

## Le Grand Return

Written and directed by Alan Stockdill

Tuesday 17 to Saturday 21 November

Starts at 7.30pm. Saturday matinée at 2.30pm

It's 1994 and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day looms. Tommy, Alf and Edwin are incarcerated in Coldrick Nursing Home. In spite of his ever-worsening heart condition, D-Day veteran Tommy is determined to break out and rejoin his old comrades on the Normandy beaches. But how will they all get out - and what will happen along the way?

This gentle comedy is about love, remembrance, war and peace.



A Halifax Thespians production  
Box Office 01422 365998 and online

Coming soon locally :

Haworth West Lane A.O.S.

## The Pirates Of Penzance

Haworth West Lane  
Baptist Chapel

November 16 – 21 at 7.30 p.m.  
Saturday matinée at 2.15 p.m.

£10.00. Children £5.00.  
Concessions £8.00 on Monday  
and Saturday matinée

Bookings : 01535 643425

Meltham Parish Church  
G & S

## HMS Pinafore

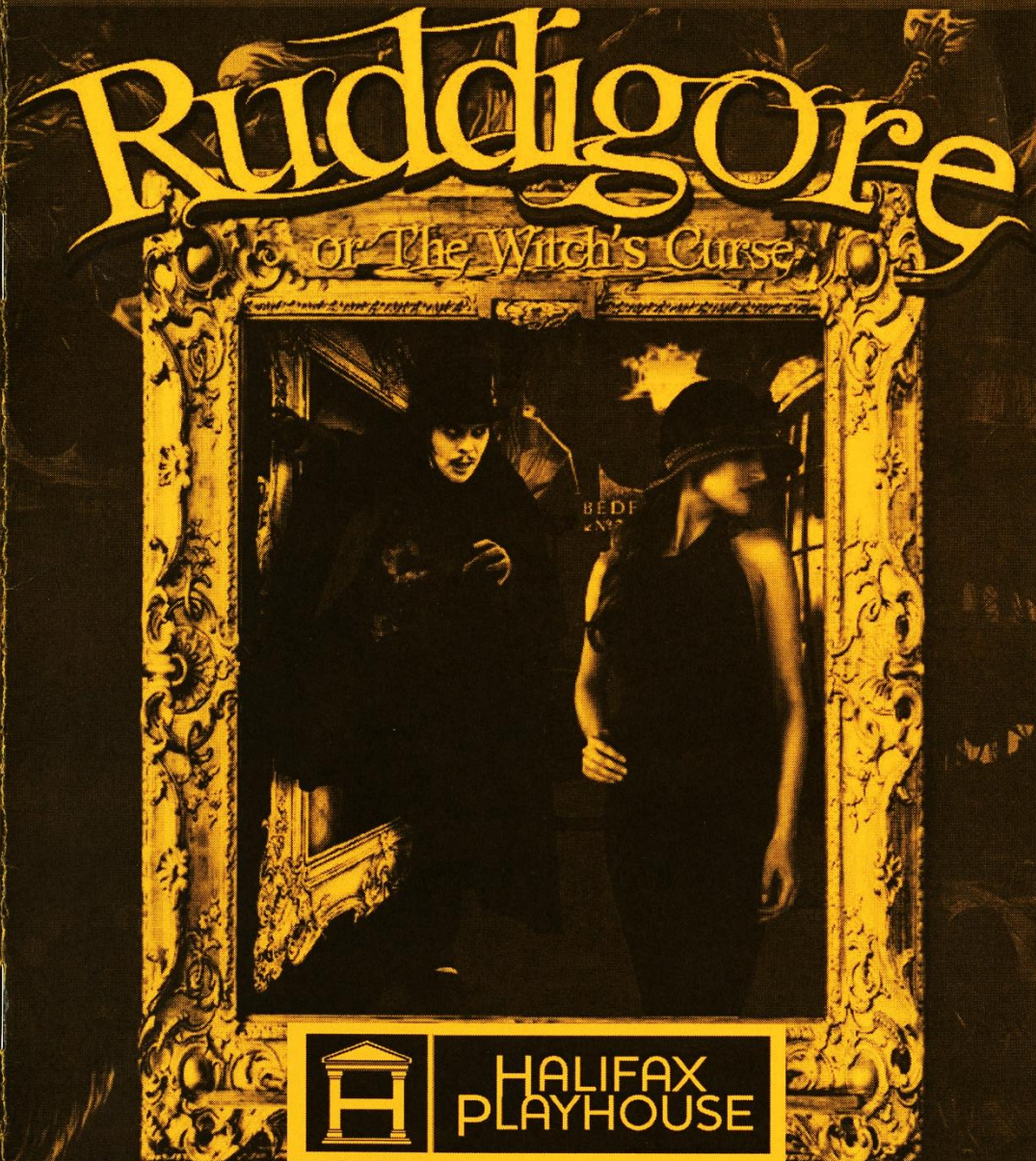
Church Hall  
Meltham

November 24 – 28 at 7.30 p.m.  
Saturday matinée at 2.15 p.m.

£9.00. Children £5.00.  
Concessions £7.00 on Tuesday,  
Wednesday and Saturday matinée

Bookings : 01484 850338

Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society presents



20 – 24 October 2015

Programme £1.00

## A note from the Chairman

*Ruddigore* was first performed at the Savoy Theatre on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1887 and ran for 288 performances. Whilst some critics regarded this as a failure (probably comparing it with the 672 performances of *The Mikado*), Gilbert himself said "I could do with a few more such failures" and the operetta went on to receive general acclaim from its audiences. It was in this production that the great Henry Lytton made his principal debut as Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd (as understudy to George Grossmith) whence he never looked back.

We welcome Philip Sutcliffe to direct his first show with us. He has performed sterling work with the Society in the past as both our pianist and our assistant Musical Director. We have enjoyed rehearsing with him and trust that this will show in our performance on stage this week. Richard Buxton has stepped out of the Director's chair, but remains on the Conductor's rostrum.

