

A BRIEF HISTORY OF "THE MIKADO"

Of the fourteen light operas produced by Gilbert and Sullivan between 1871 and 1896, "The Mikado" was the ninth, and was arguably the best. Certainly it has been loved by audiences around the world for more than a century since it opened at the Savoy Theatre, London, on 14 March 1885.

When the previous opera, "Princess Ida" reached the public for the first time in January 1884, it had been greeted with little enthusiasm by the critics. Sir Arthur Sullivan (he had been knighted the previous year) was ill, exhausted and dispirited, and once "Princess Ida" had begun its run, he declared his determination to write no more comic operas with Gilbert. During the months that followed, Gilbert offered him a new plot which he rejected, the two were on

unfriendly terms, and it looked as though a now-famous partnership was over

Late in 1884, Gilbert was pacing around his study when a huge Japanese sword fell from the place where it had decorated his wall. This gave him the seed of a totally new idea, which he fleshed out in detail from a Japanese Exhibition which was then running in Knightsbridge. Sullivan was delighted, and possibly their greatest collaboration began.

"The Mikado" must have offended Japanese sensitivities from time to time, as it was banned in England in 1907 during the visit of a Japanese prince. However it is an English opera in Japanese clothing, in which Gilbert laughs (as he always did) at the people he knew best!

*The Valley Musical Society
& The Eltham Community Orchestra present*

THE MIKADO

PRESENTED FOR WORLD VISION



• *Eltham College Theatre*
SEPT. 11, 12, 18 & 19 at 8pm.

Sun. 13th - 2.00pm Sat 19th - 2.00pm & 8pm.

TICKETS: \$8, \$4 & CONCESSION AVAILABLE

• **BOOKINGS: Ph. 439 2039**

WORLD VISION



World Vision began in 1950, developing from the work of an American, Dr Bob Pierce, in helping orphans and displaced children during the Korean war. From a beginning in childcare, the work of World Vision has expanded to provide, help, encouragement, education, training and care to millions of men, women and children in over 80 countries.

The aim is not simply to give goods and services but to enable needy people to survive and to become self-reliant in their own communities. World Vision seeks to provide a total ministry, meeting the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of individuals and communities.

World Vision of Australia was established in 1966. It is now the largest non-government aid agency in Australia. Completely autonomous, with its own board of directors, World Vision of Australia works in association with partners in New Zealand, Hong Kong, Canada, Britain, Europe, USA and Southern Africa to plan and fund programs to assist people in developing countries.

As a non-denominational Christian agency, World Vision demonstrates the love of God through healing the sick, ministering to the needy and delivering the oppressed. World Vision employees come from different Christian backgrounds and share a common regard for the dignity of all people.

OUR SINCERE THANKS

The Valley Musical Society the Eltham Community Orchestra and World Vision Australia wish to express their sincere thanks to the administration of Eltham College for their generous donation of the use of this magnificent theatre for rehearsals and performances during this season.

Thanks also to Paul Paton for the photography and to Dianne Richter and the committee for co-ordinating the publicity. Especial thanks to World Vision Australia for printing the posters and tickets and for help with the programs.

THE VALLEY MUSICAL SOCIETY In association with THE ELTHAM COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

proudly presents

THE MIKADO

or The Town of Titipu

Music by: Sir Arthur Sullivan

Text by: Sir William Gilbert

Conductor: Ian Lowe Orchestra leader: Mary Wright

Director: Roderick Chappel Direction Consultant: Carole Driscoll

Producer and Chorus master: Graham Ford

Assistant Producer: Dianne Richter

Assistant chorus master: Lynne Stevens

Rehearsal pianist: Roger Peck (assistant: Lisa Gasparotto)

Choreographer: Rhonda Webb

Set Designs: Chris White Lighting: Rohan and Cameron Wenn

Makeup: Barbara Forbes Props: Bernie Fitzgerald

Stage Manager: Howard Willis Front of house: Walter Ezard

Characters, in order of appearance:

NANKI-POO, the son of the Mikado, John Tacey

disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in love with Yum-Yum

PISH-TUSH, a Noble Lord Graham Ford

OH-BAH, Lord High Everything Else Rod Gorflne

KO-KO, Lord High Executioner of Titipu Roderick Chappel

KO-KO'S SWORD-BEARER Sam Lord

YUM-YUM, Mavis Ford

PITTI-SING, and Judith O'Shea or Lynne Stevens

PEEP-BO, Wards of Ko-Ko Julie Cleeland or Emille

JOHNSON

KATISHA, an elderly lady in love with Beryl Nichols

Nanki-Poo

THE MIKADO OF JAPAN Chris White

Chorus of Schoolgirls, Gentlemen of Japan and Guards The Ladies and Gentlemen of the Valley Musical society

