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THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE. Sidmouth Arts Club Operatic Society. Manor Pavilion. Oct.  
Director: Alec Fellows Bennett. M.D: Roger Howell. Choreography: Evelyn O'Malley.

This production enabled me to look at G & S from a completely different aspect. For the first time practically every word that came out of the actors mouths could be heard and understood, every joke laughed at, was this the G & S I have occasionally struggled to enjoy in the past. From the start the audience were drawn in, as the pirates bounded on the stage with enough energy to light a small town. Inspired staging encouraged the lively cast to perform the essence of the story with deliberation, while having the best time ever. It has been quoted that G & S dies by it's chorus, rather than its leads, neither had any intention of kicking the bucket in this production. Every one had their own personality which you could not fail to love, from the eloquent young Frederic (Sean Mulkerrin) and his warm Mabel (Grace McNeil) to the most hilarious, mixed sex troupe of constabulary seen this side of a Scotland Yard's Christmas party. All cast delivered nothing less than a first class performance. Vocal contribution was without doubt of comparable excellence, although it was noted that harmony drifted particularly during "Hail Poetry", by no means a slight on a powerful performance, merely a surprising observation on a otherwise thoroughly rehearsed production.