

Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society

75th Anniversary Production



Ruddigore

or 'The Witch's Curse'

Batley Town Hall

24th ~ 27th April 2024

Souvenir Programme



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A message from the President

Well, we have made it to our 75th year since the society began life in 1949 as the Augmented Choir of Hanover Street Congregational Church. Stanley Lockyer, an ardent Gilbert and Sullivan fan, was the instigator who encouraged his fellow choir members to "have a go". As we celebrate this milestone in our history, we consider ourselves very fortunate that we can still manage to put on a fully staged production with costumes, traditional set, a 15-piece orchestra, and the only microphones in sight will be for recording purposes and not a microphone in sight! Well they may come out when the show is being recorded.

Ruddygore as it was originally titled, was the 10th collaboration of the famous duo and was first performed on 21st January 1887, following the success of "The Mikado". The original title caused offence so Gilbert took heed of the criticism and changed it to Ruddigore.

I am so proud to be the longest serving performing member on stage and to have the honour of being this society's President. I first joined the society in 1967 encouraged by the late Marjorie Harrap, a former life member, and since then I have never looked back. I have made such wonderful friends who all share the same passion for performing and keeping the name of Gilbert and Sullivan alive.

What the society needs now is more young members to follow in the footsteps of some of us "old-timers." Sadly G & S does not appeal to most young people, however, we were delighted that Stephen Mohun managed to persuade his son (Daniel) and daughter (Elizabeth) to join us. Stephen is also taking his first principal role with the society as Sir Despard, the current, dastardly, bad baronet of Ruddigore, and we hope this will be the first of many principal roles for him.

Preparing for the show and rehearsals take up a lot of time and hard work, but none of it would be worthwhile if we did not have you, the members of our audience, to come and support us. It is lovely to see so many of our loyal regulars and we thank you all.

This year we are taking you to the fishing village of Rederring, to meet our endowed corps of professional bridesmaids, who are bound to be on duty from ten to four each day. What the village desperately needs is a wedding but no-one seems to want to tie the knot. Maybe their services will finally be called upon. One thing we can guarantee is plenty of sunshine, well we are in Cornwall!

I hope you enjoy the show as much as we will performing it!

Stephanie Roe

**The programme for our production
has been very kindly sponsored by
Anne and Phil Haley**

Ruddigore - The plot

The basis of the plot is a curse on the Murgatroyd line. According to the curse, every Baronet of Ruddigore must commit a crime every day or die in terrible agony. The curse is inherited along with the title.

The action begins in the village of Rederring, the only village in the country with an endowed troupe of professional bridesmaids, who find themselves woefully under-employed. Dame Hannah explains that she had been engaged to a man who was, as she later discovered, the holder of the title of bad baronet, and subsequently pledged herself to an eternal maidenhood. Rose Maybud, whose life is guided by a book of etiquette, hopes to find a suitor. One whose love she might return, if he could work up the nerve to state it, is Robin Oakapple, really Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd, who lives in disguise in order to avoid the curse. His younger brother, Despard, believing Ruthven to be dead, has assumed the title. Robin's foster-brother Richard, one of the few people who knew this secret, comes home and Robin confides his love. Going to Rose to act on Robin's behalf, Richard finds himself enchanted, and speaks his own heart, with Rose responding as he desires. Robin enters and, through insinuating comments about a sailor's difficult life, wins Rose for himself.

Mad Margaret enters to warn Rose that Despard plans to carry her off in one of his criminal sprees. But as Rose is now engaged to Robin, she feels safe. Despard enters and bemoans the cruel curse, explaining how he gets his crime over with first thing and spends the rest of the day doing good in atonement. In order to get back at Robin for winning Rose, Richard tells Despard Robin's secret. They go to Rose and Robin's wedding and Despard claims Robin as his older brother and the true baronet of Ruddigore. Robin admits it, and Rose, ignoring Richard, offers herself to Despard, who refuses because he can now keep his promise to marry Margaret. Rose then turns to Richard, and Robin faints.