We also welcome two new members of the chorus. Eoin O'Shea is making his debut with us, while Patricia Brennan is returning after a long time away from the Society, if not from the stage, where she has performed regularly with a number of companies. We hope they will be encouraged to stay with us.

Of course all this work would count for nothing were it not for you, who come to support us and make all the effort worthwhile. If you are a regular supporter, you have our grateful thanks. If this is your first sight of the Society, may it be the first of many, and please consider strengthening this support by becoming a member or patron, coming to hear our concerts and club nights, or even coming along to sing with us or to help behind the scenes.

I wish you all a very pleasant evening.

Kelvyn Waites



## The Story so far ....

Rederring is a small seaside town, distinguished according to the Michelin Guide by two notable institutions. The first is the endowed corps of professional bridesmaids, founded many years ago by a pious charity and bound to be on duty every day from ten till four against the chance of a passing wedding, shotgun or otherwise. The second is the curse on the Baronets of Ruddigore, whose ancestral home, Ruddigore Castle, lies close by.

The curse, originally pronounced on the misdeeds of the first Baronet, Sir Rupert Murgatroyd, condemns the incumbent titleholder to commit at least one crime a day, or else to perish in excruciating agony. On hand to check that this duty is being carried out are the portraits of all his predecessors, who show an inclination to step down from their frames now and again whenever they feel that the present Baronet is showing too much benevolence.

Twenty years ago, Ruthven Murgatroyd was heir to the Baronetcy, with the prospect of inheriting upon the death of his uncle Roderic. To avoid this he fled his family home and disguised himself as a gentleman farmer, Robin Oakapple, leaving his younger brother Despard to take on the accursed title. By one of those twists of fate common to the gentleman farming business he has ended up in Rederring, not a mile away from the Castle he was trying to avoid. Only two people know his secret. One is Old Adam Goodheart, a faithful retainer of the family, and the other is Dick Dauntless, Robin's foster-brother, who has spent most of his life sailing the seas on questionable exploits with the Royal Navy.

