

# An Old Time Music Hall

Performed in November 2000 at The Faringdon Corn Exchange

## Dramatic return to the Good Old Days

JUST for a few nights the Corn Exchange in Faringdon became an "Emporium of Entertainment", and a "Symposium of Style" as theatre-goers laughed to versatile versification and marvelled at terpsichorean treats.

Not since Leonard Sachs vanished from our TV screens, along with his curling moustache and mellifluous tones, had the delights of a Good Old Days been seen in the town, and it was Faringdon Dramatic Society that revived that eclectic mix of Victorian music hall entertainment - comedy, dance, drama and song.

There were excellent performances from the Three Little Maids of G & S fame - Carole Tappenden, Carolyn Taylor and Jo Webster - who titillatingly transmogrified themselves into "Ladies from the FDS", who admitted to being "filled to the brim with HRT"! And Ken Brown's rendition of ... Enery the Eighth" was worthy of Stanley Holloway himself.

Newcomer Allyn Richardson sang a couple of parlour songs complete with trills and grace notes, in a pleasant baritone voice which the society will no doubt be able to use to good effect in the next pantomime, already being cast.

Dave Headey gave a recitation loosely based on an ancient Greek theme, entitled "Jason and the Arguments, and Helen Barter told the tale of Albert Ramsbottom. Lucy Walden, who had earlier sung "A

No evening at the music hall would be complete without its melodrama, and Dominic Bullock, as the wicked squire, Rachel Coward - another newcomer - as the heroine Little Nelly, Carole Tappenden as her mother and Gary Thompson as Nelly's admirer - performed with panache the traditional tale of a family about to lose everything. The heroine was duly rescued from the railway line to which she had been tied by the wicked squire!

The terpsichorean treat came from three young Faringdonians from the Karen Brind school of Dance - Catherine Walden (12), Rebecca Whiffen (10) and Kim Ashdown (12), who danced a ballet scene to the tune of "True colours", while Catherine Walden and Katherine Smith (12) also took part in a Teddy Bears' picnic sketch with Dominic Bullock.

The evening was rounded off with a First World War song medley in which there was an interesting amalgam of "It's a long way to Tipperary" and "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag", which worked surprisingly well.

Small tables for the audience, with drinks being served from the bar all evening, made for a party atmosphere for this "diverting diffusion of delight".

I.S

nightingale sang in Berkeley Square", combined with Allyn Richardson to perform the amusing "Cats' Duet" (which owed nothing at all to Andrew Lloyd-Webber).

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