Act two opens in the picture gallery at Ruddigore Castle, where Ruthven and his servant attempt to devise new crimes. Rose and Richard arrive seeking consent to their marriage but, although Ruthven threatens them with harm, Richard thwarts him with a Union Jack, which he cannot overcome. Ruthven reluctantly consents and allows them to leave.

The ghosts of Ruthven's ancestors step down from their frames and accuse him of failing to fulfil the terms of the curse that rests upon him. They tell him to carry off a lady immediately. Ruthven directs Adam to do this on his behalf and he leaves for the village. Despard and Margaret arrive and inform Ruthven that he bears responsibility for Despard's crimes, committed while Ruthven was living as Robin Oakapple. He decides that he will defy the curse and take the consequences of doing so. Adam returns from the village having kidnapped Dame Hannah who grabs a weapon and pursues Ruthven, who calls upon the ghost of his uncle, Sir Roderic, who had been engaged to Hannah. Roderic and Hannah recognise each other and demand privacy. Ruthven leaves, only to return with the entire cast. He has established that refusal to commit a daily crime is tantamount to suicide and is thus itself a crime. That being the case, Roderic should not be dead and finds himself 'practically alive', in which state he and Hannah can now be happy together. Rose returns to Ruthven, and Richard finds himself a bridesmaid to love, and everyone is happy.

Producer - David Hall



David returns as Producer for our production of *Ruddigore*, after the success of our last two productions. He is no stranger to the top team, having also being Musical Director for our productions in 2004, 2008 and 2012, and has been a member of this society since 1999.

Well-known to local audiences, David has also been musical director for Carlinghow Theatre Company and Batley Amateur Thespians. He has appeared in many of their shows, and also in cabarets with the group *Songsational*.

His G&S principal appearances include Ko-Ko & Pish-Tush (*The Mikado*), Captain Corcoran (*HMS Pinafore*), Richard Dauntless (*Ruddigore*) and Frederick (*Pirates*), as well as many other incidental roles such as “waiter”, “drunk”, “passer-by” and “oops”.

David directed Mirfield Choral Society for 17 years and is Organist & Choirmaster at Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury. By day, he teaches singing at Heckmondwike Grammar School and at Silcoates School, Wakefield, and has been a local councillor since 2004.

Ruddigore is one of David's favourite shows, and he wishes our audience and cast a hugely enjoyable performance.

Our Accompanist - Andrew Bedford

Andrew is an extremely talented musician and has accompanied our rehearsals since 2017. He is a real asset to the Society and we are very lucky to benefit from his skills on the keyboard.

In addition to his mastery of the piano, he has also played viola in our orchestra on many occasions and so is an integral part of our entire production, from the very first rehearsal to our final performance.



This page is sponsored in memory of Jonny. Loved and missed always.

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Ruddigore over the years

Since its formation in 1949, the Society has performed Ruddigore on six occasions, the first being in 1953. Here is a selection from our archives— it's interesting to note the ticket price of 3/- (15p)... how times have changed. 2024 sees our third performance of the show in Batley Town Hall.

Presented by the
BATLEY
CONGREGATIONAL OPERATIC SOCIETY
HAYDOVER STREET



RUDDIGORE
By W. G. SWANSON and J. SULLIVAN
(The first production of the Batley Congregational Operatic Society)

SATURDAY	MARCH 21st, 1953
SUNDAY	20th
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THURSDAY	24th
FRIDAY	25th
SATURDAY	26th

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Batley Gilbert & Sullivan
Society



PRESENT

Ruddigore

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Centenary showtime

Showtime for Batley Gilbert and Sullivan Society also meant celebration this year — for they staged the 100-year-old operetta 'Ruddigore'.

To mark the centenary the local society's staging of the show last week was as near as possible to the original, first produced in 1887.

