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**Batley**  
**Gilbert & Sullivan Society**

# Utopia Limited

*Or 'The Flowers of Progress'*

**Souvenir Programme**

**26th April - 1st May 2010**

**Dewsbury Little Theatre**

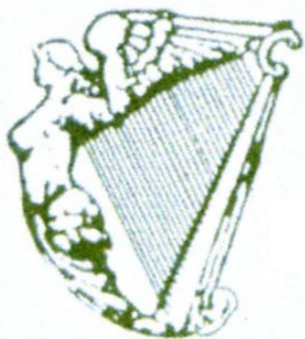
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Producer/Director  
Musical Director  
Accompanist  
Assistant Accompanists  
Scenic Designer  
Stage Manager  
Lighting  
Prompter  
Wardrobe Team  
Costumes  
Make up  
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Safety Officer

Graham Weston  
Colin Akers  
John Hall  
Philip Sutcliffe & Pamela Thorne  
Keith Horner  
Keith Horner  
John Trout  
Aileen Middleton  
Stephanie Roe, Debbie Stringer & Helen Fox  
Ian Stead and the Society's wardrobe  
Stephanie Roe, Debbie Stringer & Helen Fox  
Debbie Stringer  
Chris Sowerby  
Beryl Johnson  
Margaret Hanson  
Penny McGoverin  
Robert Thurman  
Penny McGoverin  
Lyndsey and David Hall  
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Our grateful thanks to the front of house staff and all those who have helped with this production.



The cast of our Diamond Jubilee production of 'The Pirates of Penzance'

*This page sponsored by Keith Horner with thanks to the scenery team*

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Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society

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# Utopia Limited



## A message from the President



Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Utopia.

Our production this year is dedicated to the memory of Alison Sowerby, who died very suddenly last year. A tribute appears later in our programme.

Utopia Limited was Gilbert & Sullivan's penultimate collaboration, being first performed in 1893. Although this ran for 245 performances, it was not revived professionally until 1975. It has been occasionally staged by amateur societies and we here at Batley performed the show in 1957. That being the case I can say that it is unlikely you will have visited the South Sea island of Utopia.

The score is enchanting and some of its themes are reminiscent of earlier shows, but there are many very different harmonies. It is said that this was Sullivan's most accomplished operetta. Utopia is the only show in which a character from an earlier operetta re-appears: I will leave you to spot who that is. Other G & S characters are also referred to.

The size of the cast is, perhaps, one of the reasons it has not been performed on a more regular basis. It has not been easy filling all the roles and I would like to thank those who have come to augment our membership to enable us to stage this rare production.

Without an audience, our efforts amount to nothing and I would like to thank you all for your support over the years. If this is your first time at Batley, you are very welcome.

So, sit back and enjoy your visit to the beautiful island of Utopia as King Paramount attempts to bring all that is English to the sunny south seas!

*Robert Thurman*

*This page kindly sponsored by the gentlemen of the Island of Utopia*



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## Alison Sowerby

1955-2009

Having begun piano lessons as a child, Alison became an Associate of the London College of Music, in turn passing on her enthusiasm and love of music to her many pupils.

She joined the Society as a teenager and first donned fairy wings in the 1972 production of *Iolanthe*. She was a proud member of the Society for almost forty years, holding the positions of President and Secretary. She organised our house staff with great efficiency, always making sure people were in place where they were needed most. More recently she assisted her husband, Chris, in the role of Booking Secretary. Over the years she played parts in many of the shows and sang in our concerts. A selection of her roles is shown below, but her favourite was that of Mad Margaret in *Ruddigore*. Alison was also the holder of a long service medal awarded by the National Operatic and Dramatic Society (NODA). Alison's sudden death at the age of 54 last December came as a shock to us all. She will be greatly missed by all those who knew her. We dedicate our performance to her memory.

Here is just a selection of the roles Alison took (left to right): Pitti Sing in *The Mikado*, Mrs Partlet in *The Sorcerer*, Mad Margaret in *Ruddigore*, Counsel for the Plaintiff in *Trial by Jury* and Gianetta in *The Gondoliers*.



