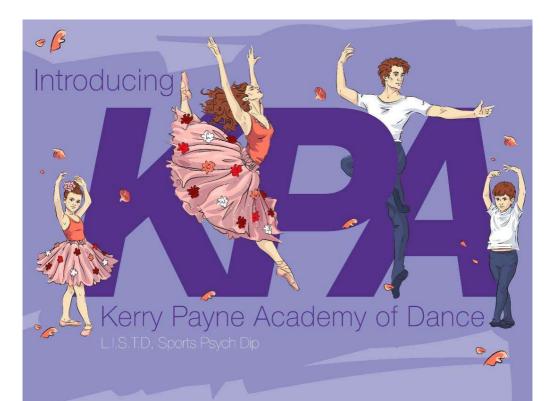


A Night at the Opera! GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S Improbable New Musical LESS MISERABLE!



24th - 26th November 2021

Written by Susan Ellerby, using Songs and Music from the works of W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan This amateur production is presented by special arrangement with Susan Ellerby



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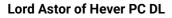
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Honourary Patron







The Chairman's Welcome

Andrew Claringbull

Welcome to the New Aquarian Opera Company, relaunched and rebranded after a hiatus of 10 years. We aim to follow faithfully in the footsteps of previous Aquarian Opera productions and continue the legacy of so many fine opera productions at the beautiful Barn Theatre.

I have been friends for many years with our Creative Director Melanie Vinall and I was thrilled when she expressed enthusiasm to relaunch Aquarian. To have a very experienced international opera soloist and director on board is fantastic. We are so pleased that, despite Covid related delays, we now have our first show.

We had planned to relaunch last year with Franz Lehar's, "The Merry Widow", which would have been a spectacular opera, but staging such a big production just after Covid has just not been possible. Against all the odds, and in very short time, we have put together a completely new production with the assistance of the brilliant Guy Middlemiss as Musical Director.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the help that we received in taking over the reins of the company from the previous management team, and in particular, we have inherited a very fine collection of costumes. Now to put them to good use.

Sit back and enjoy a "Night at the Opera" and the English premier of the hilarious new Gilbert and Sullivan based operetta, "Less Miserable". It really is less miserable!

Covid Precautions

It is the recommended policy of The Barn Theatre, that audience members wear a mask to prevent the spread of Covid in the theatre. Hand sanitiser is available in the foyer and bar area and masks are available at the box office and sweet counter. Where possible, please keep a respectful distance to others and enjoy a safe show.

SPECIAL NOTICE

By order of Surrey County Council, no obstructions, whether permitted or temporary, shall be allowed in any Exit Doors, Exit Ways (whether corridors or staircases), external passageways, gangways, foyers, lobbies or entrance hall. Persons seeking admission shall not be allowed to form queues which obstruct exit doors etc.

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE THEATRE

It Gradually Got So...

Aquarian Opera and Less Miserable

Melanie Vinall – Artistic Director



Back in the Spring of 2014, at the Pirates of Penzance after-show party (my first production at The Barn Theatre), several people remarked how it would be lovely to have a resident opera company at The Barn again. This led to later discussions about the possibility of bringing Aquarian Opera out of slumber, to add to its glorious past. Life got in the way, the idea got shelved, but as often (as in frequently, not orphan - as in a person who's lost its parents) happens with good ideas, it got mooted again. In 2018, my husband James approached the Trustees, who kindly agreed to pass on the reins to Andrew, James and me and The New Aquarian Opera Company phoenixed into flight.

In late 2019, I heard about a production written for Coily Dart Theatre that had been a huge success at the Edinburgh Fringe and managed to obtain a copy of the script, which I thought was hilarious. The writer, Susan Ellerby noted that she would welcome further performances. I thought it could be a wonderful fit for us, I just didn't know when we'd be able to do it.

We excitedly held our launch party at The Barn Theatre in December 2019, and proceeded with our pre-audition, cast read-through for The Merry Widow on 13th March 2020. The pandemic came, the World locked down, putting all delightful things on hold and The Merry Widow scores were tucked away in the music room for a better day.

Earlier this year we thought about putting on a concert, but rehearsing was too problematic, so we decided to wait until the end of the year. We didn't want to launch with a full-scale production and then I remembered the show from the Edinburgh Fringe. I contacted Susan Ellerby, asking to stage Gilbert and Sullivan's Improbable New Musical Less Miserable! she said yes, and the rest, as they say, is history!

