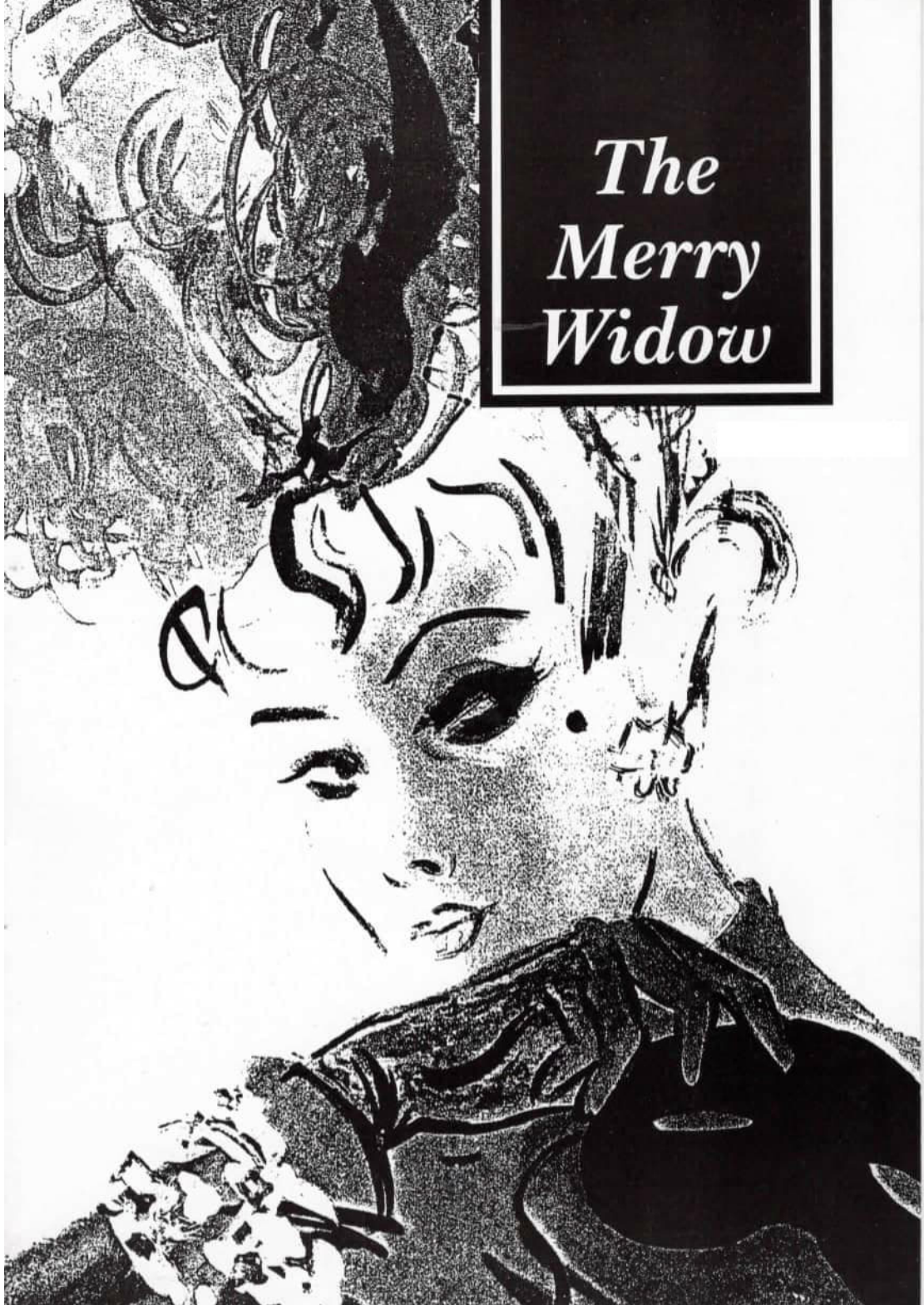


*The
Merry
Widow*



Back Over The Years

1952 The Gondoliers, The Mikado. 1953 Patience. 1954 H. M. S. Pinafore. 1955 Pirates of Penzance. 1956 Iolanthe. 1957 The Yeoman of the Guard. 1958 Princess Ida. 1959 The Vagabond King. 1960 Merrie England. 1961 The Gondoliers. 1962 The Rebel Maid. 1963 The Song of Norway. 1964 Pirates of Penzance. 1965 The Merry Widow. 1966 The Yeoman of the Guard. 1967 White Horse Inn. 1968 The Mikado. 1969 The New Moon. 1970 Orpheus

