

Halifax
Gilbert & Sullivan
Society

presents

The YEOMEN of the GUARD

Halifax Playhouse

Wed 9 to Sat 12 Nov 2022

7.30pm and 2.30pm Sat Matinee

Programme

£1.00



www.halifaxgands.org.uk

From the chairman

Welcome to the Playhouse and thank you for joining us for our production of *Yeomen of the Guard*.

This is our first show since 2019. We were able to keep our society together during lockdown by holding 'virtual' Zoom rehearsals, which gave us a chance to see and hear each other. These, of course, were not as satisfactory as real-life meetings (co-ordinating singing in a Zoom meeting is certainly challenging), and we were delighted to be able to meet again in June 2021 when restrictions were lifted, after a break of over a year.



Since then, we have performed a number of concerts and club nights and we are now able to resume our annual production.

We are delighted that matters appear to be returning to normal: a number of old friends have joined our regular cast, our talented orchestra return, and Richard Buxton continues to be our musical and artistic director.

Yeomen of the Guard is a comic opera with serious underlying themes. You may wonder if all the characters are happy with their 'happy ending', and you'll certainly need a handkerchief for the closing moments.

I hope you will enjoy the performance and thank you again for your support.

Stephanie Bolton

HALIFAX GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

Andrew Stopford (President), Stephanie Bolton (Chairman), Stuart Summerscales (Vice-Chairman), Kathryn Buxton (Secretary), Fintan O'Shea (Treasurer)

Richard Buxton, Sue Bythell, Steven Greenwood, Deborah Hammond, Peter Skelton (Committee members)



Page sponsored by David Heathcote, who once got away with delivering the First Yeoman's lines in a mock Italian accent for Carl Rosa Opera, in recognition of the Verdian scene.

The Society

Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society was originally formed in 1968, and gave its first public full-dress performance three years later at Halifax Playhouse. The annual production in the late autumn, still at the Playhouse, remains the Society's major public appearance, but we also offer a season of public concerts in the spring, usually between March and June. We are always pleased to perform at new venues in and around Halifax or further afield, and anyone wishing to organise a concert should contact the Secretary (see below).



*Kathryn Buxton
Society Secretary*

The Society meets to rehearse on Friday evenings throughout the year at All Saints Church Hall, Skircoat Green, Halifax. Three or four of these Friday evenings during the year are given over to informal concerts and Club Nights, where we will sing through a complete Gilbert and Sullivan opera, or perhaps another piece from the same period, with the audience providing the chorus. Members of the public are always welcome to join us (and sing with us, although that's not compulsory!) on these occasions.

If you would like to sing with or support the Society yourself, you are very welcome to turn up at the rehearsal room on a Friday evening (7.45 onwards). Alternatively you may contact the Secretary, Kathryn Buxton, 34 Fir Road, Huddersfield, HD1 4JE (01484-301291). If you don't sing yourself, but can perhaps offer organisational or other practical skills, you will be equally welcome. We look forward to seeing you in the future!

Check what's happening on our website - www.halifaxgands.org.uk
You can also find our Facebook page



Come to our Christmas Pot-Pourri

at All Saints Church Hall, Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green
on Friday 9 December at 7.45 pm



A miscellany of songs, poems, carols and anything else that people want to offer.
Contact Trevor Roberts (07565 700170) if you fancy doing something
Admission free, with retiring collection

Page sponsored by Sheila and Raymond Spencer

A Tudor intrigue : the background to the story

Tudor England was a world of violence, superstition and intrigue, and life was held cheap. An inconvenient person could be disposed of by direct means, such as a swift dagger stroke, or by more devious means. A word in the ear of a Court contact and a man could be charged with treason, heresy or sorcery, and condemned to death or hidden away out of existence.

Sir Clarence Poltwhistle, one of the Secretaries of State, has a reason for desiring the disappearance of his kinsman, Colonel Fairfax. The Colonel's estate devolves to him provided there is no widow to succeed to it. At present the Colonel remains unmarried, but Sir Clarence is taking no chances. A charge of sorcery has put Colonel Fairfax in the Tower of London under sentence of death, to be carried out this day.

