



Ken Saunders & Malcolm. Set designed & painted by Liz.



Ken and Linda Myers, Stage Manager



Linda and Malcolm





Gavin Guilfoyle  
Alex Teligadas  
Mike West

John Hall  
Roger Clough

Campbell Thomson  
as The Grand Old Duke  
Rachel as Colen  
Julia Vinicombe  
as Melody



Geoff Stevens as Tommy Tucker



Linda, Neil Johnson as Peas, Jonathan Heasfield as Pye





Edith van der Heuvel  
dances to  
Hubert Welkensteyn's  
tambourine.  
←

Valerie Scott as  
Maleficent and  
Julia Vinicombe  
as Melody ↓







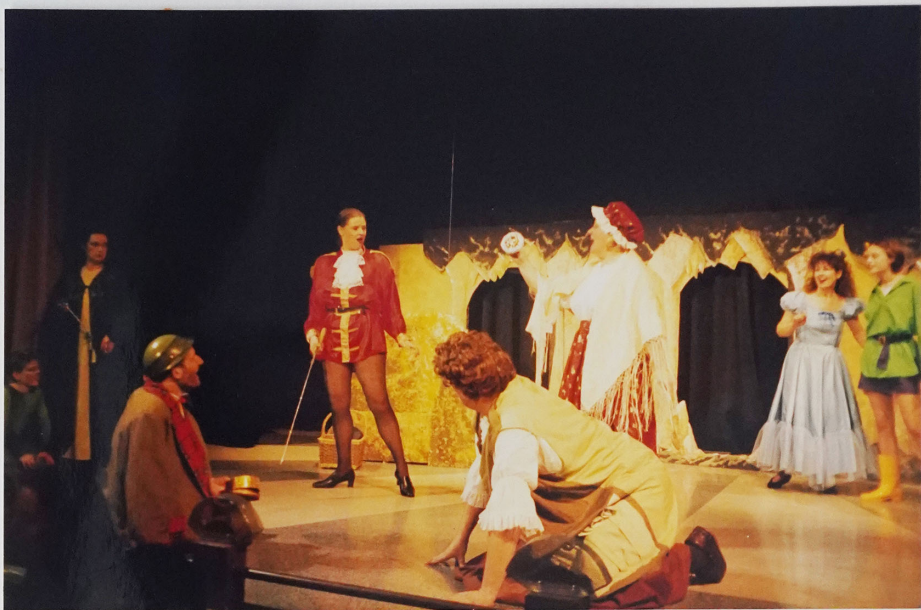
Barbara & Rachel

Monsters!

Erin Kahn  
 Natasha D'Ancona  
 Alex Scott-Perry  
 Alexander Atkins  
 Vincent McAviney  
 Kian D'Ancona







Ian Brooks & Geoff Stevens  
as Martha Muffet & Tommy



Steve Preston as Baron Snatcher

















# Festive tomfoolery guaranteed at Pirate Productions' panto



*They don't always look like that - oh yes they do! Ian Brookes and Steve Preston in rehearsal*

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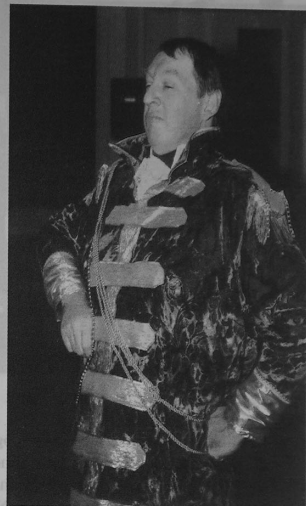
18



*'I'm a teapot!' - the strain of rehearsals for Pirate Productions' The Grand Old Duke Of York begins to tell as co-director Karim Hyatt tries to calm down Dame Ian Brookes.*

## It's Panto time

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Recently soap opera actors and sporting personalities are very much in vogue but one thing that seems to stay the same year after year are the corny jokes, the outrageous comic Dame character (played extremely ungracefully by a man) and loud enthusiastic audience participation. Please remember that the villains are there to be booed at - enjoy yourselves.

There are still tickets available for the Pirate Productions *The Grand Old Duke of York* which is being performed at the Chateau de Bettembourg on January 14 through to January 17 with performances at 8 p.m. and an additional matinee on the Saturday at 3 p.m. Tickets, priced 400 LuF for adults and 250 LuF for children, can be bought in advance by telephoning 35 63 39 between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday to Friday.

