

Guys & Dolls 1996

BWT Review

SOCIETY'S SPARKLING SUCCESS

WITHAM Operatic Society marked their 75th anniversary with a sparkling success, presenting Guys and Dolls last week.

Lee Threadgold and Lavinia Farmer, the producer and his assistant, handled the large cast on a small stage with skill. Some of the movements, in particular the final scene in the meeting hall, were outstanding.

They had the advantage of producing a well written show but Michael Dunion's timing and acting created a memorable Nathan Detroit. He had, and needed, considerable stage presence to play opposite Pat McLeod.

The part of Adelaide could have been written for her and her larger than life personality exploded across the footlights. The variety of her moods were remarkable. Her eyes, on occasions, sparkled to the back of the auditorium, while in Adelaide's Lament she drew out all the humour.

The young dancers were a strong point in a show which calls for a lot of dancing. The many minor male parts were also played with enthusiasm.

Nicholas Clough was an "avuncular" grandfather and Paul Chittleborough was a rival to Stubby Kaye in his entertaining portrayal of Nicely Nicely Johnson.

Liz was a sympathetic Sarah Brown whose transformation in Cuba gave her the chance to show other aspects of her stage craft. Mick Hemstedt was her effective partner creating the slick personality as the sophisticated gambler.

It was a delight to hear all the words of the songs. Brian Brown, the musical director, created the right atmosphere with on occasions, the whole orchestra and on others provided helpful accompaniment to the soloists.

An outstanding show. - James Bright.

James Bright