in the Underworld. 1971 The Gipsy Baron. 1972 Princess Ida. 1973 Pink Champagne. 1974 The Land of Smiles. 1975 Iolanthe, La Belle Helene. 1976 Patience, Summer Song. 1977 The Merry Widow. 1978 Oklahoma! 1979 Kismet! 1980 H. M. S. Pinafore, Carousel. 1981 Ruddigore, Vagabond King. 1982 The Sorcerer, My Fair Lady. 1983 The Music Man. 1984 Trial by Jury & A Music Revue, Fiddler on the Roof. 1985 Utopia Ltd., South

Pacific. 1986 A Celebration, White Horse Inn. 1987 The Mikado, The Pajama Game. 1988 The Pirates of Penzance, Calamity Jane. 1989 Iolanthe, Half a Sixpence. 1990 H. M. S. Pinafore, Oklahoma! 1991 The Gondoliers, Brigadoon. 1992 Showstoppers, The Yeoman of the Guard. 1993 Red Hot & Cole, Show Boat. 1994 Ruddigore, Carousel. 1995 Charlie Girl.

A Message from the Chairman

LADIES and GENTLEMEN,

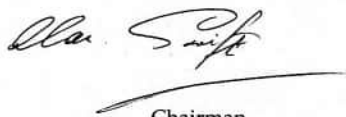
Welcome to the Show, and in particular, welcome to our contribution to the world wide celebration of the 125th anniversary of the birth of Franz Lehár.

It is almost 90 years since the *Merry Widow* was first seen and heard, but in that time the lovely music seems not to have lost its appeal for audiences new and old. The Viennese critic who described the original production as distasteful must have spent a long time getting over his embarrassment.

The Society first produced the Show in 1965 with a repeat in 1977. There are those who feel that another production is long overdue!

Rehearsals have been most enjoyable but the decision as to how successful our offering will be rests, as usual, with you the audience.

We hope / think that you will enjoy it!



Chairman

Acknowledgements

The Committee, on behalf of the Society, wishes to express its grateful thanks to -

Carlsberg Tetley
Keith Dadley, for lights
de Ferrers High School
Dean & Smedley Ltd., Chemist
Marstons Brewery
The National Trust, in their Centenary Year, for the use of Kedleston Hall for photography
The Staffordshire Education Committee
Tony Gaskin, The Beacon Hotel

AND TO ANYONE ELSE WHO HELPED TO MAKE 'THE MERRY WIDOW' A SUCCESS - THANK YOU!

Burton & District Operatic Society
presents

The Merry Widow



Original Book and Lyrics by
VICTOR LEON and LEO STEIN

Music by
FRANZ LEHAR

New Book and Lyrics by
PHIL PARK

Music adapted and arranged by
RONALD HANMER

Produced by: NIGEL TAYLOR

Musical Director: IAN STEPHENSON

Scenic Design: DAVE KITE

Stage Director: DAVID HUSSEY

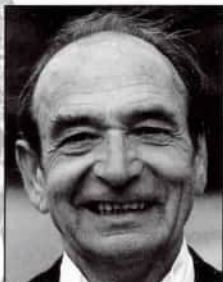
Lighting Design: MICHAEL THOMPSON

Costumes and Wigs by Homburg's of Leeds
'Grisettes' Wigs by Visage

Commencing Monday, 23rd October, 1995
de Ferrers High School, Harehedge Lane,
Horninglow, Burton upon Trent



The Society is affiliated to the Burton Arts Council
and the National Operatic and Dramatic Association



Ken LOWE – *Baron Mirko Zeta* – I joined the Society in 1956 and remained a member until 1976, rejoining in 1990 to date. Principal parts include the following Gilbert and Sullivan shows – Hilarion in *Princess Ida* (twice!), the Duke of Plaza Toro in *The Gondoliers*, Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Colonel Fairfax in *The Yeoman of the Guard*, Nanki Poo in *The Mikado*, Toffler in *Iolanthe* and Bunthorne in *Patience*. Other Shows – Count Peppi in *Song of Norway*, Sutton in *White Horse Inn*, Alexander in *New Moon*, and Mercury in *Orpheus in the Underworld*.