I was delighted when Guy Middlemiss and Kerry Payne, my wonderful Musical Director and Choreographer from Pirates, agreed to come on board again, so I got my old address book out and begged and beseeched many old friends and colleagues to take part. Rehearsing in these times has been interesting to say the least, but here we are, the first performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's Improbable New Musical Less Miserable! since Edinburgh 2019. We decided to team it with some opera favourites, including one piece that may not be as familiar to many, but is a favourite of mine (it doesn't say in the title whose favourites they are!) and a selection from The Merry Widow, which we will be performing next year. We strive to burnish Aquarian Opera's legacy and really hope you enjoy the show!

Barn Theatre 100 Front Extension Project

Fundraising has now commenced in earnest for our Barn 100

1924 - 2024

project and we are waiting to hear from the builders when they can start works on Phase One, hopefully later this year. 28,000 appeal brochures have been circulated around this and surrounding areas during the recent months and the results are already

optimistic.

If you have not received a brochure and would like to donate please go to www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk which takes you to the page where you will find the PayPal button.

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OUT

Production Team



Melanie Vinall – Artistic Director

Melanie trained as an operatic soprano and has performed In Italy, the USA and Germany. Closer to home, Melanie has sung with London City Opera, Leitmotif Opera, Opera Piccola and Abbey Opera. She has appeared in cabaret, was the guest soloist with the Croydon Male Voice Choir and has

given Opera, Lieder, French, Russian Song and Musical Theatre recitals. Her operatic stage roles includes Violetta (La Traviata), Micaela (Carmen), the Dew Fairy (Hansel and Gretel), Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni) (Contessa) The Marriage of Figaro and Cio-Cio-San (Madame Butterfly). Melanie provided the voice for commercials including the Opera Singer in Vodaphone's "It ain't over 'til the fat lady sings" campaign.

Melanie directed Offenbach's La Belle Helene for Guildford Opera and Beauty and the Beast panto for Westerham Amateur Dramatics. For Oxted Operatic, she directed The Pirates of Penzance (with Guy Middlemiss and Kerry Payne), The Wizard of Oz and Curtain Up! at The Barn Theatre. Oxted based Melanie is now Artistic Director of The New Aquarian Opera Company and future plans include a Spring Concert and The Merry Widow in October 2022.



Guy Middlemiss – Musical Director

Guy has been on the musical theatre scene for the last 30 years. Gilbert and Sullivan was one of his first engagements, with the Imperial College Operatic Society (London). He has subsequently been repetiteur, orchestral keyboard player and musical director for a number of companies in the London area, including SEDOS, BROS Theatre Company,

Questors Theatre, Wallington Operatic & Dramatic Society, Younger Generation Theatre Group, Oxted Musical Theatre Company (with Melanie Vinall and Kerry Payne, The Pirates of Penzance, 2014), Hashtag Opera, Harrow Opera, Brent Opera, Creative Minds Academy, Camberley Musical Society and Lost for Words Theatre Company. He has also transcribed the orchestral score of Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro for 2 pianos and in lockdown had enough time to do the same with Wagner's Das Rheingold. He is delighted to be working with Melanie and Kerry again and to be part of Aquarian Opera's revival launch. He hopes you enjoy the show.



Kerry Payne L.I.S.T.D/ Sports Pysch Dip Choreographer

Having trained at the Alexandra Barnes School of Dancing in Hurst Green for 10 years, Kerry went on to study at the famous performing arts college, Laine Theatre Arts in Epsom. Kerry proceeded to a long and successful career as a professional dancer, performing all over the world, including Italy, Mexico and Japan. Kerry appeared on television and

cruise ships as lead dancer, Adagio dancer and dance captain as well choreographing fashion shows, hair shows, dance troupes and magic shows. Kerry now teaches at theatre schools, colleges and runs her own Kerry Payne Academy of Dance and Kerry's Youth Ballet Company. Kerry has choreographed at The Barn Theatre many times, including Pirates of Penzance, My Fair Lady, The King and I, Curtain Up and three pantos, Mother Goose, Once Upon A Time and Puss In Boots. Kerry is delighted to be reunited with Melanie and Guy bringing Aquarian Opera back to The Barn



Caro Rowley – Lighting Design and Lighting Engineer

Caro has been lighting shows at the Barn Theatre since 1981 and has been instrumental in bringing the latest advances in technology for the benefit of audiences and performers. Caro is a Barn Theatre Trustee and takes a leading role in the management of the theatre. Aquarian Opera are extremely

grateful for Caro's ingenuity, advice and support on so many levels, as she makes it all look so easy.



