



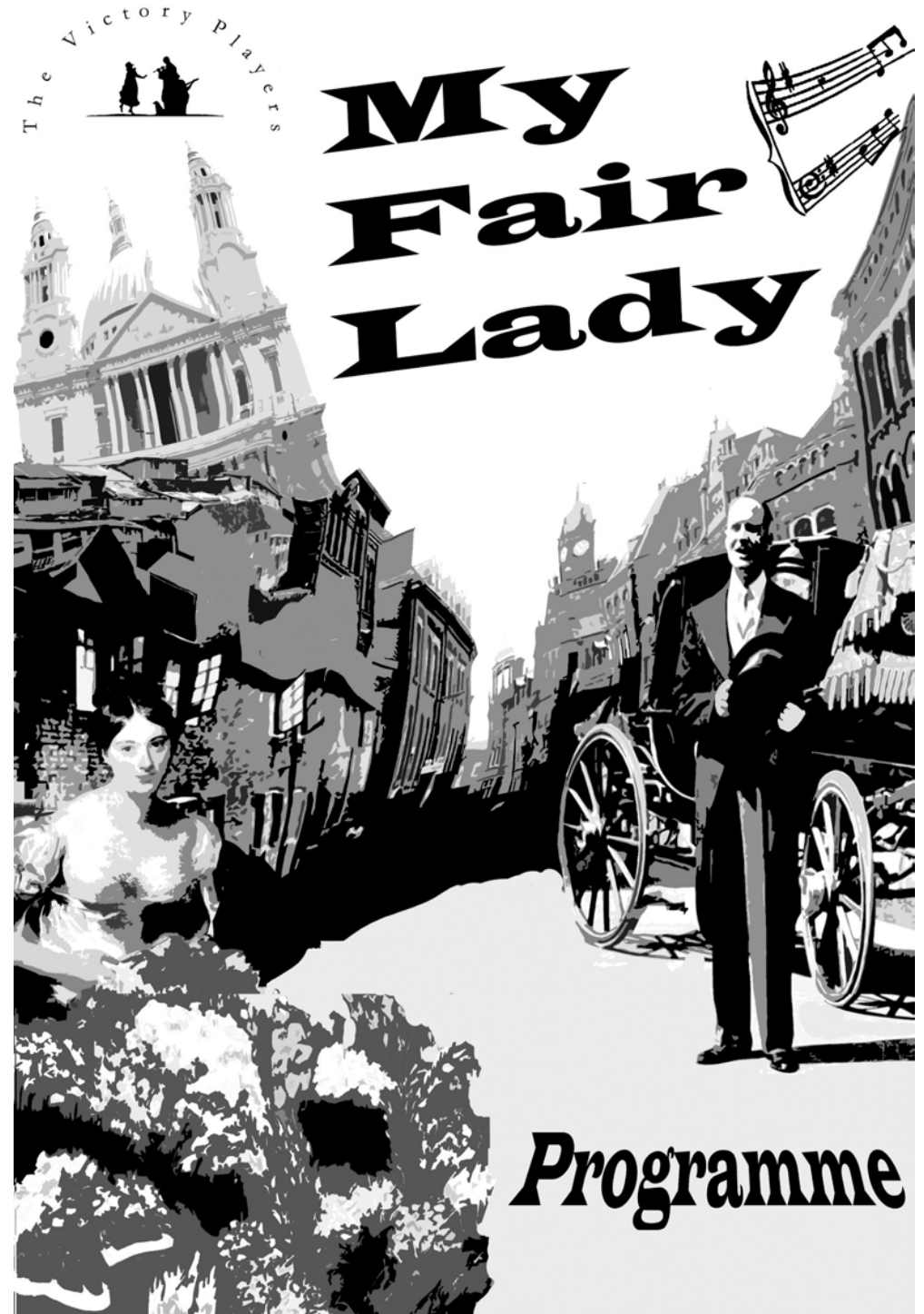
Following a hugely successful production of *Oh What a Lovely War* in April 2004, a public meeting was held at which it was agreed to form a drama group in Balcombe. The group was named The Victory Players after The Victory Hall in which it performs. The objective of the group is to perform drama in Balcombe, and to offer its members a range of drama related activities, including theatre visits, play readings and workshops.