Sally HAMBLING – *Valencienne* – I joined the Society in 1985 and since that time have played the following principal roles – Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, Magnolia in *Showboat*, Laurie in *Oklahoma* and Babe in *The Pajama Game*. I've enjoyed various supporting roles in other shows over the last ten years. By profession I am an Estate Agent.



Steven FOSTER – *Njegus* – I joined the Society in 1988 for *Calamity Jane*. Since then I have played the following principal roles – Kipps in *Half a Sixpence*, Jack Point in *The Yeoman of the Guard*, Joe Studholme in *Charlie Girl*, Will Parker in *Oklahoma*, Jigger in *Carousel*, Robin Oakapple in *Ruddigore* and Sandy in *Brigadoon*. I've played Diesel in *West Side Story* with the Rolls

Royce Operatic Society and Dick Deadeye in *H.M.S. Pinafore* both at School and with the Eastbourne Operatic Society. I'm also a member of the Little Theatre Players.



Mike STORR – *Cascade* – I joined the Society in 1984 and the principal roles played are Avram in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Commander Harbison in *South Pacific*, Mr. Shalford in *Half a Sixpence* and Prof. Hinzl in *White Horse Inn*. I am also a member of the *Mellow Dramatics*.



Mark JONES – *St. Briche* – I joined the Society in 1987 for *The Mikado* and have since enjoyed the following principal roles – Sir Joseph Porter in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Andrew Carnes in *Oklahoma!*, Tommy in *Brigadoon*, Shadbolt in *Yeoman of the Guard*, Monty in *Red, Hot & Cole* and Wainwright in *Charlie Girl*. I was a member of the Mercian Chorale until 1994 and sung with them in three Sainsbury "Choir of the Year" televised rounds.

The Story of the Show

ACT I A glittering party is in full swing at the Pontevedrian Embassy in Paris to celebrate the Official Birthday of the Grand-Duke. The recently widowed Anna Glavari is to be the guest of honour and Baron Zeta, the Ambassador, plans to find a husband for her. This task takes on all the proportions of a national crisis – when it is revealed that the Fatherland will become bankrupt if Anna marries a foreigner and the Glavari millions are taken abroad. Raoul de St. Brioche and Viscount Cascada, two impoverished aristocrats are rivals for the widow's hand, and millions.

Camille de Rossillon has eyes for no-one but the Ambassador's young wife, Valencienne, and has written the words "I love you" on her fan. Baron Zeta's factotum, Njegus, is despatched to find Count Danilo (four months at the Embassy, but more often found at Maxim's)!

Zeta feels that Danilo is the man to save the day by wooing the Widow; but, what he does not know, is, that Danilo and Anna were once engaged. When they meet, it is clear that their passionate relationship is not dead but injured pride and, now, her money stands between them. Danilo, not entirely selflessly, promises Zeta that he will preserve Anna from all prowling admirers.

ACT II The following day Anna gives a Pontevedrian party at her Palais. She and Danilo continue to skirmish, deeply in love, but both with deeply wounded feelings. Zeta is under fierce pressure from Pontevedro to get the Widow paired off with a compatriot. Valencienne's fan with its compromising message, is causing chaos, and she and de Rosillon are all but caught "in flagrante". Njegus saves the day, and Anna tries to turn the situation to her advantage, but the pressure she puts on Danilo misfires. He storms off to the one place he feels at home – Maxim's.

ACT III Anna has engaged Njegus to create a replica of Maxim's in the garden of her Palais, and has hired all of les Grisettes for the evening. Valencienne and some of the other Embassy wives have entered into the party spirit too and a riotous cabaret is in progress. Danilo has found Maxim's devoid of its usual attractions and is tricked into returning. Zeta is still convinced that Danilo is the only man likely to succeed with an appeal to Anna's patriotism and so instructs Danilo to issue an ultimatum: Anna must marry a Pontevedrian, or see her country ruined.

Anna would willingly marry a Pontevedrian – Danilo – but the words – I love you – which she longs to hear, are the very ones he cannot bring himself to say. Impasse?

But the happy ending is only a few more twists away.

The Audience is respectfully requested not to smoke in the building, and not to use flash photography in the auditorium during the performance.

The Society cannot accept responsibility for any articles left in the cloak room.