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***Thanks also to:***

St John Ambulance, Millennium Players for scenery storage,  
St Andrew's Church and Carlinghow Theatre Company for rehearsal facilities.  
Orchestra rail kindly loaned by Batley Amateur Thespian Society

***The following have kindly sponsored costumes:***

Calyx - Ben Hashbaz, Hugh Lalica - Keith Horner, Phylla - Stephanie Roe,  
Scaphio - Stanley Accrington, Lady Sophy - Pamela Thorne.

**Would you like to join us?**

We rehearse every Wednesday at 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Hall, Purlwell, Batley.

For further details visit our illustrated website

[www.batleygands.org.uk](http://www.batleygands.org.uk)

Or contact our President: Robert Thurman

54 Cawley Lane, Heckmondwike WF16 0DA (Tel: 01924 503510)

**Officials of the Society**

*President:* Robert Thurman

*Vice Presidents:* Margaret Hanson & Sally Roberts

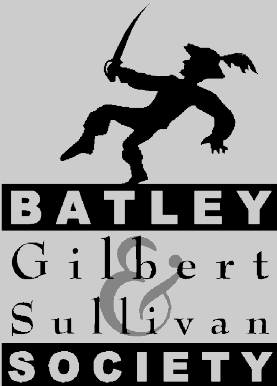
*Secretary:* Lyndsey Hall

*Treasurer:* Andrew Stopford

*Publicity Officer:* Penny McGoverin

**Executive Committee Members**

Fi Baker, Helen Fox, Keith Horner,  
Stephanie Roe, Pamela Thorne.



*This page kindly sponsored by Margaret Hanson*

**Invited Guests**

The Mayor of Kirklees and Consort - Councillor Julie Stewart-Turner  
Auditions Panel - Bruce Merlin, David Heathcote, Barbara Thornton and guests  
NODA Representative - Noel Rigg and guest  
Representatives from Leeds, Halifax, Harrogate and Wakefield  
Gilbert & Sullivan Societies, Batley Amateur Thespian Society  
Carlinghow Theatre Company, Dewsbury Collegians

**Honorary Life Members of the Society**

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Mrs I Richardson, Mrs S Roberts, Mrs S L Roe, Mr C J Sowerby,  
Mr C R Thurman, Mrs K Thurman, Mr I Townend

**A message from Opera North**

We're delighted to send our best wishes to the Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society for their new production of Utopia Ltd which we hope will be a great success.

*Richard Mantle*

General Director, Opera North

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*This page kindly sponsored by Graham Weston with thanks to Batley G & S Society*



## Utopia Limited - the story

For many years, the South Sea island of Utopia has been the home of a languid and lazy people, ruled by a benevolent King who is, in theory, an absolute monarch. His power, however, is held in check by two Wise Men, judges of the Utopian supreme court, who have only to denounce him for any lapse from political or social propriety to the Public Exploder in order to have the King exploded on the spot.

The present monarch, a great admirer of English culture, is deeply in love with the English governess he has hired to teach English ways to his two younger daughters. However, the governess (Lady Sophy) will have none of him, as the present Wise Men have forced him to write anonymous scurrilous (and untrue) articles about himself in a sort of tabloid newspaper; and Lady Sophy, having seen the articles, believes the King to be much beneath her in terms of respectability.

This is the state of affairs when the princess Zara, the King's eldest daughter, returns from college in England. Indignant at her father's degraded position, she comes up with a plan. She has brought with her six shining representatives of English culture (the Flowers of Progress) in order to completely reform Utopian institutions. One of them is a Company Promoter, and under his remarkable influence every Utopian citizen turns himself into a Company Limited (complete with Prospectus) and liable only for the amount of his declared capital, which does not include explosion!

Once they realize that this implies that the King is now immune to being exploded, the Wise Men and Public Exploder are understandably annoyed. They rouse the Utopian citizenry to revolt, on the grounds that the country is so healthy under the new sanitation that the doctors are starving, and the new laws have so extinguished crime and litigation that all the lawyers are out of work, etc.

