

Calamity Jane

BWT

Wild West foot-tapper delighted audience Witham Operatic Society - Calamity Jane

THE programme of Witham Operatic Society's performance of Calamity Jane was a real pleasure to read while waiting for the curtain to rise. The show which followed gave delight to the packed audience at the Public Hall last week.

Set in the Wild West in the 1870s, there is a slight plot. It is used as an opportunity to sing well known foot-tapping songs and for the chorus to present colourful set pieces. Jill Parkin, the musical director, set a vibrant rhythm from the start. In the opening number Jacqui Foster, the director and choreographer, with her assistant Lyndsay Ward, showed the audience what pleasure lay in store.

The costumes were colourful and the movement of the cast always presented attractive and interesting shapes.

Kathryn Adkins played the title role as a vital, boastful gun-toting young woman. Her confident, pleasant voice added a great deal to the songs.

As Wild Bill Hickock, Stewart Adkins used his powerful, tuneful voice to emphasise his strong personality, showing more gentleness when singing 'My Secret Love'.

The flustered, blustering owner of the Golden Garter saloon in Deadwood City was well played by Richard Cowen.

Jonathan Baron played the part of 'a good-looking young officer'. He and Elizabeth Ladd were the second couple, providing a peaceful contrast to the leading pair.

Bonny Osborne made a brief appearance as the backwoodsmen's heart-throb and Tim Clarke was introduced to perform a song and dance act, He also closed the performance by arranging to wed the proprietor's niece, played by Helen Fox.

This show will long be remembered for the outstanding use of the chorus and the principals, especially at the final curtain call .

By James Bright.