To achieve this various numbers, which have been dropped over the years, were re-introduced and even the spelling of the show's title with the 'Y' rather than the 'I' was an original touch.

Here in 'original' costume, are some members of the cast (back) Ian Townend, Chris Sowerby, Margaret Lister and (front), Keith Horner, Alison Sowerby, Carol Parkinson, Stephanie Roe and Verity Thomas. (1105/9).

Ruddigore

BATLEY TOWN HALL, 17TH - 20TH APRIL 2013



Dramatis Personae

Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd (<i>disguised as Robin Oakapple, a Young Farmer</i>)	Oliver McGreevy
Richard Dauntless (<i>his Foster-Brother, a Man-o'-war's man</i>)	Leon Waksberg
Sir Despard Murgatroyd (<i>of Ruddigore, a wicked Baronet</i>)	Stephen Mohun
Old Adam Goodheart (<i>Robin's Faithful Servant</i>)	Philip Haley
Rose Maybud (<i>a Village Maiden</i>)	Heather Watson
Mad Margaret	Kathryn Buxton
Dame Hannah (<i>Rose's Aunt</i>)	Stephanie Roe
Zorah (<i>a professional bridesmaid</i>)	Fay Church
Ruth (<i>a professional bridesmaid</i>)	Philippa Johnstone
Sir Roderic Murgatroyd (<i>The Twenty-first Baronet</i>)	David Parker

Chorus of Bucks and Blades, Ancestors, Professional Bridesmaids, and Villagers

Fiona Baker, Simon Bray, Louie Fung, Gayna Goalby, Richard Grigg,
David Hall, Lyndsey Hall, Tracey Hook, Tony Johnson, Edwin Kirkwood,
Caroline Ledgard, Elisabeth Mohun, Daniel Mohun, Amanda Storey

The ladies and gentlemen of our
wonderful orchestra under the
baton of our Musical Director,
Richard Buxton:

Violins: Kate Ghent (Leader),
Nicky Dick, Becky Mellings,
Lynda Dunn;

Viola: Jenny Nicks; **Cello:** Oona Hall;

Bass: Susan Morgan

Trumpet: Rebecca Todd;

Trombone: Ian Graham;

Horn: Joanne Beaumont

Clarinets: Gary White, Tony Dylak

Flute: Jayne White;

Oboe: Trudy Mansfield;

Percussion: Neil Graham

A date for your diary

Next year's production will be
'HMS Pinafore'

9th -12th April 2025



Musical Numbers

Act I Overture

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. "Fair is Rose" | <i>Chorus of Bridesmaids</i> |
| 2. "Sir Rupert Murgatroyd" | <i>Hannah and Chorus</i> |
| 3. "If somebody there chanced to be" | <i>Rose</i> |
| 4. "I know a youth" | <i>Rose and Robin</i> |
| 5. "From the briny sea" | <i>Chorus of Bridesmaids</i> |
| 6. "I shipp'd, d'ye see, in a revenue sloop" | <i>Richard and Chorus</i> |
| 6a. Hornpipe | |
| 7. "My boy, you may take it from me" | <i>Robin and Richard</i> |
| 8. "The battle's roar is over" | <i>Rose and Richard</i> |
| 9. "If well his suit has sped" | <i>Chorus of Bridesmaids</i> |
| 10. "In sailing o'er life's ocean wide" | <i>Rose, Richard, and Robin</i> |
| 11. "Cheerily carols the lark" | <i>Margaret</i> |
| 12. "Welcome, gentry" | <i>Double Chorus</i> |
| 13. "Oh, why am I moody and sad?" | <i>Sir Despard and Chorus</i> |
| 14. "You understand? I think I do" | <i>Richard and Sir Despard</i> |
| 15. Finale Act I | |
| "Hail the bride of seventeen summers" | <i>Chorus</i> |
| Madrigal, "When the buds are blossoming" | <i>Ensemble and Chorus</i> |
| "When I'm a bad Bart, I will tell taradiddles!" | <i>Robin and Chorus</i> |
| "Oh, happy the lily" | <i>Ensemble and Chorus</i> |