The various inhabitants of the Tower view this with mixed feelings. Sir Richard Cholmondeley, Lieutenant of the Tower, is reluctant to see the sentence carried out, but dare not be seen to challenge an order from a Secretary of State. Sergeant Meryll of the Yeomen of the Guard has been a fellow soldier with the Colonel, who has twice saved his life. His daughter Phoebe has admired Fairfax from a distance as he took his exercise in the prison yard, and she is appalled at the bloodthirsty atmosphere of the Tower, whereas Dame Carruthers, the Tower's housekeeper, looks upon it all as part of a noble and ongoing tradition. The only person who seems to welcome the forthcoming execution is Wilfred Shadbolt, Head Jailer and Assistant Tormentor, a simple soul to whom such preparations are simply part of his job.



The Beauchamp Tower, Tower of London

We meet Colonel Fairfax as he is brought in under the Lieutenant's command to prepare for his execution. Once they are alone together, the Colonel explains his predicament and asks the Lieutenant to find him a woman that he can marry, if only for the remaining hour he has to live, thus thwarting Poltwhistle's designs on his inheritance. The Lieutenant agrees.

Three people now come into the story. First Leonard Meryll, the Sergeant's son, returns from brave deeds overseas to join the Yeomen of the Guard. Nobody has seen him save the Sergeant and Phoebe, and they concoct the idea of hiding Leonard away

*Sponsored by David Glover
Remembering Anne Boleyn 1536 and Catherine Howard 1542, RIP*

so that they can spirit Colonel Fairfax out of his cell and into Leonard's uniform and consequent safety.

Then Jack Point and Elsie Maynard, two strolling players, are chased on to Tower Green by a rough mob of townspeople. The Lieutenant clears the mob away and on questioning the pair finds out that Elsie is as yet unmarried (though Jack Point has hopes) and in desperate need of money. Could this be the bride for an hour that Fairfax had requested?

Let the story unfold ...

Every Evening at 7.30, the entirely New and Original Opera, entitled

MRS. JARRAMIE'S GENIE.

Words by FRANK DESPREE. Music by ALFRED & FRANCIS CELLIER.
(No. 1 & 2, by FRANCIS CELLIER; No. 3, 4 & 5, by ALFRED CELLIER.)

MORTALS.	
Mr. Harrington Jarramie (A Hatred Epistle) ...	Mr. GORDON.
Ernest Popporton ...	Mr. J. WILBRAHAM.
Stultore ...	Mr. CHARLES CHEMIST.
Bill ...	Mr. SMITH.
John ...	Mr. MEDCALFE.
Mrs. Harrington Jarramie ...	Miss M. CORNING.
Daphne ...	Miss L. HERVEY.
Nicola ...	Miss M. RUSSELL.
IMMORTAL.	
Non-Nol-Joon (The Slave of the Lamp) ...	Mr. JOHN WILKINSON.

Scenes—Morning Room, Mr. Jarramie's House, Harley St., London

Every Evening at 8.30, and every Saturday Afternoon at 2.30, The New and Original Opera, in Two Acts, entitled

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD:

Or, The Merryman and His Maid.

Written by W. S. GILBERT. Composed by ARTHUR SULLIVAN.
Produced under the personal direction of the Author and Composer.

Sir Richard Cholmondeley (Warrant of the Tower) ...	Mr. WAT LAGB BROWNLOW.
Colonel Fairfax ...	Mr. GOURTIER POUNDS.
Second Meryll ...	Mr. RICHARD TREMPER.
Leonard Meryll ...	Mr. W. R. SHIPLEY.
Jack Point ...	Mr. GEORGE CROSSMEN.
Wilfred Roundell (Headquarters Assistant Sergeant) ...	Mr. W. H. PERBY.
The Headman ...	Mr. RICHARDS.
First Yeoman ...	Mr. WILBRAHAM.
Second Yeoman ...	Mr. MEDCALFE.
First Citizen ...	Mr. HEDMONIA.
Second Citizen ...	Mr. BURY.
Miss Maynard ...	Mrs. GENERAL DINEULMAR.
Phoebe Meryll ...	Miss JESSIE BOND.
Dame Carruthers ...	Miss ROSINA BRANHAM.
Kate ...	Miss ROSE HERVEY.

