Colegrave	-	Yeoman
Bob Campbell	-	Yeoman
Anne Muir	-	Banbury Choral Society
Millie Renn	-	Banbury Choral Society
Mary Ennis	-	Banbury Choral Society
Lynne Morton	-	Banbury Choral Society
Ruth Dale	-	Fanfare Trumpeter
Agnes Morrel	-	Fanfare Trumpeter
Connie Wookey	-	Fanfare Trumpeter
Corydon Morrel	-	Fanfare Trumpeter
Ann Quincey	-	Hair
Rebecca Abbott	-	Make-up
Peggy Lester	-	Make-up
Claire Lester	-	Make-up
Di Carter	-	Make-up
Mrs Martin	-	Front of House
Mrs Wypor	-	Front of House
Mrs Allan	-	Front of House
Mrs Parker	-	Front of House
Mr Moses	-	Front of House
Mrs Fitzpatrick	-	Front of House
Judith Langley	-	Wardrobe
Louise Newell	-	Wardrobe
Sara Woodruff	-	Hospitality
Gill Huband	-	Crew
Chris Wyatt	-	Crew