LUXEMBOURG NEWS

8 JANUARY, 199



L U X E M B O U R G

# NEWS

## Theatre

## Pantomime review

### A grand old day out

Along with my junior critic (now aged nearly 11) I have now seen three of the Pirates pantomimes, and we both agree that they get better and better. Said junior critic has good memories of boeing the Wicked Wizard (originally of Baghdad, later of no fixed abode owing to the Gulf War) in *Hickoway Dickoway Dock* and of giving the same actor the same treatment in his later incarnation as King Rat in *Dick Whittington*. Now taking a break from being booted, Karim Hyatt (for it is he) has taken on the role of director, together with Brian Parker, whose Piratical credentials were well and truly established as the shifty oriental pedlar in *Oklaboma*.

This year's show, *The Grand Old Duke of York* is not one of the classical English panto, but it contains all the right elements: nursery-rhyme characters, a thoroughly booable villain, a dame in drag, a funny man and a Bad Fairy who appears with a flash and a puff of smoke. It also has songs you can hum, ancient jokes and the time-honoured forms of audience participation.

This kind of show isn't meant to have a star, unless it can run to Someone-famous-off-the-telly. However, Steve Preston's Baron Snatcher (try saying Baroness Thatcher quickly and you will get the joke, especially if you are old enough to remember the School Milk Affair) stood out as the best of a very good bunch, from his manic Basil Fawlty impression in the opening scene to his Evil Would-Be Master of the Universe in the 2nd act. His partner in villainy, the Bad Fairy Maleficent (Valerie Scott) was equally audible, and splendidly detestable in a dress which she might have borrowed from the Queen of the Night or some galactic empress in a sci-fi blockbuster. Her two hissing pet monsters (Alexander Atkins and Alex Scott-Perry) added to her impact rather than upstaging her, as children are traditionally supposed to do.

The cowardly eponymous Grand Old Duke (Campbell Thomson), who unexpectedly turns out brave at the end, drag dame Martha Muffett (Ian Brooks) and funny man Tommy Tucker (Geoff Stevens) kept the laugh rate consistently high, ably abetted by the Baron's henchmen, Pye and Peas (Jonathan Hearfield and Neil Johnson) with a few excellent slapstick routines ('Tiptoe through the Tulips' and the pickpocket scene stick in the memory).

The romantic interest was supplied by Colin the Principal Boy (Rachel Parker) and

Miss Melody (Julia Vinicombe), whose voices blended beautifully in the songs, backed up by Good Fairy Mother Shipton (Barbara Thomson) who managed to make sense of the doggerel verse fairies have to speak in (I suppose it's a rule of their union). Two brightly clad junior principals, Jack and Jill (Doug Haley and

Heidi Connolly) helped keep a fairly intricate plot moving.

For the other highlights, I turn to the junior critic and his younger brothers (aged 8 and 4). Asked for their opinion, Philip (8) said his favourite bits were the spider scene (where Miss Muffet triumphantly whacks the beast with her mallet) and the references to RTL-TV and Teletubbies in the Baron's patter song. Sam (4) said he liked it when the Grand Old Duke got rid of the baddy and when Maleficent came out with a headache (the spider scene again). Their more experienced Pirate-watching brother said he liked the fight with the Guardian of the Cave and the scaredy soldiers with their knitting. Watching their reactions, they laughed loudest at the chase scene and the local jokes about road works. My personal favourite touch was Miss Muffett having to show her Outrageous Dress Licence and being told it had expired.

The chorus (as word-perfect in their songs as the principals in their lines) deserve special mention, particularly the juniors (Erin Kahn, Natasha D'Ancona, Kim D'Ancona and Vincent McAviney) who also featured largely in the excellently choreographed dance routines. The music

(provided by a small band) was subtly orchestrated and never overpowering, and the new songwriting team of R. Parker & A. Carlisle are clearly set to continue in the tradition of Gilbert & Sullivan and Rogers & Hammerstein. The costumes were magnificent, and Miss Muffett's selection of Outrageous Dresses never ceased to amaze.

One slight quibble: the show was too long for small children. We went to the matinee, and while I realise it would have been hard work cutting text out just for one performance, it would have been fairer to the actors if the young audience had not got quite so restless. Equally, it would also have been fairer to the rest of the audience if there hadn't been quite so many tinsies who were too young to appreciate it, but short of imposing a lower age limit it is hard to see how this could have been achieved (and I am as aware of the baby-sitting problem as anyone).

But this really is a quibble, because it was quite clear that this was the nearest thing to a professional panto production that Pirates has achieved so far, and all those involved have much to congratulate themselves on. Truly, a Grand Old Day Out was had by all.