Scenes—TOWER GREEN. Date—16th Century.

Musical Director, Mr. FRANCIS CELLIER. Stage Manager, Mr. W. H. KEYMOUR.
The scenery painted by Mr. Havers Graye under the supervision of Mr. HENRY JENNINGS.

HARDEN
STAR
GRENADES

114,
CANNON ST.,
LONDON, W.

From a Yeomen programme, 29 March 1889

Paul Sanders, whose love of music affected so many lives. Thank you for the music.
Page sponsored by Wendy Sanders

Musical numbers

Act One

- When maiden loves, she sits and sighs (*Phoebe*)
- Tower warders, under orders (*Chorus, with Second Yeoman*)
- When our gallant Norman foes (*Dame Carruthers, with Men's Chorus*)
- Alas! I waver to and fro (*Phoebe, Leonard Meryll, Sergeant Meryll*)
- Is life a boon? (*Fairfax*)
- Here's a man of jollity (*Chorus*)
- I have a song to sing, O! (*Point, Elsie, Chorus*)
- How say you, maiden, will you wed (*Lieutenant, Elsie, Point*)
- I've jibe and joke, and quip and crank (*Point*)
- 'Tis done! I am a bride! (*Elsie*)
- Were I thy bride (*Phoebe*)
- Finale to Act One: Oh, Sergeant Meryll, is it true? ... Forbear, my friends, and spare me this ovation ... Didst thou not, oh, Leonard Meryll ... Leonard, don't you know me? ... To thy fraternal care thy sister I commend ... The prisoner comes to meet his doom ... My Lord! My Lord! I know not how to tell the news I bear ... All frenzied, frenzied with despair they rave

Act Two

- Night has spread her pall once more (*Chorus, Dame Carruthers*)
- Oh! A private buffoon is a light-hearted loon (*Point*)
- Hereupon we're both agreed (*Point, Wilfred*)
- Free from his fetters grim (*Fairfax*)
- Strange adventure! (*Kate, Dame Carruthers, Fairfax, Sergeant Meryll*)
- Hark! What was that, sir? ... Now what can that have been? ... Who fired that shot? ... Like a ghost his vigil keeping (*Sergeant Meryll, Fairfax, Lieutenant, Wilfred, Point, Chorus*)
- A man who would woo a fair maid (*Fairfax, Elsie, Phoebe*)
- When a wooer goes a-wooing (*Elsie, Fairfax, Phoebe, Point*)
- Rapture, rapture! (*Dame Carruthers, Sergeant Meryll*)
- Finale to Act Two: Comes the pretty young bride ... 'Tis said that joy in full perfection ... Hold, pretty one! ... All thought of Leonard Meryll set aside ... Leonard, my loved one, come to me ... With happiness my soul is cloyed ... Oh thoughtless crew, ye know not what ye do! ... I have a song to sing, O!

This page sponsored by Stephanie and Stephen Roe

Production team

MUSICAL DIRECTOR and STAGE DIRECTOR Richard Buxton

ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTORS Philip Sutcliffe, Keira Watson

Members of the WEST YORKSHIRE ORCHESTRA, SQUARE CHAPEL ORCHESTRA and FRIENDS

STAGE MANAGER	Paul Matthews
SET AND COSTUMES	West Yorkshire Savoyards Appreciation Society
LIGHTING	Karl Eaton
ORCHESTRAL PARTS	James Newby Music
TICKET SALES	Stephanie Bolton
FRONT OF HOUSE	Kathryn Buxton, Andrew Stopford
PUBLICITY	Peter Sugden, Stephanie Bolton
FOYER DISPLAY	Stephanie Bolton
FOYER PHOTOGRAPHS	Stephanie Bolton
PROGRAMME	Richard Buxton



Peter Skelton (Wilfred) and Anna Trent (Phoebe)



John Ramsdin (Meryll) and Christine Roberts (Dame Carruthers)



Page sponsored by John and Barbara Thompson (Whangarei, NZ)
Sergeant Meryll (1991) and Musical Director and Flautist for many years