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Overture

ACT 1

- 1 "If you want to know who we are" Chorus
2. "A wand'ring minstrel, I" Nanki-Poo
3. "Our great Mikado, virtuous man" Pish-Tush
4. "Young man, despair" Pooh-Bah, Nanki-Poo, Pish-Tush
5. "Behold the Lord High Executioner" Chorus and Ko-Ko
6. "Comes a train of little ladies" Chorus
- 7 "Three little maids from school" Yum-Yum, Peep-Bo, Pitti-Sing
8. "So please you, Sir we much regret" Trio and Pooh-Bah
9. "Were you not to Ko-Ko plighted" Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo
10. "I am so proud" Pooh-Bah, Ko-Ko and Pish-Tush
- 11 Finale all cast (except Mikado)

INTERVAL

ACT 2

12. "Braid the raven hair" Chorus and Pitti-Sing
13. "The sun, whose rays are all ablaze" Yum-Yum
14. Madrigal "Brightly dawns our wedding day"
Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Nanki-Poo and Pish-Tush
15. "Here's a how-de-do!" Yum-Yum, Nanki-Poo and Ko-Ko
16. "Mi-Ya Sa-Ma" (Entrance of Mikado) Chorus, Mikado, Katisha
- 17 "A more humane Mikado" Mikado
18. "The criminal cried" Ko-Ko, Pitti-Sing, Pooh-Bah and Chorus
19. Glee -"See how the Fates their gifts allot" Mikado, Pitti-Sing,
Pooh-Bah, Ko-Ko and Katisha
20. "The flowers that bloom in the spring" Nanki-Poo and Ko-Ko
- 21 "Alone, and yet alive" Katisha
22. "Willow tit-willow" Ko-Ko
23. "There is beauty in the bellow of the blast" Katisha and Ko-Ko
24. Finale all cast.

THE STORY IN BRIEF

"The Mikado" is set in the Japanese town of Titipu, and when Act 1 begins, we meet the noblemen of the town explaining their Japanese appearance and attitudes. Into the town comes Nanki-Poo, ostensibly a wandering musician. He is seeking Yum-Yum, a maiden whom he has loved from afar. Nanki-Poo's love had been in vain, because Yum-Yum was engaged to her guardian Ko-Ko. He is now returning hopefully to seek her because he has learned that Ko-Ko is under sentence of death. The nobleman Pish-Tush explains that, to prevent a rash of judicial decapitations, it had been necessary to free Ko-Ko from prison and raise him to the exalted rank of Lord High Executioner of Titipu. All the other public offices are held by the immensely haughty nobleman Pooh-Bah, the Lord High Everything Else.

Ko-Ko arrives in state. He has a list of suitable candidates for execution, but has yet to actually decapitate anyone. Yum-Yum arrives home from school with her sisters Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo and their friends. Nanki-Poo is able to see her alone, and he reveals that he is, in fact, the disguised son of the Mikado, the Japanese emperor. However their love seems hopeless.

Meanwhile Ko-Ko learns that, to save himself and Titipu from ruin, he must obey the Emperor's edict and find somebody to behead. Nanki-Poo

agrees to be Ko-Ko's victim in a month's time, on condition that he can marry Yum-Yum in the meantime. The celebrations that follow this agreement are interrupted by Katisha, a fearsome lady of the Mikado's court, who claims Nanki-Poo in marriage. Rejected and spurned, Katisha departs from Titipu, threatening vengeance.

Act 2 begins with the preparations for Yum-Yum's wedding to Nanki-Poo, a happy event made sad by the fact that the bridegroom must die at the end of a month. Ko-Ko then reveals that he has discovered that, by law, Yum-Yum, as Nanki-Poo's wife, must be buried alive if the latter is executed.

The wedding arrangements are cancelled, and Ko-Ko learns that the Mikado himself, with Katisha, is about to enter Titipu. In desperation he decides to invent Nanki-Poo's death. He sends Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo to marry and flee, and then, with the help of Pitti-Sing and Pooh-Bah, graphically describes for the Mikado the supposed execution. However Katisha learns that the dead man was the crown prince, her beloved Nanki-Poo. Ko-Ko, Pooh-Bah and Pitti-Sing face execution, but Nanki-Poo will only consent to reappear and prove their innocence if Katisha is safely married to someone else. Ko-Ko reluctantly woos Katisha, they are married, and Nanki-Poo appears with his bride to be reconciled with the Mikado.