The Victory Players are always very happy to welcome new members and friends. As well as thespians the group is dependant upon people with a wide range of talents in order to thrive, including directors, backstage crew, graphic designers, producers, prompts, set-painters, make-up artists etc. Annual subscription is £10 for Members and £7.50 for Friends. Membership is open to all Balcombe residents, and to non-residents when sponsored by a Balcombe resident member. Application for membership forms are available both from our website and Threads, and from our membership officer Robin Williamson (tel: 01444 811519) who will be pleased to provide any further information.

Productions to date have included a pantomime, Gilbert & Sullivan operettas, music hall, and a variety of plays.

More information about The Victory Players, including photographs, news and reviews, is available on our website: www.victoryplayers.co.uk

The Honorary President of The Victory Players is
Mrs Joy Scofield



The Victory Players
in association with Balcombe Social Club
present an amateur production of

My Fair Lady

A musical play adapted from
George Bernard Shaw's play and Gabriel Pascal's motion picture
Pygmalion

Book & lyrics by
Alan Jay Lerner

Music by
Frederick Loewe

This, the bewitching story of a flower girl's transformation into the pride of London Society, is also one of the best-loved musicals of all time.

When the arrogant Henry Higgins, a professor of phonetics and a confirmed bachelor, meets Eliza Doolittle in Covent Garden he recognises that her hideous vowels and forgotten consonants are all that separate her from the upper classes. Higgins makes a wager that he can pass her off as a duchess in a matter of weeks. However when the bet is over, what is to become of Eliza? Too elegant to return to the life of a flower girl, but without the breeding of the upper classes her choices seem few and her future bleak.

Presented by arrangement with
MusicScope and Stage Musicals Ltd. of New York

This is no lightweight play by any stretch of the imagination. The relationships between the main characters are exquisitely drawn. The change in Eliza seems so massive that if we are not careful it hides the fact that much of what she appears to become was already within her in the first place. Also it can mask the changes that occur in other characters, notably in Higgins but in others too.

However tonight is not primarily a social lecture. Rather it is about enjoying a cracking good show. Not only will you experience a good play with drama and humour, but also a wealth of popular and well known songs to lift our spirits and send us home happy. I hope that when you leave this hall later you will agree with me that this was only a beginning. There is a further story that could be told, but that I leave to **your** imagination.

Tonight we would like you to feel involved more intimately with the characters. In consequence we have brought much of the action into your space, with the stage extended further into the hall.

In conclusion I would like to thank everyone who has helped us to bring you this show today. To the Committee, Chris and his staff of the Social Club, the Balcombe Estate, the Balcombe Flower Club, the Bluebell Line and to all those who have lent us props and furniture, we are so grateful. Nor should we forget our long suffering families and those who had to withdraw before the public performances due to circumstances beyond their control. It is a privilege and delight to have worked with the support of so many friends of and in the Victory Players.

May I wish you all a most enjoyable evening.

Keith Major

Director's Note

I daresay that many of you have come here tonight with a picture in your mind of *My Fair Lady*. Some of you on the other hand may never have seen it before, or so long ago that it only seems a vague memory. In either case I think it good to consider the construction of this play.

Modern musicals are often 'song and dance' numbers in the main, with the merest thread of a story-line holding the piece together. Not so with *My Fair Lady*. Quite the reverse in fact. Here we have a story that runs deep, and not always without pain. As you may know, it is based on George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and though it is different in several ways it still bears his strong social message.