The characters in the story

Sir Richard Cholmondeley, <i>Lieutenant of the Tower</i>	Edward Thornton
Colonel Fairfax, <i>under sentence of death</i>	Steven Greenwood
Sergeant Meryll, <i>of the Yeomen of the Guard</i>	John Ramsdin
Leonard Meryll, <i>his son</i>	Leon Waksberg
Jack Point, <i>a strolling jester</i>	John Tattersall
Wilfred Shadbolt, <i>Head Jailer and Assistant Tormentor</i>	Peter Skelton

Elsie Maynard, <i>a strolling singer</i>	Rowena Thornton
Phoebe Meryll, <i>Sergeant Meryll's daughter</i>	Anna Trent
Dame Carruthers, <i>Housekeeper to the Tower</i>	Christine Roberts
Kate, <i>her niece</i>	Rachel Prosser

Yeomen of the Guard and townspeople

Stephanie Bolton	Eoin O'Shea
Patricia Brennan	Fintan O'Shea
Kathryn Buxton	David Prosser (1 st Yeoman)
Sue Bythell	Trevor Roberts
Carole Engel	Roly Robertshaw
Philip Haley	Peter Sugden
Deborah Hammond	Stuart Summerscales (2 nd Yeoman)
Helen Matthews	Léonie Thornton
Deirdre O'Shea	Tim Widdop



Steven Greenwood (Col, Fairfax)



Rowena Thornton (Elsie Maynard)



John Tattersall (Jack Point)

Loving memories of Audrey Greenwood, from Steven and Jean



Back row (L-R) Roly Robertshaw, Peter Sugden, David Prosser (1st Yeoman), Stuart Summerscales (2nd Yeoman); Front row (L-R) Fintan O'Shea, Philip Haley, Tim Widdop, Eoin O'Shea (absent : Trevor Roberts)



Back row (L-R) Stephanie Bolton, Rachel Prosser (Kate), Deborah Hammond, Kathryn Buxton, Carole Engel, Deirdre O'Shea; Seated (L-R) Léonie Thornton, Sue Bythell (absent : Patricia Brennan)

In memory of Frank Hogan
Page sponsored by Janet Cowley

A Gilbertian jester



Jack Point boasts to the Lieutenant that he can convulse him with quip and conundrum from dawn of day to set of sun and then well into the small hours. He has a predecessor in one of Gilbert's *Bab Ballads* :

In all the merry land that spreads from Humber to the Thames,
You couldn't find a jester who could rival Jester James;
His antic jokes were modelled on severely classic rules,
And all his quips passed muster at the strictest ladies' schools.

Sir Hugh de Barbican unwisely engages James on a seven-year contract, and all goes well for six months or so –

But, ah! There came a day when it was patent to Sir Hugh
That James had uttered nearly all the decent jests he knew.
He doled them out at intervals, and much impaired their strength,
By dwelling on their merits at unnecessary length.

His quips grew very feeble, and his puns fell flat and dead;
His riddles were so easy, you could do them on your head;
And though his imitations were by far the best of all,
Yet even imitations, all day long, are apt to pall.

Sir Hugh desperately attempts to cancel the contract, but James is adamant that it is his duty to quip for the whole seven years.

Sir Hugh gave in and tried another plan (for he was weak);
He spent his night inventing decent jokes for James to speak,
And each day at James's breakfast, with his rolls and Sally Lunn's,
Came a batch of blameless riddles and of inoffensive puns.

And every morn, from eight to ten, they'd sit beneath a tree,
Rehearsing conversations that would lead to repartee,
Or planning little incidents and complicated larks,
On which this dismal jester might extemporise remarks.

For instance, Hugh would bid him sit, his head between his feet,
To justify his saying "I am making both ends meet"
On which a shout of merriment would echo through the hall,
Which must have been good nature, for the joke was very small.

Hebden Bridge LOS, Farndale Avenue Mikado, July 2023

And sometimes James was told to climb a venerable oak,
That he might say "I'm up a tree" - an irritating joke.
But still his audience wore a pleasant smile upon their lips,
For they saw the Dawn of Reason in these gruesome little quips.