The Merry Widow

CAST

In order of appearance

BARON MIRKO ZETA <i>Pontevedrian Ambassador</i>	Ken Lowe
VALENCIENNE <i>His Wife</i>	Sally Hambling
NJEGUS <i>His principal secretary</i>	Steven Foster
VISCOUNT CASCADA <i>Spanish Diplomat</i>	Mike Storr
RAOUL DE ST. BRIOCHE <i>French Diplomat</i>	Mark Jones
KROMOV <i>Consular Attaché</i>	Iain Wishlade
OLGA <i>His Wife</i>	Louise Evanson
CAMILLE DE ROSILLON <i>French Aristocrat</i>	Melvin Edwards
PRITSCH <i>Military Attaché</i>	Kevin Storr
BOGDANOVITCH <i>Military Attaché</i>	Richard Tunstall
SYLVIA <i>His Wife</i>	Christine Frost
PRASKOVIA <i>Dowager Duchess</i>	Kate Buckley
ANNA GLAVARI <i>The Widow</i>	Caroline Salt
COUNT DANILO <i>Embassy Attaché</i>	Andrew Last
EMBASSY LADY	Mary Collingwood
EMBASSY LADY	Stella Hambleton
EMBASSY LADY	Margaret Hogg

MAXIM'S GRISETTES

LOLO	Helen Lowe
DODO	Sam Hartwright
JOU - JOU	Melanie Stevenson
FROU - FROU	Angela Wynne
CLO - CLO	Rebecca Mallinson
MARGOT	Sarah Cottle

EMBASSY GUESTS

Hazel Devine, Andrea Franke, Ann Holmes, Sarah Stephenson, Sue May,
Donna-Jayne Moffet, Jean Rogers.
Adrian Bader, Mike Burke, John Collingwood, Richard Dean, Maurice
Goodhead, Robert Hughes, Alan Swift.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

Salon of the Pontevedrian Embassy, Paris 1904

<i>Overture</i>	Orchestra
<i>Pontevedro in Paris</i>	Zeta, Cascada and Company
<i>A Highly Respectable Wife</i>	Valencienne and Camille
<i>So Many Men Admire Me</i>	Anna and Men
<i>You'll Find Me At Maxim's</i>	Danilo and Maxim's Girls
<i>It Goes To Show</i>	Anna and Danilo
<i>Finale</i>	The Company

Act II

The Gardens of Anna Glavari's Residence, next day

<i>Pontevedrian Dance</i>	The Company
<i>Vilia</i>	Anna and Company
<i>Driving In The Park With You</i>	Anna and Danilo
<i>Women! Women! Women!</i>	Zeta, Danilo, Njegus, Kromov, Pritch Cascada, St. Brioché, Bogdanovitch
<i>Waltz Scene</i>	Anna, Danilo and Guests
<i>Flow'rs Are Awakened In Maytime</i>	Camille and Valencienne
<i>Finale</i>	The Company

Act III

Anna Glavari's Garden "a la Maxim's", the same evening

<i>Entr'acte</i>	Orchestra
<i>Les Grisettes</i>	Valencienne and Embassy Ladies
<i>You'll Find Me At Maxim's</i>	Maxim's Grisettes
<i>The Merry Widow Waltz</i>	Anna and Danilo
<i>Finale</i>	The Company

Orchestra

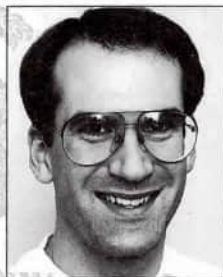
<i>Piano</i>	Vic Benson	<i>Violin 1 lead</i>	Karen Smith
<i>Flute</i>	Julie Shipley	<i>Violin 1</i>	Anne Foster
<i>1Bb Clarinet</i>	Nicky Maclure	<i>Violin 11</i>	David Foster
<i>11Bb Clarinet</i>	Peter Bacon	<i>Violin 11</i>	Kate Dixon
<i>Oboe</i>	Tony Reynolds	<i>Viola</i>	Howard Jones
<i>1 Trumpet</i>	Keith Ball	<i>Cello</i>	Joanne Rose
<i>11 Trumpet</i>	Liz Butler	<i>Double Bass</i>	Tony Mortimer
<i>Trombone</i>	James Adams	<i>Percussion</i>	David Shipley
<i>Horn</i>	Tim Ball		



Iain WISHLADE – *Kromov* – I came to Burton, from Nottingham, in 1991 and joined the Society in April 1992. I am now a member of the Committee. To date I have enjoyed being a member of the chorus. Whilst at Leeds University I played the role of Lazer Wolfe in *Fiddler on the Roof*.