PRINCIPALS

John Tacey - Nanki-Poo

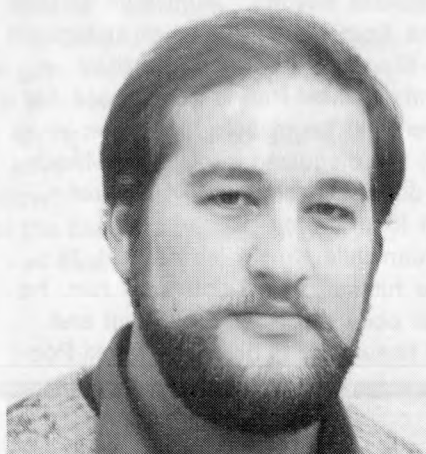
John brings a wide range of experience and a number of great gifts to this role. As well as choral singing and directing, he also plays clarinet and bass clarinet in the Croydon Citizen's Band. He has sung with the Melbourne Youth Choir backing Marcia Hines and Barry Manilow. He currently sings with the Faye Dumont Singers, touring Victoria and interstate.

John has performed in "Fiddler on the Roof" and the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" Nanki-Poo is John's first principal role.



Mavis Ford - Yum-Yum

Mavis has sung in a vast number of operas and operettas. Her experience includes leads in "Mikado" "The Pirates of Penzance" "The Gondoliers" "Sister Angelica" (Puccini), "The Telephone" (Menotti), "Il Seraglio" and "The Marriage of Figaro" (Mozart). She has been a member of the Tudor Choristers and has sung solos in several oratorios. In recent years, she has sung the leads in "Trial by Jury" and "HMS Pinafore" for the Valley Musical Society



Rod Gorfline - Pooh-Bah

Rod has been a G and S specialist since his first role in high school, as Ko-Ko in the Mikado. He has worked for seven seasons with the SEC G and S Company taking principal roles in "Princess Ida" "The Pirates of Penzance" "The Sorcerer" "The Yeoman of the Guard" "HMS Pinafore" and only a few weeks ago, as Pooh-Bah in the SEC's "Mikado"



Beryl Nichols - Katisha

A "dramatic mezzo soprano" Beryl competed successfully in eisteddfods, reaching the semi-finals of the Sun Aria. Her stage experience began with the White Orchid Ensemble, and continued with the Regent Dramatic Society As well as being Musical Director and Stage Manager she played roles in "Oklahoma" "South Pacific" "Carousel" "Paint Your Wagon" and "Brigadoon" More recently she has taken part in the musical productions of the Eltham Singers, an adult singing group associated with Eltham College. Katisha is her first G and S role.

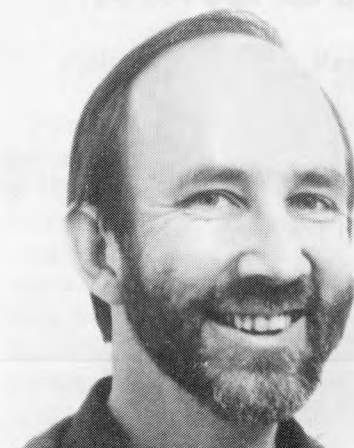


Roderick Chappel

- Director, and Ko-Ko

Roderick has been a lover of G and S since appearing as Ko-Ko's sword bearer as a child! He has appeared in several productions with Savoy Loyola and Valley His first G and S comic lead role was as Sir Joseph Porter in Valley's 1986 production of "HMS Pinafore"

Roderick has also appeared regularly in recent years in straight theatre and in melodrama, with Eltham Heidelberg, St Andrew's, and Starlight. In this, his first venture into directing, Roderick has also acted as a dialogue coach.



**Lynne Stevens - assistant
chorus master, Pitti-Sing**

Lynne has extensive experience as a choral conductor from the age of 13! She has studied choral conducting in Australia, USA and Hungary. She has been a member of the Stonnington Singers and of other groups.

Her musical stage experience includes "Guys and Dolls" "Bells are Ringing" and two productions of "HMS Pinafore" Her first principal role was that of Hebe in Valley's 1986 "Pinafore"



**Chris White - The Mikado of
Japan, poster and set design**

Chris had a wide experience in theatrical direction and design before he started using his magnificent voice on stage himself. He has played leading roles in amateur and professional productions including "The Pirates of Penzance" "Iolanthe" "South Pacific" "Pajama Game" "Kismet" and many others. This year he has just completed directing Warrandyte High School in "Oklahoma" has played a leading role in "Annie" and is preparing for a role in "Evita" Last year he was the Captain of our "HMS Pinafore"



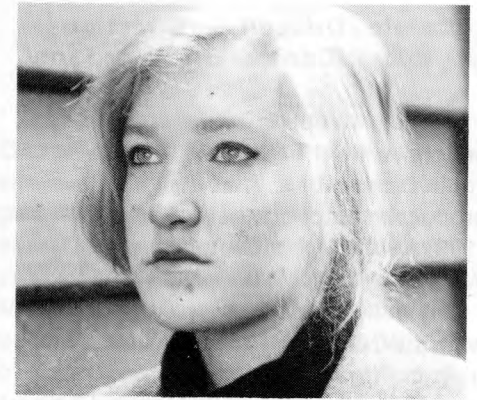
Judith O'Shea - Pitti-Sing

Apart from playing a male ghost in "Ruddigore" at school, this is Judith's G and S debut. She recently discovered a love of acting, through playing the villain in a revue. She has been a member of various choirs including the Tudor Choristers, and sang several solos in Valley's performances of "The Messiah" in 1986 and 1987