Suddenly, however, Zara realizes she has left something out of her perfect emulation of English society: Government by Party! "No political measures will endure, because one Party will assuredly undo all that the other Party has done; and while grouse is to be shot, and foxes worried to death, the legislative action of the country will be at a standstill. Then there will be sickness in plenty, endless lawsuits, crowded jails, interminable confusion in the Army and Navy, and, in short, general and unexampled prosperity!"

The populace is well contented with this proposition, and the Wise Men are led off in defeat. And so they all married each other, and lived happily (well, prosperously anyway) ever after.



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### Tarara - Jeremy Shoemith

Jeremy seems to have been around forever - from choirboy to the lead singer of a pop band to the amateur stage. Jeremy made his debut as Fyedka in *Fiddler on the Roof* in 1986 for Spensborough Amateurs. He joined Batley G&S in 1993 playing the role of Ralph Rackstraw in *HMS Pinafore* before going on to play both Frederic and Samuel in different productions of *Pirates'* Leonard Meryll in *Yeomen of the Guard*, Hilarion in *Princess Ida* and Luiz in *The Gondoliers*.



### Calynx - Andrew Stopford

Andrew has previously appeared in Utopia Ltd with Halifax Gilbert & Sullivan Society in 1989, when he took the part of erm, Calynx. More comfortable in the back row of the chorus, and even more comfortable working backstage, Andrew is however glad to have another opportunity to appear in a show that he feels is sadly neglected and underrated.



### Phylla - Stephanie Roe

Stephanie is the longest serving member on the stage - but not the oldest! She started very young. She has now been in many of the shows several times and taken many more principal roles over the years, her favourites being Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*, Mad Margaret in *Ruddigore*, Yum-Yum and Katisha in *The Mikado* and Tessa and The Duchess in *The Gondoliers*. She is also a member of Carlinghow Theatre Company.



### Salata - Catherine Roberts

Catherine has been part of the Society for as long as she can remember, her mother Sally and both grandparents, Allan and Margaret Haigh having been members for many years. As a child she regularly came to see our shows. As soon as she was old enough she joined us on stage and has been in almost every production since 1998.



### Melene - Penny McGoverin

This is Penny's seventh show with the Society. She played Lady Angela in *Patience* and Inez in *The Gondoliers*. She also sings with Mirfield Choral Society and Halifax Gilbert & Sullivan Society for whom she has played the role of Baroness Von Krakenfeldt in *The Grand Duke*, the least performed of all the Savoy Operas, Counsel for the Plaintiff in *Trial By Jury* and The Duchess of Plaza Toro in *The Gondoliers*.



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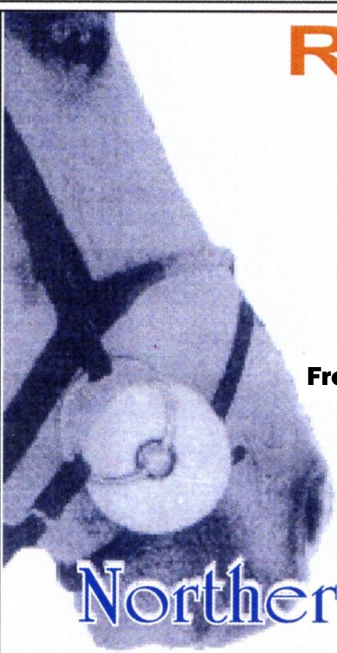
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### Mr Goldbury - Steven Greenwood

Steven is well known in the local amateur G & S circuit, having played all the leading tenor roles. He has also produced most of the Savoy operas and is not afraid to deviate from the traditional style. Away from G & S he has enjoyed a varied singing career ranging from Barbershop to Grand Opera, his formative vocal training having been provided by the late John Tetlow. His role in Utopia completes his G & S repertoire.



### Captain Corcoran KCB Alan Evans

Alan decided to take up singing as a hobby on retirement. He joined the society in 2006. This is his fourth G & S production. He is married to Audrey and they have four adult sons, six grandsons and one granddaughter. Other hobbies include writing poetry. In retirement he has spent time lecturing in Uganda. He is a United Reformed Minister.