Henry Wickens



Ria adjusts Rachel's costume



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„The Grand Old Duke of York“

TAGEBLATT

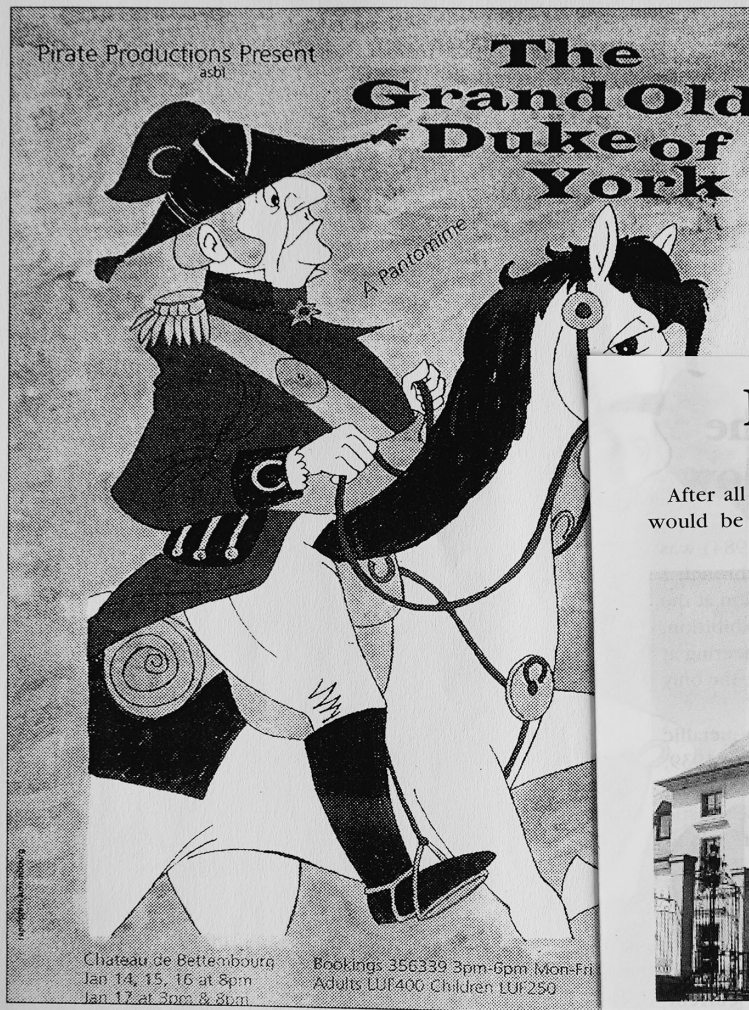
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# Britische Pantomime

**Bettemburg** - Pantomime in England, das heißt Theater nicht ganz ohne Worte. Das heißt auch volksnahes Musical, beruhend auf märchenhaften Erzählungen, das heißt Abenteuer und Romantik mit Witz und Humor, das heißt ganz einfach Unterhaltung pur.

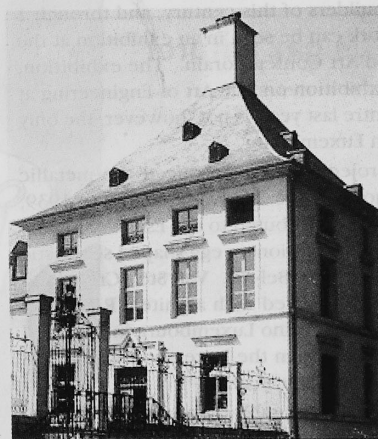
Die Gelegenheit, die typisch britische Pantomime mit all ihren Eigenarten kennenzulernen, bietet sich derzeit im Kultursaal des Bettemburger Schlosses, wo heute Donnerstag und morgen Freitag, jeweils um 20.00 Uhr sowie übermorgen Samstag, 17. Januar, um 15.00 und um 18.00 Uhr Vorstellungen von „The Grand Old Duke of York“ stattfinden. frh

Der Eintritt kostet 400 Franken



## It's behind you!

After all the hype and excitement leading up to this week it would be a disaster not to be able to find the Château de Bettembourg where the Grand Old Duke of York is being performed!



When you reach Bettembourg look for the church in the north west of the town where there is a large parking area. With the church behind you cross the road (the route d'Esch) and turn right. The wall of the Château is then on your left.

für Erwachsene und 250 Franken für Kinder.

Vorbestellungen, sofern noch möglich, unter Telefonnummer 35 63 39.