Alison Grogan – Stage Manager

Alison has worked with Aquarian Opera on many occasions Is delighted to be working with them once more on their latest venture. A regular at the Barn Theatre for many years, Alison was last seen on stage in Sweeney Todd both at Oxted School and the Minack Theatre with The Barnstormers in 2018. However, Alison is now more often

than not found either backstage helping husband Richard with lighting or working front of house behind the bar

A Night at the Opera!

La Traviata - Giuseppe Verdi The Brindisi – Libiamo ne' lieti calici

Janette Cattell, Vicki Hodges, Mike Mackenzie, Randy Nichol & Chorus

The Magic Flute – W. A Mozart

Pa...pa - Duet Papagena - Emma Davey Papageno - Matt Stainer

Beatrice & Benedict - Hector Berlioz

Je vais d'un Coeur aimant - Trio

Hero - Vicki HodgesBeatrice - Yvonne ColdronUrsule - Charlotte Collier

Carmen - Georges Bizet

The Card TrioMusical Introduction - Guy MiddlemissCarmen - Charlotte CollierMercedes - Yvonne ColdronFrasquita - Emma Davey

Rigoletto - Giuseppe Verdi Bella figlia dell'amore - Quartet Gilda - Janette Cattell Maddalena - Charlotte Collier Duke - Randy Nichol Rigoletto - Matt Stainer

La bohème – Giacomo Puccini O soave fanciulla – Duet Mimi - Vicki Hodges Rodolfo - Mike Mackenzie

Tales of Hoffmann - Jacques Offenbach

The Barcarole

Giulietta - Emma Davey Nicklausse - Yvonne Coldron

The Merry Widow – Franz Lehár

I am a respectable wife

Valencienne - Vicki Hodges Camille – Randy Nichol

You'll find me at Maxim's

Danilo - Mike Mackenzie

Vilja

Hanna - Janette Cattell

Women, Women

7eta - Matt Stainer Danilo - Mike Mackenzie & Men's Chorus

The Grisettes song

Valencienne - Vicki Hodges

La Grisettes - Hannah Alladina Georgia Huggins Ruby Taylor

Flena Vinall

The Merry Widow Waltz

Hanna - Janette Cattell Danilo - Mike Mackenzie

Women, Women – reprise

Danilo - Mike Mackenzie & Chorus

There will now be a 20-minute interval between Acts 1 & 2

GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S Improbable New Musical LESS MISERABLE!

In heaven, Gilbert is bragging to Sullivan, that, as fathers of the modern musical, all recent shows are merely variations on their plots. Sullivan challenges Gilbert to tell the story of the world's longest running musical using only their own songs. Gilbert agrees, but only if no one dies and he can have an implausibly happy ending, hence Less Miserable.

Cast in order of appearance

Richard Peachey Andrew Claringbull Matt Stainer Randy Nichol **Yvonne Coldron Charlotte Collier** Jenny Roe Melinda Cherrett Janette Cattell John Tolley Sidney Dolbear Jenny Roe Vicki Hodges Emma Davey Julius Wills James Saunders Mike Mackenzie

W.S. Gilbert Arthur Sullivan and Rebel 2 Jasper John Well Wells The Bishop of Sodor and Man Women 1, Pirate King (Roderic) Woman 2 Woman 3 Aline Customer 1 Duke, Rebel 3 Duchess Constance Josephine Scynthius Rebel 1 King Paramount the First

