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## **CODS**

**A NODA Script by Toby Bradford & Tina Webster**

**Queen's Hall Theatre, Cranbrook**

**Director: Annie Hatcher**

**Musical Director: Ruth Roberts**

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

With family stalwarts – Lee in his varying roles and Annie at the helm of the nautical adventures aboard the Hispaniola the cast sailed away from the Admiral Benbow Inn with Blind Pew's treasure map to discover Captain Flint's buried treasure. Of course, on board we have an assortment of goodies and baddies. After the ship runs aground the motley crew are washed up on an island of sunshine, palm trees, Robinson Crusoe and his Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday Girls and of course the hidden treasure. All with the aid of one Fairy Godmother and her 'mobile' magic wand in perfected rhyme and the sprinkling of fairy dust and the help of the children and adults present. Good overcame evil and all had a good time.

The Roberts were in control of the live band, set at one side of the stage, with musical numbers – a very good selection of jolly seafaring ditties, of romance, singalong - a modern and nostalgic mix.

The young, ensemble cast, worked hard together and obviously enjoyed themselves. Captain Corker'un was played by Evelyn Kite who literally let her hair down! In tunic and hose, high leather boots Sarah Hutchings was avid adventure book reader Jim Hawkins, who fell for Squire Trelawny's daughter Felicity, delightfully performed by Lucinda Hurt taking her first principal role. Landlady of the Admiral Benbow Inn was Ma Hawkins, with Andy Clarke sporting some dubious wigs and frocks, a great sailor's suit in dame tradition. Mark Cheeseman as Long John Silver had his feet on the ground, was agreeably bad and we enjoyed much booing. Billy Brass and Nicky Knuckles (Michaela Adam and Julie Aitken) played a pair of comedy pirates who turned to good and encouraged much shouting of 'Shiver Me Timbers'. Fairy Godmother – Charlotte Fillmore drew her tinkling telephone aerial with aplomb, rhyming her tale, adding a number we know well – when a fairy reaches a certain age! She encouraged the children to come up on stage, introduce themselves and then made sure they had a little treat. One young man told us some 'Knock Knock' jokes with much confidence and we sang 'Happy Birthday' to a Dad in the audience.

Eva Wilson added much colour with her portrayal of Polly the Parrot as she perched on her stool. Max Chesters, who is currently studying Drama and attends Cranbrook School gave a 'top notch' performance as Robinson Crusoe both in speech and lyric.

Costumes were in house, prepared by Rita Wilkins and related to the period. Some interesting lighting effects including strobe were devised – Annie was on follow spot with Owen Ling taking overall charge during this production, much to his delight, with Penny Tobin once again efficiently on the sound desk, managing mikes and heading makeup.

Scenery was well constructed and adapted by the team, in particular, centrally set were two beautifully lit palm trees with rocks hiding the treasure chest. With pirates, treasure, The Hispaniola to keep shipshape, the Inn, a desert island there was plenty for Props Master, Lee, to be responsible for!

Young pirates enjoyed the action and together with hornpipes, ghosts and skeletons, corny jokes, good overcoming evil all ended happily.

A Very Happy New Year to all involved – to those on stage, in the wings, up aloft, and those behind the scenes to complete the production.

**Anne Lawson**  
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