The play is set prior to the horror of World War I, when Britain was at the height of Empire. The feel-good factor was 100 per cent as far as the upper classes were concerned, though not so much for the working ones. For a young audience it is hard to imagine the way of life at that time, let alone understand how the poor put up with their lot. Why did they have such pride in being British? To anyone with such difficulties I would say: just look at America today! There are many poor and underprivileged people living there who are proud to be American. *Pygmalion*, and hence this play, grew out of a desire to expose the inequalities in society that Shaw felt were so unfair.

In *My Fair Lady* we see what happens when someone is groomed to become a member of another section in society. It shows the dangers of being left high and dry when seemingly all is over – mission accomplished. It could be a great temptation for audiences to see Higgins as a villain, which quite clearly he is not! The way in which the latter part of the play develops presents several challenges and, in my view, is intriguing.

The place: London

The time: 1912

Act One

Scene 1	Covent Garden	A cold March night
Scene 2	Near Doolittle's house	Immediately after
Scene 3	Higgins' study	The following morning
Scene 4	Near Doolittle's house	Several weeks later
Scene 5	Higgins' study	Later that day
Scene 6	Outside Ascot	A July afternoon
Scene 7	Ascot	Immediately after

Interval of 30 minutes

Act Two

Scene 1	Outside Higgins' house	Later that afternoon
Scene 2	Higgins' study	Six weeks later
Scene 3	Higgins' study	3.00 a.m. the next day
Scene 4	Outside Higgins' house	Shortly after
Scene 5	Covent Garden Market	5.00 a.m. same day
Scene 6	Higgins' study	10.00 a.m. same day
Scene 7	Mrs Higgins' garden	Later same day
Scene 8	Outside Higgins' house	Immediately after
Scene 9	Higgins' study	Immediately after

Cast

<i>Eliza Doolittle</i>	Charlie Marshall
<i>Henry Higgins</i>	Charles Metcalfe
<i>Alfred Doolittle</i>	John Bunn
<i>Colonel Pickering</i>	Douglas Wragg
<i>Mrs Higgins</i>	Shirley Michell
<i>Freddy Eynsford-Hill</i>	Rhys Whiteside
<i>Mrs Pearce</i>	Isabel Gordon
<i>Mrs Eynsford-Hill</i>	Barbara Saunders

Other parts are played by members of the company
which comprises:

Jo Armstrong	Flora Oman
Anthea Bell	Mike Rayner
Caroline Carpenter	Sue Rolley
Sue Etheridge	Rodney Saunders
Amanda Holland	Helen Sweetman
Val Horton	Chris Walker
Manuela Warburton	

*The stage version of My Fair Lady was first presented in
England at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Wednesday 30th
April 1958, with Julie Andrews as Eliza Doolittle, Rex Harrison
as Henry Higgins and Stanley Holloway as Alfred Doolittle*

Production Team

<i>Director</i>	Keith Major
<i>Associate Director</i>	Jane Horrell
<i>Musical Director</i>	David Moore
<i>Choreographer</i>	Gill Osborne
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Martin Allitt
<i>Assistant Stage Manager</i>	Anthony Phillips
<i>Lighting</i>	Brian Couchy
<i>Set design & construction</i>	Richard Harris, John Randall, Colette Randall, Anthony Phillips
<i>Wardrobe</i>	Jane Horrell, Isabel Gordon, Manuela Warburton
<i>Props</i>	Isabel Gordon, Jacqueline Wiginton
<i>Make-up</i>	Penny Jennings
<i>Prompt</i>	Pat Rayner
<i>Page turner for pianist</i>	Jack Holland
<i>Front of House Manager</i>	Robin Williamson
<i>Front of House Team</i>	Eileen Knight, Julie Walker, Priscilla Williamson, Steven Daultrey, Alan Dearden Norman Howard, Jim Knight,
<i>Publicity</i>	Greg Field
<i>Poster design</i>	Peter Huxley
<i>Box Office Manager</i>	Isabel Gordon
<i>Producer</i>	Rodney Saunders