As the opera opens the professional bridesmaids are frustrated by a lack of business. The only eligible maiden in town is Rose Maybud, who demands impossibly high standards of any suitor. Her choice would perhaps be Robin, but his shyness stops him from making the first move. At this point Dick Dauntless sails into town to muddy the waters. Also lurking in the background is Mad Margaret, a fallen socialite who had once been wooed and then abandoned by Sir Despard as one of his enforced crimes. The bridesmaids, desperate for some appearance money, encourage marriage proposals at every opportunity.

Stay with us to see whether Ruthven can keep up his deceit, Rose her moral standards, Despard his evil lifestyle and Dick his accent. And will the bridesmaids get their payday?



## The characters in the story

SIR RUTHVEN MURGATROYD (disguised as Robin Oakapple, a Young Farmer)	Peter Skelton	
RICHARD DAUNTLESS (his Foster-Brother, a Man-o'-war's man)	Leon Waksberg	
SIR DESPARD MURGATROYD, OF RUDDIGORE (a Wicked Baronet)	Martin Whitaker	
OLD ADAM GOODHEART (Robin's Faithful Servant)	Trevor Roberts	
ROSE MAYBUD (A Village Maiden)	Louise Jacques	
MAD MARGARET	Anna Trent	
DAME HANNAH (Rose's Aunt)	Penny McGoverin	
SIR RODERIC MURGATROYD (The Twenty-first Baronet)	Steven Greenwood	
PROFESSIONAL BRIDESMAIDS Deirdre O'Shea (ZORAH), Christine Roberts (RUTH)		
TOWNSPEOPLE, BRIDESMAIDS, ANCESTORS		
Stephanie Bolton	Ryan Jacques	Andrew Stopford
Patricia Brennan	Eoin O'Shea	Sally Stopford
Kathryn Buxton	Fintan O'Shea	Peter Sugden
Harold Galley	David Prosser	Kelvyn Waites
Jean Greenwood	Rachel Prosser	Tim Widdop
Deborah Hammond		

Coffee Morning at Southgate Methodist Church

Saturday 7 November, from 10.00 to 12.00.

Coffee and cakes - Christmas craft stall - Books and music

And of course a bit of singing!

Do come along and support the Society

## Musical numbers

### Act One

- Fair is Rose as bright May day (*Bridesmaids, Zorah*)
- Sir Rupert Murgatroyd (*Hannah, Bridesmaids*)
- If somebody there chanced to be (*Rose*)
- I know a youth (*Robin, Rose*)
- From the briny sea ... I shipp'd, d'ye see (*Bridesmaids, Richard*)
- My boy, you may take it from me (*Robin, Richard*)
- The battle's roar is over (*Richard, Rose*)
- If well his suit has sped (*Bridesmaids*)
- In sailing o'er life's ocean wide (*Rose, Richard, Robin*)
- Cheerily carols the lark ... To a garden full of posies (*Margaret*)
- Welcome, Gentry (*Chorus*)
- Oh why am I moody and sad? (*Despard*)
- You understand? I think I do (*Richard, Despard*)
- Finale to Act One : Hail the bride of seventeen summers ... When the buds are blossoming (madrigal) ... Hold, bride and bridegroom ... When I'm a bad Bart I will tell tarradiddles ... Within this breast there beats a heart ... Oh, happy the lily when kissed by the bee



### Act Two

- I once was as meek as a new-born lamb (*Ruthven, Adam*)
- Happily coupled are we (*Richard, Rose, Bridesmaids*)
- In bygone days I had thy love (*Rose, Robin, Bridesmaids, Richard*)
- Painted emblems of a race (*Chorus of Ancestors, Roderic, Ruthven*)
- When the night wind howls (*Roderic, Ancestors*)
- He yields! He yields! (*Ancestors, Robin*)
- Away, remorse! ... Henceforth all the crimes that I find in *The Times* (*Robin*)
- I once was a very abandoned person (*Despard, Margaret*)
- My eyes are fully open to my awful situation (*Robin, Despard, Margaret*)
- There grew a little flower (*Hannah, Roderic*)
- Finale to Act Two : When a man has been a naughty Baronet ... For happy the lily, the lily when kissed by the bee