### Lord Dramaleigh - Ian Townend

Ian has been a member of the society since 1985 and since then has never missed a show! He has played most of the G and S tenor leads and now as he is "maturing" enjoys cameo roles and the fun and frolics of the chorus! As well as enjoying G and S he is a keen choral singer in local church choirs and with the Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir who perform mainly in Wakefield. He is delighted to be taking part in this year's landmark production of Utopia Limited!



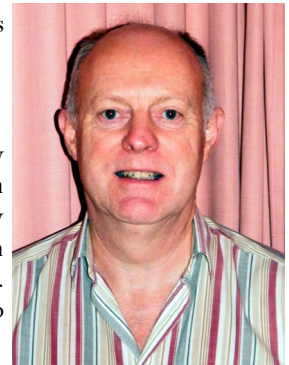
### Sir Bailey Barre - Trevor Roberts

Trevor has been a Gilbert & Sullivan addict and member of Halifax G & S Society for over 20 years and proudly boasts to have performed all 13 of the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas on stage. Previous roles include Dr Daly (his favourite) in *The Sorcerer*, Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe*, Scaphio in *Utopia Ltd*, Pish Tush in *The Mikado*, Counsel in *Trial by Jury*, and Thomas Brown in *The Zoo*.



### Mr Blushington - Tony Johnson

This is Tony's 25<sup>th</sup> year of amateur productions (he started very young!) and is his 51<sup>st</sup> show. He has mainly been involved in Gilbert & Sullivan with Batley & Wakefield G&S and Tingley Sylvians but has also appeared with D'Oyly Carte at the Buxton G&S Festival as well as performing in two other shows there. He has also performed in many shows with the Take Two Theatre Group.







### Princess Zara - Anna Trent

Anna graduated from the University of Huddersfield in 2006 after completing a BMus (hons) and an MA in performance. She has since been frequently invited to perform at various concerts and recitals up and down the country. Previous G & S work includes the title role in *Iolanthe*, Josephine in *HMS Pinafore* for Huddersfield G & S Society, Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance* for Meltham G & S and Casilda in *Gondoliers* for Brighouse Methodist Church. Anna is delighted to be taking the role of Princess Zara at Batley

### Nekaya - Lisa O'Shea

Following in the footsteps of her grandparents, who met through a G&S group in Cork, Ireland, Lisa moved to Leeds aged 3 making her debut with Heckmondwike players, aged 14, in *Oliver*. She joined Batley G&S in 2007 as a chorus member in *The Sorcerer* and last year took the role of Edith in *Pirates of Penzance*. She is currently studying at Leeds College of Music where she hopes to develop a career in classical singing together with the aid and support of Stephanie Roe as her vocal coach.



### Kalyba - Antonia McGoverin

Antonia is delighted to be returning to the stage after taking a break last year following the birth of her son. She has been singing and dancing from an early age and has performed in a number of musicals. She is enjoying learning the works of Gilbert & Sullivan and is pleased to be playing a 'confident' young lady once again, having previously taken the principal roles of Pitti-Sing, *Patience* and *Tessa*.



### Lady Sophy - Pamela Thorne

After the antics of Ruth in *Pirates* last year, Pamela is looking forward to a more sedate role as Lady Sophy in this year's performance of *Utopia Limited*. Other forays into the limelight have been as Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music* with Heckmondwike Players and performances for Mirfield Choral Society in *The May Queen* and as Little Buttercup in *HMS Pinafore* and again as The Fairy Queen.



## Our Production Team

### Producer/Director - Graham Weston

Graham's involvement in the theatre began at an early age and his love of Gilbert & Sullivan has led him to play patter parts in many theatres. He won 'Best Supporting Actor' at the International G & S Festival for his portrayal of 'Ko-Ko' in *The Mikado*. In 2006 he was invited to perform in the part of Robin Oakapple in a special production of *Ruddigore* at Buxton Opera House, which opened the 13th Gilbert & Sullivan festival. He has performed with or directed several local societies in the area, and has worked as Assistant Director to Alistair Donkin, former patter man for the original D'Oyly Carte Company. After performing the role of Bunthorne in a production of *Patience* in Ireland, future projects include *Half a Sixpence* and *White Horse Inn*. Graham is delighted to be back at Batley for his twelfth consecutive year.