Melvyn EDWARDS – *Camille* – I joined the Society in 1989 and have played Marco in *The Gondoliers*, Ravenal in *Showboat* and Colonel Fairfax in *The Yeoman of the Guard*. I've had other principal parts with The Mellow Dramatics, Ashby Operatic Society, The Waterside Players and The Little Theatre Players and was a member of the Ambrosian Chorus in *Aida* at the indoor arena, Birmingham.



Richard TUNSTALL – *Bogdanowitsch* – I joined the Society in 1991. Work for Rolls Royce. Rowed for my college at Cambridge.



Kevin STORR – *Pritsch* – First joined the Society, as a Junior Member, in 1983 and was with them until 1991 and have rejoined this year. My absence was for University, from whence I've just returned. My principal role was as Jerome in *South Pacific*.



Christine FROST – *Sylvia* – My first show with the Society was *Brigadoon* in 1991. Principal roles to date are Mrs. Mullins in *Carousel* and Mrs. Connors in *Charlie Girl*.

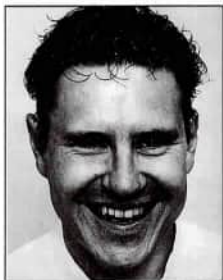


Kate BUCKLEY – *Praskovia* – (daughter of Kitty and Joe). I joined the Society in 1987 for *The Mikado*. In *Oklahoma* I took the principal role of Aunt Ella.

Louise EVANSON – *Olga* – I joined the Society in 1968. Since then I have played the following principal roles – Bloody Mary in *South Pacific*, Parthy in *Showboat* and, most recently, Lady Hadwell in *Charlie Girl*.



Caroline SALT – *Anna* – I joined the Society in 1981. Principal roles to date are Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*, Pitti-Sing in *The Mikado*, Gianetta in *The Gondoliers*, Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof*, the Plaintiff in *Trial by Jury*, Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore* and Princess Kalyba in *Utopia Ltd*. I sing professionally using my maiden name of “Oakley”. In April of this year I passed my L.L.C.M. examination, gaining honours. Am guest soprano with the Rolleston Choral Society in their performance of *The Messiah* in November.



Andrew LAST – *Danilo* – Although this is my 27th show with Burton Operatic Society, it is only in the last 7 years while working for Marstons, that I have been able to commit myself to audition for principal parts. Leading roles recently have included Judd Fry *Oklahoma!*, Cole Porter *Red, Hot & Cole!*, Billy Bigelow *Carousel* and Jack Connor *Charlie Girl*. It is always enjoyable spending a week being someone else!!

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Waltz Tuition
Melanie Stevenson

Accompanist
Vic Benson

Stage Director
David Hussey

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Tim Goodhead and Brian Hogg

Assistant Stage Manager
Darren Hussey

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Michael Thompson

Lighting Board
Michael Thompson,
Karen Thompson

Lighting Construction
Michael Thompson, Francis Bates,
Paul Wright, Robert Cottle

Scenic Design
Dave Kite

Scenic Artists
Dave Kite, Chris Yardley

Scenery Construction and Stage Staff
John Burton, Tim Goodhead,
Brian Hogg, Darren Hussey,
David Hussey,
Terry Thornton

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Verna Harlow, Derval Lester

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Jean Rogers

Wardrobe Assistants
Ruth Skellett, Laurie Swift

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Jan Caldwell

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James Grant

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Ron Harris and Vi Harris

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Jan Goodhead, John Goodhead,
Vi Harris, Robert Kemp, Jack Last,
Jean Last, Stella Reynolds,
Jenny Sanders, Alan Thompson,
Marie Thompson, John Woodcock,
Pam Woodcock

Background Information of the Show

The state of Pontevedro along with many of its Balkan neighbours, ceased to exist when the victors of World War 1 re-drew the map of Europe in the Treaty of Versailles. The following details are taken from Websters Gazeteer of 1903.

Pontevedro

Capital Pic, Grand Duchy, bordered by Herzegovina, Bosnia and Eastern Roumelia. Population (1903) 1.4M. Currency: Prouble (zloty) 28.9 = £1.

Although dating from mediaeval times, the modern state was established by an uprising lead by the Haiduks (bandit clans), in alliance with Bosnia, which secured freedom from the Ottoman Empire at the Glorious Battle of Basenji Pass (1886).