To find out how Sir Hugh finally dealt with this persistent wag, you should go to a volume of *Bab Ballads* (also available online via the *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive*).



Who were the Yeomen?

The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard are a bodyguard of the British Monarch. The oldest British military corps still in existence, it was created by Henry VII in 1485 at the Battle of Bosworth Field. Today they have a purely ceremonial role, accompanying the Sovereign at the annual Royal Maundy Service, investitures and summer Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace, and so on. However, their most famous duty is to 'ceremonially' search the cellars of the Palace of Westminster prior to the State Opening of Parliament, a tradition that dates back to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up Parliament. They are not, however, the Yeomen who appear in Gilbert and Sullivan's opera.



The Yeoman Warders of Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress the Tower of London, and Members of the Sovereign's Body Guard of the Yeoman Guard Extraordinary, popularly known as the Beefeaters, are ceremonial guardians of the Tower of London. In principle they are responsible for looking after any prisoners at the Tower and safeguarding the British crown jewels, but in practice they act as tour guides and are a tourist attraction in their own right.

The name Beefeater is of uncertain origin, with various proposed derivations. The most likely is considered to be the Warders' payment in rations that included beef, as well as mutton and veal, and various historical commentators have noted a preference for beef among the Warders and the Yeomen of the Guard. It is theoretically possible that these professions also enjoyed rich, hearty broths as well. Count Cosimo, grand duke of Tuscany, visited the Tower in 1669 and commented "A very large ration of

beef is given to them daily at court...that they might be called Beef-eaters". It has been suggested that beefeaters were privileged with a ration of beef from the King's table. (Conjectures that derive the name from the French "buffetier" [waiter] are, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, historically baseless)

Muscular elite troops would benefit more from a high-protein diet than other soldiers. Retiring as a Yeoman Warder and continuing to eat beef rations would have been seen as a generous reward in a society that may not otherwise have cared for their ageing population. Beefeater may once have been a nickname applied to all such elite troops, or it may have been a nickname applied to only those lucky enough to continue their meat ration in retirement.

Yeoman Warders began guarding the Tower in 1485; today there are 35 Yeomen Warders and one Chief Warder. All warders are retired from the Armed Forces of Commonwealth realms and must be former senior non-commissioned officers with at least 22 years of service. They must also hold the Long Service and Good Conduct medal. NCOs from the Army, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force are eligible to apply, but members of the Royal Navy are not, because while members of the other services take oaths to the Crown, members of the Navy take an oath to the Admiralty.

The Yeoman Warders and their families live in tied accommodation inside the fortress paying council taxes and a portion of their salaries for rent. They must own a home outside of the fortress to go to when they retire. The community of the Tower of London is made up of these Yeoman Warders and their families, the Resident Governor and officers, a chaplain and a doctor.

(Selected from Wikipedia)



Sir Richard Cholmondeley

The chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, the 'Parish Church' of the Tower of London is the resting place of numerous famous characters from British history. The oldest original tomb in the chapel is the monument to Sir Richard Cholmondeley, a former Lieutenant of the Tower of London, and his wife Elizabeth. The monument is constructed out of alabaster, with a limestone base and, based on the date of Sir Richard's death is dated to 1521-1522. Due to the Tower being unaffected by the Great Fire of London, it is one of the few surviving pre-seventeenth



*Congratulations on your enterprise and resilience during lockdown
Becky Gregson-Flynn and Dorothy Jones*

With best wishes, your friends at All Souls' Amateur Operatic Society

century church monuments in the City of London. The monument consists of effigies of Sir Richard and his wife Elizabeth, both lying down and facing east with their hands clasped in prayer. Sir Richard is portrayed in full-plate armour with his feet resting on a lion and his head on a helm.