### Musical Director - Colin Akers

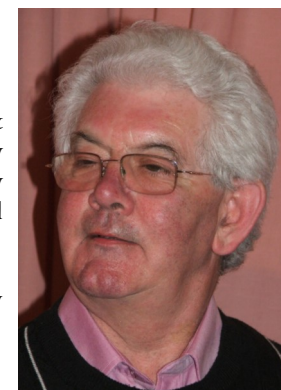
Colin started his musical life quite late at the age of eleven and at 16 went to Cheethams School of Music with joint first study instruments of piano and flute. From there he went to Huddersfield University and studied primarily music performance. He joined Halifax Gilbert & Sullivan Society in 1988, initially as accompanist, and was promoted to Musical Director in 2000 where his first Show was 'Yeomen of the Guard'. *Utopia* is Colin's fourth show at Batley, having directed us in *Patience*, *The Gondoliers* and *Pirates of Penzance*. As well as being an accompanist, he is also a member of an orchestra that supports several societies throughout West and North Yorkshire.



### Accompanist - John Hall

This is John's second show with Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society. Over the years he has accompanied Dewsbury Collegians, Batley Amateur Thespian Society and Dewsbury Concert Society. He is a member of Mirfield Choral Society and also sings with the Longcauseway Church Choir in Dewsbury.

John has become a valued member of our team and we enjoy working with him, Thanks for all your hard work!



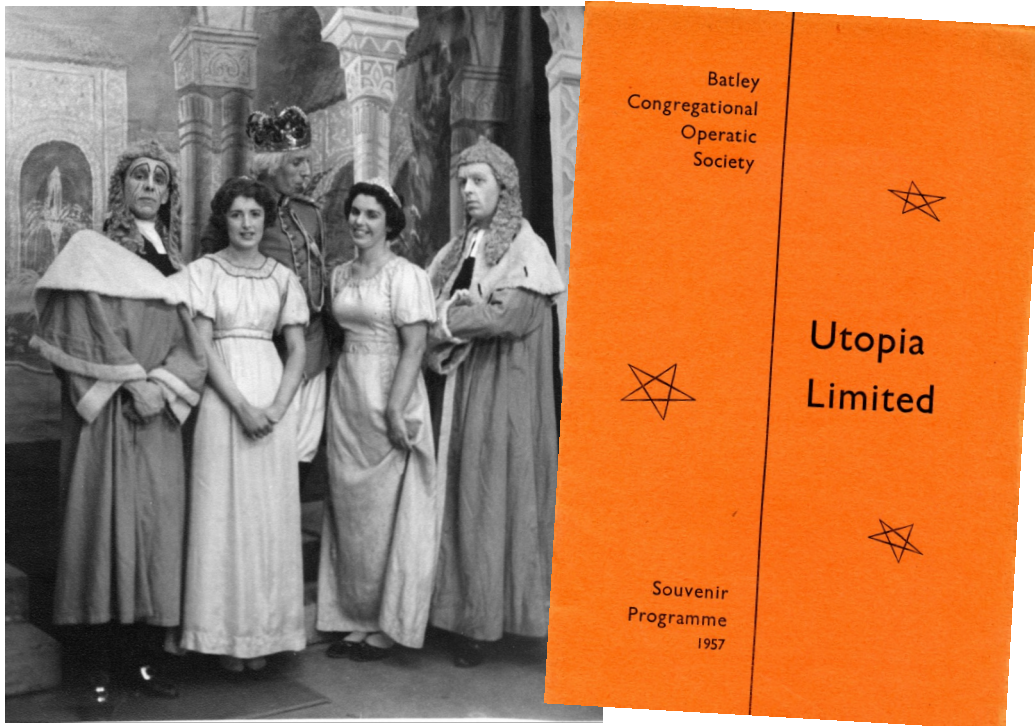
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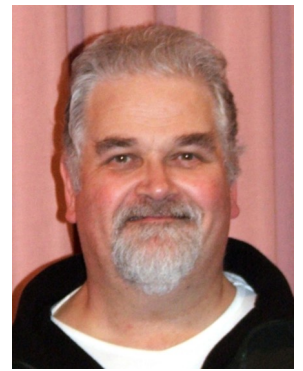
### From our archives

Pictures taken from the Society's previous performance of 'Utopia Limited'. The was held in the schoolroom at Hanover Street Congregational Church in Batley in February and March 1957. The role of King Paramount was taken by Clive Moul. Scaphio and Phantis were played by Geoffrey Greenwood and Charles Stuart Clubb. Joan Clubb and Barbara Newsome (later Moul) were the Princesses Nekaya and Kalyba.