The cast will sing in the chorus when not in a scene as a named role

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Now to the banquet we press Company 1 When I first put this uniform on Jasper & Chorus 2 3 Free from his fetters grim John Well Wells See how the fates their gifts allot 4 **Bishop & Chorus** My gallant crew good morning John Well Wells 5 & Chorus I cannot tell what this love may be Aline & Chorus 6 7 I stole the Prince Woman 1 & Chorus Oh false one, you have deceived me 8 John Well Wells & Aline 9 There was a time Aline & John Well Wells 10 Alas! I waver to and fro' Aline, John Well Wells & Jasper 11 Here's a man of jollity Chorus 12 The sun whose rays Constance Rebels 1, 2, 3 & Chorus 13 A British Tar is a soaring soul 14 Oh. better far to live and die Pirate King & Chorus 15 P'raps if you address the lady Rebel 1 & Chorus 16 Sorry her lot Josephine 17 My eyes are full open Scynthius, Constance & John Well Wells Scynthius & John Well Wells 18 Hark what was that Sir Josephine & Scynthius 19 Ah leave me not to pine 20 The Soldiers of our Queen Company 21 Away with them King Paramount, Josephine & Chorus Pirate King, King Paramount 22 Replying we sing & Chorus Pirate King, King Paramount 23 For ev'ry one who feels inclined & Chorus 24 I once was a very abandoned person Duke & Duchess 25 I hear the soft note Company 26 Dance a Cachucha Company

This amateur production is presented by special arrangement with Susan Ellerby

Cast



Janette Cattell

Janette is delighted to be taking part in this production as she adores Gilbert and Sullivan and Les Miserables (although she didn't enjoy sewing 50 gold buttons onto Enjolras' waistcoat for her son's school production). She has sung the soprano leads and several mezzo roles in all 13 of the Savoy operas and is equally at home with the

operettas of Strauss, Lehár and Offenbach, as well as lyric and coloratura operatic roles, including the Queen of the Night and Olympia. She recently fulfilled a long-held ambition to perform Mozart's Laudate Dominum (in Derby Cathedral). When not singing Janette practises as a city lawyer and hopes that one day she will succeed.



Melinda Cherrett

Melinda studied singing privately and did a foundation course at Birkbeck College. She has sung with Surrey Opera, Kentish Opera and she's performed locally for her own enjoyment. She's not performed for some time as she has been busy running Showtime Theatre Schools in Kent and Surrey.



Andrew Claringbull

Andrew is delighted to back performing with The New Aquarian Opera Company after a break in the company's productions of 11 years. He thanks fellow trustee and Artistic Director, Melanie for her determination in putting this production together and successfully relaunching the company. He has enjoyed performing at The Barn Theatre for

the past 15 years in numerous musicals, pantomimes and plays. Previously with Aquarian he has performed in Carmen and Die Fledermaus and is really looking forward to once again singing opera.

Yvonne Coldron



Yvonne has been singing in musical theatre production since she was in Bart's Hospital Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Since then she has performed with Hornsey Operatic and Dramatic Society, South Anglia Savoy players, Riverside Opera, Epsom Light Opera society and

Merton Abbey Opera. Yvonne currently performs with Utopians Unlimited where she takes the old lady parts – now that she is one! G & S parts played recently include Ruth (Pirates), Katisha (Mikado), Lady Sangazure (Sorcerer), Dame Hannah (Ruddigore), Lady Angela (Patience), Phoebe (Yeomen). She is looking forward to being a performer in the New Aquarian Opera and is delighted that opera and G&S are being performed together.



Tel : 01 883 330095 or email enquiries@allenbycoachhire.co.uk

www.allenbycoachhire.co.uk

Cast



Charlotte Collier

After seeing The Mikado aged 3, a path to the stage was set out for Charlotte. Enjoying all things G&S including singing with Carl Rosa, Grimesdyke Opera, Grosvenor Light Opera and New London Opera Group she has performed all the G&S contralto roles several times. Charlotte is delighted to join New Aquarian Opera for this Opera Gala and performance of Less Miserable.



Emma Davey

Emma trained in Musical Theatre at Mountview and has had a varied career on stage, TV and film, including news reading, presenting. Onstage roles include Anna in The King & I, Ado Annie in Oklahoma, Johanna in Sweeney Todd, Jenny Lind in Barnum and Mabel in The Pirates of Penzance.

Emma is delighted to join Aquarian Opera for their exciting return to The Barn.