Details of his life are vague, indeed contemporary documents (including his will) refer to his surname as 'Cholmeley' suggesting that the plaque on his tomb may have been misspelled. He was born around 1460 and as a young man appears to have been a member of Henry VII's Court. After receiving his knighthood in 1497 he gained several



Edward Thornton (Sir Richard Cholmondeley)

new appointments in the north of England. He relinquished most of these in 1503 and may well have moved south to a new appointment as Lieutenant of the Tower in 1504. Although no official date of appointment can be established, Cholmondeley was certainly in position by Henry VIII's coronation in 1509. In his role as Lieutenant of the Tower, Cholmondeley was responsible for organising the ordnance based in the Tower, helping to sending supplies and equipment to the English army in France as well as being personally responsible for any prisoners. He also ordered that the Tower's cannons be fired upon rioters in the City of London during the 'Evil May Day' of 1517.

The monument gained its local fame, however, when it was moved during the renovations of 1876. When opened, the tomb was found to be empty, with the exception of the original Tudor font, which has now been re-instated to the chapel. The traditional (but un-sourced) story follows that a priest placed the font in the tomb for safe-keeping during the Commonwealth, before he was executed by Parliamentary troops, ensuring it remained hidden for another 200 years. The font's presence ensures the fates of their remains are unknown; were they inside the monument when it was relocated to the chapel, only to be replaced by a font during the 1640s and now in some unmarked grave? Or were they never there in the first place? A fact known to a desperate priest who hid a font in a monument he knew to be empty, never to return to reclaim it.

(Church Monuments Society)

Fond memories of our late friend David Welch, 12 March 1963 to 27 September 2022
From Stuart and Phil

Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society is affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association



SERVING AMATEUR THEATRE SINCE 1899



Affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association

Founded in 1899, it is the main representative body for amateur theatre in the UK. It has a membership of some 2500 amateur/community theatre groups and 3000 individual enthusiasts throughout the UK, staging musicals, operas, plays, concerts and pantomimes in a wide variety of performing venues, ranging from the country's leading theatres to village halls.

NODA is divided into 11 National Regions, each headed by a Regional Councillor who sits on the Council, the ruling body of the Association. They are supported by a network of Regional Representatives and other volunteers, who are the vital links to the grass roots of the Association, the amateur theatre companies themselves. The Association is administered from its Headquarters in Peterborough, with knowledgeable and friendly staff able to deal

with virtually any enquiry relating to amateur theatre.

NODA aims

- to give a shared voice to the amateur theatre sector
- to help amateur societies and individuals to achieve the highest standards of best practice and performance
- to provide leadership and advice to enable the amateur theatre sector to tackle the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century

National Operatic and Drama Association,
15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 7UH;
Tel : 01733 865790; E-mail : info@noda.org.uk; Web site : www.noda.org.uk

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Advertisements from the programme, 29 March 1889

In memory of Derrick and Michael Stopford

Previous productions of Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society

1971	HMS Pinafore	2007	The Pirates of Penzance
1972	Iolanthe	2008	The Sorcerer
1973	The Sorcerer	2009	The Gondoliers
1974	The Pirates of Penzance	2010	The Yeomen of the Guard
1975	The Gondoliers	2011	HMS Pinafore
1976	Princess Ida	2012	Princess Ida
1977	The Mikado	2013	The Mikado
1978	Ruddigore	2014	The Pirates of Penzance
1979	The Yeomen of the Guard	2015	Ruddigore
1980	Patience	2016	Iolanthe
1981	Trial by Jury / HMS Pinafore	2017	Patience
1982	The Sorcerer	2018	Utopia Limited
1983	The Gondoliers	2019	The Sorcerer
1984	Iolanthe		
1985	The Mikado		
1986	Princess Ida		
1987	Cox and Box / Pirates of Penzance		
1988	Ruddigore		
1989	Utopia Limited		
1990	The Gondoliers		
1991	The Yeomen of the Guard		
1992	The Zoo / HMS Pinafore		
1993	The Sorcerer		
1994	Iolanthe		
1995	The Mikado		
1996	Patience		
1997	The Pirates of Penzance		
1998	The Gondoliers		
1999	Princess Ida		
2000	The Yeomen of the Guard		
2001	HMS Pinafore		
2002	Ruddigore		
2003	The Mikado		
2004	Iolanthe		
2005	The Grand Duke		
2006	The Zoo / Cox & Box / Trial by Jury		

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Wilf's tip for the day – First pants, then trousers