## Production team

STAGE DIRECTOR Philip Sutcliffe

MUSICAL DIRECTOR Richard Buxton

ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR Philip Sutcliffe

REHEARSAL PIANISTS Philip Sutcliffe, Richard Quarmby, Nicholas Whitaker,  
Martin Whitaker, Colin Fine, Roland Mander, Colin Akers

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

STAGE MANAGER	Paul Matthews
SET PROVIDED BY	West Yorkshire Savoyards Appreciation Society
LIGHTING DESIGNED BY	Karl Eaton
COSTUMES	The Boyz Theatre Costumes, Bacup
PROPERTIES	Deborah Hammond, Christine Noble-Doyle
ORCHESTRAL PARTS	James Newby Music
TICKET SALES	Stephanie Bolton
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER	Colin Fine
PUBLICITY	Peter Sugden
FOYER DISPLAY	Kathryn Buxton
PROGRAMME	Richard Buxton

### HALIFAX GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

PRESIDENT : Andrew Stopford                      SECRETARY : Kathryn Buxton  
CHAIRMAN : Kelvyn Waites                         TREASURER : Richard Buxton  
VICE-CHAIRMAN : Stephanie Bolton

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Deborah Hammond, Christine Noble-Doyle, Fintan O'Shea, Marie Sugden, Peter Sugden,  
Martin Whitaker

Many thanks to



**Charnock Bates** ▼  
Chartered Surveyors & Auctioneers

for providing space for our advertising banners

## 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).

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!

We will be singing at Bankfield Museum, Boothtown Road, Halifax, on the afternoon of Saturday 5 December.



Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society present their

### Christmas Pot-pourri

at All Saints Church Hall, Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green  
on Friday 11 December at 7.45 pm

Free admission with retiring collection. Bring along your party piece!

Ring 01484 301291 for information

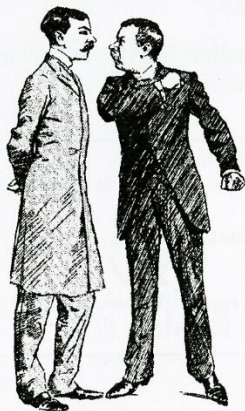
## Some notes on melodrama

Extracts from *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, by Michael R Booth (Cambridge, 1991)

Because the Licensing Act of 1737 forbade stage speech at theatres not holding a licence to perform the “legitimate” drama, the early minor theatres playing melodrama resorted to a combination of musical accompaniment and dumbshow to convey plot and meaning.

Melodrama contains every possible ingredient of popular appeal : strong emotion, both pathetic and potentially tragic, low comedy, romantic colouring, remarkable events in an exciting and suspenseful plot, physical sensations, sharply delineated stock characters, domestic sentiment, domestic settings and domestic life, love, joy, suffering, morality, the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice.

The content of the Gothic melodrama included awful tyrants dwelling in gloomy castle fastnesses, robber bands lurking in forests and caves, heroes unjustly languishing in dark dungeons, fearful heroines fleeing villainy, humble cottagers, loyal comic servants, frightful spectres, much thunder and lightning, desperate combats and the triumph of virtue.



During the 1820s a different sort of melodrama, the nautical, began to share the stage with the Gothic. Nautical drama had its roots in patriotic entertainments about Britain’s naval victories in the war with France that were staged in the water tank on the stage of Sadler’s Wells in the first two decades of the century, but before that the heroic sailor was a feature of London South Bank dramas [*Dick Dauntless is a not-so-heroic parody of this character type*]

By 1837 all the necessary and familiar elements of melodrama were in place, including the basic character stereotypes of hero, heroine, villain, comic man, comic



woman, good old man and good old woman. ... What followed during the reign of Victoria was a movement in the direction of greater social and domestic realism, a toning down of the rhetoric and ornateness of dialogue and a less extravagant treatment of character. West End melodrama virtually ceased to have a social conscience as it became more middle-class; the social status of its characters and settings also rose to reflect the increasingly middle-class character of its audiences.