## King Paramount the First Robert Thurman

By performing in 'Utopia', Robert has achieved the distinction of having played principal roles in all thirteen of Gilbert & Sullivan's operettas. He has also performed with Halifax and Meltham G&S Societies and Heckmondwike Players, taking the role of Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* and most recently, Colonel Pickering in *My Fair Lady*. In 2005 he won a NODA award for his performance as Pooh Bah in Halifax's production of *The Mikado* - his favourite role.



## Scaphio Malcolm Parkinson

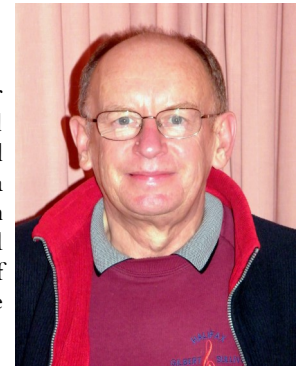
Malcolm made his first appearance on stage as one of the children in *The King and I* with Dewsbury Collegians.

Since then he has developed his reputation within local G & S circles as a patter man but is equally at home in straight acting roles, music hall and other musicals and appears regularly with Dewsbury Arts Group.



## Phantis - Richard Buxton

Richard began performing Gilbert and Sullivan with a number of middle-aged juvenile leads in Halifax and Huddersfield. He then graduated to playing late middle-aged juvenile leads before at last being allowed to act his age by a perceptive director. He relaxes after G & S by playing an assortment of psychopaths, megalomaniacs and dysfunctional husbands in Dewsbury Arts Group musicals. As Treasurer of Halifax G & S he is delighted, when in Batley, not to be desperately counting the audience every night.



## Captain Fitzbattleaxe - Jonathan Wilby

Jonathan studied music at the University of Huddersfield. He has performed roles in operas ranging from Mozart to Sondheim, touring the UK in *La Boheme*, *Tosca*, *Il Tovarore* and *La Traviata*. Recent musical theatre includes roles in *West Side Story*, *The Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *Fame*, *A Chorus Line*, *The King and I* and *Anything Goes*. G & S roles include Frederick in *Pirates of Penzance*, Alexis in *Sorcerer*, and Nanki-Poo in *The Hot Mikado*. On the concert platform Jon has performed Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Solemn Vespers*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Haydn's *Theresienmesse*. He also teaches singing and is musical director and director with various companies.





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Front Row: Kelvyn Waites, Andrew Stopford, AJ Jno-Baptiste



# Utopia Limited

Or

## *The Flowers of Progress*

### Dramatis Personae

**King Paramount the First** (*King of Utopia*)

**Scaphio**

**Phantis**

**Tarara** (*the Public Exploder*)

**Calynx** (*the Utopian Vice-Chamberlain*)

**Robert Thurman**

**Malcolm Parkinson**

**Richard Buxton**

**Jeremy Shoemith**

**Andrew Stopford**

### Imported Flowers of Progress

**Lord Dramaleigh** (*a British Lord Chamberlain*)

**Captain Fitzbattleaxe** (*First LifeGuards*)

**Captain Sir Edward Corcoran KCB** (*of the Royal Navy*)

**Mr Goldbury** (*a Company Promoter*)

(*afterwards Comptroller of the Utopian Household*)