Act II

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 16. "I once was as meek" | <i>Sir Ruthven and Adam</i> |
| 17. "Happily coupled are we" | <i>Rose and Richard</i> |
| 18. "In bygone days" | <i>Rose with Chorus of Bridesmaids</i> |
| 19. "Painted emblems of a race" | <i>Ruthven, Sir Roderic, and Chorus of Ancestors</i> |
| 20. "When the night wind howls" | <i>Sir Roderic and Chorus</i> |
| 21. "He yields, he yields" | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 22. "I once was a very abandoned person" | <i>Margaret and Despard</i> |
| 23. "My Eyes are Fully Open" | <i>Margaret, Despard and Ruthven</i> |
| 24. "Melodrame" | |
| 25. "There grew a little flower" | <i>Hannah with Sir Roderic</i> |
| 26. Finale Act II | |
| "When a man has been a naughty baronet" | |
| "For happy the lily" (reprise) | <i>Ensemble and Chorus</i> |

Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd - Oliver McGreevy



Whilst studying Economics at Newcastle University, Oliver found his passion for performing, and the world of Gilbert & Sullivan in particular, becoming a member of their G & S Society, and has been hooked ever since. He currently works as a Sixth Form Mentor, and keeps himself busy performing numerous plays with Dewsbury Arts Group. *Ruddigore* will be his third show at Batley, having previously played Strephon in *Iolanthe* and Fish-Tush in *The Mikado*. He is thrilled this year to be filling the roles of innocent Robin Oakapple and cunning Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd, and is excited to explore the complexities and silliness each persona has to offer.

Richard Dauntless - Leon Waksberg

This is Leon's 11th show with Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society. He has previously played Florian, Strephon, Fairfax, Richard Dauntless, Nanki Poo, Edwin, Ralph, Cyril, Luiz, Alexis and Frederic with the group. Leon also performs roles with Musical Theatre and opera companies, recently playing Malcolm in Verdi's *Macbeth* with York Opera.

Outside of theatre, Leon occasionally writes songs, and plays bass guitar in the Leeds-based rock band Nithered.



Sir Despard Murgatroyd - Stephen Mohun

Like so many, Steve was first introduced to Gilbert & Sullivan at school and, some years later, enjoyed participating in the chorus with two other local societies. After his career took him to London, he fell out of the habit of performing, and only made his return to the stage in Batley's successful production of *Iolanthe* in 2023, joining the chorus of Peers, after a twenty-seven year hiatus.

The role of Despard Murgatroyd represents Steve's first principal role in any Gilbert & Sullivan production, and he is very much looking forward to bringing to life one of their most memorable characters.



Old Adam Goodheart - Philip Haley

Phil joined the Society for the 1973 production of *HMS Pinafore* and continued to perform until 1986. Whilst living abroad he performed with the Calpe Gilbert & Sullivan Society (Costa Blanca), playing Ko-Ko and assisting with production. He was also in two rock bands whilst in Spain!

He co-wrote a production of *Cinderella* for the Cross Bank Youth Group with fellow member Stephanie Roe. He returned to Batley G & S and also joined Halifax G & S in 2022 and at 68, he has finally got to take a principal vocal part.



Sir Roderic Murgatroyd - David Parker

David first performed with the Society in 2008 when he was invited to play the role of Giuseppe in our production of *The Gondoliers* and has returned frequently since. He is well versed in the lore of Gilbert & Sullivan, having performed all the principal bass/baritone roles with several local groups, including Harrogate, Leeds and Wakefield Gilbert & Sullivan Societies. He also appears regularly with the West Yorkshire Savoyards.



Why not come and join us?

We rehearse every Wednesday at 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Hall, Purlwell, Batley.