Exports: Prouble 28.4M (1901) mainly bauxite, goatskins, apricots and spirits (kartoz). Government: Kabinet, appointed by Grand - Duke, with an elective Assembly meeting annually.

A more contemporary comment is available from a 12th July 1904 leader in The London Gazette:

Problems in Pontevedro

"Pontevedrian agronomy, previously in the hands of Turkish farmers, has suffered serious declines since 1886, the which condition is considered by many to have been the principal cause of the now frequent and severe devaluations of the Prouble. We are reliably informed by our correspondent in Pic, that the much vaunted contract to supply traditional Pontevedrian yoghurt to the Imperial Russian Court is unlikely to generate the expected level of foreign exchange, as the Grand - Duke's eldest son, Kyril has now broken off his engagement to Crown - Princess Aframosia".

"Meanwhile, French influence in the Balkans is growing steadily, and by the protocol of Splitz, Pontevedrian representation in Paris has been raised to full Embassy status. There are rumours that the accord is linked to the continuing international repercussions surrounding the "Glavari Scandal" in the Pic General Post Office. It will be remembered by leaders that Otto Glavari, the Hungarian financial expert seconded the Kabinet, did much to salvage the floundering economy of Pontevedro by developing a vigorous overseas trade in postage stamps, especially following the philatelic coup of withdrawing the 50 Zloty Magenta on its first day of issue. Following his recent death, sources close to the Grand - Duke have revealed that certain of Glavari's philatelic dealings were undertaken by his own private concern and that some 20.4M Prouble, assumed to be part of Treasury funds, are in fact belonging to his young widow, Anna. There can be no doubts that her next moves will be watched with great interest both home and abroad."

The Society apologises for any inconvenience you have experienced this evening - this is due to the building alterations taking place and entirely beyond our control. We have endeavoured to hold the disturbance to a minimum.

Mr. Peter Vernon would like you to join **The Rolleston Choral Society** in St. Peter's Church, Stapenhill, Burton upon Trent, on the evening of Saturday, 4th November at 7.30 p.m. when they will be performing Handel's Messiah.

The Soloists will be: *Caroline Oakley, Sally McInnes,
Michael Guest and Mark Horner.*

Admission: £5. Concessions: £3.

Franz Lehar

This is the 125th anniversary of the birth of Franz Lehar – he was born on April 30th 1870 at Komarno in Hungary. His father was a bandmaster. He spent his childhood in the ancient town, birthplace of the Hungarian novelist, Marius Jokai, whose book, *The Gipsy Baron*, was the subject of the successful operetta by Johann Strauss.

When Lehar was six years old, he composed his first song. At 16 he won a scholarship to the Prague Conservatory of Music. He played both violin and piano, and filled his copybooks with original compositions. The noted Czech composer, Antonin Dvorak, saw Lehar's early work and encouraged him in his writing. Johannes Brahms also studied some of Lehar's music and sent the young composer a note of introduction to the secretary of the Vienna Society of Music Lovers.

Following his studies, Lehar moved through minor conducting positions in small theatres and was a bandmaster in the Army.

His first stage effort, "Kukuschka", presented in 1896, was an artistic success but a financial failure. At one point, he was turned down when he sought the post of conductor of the Vienna Municipal Orchestra – because it was felt that he could not conduct waltzes properly!!

In 1892 Lehar was appointed conductor at the Theater-an-der-Wien in Vienna, and here had his first real success, "Viennese Women". Now he concentrated solely on composition, and his works enjoyed world popularity. The magnificent waltz from "The Merry Widow" won him his greatest fame.

In 1931 this impressive looking, grey-haired gentleman sporting a trim moustache met the press in London and talked about his requirements for the libretto of a light opera. And, as he outlined his needs, Franz Lehar stated also his musical philosophy. There had to be romance, he said. Romance was the prime factor. Then there had to be drama, a bit of sentiment, a good deal of wholesome comedy, and, finally, more romance. It mattered not where the action occurred; all over the world, romance was magic.

With these ingredients in a libretto, the Master, as he was popularly known, could create music that sparkled like Viennese wine, bubbled like a child's laughter, and sang with the ardour of first love. His proof – *The Merry Widow*, considered everywhere to be his outstanding work and a classic of the genre.

He died on October 24th, 1948.

Patrons 1995

The Society would like to thank all Patrons for their continued support.

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