

## Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of the WAOS Newsletter.

In this edition we look forward to our next show *White Christmas*, the call for new Committee Members, a spotlight on three of our new members and a look ahead to 2026

Plus the usual reminders on dates and WAOS committee details.

### Have you got your tickets for Anything Goes yet?

Rehearsals have gone well and this great cast, including seven new members, three with lead roles, are ready for an audience. If you've seen the show before you may notice a few changes to dialogue and the names of some of the smaller roles. Apart from that it's the same show you know and love. Great songs, romance and comedy with tap-dancing thrown in.

[Click here to buy tickets.](#)

### A Spotlight on Some New Members



#### Lucy Charlesworth

Lucy's most recent role was playing her dream role of Wednesday Addams in MADD'S production of *The Addams Family*. She trained at the PQA Academy for performing arts for 6 years and has appeared in many pantomimes and shows with Danbury Players since the age of 8. When not on the stage, she is usually running her Etsy business or going to a cat café!

### An Appeal for New Committee Members

We have three roles to fill on the WAOS committee

- one for Business Manager (to secure the rights to shows and negotiate fees with Director and Musical Director)
- one for Publicity/Marketing Manager (advertise shows using all the usual media outlets)
- Chairperson

but only two slots available on the committee, one to replace Emma Loring and one to replace Stewart Adkins (who is interim Chair awaiting a successor). This does mean that some reallocation of roles will be needed when we have the volunteers.

None of these roles are particularly complicated but they have to be filled and take some time to do properly. There are some tasks that can be done out of office hours and there are some that require some time during the business day to make contact with those who only respond during working hours. All committee members are by definition Trustees of the charity WAOS and this carries some responsibility. However, it is also fun to be part of the team that makes things happen and plays a part in the continuity of a 100 year old musical theatre society. If you have just a little time to attend meetings one night every 4-6 weeks and would like to learn more please talk to Stewart Adkins, [stewartadkins@waos.org](mailto:stewartadkins@waos.org), the interim Chairperson of WAOS, about how you could get involved. Without a Committee we have no Society!

Do you wish to nominate someone (with their permission) or even yourself as a committee member? Click on the link.

<https://forms.office.com/e/2VSN2GfPHj>

## A Spotlight on Some New Members(continued)



**Steve Taylor**

*Anything Goes* is my first ever jaunt into performing arts! Readers might recognise my daughter, Poppy, from many WOW productions including the recent hit rendition of *Les Misérables*, or my wife Rhoda, from the smash WAOS production of *Calendar Girls*. Seeing these two impressive performers gave me the encouragement to attend auditions this time round, and boy am I glad I did! I will be playing the part of The Captain, which my day job as a police officer has helped me shape. I have underestimated the amount of skill required to perform, and it's proving challenging to sing, dance and act at the same time, but it's a challenge I relish and one I hope I rise to.

## Graham Bowden

I've been performing for 40 years, starting after university in York with The Rowntree Youth Theatre and York Light Opera, where I played Frederic in *Pirates of Penzance*. After retraining in London, I moved to Colchester in 1998 as an Optometrist and joined Colchester Operatic Society, performing in *The King and I*, *Oliver*, *Sweeney Todd*, and more. Since 2006, I've worked with Platform Musicals at Headgate Theatre. I've also performed at Manningtree's Manifest Theatre and recently played Uncle Fester in *The Addams Family*. I remember fondly performing with your own Stewart Adkins in a production of *Trial by Jury* in 2010. Now, I'm thrilled to play Moonface Martin in *Anything Goes* for WAOS!



## The WAOScars – July 25<sup>th</sup>. What is this all about? Book now for the social event of the year!

This event has only happened twice before but was hugely popular on both occasions. It is our take on the OSCARS, a bit of a stretch you might think. Witham is a long way from Hollywood and our own society (including senior and junior groups) members not quite as well-known as the Grade A listers that usually attend the US version. But what we lack in fame and self-aggrandisement we make up for in enthusiasm and bonhomie. We dress up in best bib and tucker, have our photos taken on the red carpet, have a meal and drinks, then participate in a big screen, live voting session for our favourite WAOS and WOW shows over the last few years. There are numerous other categories for which we also vote and while Hollywood has its secret panel of voters, we have a democratic vote based on the people in the room. Bring your phones since you'll need them to load up the voting app. It's great fun, it's local and it only costs £15. Contact Nikki Mundell-Poole to book your places.





## White Christmas - I know the title song, who doesn't, but what's the show about?

**White Christmas** is a musical based on the 1954 film of the same name, featuring the songs of Irving Berlin. The story follows two World War II veterans, Bob Wallace and Phil Davis, who become a famous song-and-dance duo. They follow two talented sisters, Betty and Judy Haynes, to a Vermont inn owned by their former army general, who is struggling financially. The group decides to put on a Christmas show to save the inn, leading to romance, misunderstandings, and plenty of spectacular musical moments.

### Breakdown of Musical Elements

- **Ensemble/Chorus Numbers:** There are around **7–8** ensemble numbers, including large group scenes like "Happy Holiday/Let Yourself Go," "Snow," and "Blue Skies."
- **Dance Numbers:** The show features **several major dance numbers**, especially for Phil and Judy, including "The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing" and large tap numbers like "I Love a Piano."