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Sid Dolbear

Sid has been doing amateur theatricals for about twenty five years, involving a mixture of Shakespeare, 'Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Twelfth Night', musicals, about fifty Gilbert & Sullivan operettas and twenty Pantomimes, twenty 'Songs from the Shows'. The highlight being when he was in 'A Christmas Journey' when he appeared before a group of fifteen seven-year-

old 'shepherds' to announce the arrival of the baby Jesus and a little voice piped up from the back 'Wow! the angel Gabriel '.



Vicki Hodges

Vicki studied at Morley Opera School, the Conservatorio Arrigo Boito di Parma and Newcastle University, where she graduated with first class honours. She has performed in the wings of the Royal Opera House for the Mariinsky Ballet, at the Royal Albert Hall under the baton of Gustavo Dudamel and as a soloist for The Armed Man (Jenkins) at the Sage Gateshead. Recent

engagements include Madeleine (Surrey Opera), Mercedes in Carmen (New London Opera Group) and the title role in Euridice and Filia in Jephte (Ensemble OrQuesta). Vicki also runs wellbeing choirs in London and Sutton.



Mike McKenzie

Mike is happy to be back treading the boards and even happier to be back singing opera, operetta and G&S. Mike is a versatile chap, singing everything from Country and Western through to full opera, whilst filling in spare time directing, costume making, lighting design, stage managing and recently added choreography to the list (did he really say spare time?).

Mike said, "it's been great fun working this cast, delivering new life into the G&S classics and hopes you all enjoy a welcome return to live theatre".

Cast



Randy Nichol

Originally from Canada, Randy trained at The Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of Spiro Malas. In the UK, Randy has sung with many of the local societies and opera groups performing both opera and oratorio. Currently, he is performing with Southgate Opera, Porcupine Opera and Utopians Unlimited. Randy has performed roles from Puccini, Verdi, Mozart, Bizet and Offenbach repertoire. Gilbert and

Sullivan lead roles from HSM Pinafore, Pirates of Penzance Cox and Box and The Zoo are among his favourites. His most memorable performance was that of Nadir, performing The Pearl fishers on the stage of the Minack Theatre. Along with the current production, Randy has sung both the Magic Flute (Tamino) and La Bohème (Rodolpho) with Aquarian Opera.



Richard Peachey

This is Richard's first appearance with Aquarian Opera Company and also his first show back on the Barn stage since playing Mr. Bennett in Pride & Prejudice in May 2019. His introduction to the wonders of G&S has come late in life, but this funny piece has sparked his interest in our famous duo. Favourite roles have included Manuel in Fawlty Towers, Rene Artois in Allo Allo, Otto Frank in The Diary of Anne Frank, Dr.

Einstein in Arsenic & Old Lace and Ali Hakim in Oklahoma.



Jenny Roe

This is Jenny's first performance with Aquarian Opera. She has taken part in many shows and concerts, including being the title role in Iolanthe at The Barn Theatre just recently. She regularly performs with The Oxted Players, Oxted Musical Theatre Company, local choral societies and is currently

working towards a singing diploma. She has enjoyed the rehearsals for Less Miserable and hopes you love the show!



James Saunders

James has performed previously at the Barn Theatre with both Aquarian Opera and Oxted Operatic, in productions ranging from My Fair Lady to 42nd Street, as well as singing the Bullfrog's song "Warts and All" to great acclaim at The Barn Theatre 90th Anniversary show. G&S is a favourite, with appearances in Yeomen of the Guard, The Gondoliers and Pirates of Penzance and most recently as the sentry in Iolanthe

FOBS – Friends Of The Barn Theatre

We need you

For 40 years the Friends Of The Barn Theatre (FOBS) have played a dual role of fundraising to maintain and improve the theatre and providing volunteers to staff all the Front Of House roles to make every performance possible.



The Barn 100 Project is the latest fundraising effort the extend the front of the theatre to double the number of the toilets and improve access and storage.

Contactless donations can be made at the bar or box office, or by PayPal on the *www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk* website or drop some change in the Red Buckets at the end of the show.

If you wish to become involved with The Barn Theatre as a FOBS volunteer or help behind the scenes, speak to the Front Of House staff or email *fobs.membership@barntheatreoxted.co.uk* or come along to the Barn Sunday Club between 12pm and 2pm on the first Sunday of every month and meet the team.