For further details visit our illustrated website

www.batleygands.org.uk

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Tel: 07835 163795

This page has been kindly sponsored by the Stick-Man.

Rose Maybud - Heather Watson



Heather joins the cast for her second performance with Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society, having enjoyed her time as Phyllis in last year's *Iolanthe*. Heather trained at Leeds College of Music in Classical Singing, Opera and Performance, where she performed in several operas including Mozart's *Magic Flute* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Since graduating she regularly performs with Northern Opera Group and has turned her hand to musical theatre with societies in Halifax, having played Anna in the *King and I* and Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Off stage Heather works as a member of the pastoral team in a secondary school and as a trustee for a children's charity. In her spare time, Heather continues to grow her indoor jungle with her cat.

Mad Margaret - Kathryn Buxton

Kathryn has been a member of Halifax Choral Society for fifty years, having joined as a babe in arms. A joint concert with Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society put her on a slippery slope, and she has now been their Secretary for nearly forty years. She has managed to mix youthful maidens and elderly dragons and has appeared in all thirteen of the regular G & S canon, as well as Sullivan's *The Zoo* and the usually all-male *Cox and Box*, in a production which required a mixed chorus.

She has appeared with Dewsbury Arts Group in several productions, but now spends most of her time there running the bar.

Last year she played Celia in Batley's *Iolanthe* at two days' notice. This appearance is slightly more planned.



Dame Hannah - Stephanie Roe



Stephanie is delighted to be playing Dame Hannah once again. A quiet old lady who suddenly turns into a fighting tiger – well, she has been kidnapped! She is looking forward to singing the duet with Sir Roderic, reunited at last with her old, old love. This will be the fifth occasion she has performed in *Ruddigore*, having previously taken the roles of Ruth, Rose, Mad Margaret, and Dame Hannah: all very different characters that have enabled her to grow old gracefully and continue to enjoy her passion for Gilbert & Sullivan with this very talented and friendly group.

Zorah - Fay Church

Fay is thrilled to be taking her second principal role with Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society, after her debut in the title role of *Iolanthe* last year. She has been with the society for three years, having previously performed in the chorus with Leeds Gilbert & Sullivan Society and Wakefield West Riding Theatre Company.

She has always enjoyed singing, taking after her mother who was also a performer. She particularly enjoys Gilbert & Sullivan because it can let out a little of the bonkers, without looking completely crazy...most of the time.



Ruth - Philippa Johnstone

Philippa has been involved in amateur dramatics since a very early age and has enjoyed being a chorus member or taking principal role in pantomimes and musicals with Morley Amateurs, Headingley Amateurs, Southend Operatic Society and Dewsbury Collegians. She has also been a member of both Mirfield and Halifax Choral Societies. This is her second year with Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society, after she thoroughly enjoyed playing a fairy in *Iolanthe* last year.



The Society is very grateful for funding received from the Batley & Birstall Community Fund, providing funding for voluntary projects in the Batley and Birstall area.

**Details of the fund can be obtained from
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Richard Grigg



Louie Fung



Gayna Goalby



David Hall



Lyndsey Hall



Tracey Hook



Tony Johnson



Edwin Kirkwood



Caroline Ledgard



Elisabeth Mohun



Daniel Mohun



Amanda Storey

Musical Director - Richard Buxton



Richard Buxton began singing Gilbert and Sullivan in his mid-thirties, and played a succession of middle-aged and elderly juvenile leads before a perceptive director finally allowed him to act his age.

In *Ruddigore* he has played Robin and Richard twice each, finishing with Old Adam. Since 1982 in Huddersfield and Halifax he has worked through most of the G & S canon several times in various roles, and has played all three parts in *Cox and Box* (though not in the same production). Batley G & S have called upon him from time to time when they were short of an Old Bald Bloke, and he has appeared for them in *The Gondoliers*, *The Sorcerer* twice, *Utopia Limited*, *Trial by Jury* and *HMS Pinafore*.