### Principal Characters

- **Male Principals:** 3 (Bob Wallace, Phil Davis, General Waverly)
- **Female Principals:** 3 (Betty Haynes, Judy Haynes, Martha Watson)

Additional supporting roles include Susan Waverly (the general's granddaughter), Ralph Sheldrake (a producer), and various featured ensemble roles.

### Why Be in This Show?

- **Classic Irving Berlin Music:** The score is filled with timeless tunes like "White Christmas" and "Blue Skies."
- **Fun Dance Opportunities:** If you love tap or ballroom, this show has some fantastic choreography moments.
- **Heartwarming Story:** It's a feel-good show with romance, comedy, and a touching message about loyalty and generosity.
- **Big Ensemble Moments:** Whether you're in the chorus or a lead, there are great opportunities to shine.
- **Festive Atmosphere:** It's the perfect holiday show, making it a joyful experience for both cast and audience.

Here are the **Top 10 well-known songs** from *White Christmas* the musical:

1. "White Christmas" - The iconic title song, originally from *Holiday Inn* (1942), and one of the best-selling songs of all time.
2. "Blue Skies" - A big, upbeat ensemble number led by Bob, often featuring impressive dance choreography.
3. "Snow" - A fun quartet number sung by Bob, Phil, Betty, and Judy on the train to Vermont.
4. "The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing" - A romantic dance duet between Phil and Judy, showcasing elegant choreography.
5. "I Love a Piano" - A lively tap number, usually featuring Phil and Judy, celebrating their love of music and dance.
6. "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep" - A heartfelt ballad between Bob and Betty, encouraging gratitude and comfort.
7. "Happy Holiday/Let Yourself Go" - A high-energy opening number that sets the festive tone of the show.
8. "Sisters" - The Haynes sisters' signature duet, a playful and glamorous number. (Later humorously reprised by Bob and Phil in drag.)
9. "Love, You Didn't Do Right By Me" - Betty's emotional torch song, expressing her disappointment in love.
10. "How Deep Is the Ocean" - A beautiful romantic duet between Bob and Betty, adding to their love story.

### **The Great British Bake-off Musical**

*The Great British Bake-off Musical* is a heartwarming stage adaptation of the beloved British television baking competition. The musical unfolds over the course of a fictional season within the iconic Bake-Off tent, introducing audiences to eight amateur bakers, two judges, and two hosts. As the contestants engage in a series of baking challenges, the narrative delves into their personal stories, highlighting their individual journeys, challenges, and triumphs. The judges, Pam Lee and Phil Hollinghurst, along with hosts Kim and Jim, provide guidance, humour, and occasional critique, mirroring the dynamic familiar to fans of the television series. Through original songs and engaging performances, the musical captures the essence of camaraderie, competition, and the shared love of baking that has made the original show a cultural phenomenon.

Source: Wikipedia

### **The Sorcerer's Apprentice! Would you like to know the secret to being a Director?**

Nikki is looking to fill the *Assistant to the Director* role for *White Christmas* - to assist the Director through the entire production. This role includes:

- 1/ Taking notes at all setting rehearsals;
- 2/ Being responsible for keeping the attendance register and apologies updated;
- 3/ Taking production notes for the Director at show runs;
- 4/ Assisting with the liaison between production departments including wardrobe, make up, props, stage management, sound and lighting and generally being a support to the Director.
- 5/ You may be asked to take some rehearsals or work with performers on occasions.

Good communication and administrative skills are required. However, the role is perfect for someone with a strong interest in theatre and performance who wants to learn about the production side and how it all comes together. This could be a stepping stone to directing your own show one day.

Want to find out more with no obligation. Contact Stewart [stadkins58@gmail.com](mailto:stadkins58@gmail.com) who can put you in touch with Nikki.

## WAOS Committee

President	Stewart Adkins
Interim Chairman	Stewart Adkins
Treasurer	Mike Silvester
Secretary	Matt Waldie
Business Manager	Vacant
Production Manager	Michael Mundell-Poole
Social Secretary	Emma Loring <sup>a</sup>
Membership Secretary	Anita Goold
Stage Manager	Ben Sawyer
WOW Representative	Richard McNeill
Committee Members	Tracey Hackett

a. Stepping down at AGM

General Enquires – [secretary@WAOS.org](mailto:secretary@WAOS.org)  
WAOS Web site - [WWW.WAOS.ORG](http://WWW.WAOS.ORG)

## Dates for Your Diary

### Anything Goes

- Show week - April 7-12

### White Christmas

- Show week - Oct 27- Nov 1, 2025
- Open Evening – Tues, April 15, 7.30pm (SL)
- Pre-audition rehearsals – Wed, April 16 (WPH), Tues, 22 (SL) and Wed, 23 (WPH) all at 7.30pm
- Auditions -part of Wed, April 23 and Sun, April 27 10.00am (SL)

### WAOScars – July 25 19.30 WPH

### Jesus Christ Superstar

- Show week -April 20-25, 2026
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### Great British Bake-off Musical

- Show week – Oct 26-31, 2026