The FOBS volunteers are the living soul of The Barn and the busy calendar means we are always looking for new friends', whatever skills you may have,

A SMILE IS THE ONLY QUALIFICATION

Cast



Matt Stainer

Matt is delighted to be performing with the reformed Aquarian Opera after a long absence. He has had a long -time desire to play the role of Javert and jumped at playing his alter ego in the English Premiere of Less Miserable. Matt has sung many roles with Aquarian in both Savoy and Grand Opera. His role in the latter with the company was the elderly sleazy landlord in La Bohème. Although

conveying sleaze has never been a problem, he would now need rather less makeup to reflect that character's age. Indeed, judicious artifice is now needed to make him look a bit/lot younger



John Tolley

John was a member of the original Aquarian Opera company taking part in several of its shows including its final one Die Fledermaus in 2011. Before that he was a member of St Michael's Opera Group (SMOG), joining it before St Michael's school in Limpsfield closed (where his late wife was a teacher), and in its subsequent incarnation at the former hall in Merle Common. John was a chorus

member of Aquarian where he had the occasional small part. He also sings in several local and not so local choirs and takes part in other community activities.



Julius Wills

Julius is a London based performer, a graduate of the Fourth Monkey Training Company. Primarily working with his theatre company "Tell No Tales Theatre, Julius works in theatre festivals throughout the year. Most recently appearing in Surrey Opera's Madeleine, this is Julius's second Operatic experience.

Dancers



Hannah Alladina

Hannah has a love of dance and has taken part in many local productions at the Barn Theatre such as West Side Story, The Wizard of Oz and Curtain Up! as well as performing with Kentish Opera in Cavalleria Rusticana & Pagliacci.



Georgia Huggins

Georgia has been dancing since the age of 3 with Bastet School of Dancing, training in ballet, contemporary, modern, jazz and tap. Georgia also trains at Rambert School of ballet and contemporary in London, on their pre-vocational course and has had the opportunity to perform with them. Georgia is currently focused on her

A-levels at Reigate College and hopes to go to university next year.



Ruby Taylor

Ruby has been dancing with Bastet School of Dance since the age of 3. She attends The Performers College in Essex and was thrilled to dance with Young Performers in the West End. She has also performed at the Stag Theatre with Kentish Opera and has placed in dance competitions. Ruby hopes to pursue a career in dance

and entertainment in the future.



Elena Vinall

Elena has been dancing since the age of two and currently attends Starmakerz and The Kerry Payne Academy of Dance. Elena played the role of Young Fiona in the UK tour of Shrek the Musical and from a very young age has been a regular at the Barn Theatre. She has just spent two years training in Musical Theatre at The BRIT School and has recently started an intensive two-year Musical Theatre

Diploma at The Emil Dale Academy. She hopes you enjoy the show.

Aquarian Opera UK Charity No 1080942 Honourary Patron – Lord Astor of Hever PC DL Trustees Chairman - Andrew Claringbull Secretary – Melanie Vinall Treasurer – James Vinall Brook Cottage, Tanhouse Road, Oxted RH8 9PE melanie@aquarianopera.com 01 883 715126



Production Team

Director Musical Director Choreographer Stage Manager Lighting Engineer & Design Follow Spot Operators Digital Artwork Design Sound Engineer MD's Camera Set & Programme Costumes

Social Media Chaperones Melanie Vinall Guy Middlemiss Kerry Payne Alison Grogan Caro Rowley Muriel Lister & Philip Eaton Abi Chapman John Chinnock Mike Sutton James Vinall Melanie Vinall, Mike McKenzie, Janette Cattell and other members of the cast Matt Stainer Kate Reynolds, Susan Taylor & Victoria Huggins

Acknowledgements

Lucy Arterton and the former Aquarian Opera Trustees Ann Osborne, Michael Burbage, Philippa Lucas our rehearsal pianists Bruce Reed – Sage advice and continual support Muriel Lister – Help with props and the set St. Peters Limpsfield - The Musicians Church for rehearsal space

Keep in touch with Aquarian Opera

If you want to be kept in touch about future shows, email melanie@aquarianopera.com with your details or look on our website www.aquarianopera.com

Be in the next show

If you would like to sing with Aquarian Opera or help out behind the scenes, email melanie@aquarianopera.com with your details or give us a call on 01 883 715126

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