He took up the conductor's baton in Halifax in 2009, when he was Treasurer and they couldn't afford to pay anyone, and found to his delight that the orchestra appeared able to follow his beat. Since then he has also directed nine shows for Halifax, enjoying the absence of artistic friction between director and conductor. He recently managed to hand over both roles at Halifax to younger people, and moved from the pit back to the stage there last autumn.

Outside Gilbert and Sullivan Richard has enjoyed playing a variety of psychopaths and dysfunctional husbands in Stephen Sondheim musicals for Dewsbury Arts Group. His last appearance there was in the pivotal role of "Man with beard" in *Sweeney Todd* and he will be in the chorus of *The Producers* later this year. He sings with Halifax Choral Society and has been a regular supporter of Opera North since their opening night in 1978.

Richard came to Batley two years' ago to conduct *The Mikado*, following it with *Iolanthe* last year. He is delighted to have been asked back to work with so many friends both on stage and in the orchestra pit.

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Our previous productions

Show	Production Years
The Gondoliers	2017 2007 1998 1991 1981 1970 1961 1952
The Grand Duke	1969
HMS Pinafore	2015 2003 1993 1984 1974 1966 1954
Iolanthe	2023 2011 1992 1983 1972 1960.1950
The Mikado	2022 2014 2005 1995 1986 1977 1968 1959 1949
Patience	2006 1996 1985 1971 1958
The Pirates of Penzance	2019 2009 1999 1989 1979 1973 1962 1951
Princess Ida	2016 2004 1994 1982 1976 1964 1956
Ruddigore	2013 2002 1987 1975 1963 1953
The Sorcerer	2018 2008 1997 1988 1980 1967
Trial By Jury	2015 2003 1993 1984 1974 1966
The Yeomen of Guard	2012 2000 1990 1978 1965 1955
Utopia Limited	2010 1957

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Acknowledgements

Producer/Director	David Hall
Musical Director	Richard Buxton
Accompanist	Andrew Bedford
Set Design	David Hall
Scenic Artist	Chris Hall
Set Construction and Painting	David Hall, Chris Hall and the team
Stage Manager	Howard Goalby
Lighting	Stuart Sprowell at Sound Centre Plus
Properties	Fay Church
Prompter	Tanya Parsons
Wardrobe	Lyndsey Hall
Costumes	Elizabeth Stagewear
Make Up	Stephanie Roe, Philip Haley, and Debbie Moores
Bookings Manager	Stephanie Roe
House Manager	Margaret Hanson
Programme Designer and Editor	Robert Thurman
Librarian	Tracey Hook
Musical Score	James Newby Music
Safety Officer	Stephanie Roe

Society Officials

President: Stephanie Roe, **Secretary:** Lyndsey Hall. **Treasurer:** Robert Thurman
Executive Committee: Fi Baker, Simon Bray, Fay Church. Philip Haley,
Stephen Mohun, Debbie Moores, Rob Moores.

Honorary Life Members of the Society

Mr K Horner, Mrs C Parkinson, Mrs S L Roe, Mrs S Stopford,
Mr C R Thurman, Mr G Weston.

NODA Long Service Medal Holders

Mrs Tracey Hook, Mr K Horner, Mr E Kirkwood,
Mrs D Moores, Mrs C Parkinson, Mr M G Parkinson, Mrs M Roberts.
Mrs S Stopford, Mrs S L Roe, Mr C J Sowerby, Mr C R Thurman,
Mrs K Thurman, Mr I Townend.

Invited Guests

The Mayor and Mayoress of Kirklees
Representatives from Heckmondwike Players,
Halifax Gilbert & Sullivan Society, Batley Amateur Thespian Society,
Dewsbury Collegians, Carlinghow Theatre Company, Dewsbury Arts Group.
NODA Representatives - Kirstie Turnbull and Les Smith
Members of the Auditions Panel and Guests: Jane Griffin, Nancy Finnegan,
John Tattersall

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