Emilie Johnson - Peep-Bo

Emilie, still a secondary school student, is the youngest member of the cast, but is enjoying the experience! She has been involved in various school productions, the most recent being Rosencrantz in "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead" She sang two solos in Valley's "The Messiah" earlier this year



Rhonda Webb, Choreographer

Rhonda's dramatic experience started with "Under Milk Wood" when at Eltham High School. For several years she choreographed the combined schools' productions in the Northern Territory these being filmed by the ABC. She presently is the Coordinator of Expressive Arts for Loyola College, teaching Dance and Music. Rhonda has worked as instructor for the Greensborough/Janelle Calisthenics College for twelve years. She is also experienced in tap and ballet dancing.



Julie Cleeland - Peep-Bo

Julie studied singing in HSC after being involved with school productions of "Dracula Baby" "Brave New World" and "Oh, What a Lovely War" She spent a year in Germany as an exchange student and sang in a local choir there. Her most recent appearance was in "Godspell" for Eltham Little Theatre.



**Carole Driscoll - Direction
Consultant**

Carole's directing experience is mainly with Eltham Little Theatre's youth productions. With ELT she has produced, among others, "Godspell" (1987), "Oliver" "Grease" and "The Wizard of Oz"

Originally trained as an actress with the National Theatre, Carole also tries to "tread the boards" and has won several acting awards with ELT. In 1986, Carole directed Valley's four performances of "HMS Pinafore" her first venture into the world of G & S.



**The members of the Chorus
(Valley Musical Society)**

Ladies

Leslie Alves, Paula Arnold, Janine Bardwell, Marilyn Billing, Helen Clements, Doris Colvin, Nancy Cornwallis, Gillian Essex, Andrea Fitzgerald, Robyn Gorfine, Merrill Hogan, Dorothy Hughes, Susan Kleins, Patricia Seymon, Rhonda Webb, Cathy Williams

Gentlemen

Jo Bourke, Mark Howden, Chris Livingstone, Alan Luke, Brent Reichenbach, Gary Richter Neil Tupper

In 1985 Ian Lowe rang the Fords and asked them to help with a performance of "Trial by Jury" with the Eltham Orchestra. Rehearsals started and the Valley Musical Society was born.

There were two performances of "Trial By Jury" with other items by the orchestra, and \$1300 was raised for World Vision. Because of the nature of the cause, rehearsal venues were, and still are, provided free of charge by Uniting Churches in Diamond Creek and Greensborough.

Early in 1986 the Society and orchestra performed Handel's "Messiah" and went on to raise \$2300 for World Vision with four

performances of "HMS Pinafore" In 1987 this pattern has been repeated and World Vision are expected to profit even further from six performances.

Early in "Trial" rehearsals, Chris White volunteered to look after the sets. After single-handedly doing this, Chris has continued for both "HMS Pinafore" and "Mikado" Well done and thanks, Chris.

With this support from members of the company none of whom are paid, the Society hopes to continue to raise money for World Vision and provide opportunities for locals. New members are always welcome. Call Graham Ford on 438 1957

Ian Lowe - Musical Director

Ian has conducted the Eltham Community Orchestra for over eight years. The orchestra performs four programs annually and in recent years has enjoyed working on two productions each year with The Valley Musical Society. Recently Ian has been Musical Director for "The Wizard of Oz" "Peace Child" and "Oklahoma" as well as the Valley productions of "Trial by Jury" and "HMS Pinafore"



**The members of the orchestra
(Eltham Community Orchestra)**

- Violins** Mary Wright (leader), Ethel Newton, Wilma Ezard, Nola Thomson, Shiela Nye, Claus Buescher David Sadedin
- Violas** Eric Pool, Rosemary Henderson
- Cellos** Greg Pullen, Elaine Neely Ray Banks, Graham Croft
- Flutes** Mary Keusgen, Betty Martin, Len Johnstone
- Oboe:** Denis Theil
- Clarinets** Derek Wright, Robert Knappert
- Horns** Ann Burke, Henry Huggins
- Trumpets** Cal Martin, Angela MacDonald
- Bass Trumpet:** Orm Stewart
- Percussion** Philip Leenman

The Eltham Community Orchestra practices weekly throughout the year and performs four programs, two with the VMS. Programs include symphonies, concertos and lighter pieces. New members are always welcome. Call secretary David Sadedin on 434 7130, or conductor Ian Lowe on 435 5841