## The author’s dilemma

Looking back on his life in later years, Gilbert regarded *Ruddigore* with special affection. He even thought it one of his best libretti .... He felt he had succeeded in his main object, to burlesque melodrama – in other words, to burlesque a burlesque, which is always a risky thing to attempt. The opera certainly contains a few of Gilbert’s most dramatic effects, and some delicious lyrics and happy tunes. But the troubles with writing and staging it had betrayed a lack of unity behind the scenes, *Ruddigore*, in fact, had shown that with ten operas to their credit the partners were now at the cross-roads. Gilbert had blunt opinions about “what the public wants”. He put them on record in an interview with the *New York Tribune* in 1885 :

The dramatic author is in the position of a caterer, who has to supply one dish of which all members of every class of society are invited to partake. If he supplies nothing but *crème de volaille*, he may please the epicure in the stalls, but he will surely irritate the costermonger in the gallery. If he supplies nothing but baked sheep’s heads, the costermonger will be delighted, but the epicure will be disgusted. Probably, the dish that will be acceptable to the largest number of every class is rump steak and oyster sauce, which is, after all, a capital thing in its way, and may be taken as a type of the class of piece which is most likely to succeed. It does not call for a very high order of merit on the part of the chef, but it requires a good deal of practical skill nevertheless.

Sullivan was hankering to show how well he could cook *crème de volaille*, yet his own mode of life held him back. Joseph Bennett [librettist of the oratorio *The Golden Legend*] wrote “I saw him [Sullivan] immersed in West End life, which is never healthy for an artist ... in these pursuits wasting time which was precious not only to himself but to the nation”.

From *The Gilbert and Sullivan Book*, by Leslie Baily (London, 1956)

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

*noda*

SERVING AMATEUR THEATRE SINCE 1899

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.



Affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association

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.

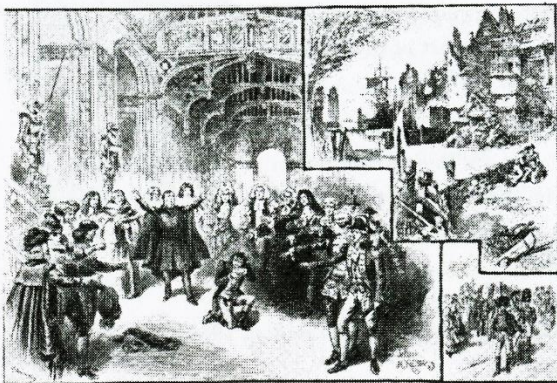
NODA aims

- 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 21<sup>st</sup> century

National Operatic and Drama Association,

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 7UH;

Tel : 01733 865790; E-mail : [info@noda.org.uk](mailto:info@noda.org.uk); Web site : [www.noda.org.uk](http://www.noda.org.uk)



Pictures from the original production of *Ruddigore* (from *The Gilbert and Sullivan Book*, by Leslie Baily)

## We are the very model of a modern Community Radio Station

Phoenix FM serves Calderdale 24 hours a day with guest interviews and local information, and a mix of music from Pop to Progressive; Brass Band to Blues. We are a not-for profit organisation funded by grants, donations and a little advertising. Behind the scenes, our one hundred volunteers and three paid workers offer training and support to a great variety of local people with all kinds of needs, giving everyone a chance to be involved in what we produce.

Maybe you might like to join us! If so, call 01422 365923.

We do a lot of work around local history: our Toffee Town project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, continues to collect recordings of Mackintosh's workers to help put Halifax on the map – if you can help, please get in touch.

To find out more please tune in on 96.7FM or have a look at [www.phoenixfm.co.uk](http://www.phoenixfm.co.uk), where you can also listen live, or to a selection of past programmes.

**phoenix** RADIO  
**96.7 FM**



Previous productions of Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society

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