**Sir Bailey Barre, QC, MP**

**Mr Blushington** (*of the County Council*)

**The Princess Zara** (*Eldest Daughter of King Paramount*)

**The Princess Nekaya**

**The Princess Kalyba**

**The Lady Sophy** (*their English Governess*)

**Salata**

**Melene** (*Utopian Maidens*)

**Phylla**

**Ian Townend**

**Jonathan Wilby**

**Alan Evans**

**Steven Greenwood**

**Trevor Roberts**

**Tony Johnson**

**Anna Trent**

**Lisa O'Shea**

**Antonia McGoverin**

**Pamela Thorne**

**Catherine Roberts**

**Penny McGoverin**

**Stephanie Roe**

### Chorus of Utopian Maidens

Fi Baker, Rita Jno-Baptiste, Jennifer Day, Margaret Hanson, Tracey Hook,

Deirdre O'Shea, Sally Roberts, Debbie Stringer, Kathryn Thurman

### Chorus of Utopian Natives and Life Guards

AJ Jno-Baptiste, Clive Daniel, Keith Horner, Paul Matthews,

Fintan O'Shea, Andrew Stopford, Peter Sugden, Kelvyn Waites.

## Musical Numbers

### Act One

#### INTRODUCTION (*instrumental*)

1. **CHORUS AND SOLO** (*Phylla*) In lazy languor motionless
2. **CHORUS** O make way for the Wise Men
- 2a. **DUET** (*Scaphio and Phantis*) *with Chorus* In every mental lore
3. **DUET AND DANCE** *Scaphio and Phantis* Let all your doubts take wing
4. **CHORUS WITH SOLOS** Quaff the nectar
- 4a. **SONG** (*King*) *with Chorus* A King of autocratic power we
- 4b. **DUET** (*Nekaya and Kalyba*) Although of native maids the cream
- 4c. **VALSE SONG** (*Lady Sophy*) *with Chorus* Bold-faced ranger
5. **SONG** (*King, with Scaphio and Phantis*) First you're born
6. **DUET** (*King and Lady Sophy*) Subjected to your heavenly gaze
7. **CHORUS WITH SOLOS** (*Zara, Fitz., and Troopers*) Oh, maiden rich in  
Girton Lore
8. **CHORUS WITH SOLOS** (*Zara and Fitz.*) Ah! gallant soldier brave and true
9. **QUARTET** (*Zara, Fitz., Scaphio, and Phantis*) It's understood, I think all round
10. **DUET** (*Zara and Fitz.*) Oh, admirable art
11. **FINALE** Although your Royal summons to appear
- 11a. **VALSE SONG** (*Zara*) *with Chorus* What these may be, Utopians all
- 11b. **SONG** (*Capt. Corcoran*) *with Chorus* I'm Captain Corcoran, K.C.B.
- 11c. **SONG** (*Mr. Goldbury*) *with Chorus* Some seven men form an Association

### Act Two

12. **RECIT. AND SONG** (*Fitz.*) Oh Zara and A tenor all singers above
13. **DUET** (*Zara and Fitz.*) Words of love too loudly spoken
14. **SONG** (*King, with Flowers of Progress*) Society has quite forsaken all her  
wicked courses
15. **ENTRANCE OF COURT** (*instrumental*)
16. **DRAWING ROOM MUSIC** (*instrumental*)
17. **RECIT. AND UNACCOMPANIED CHORUS** This ceremonial our wish  
displays and Eagle High  
With fury deep we burn
18. **DUET** (*Scaphio and Phantis*)
19. **TRIO** (*King, Scaphio, and Phantis*) If you think that when banded in unity
20. **TRIO** (*Scaphio, Phantis, and Tarara*) With wily brain upon the spot
21. **SONG** (*Mr. Goldbury*) A wonderful joy our eyes to bless
22. **QUARTET** (*Nek., Kal., Lord D., and Mr. Gold.*) Then I may sing and play
23. **RECIT. AND** Oh, would some demon power  
**SONG** (*Lady Sophy*) When but a maid of fifteen year
24. **RECIT.** (*King and Lady Sophy*) Ah, Lady Sophy, then you love me
- 24a. **DUET** (*King and Lady Sophy*) Oh, rapture unrestrained
- 24b. **TARANTELLA** (*instrumental*)
25. **CHORUS** Upon our sea-girt land
26. **FINALE** There's a little group of isles beyond the waves

*In loving memory of Allan Haigh, Captain Fitzbattleaxe in the  
1957 production of Utopia Limited*

*This page kindly sponsored by Marie and Peter Sugden*