

TOP NOTES SPRING 2019 (MOLL FLANDERS EDITION)

IN THIS EDITION:

A MESSAGE FROM THE
CHAIRMAN

MOLL FLANDERS SHOW
TIME LINE

MOLL FLANDERS THE
DIRECTORS VIEW

CIVET CAT PERFUME!

COMING NEXT



THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hi everyone! Firstly I'd like to say **thanks to Mel Bartlett** for having taken responsibility for producing these *Top Notes* newsletters over the last few years. Always excellent, engaging and informative. (Recent editions are accessible at [waos.info/top-notes]waos.info/top-notes). Thanks also to outgoing Treasurer **Keith White** for stepping in when needed - as he has done again for this edition.

However, we're still **looking for someone to take on Top Notes** ongoing, so please let me know if you're interested. It's just once every 6 months, to be published just before show week. And as alluded to above, we are also **looking for a new Treasurer**, as Keith is stepping down at the **AGM on 15th July**. In fact, all positions on the committee are available for anyone, even if those already holding the roles want to continue. Again, **let me know if you're interested** in any committee roles.

The last 6 months have been eventful - **Little Shop of Horrors** was really well received by audiences, and we were invited by the *Horsell Residents Association* to reprise **Wartime**

Memories as part of the centenary remembrance of the end of the 1st World War, provided entertainment at the *Horsell Care Christmas Party* and did some carol singing at the *Talbot Inn Ripley Christmas Market*. It was really good to be engaged with and involved in local community events, and I hope we'll be able to continue to do that. And not forgetting the fab Christmas party organised by Mel!

Meanwhile, rehearsals for our May production of **Moll Flanders** have been progressing well, and it's been brilliant seeing so many members given the opportunity to feature across the many roles in this show - there's certainly a lot of talent at WAOS! **Break a leg one and all!** (7th-11th May @ Rhoda McGaw Theatre Woking). As per previous communications, we will all be **helping with clear up** before the after show party on the final night - unless busy doing something like compiling the awards! And thanks to those who did a preview of the show at the *NODA Celebration Day* in March.

Away from rehearsals, the committee have moved forward with the suggestion of a **new WAOS logo** from last year's AGM - look out for the winner from the polls appearing in our publicity soon... Thanks to everyone who submitted a new design!

And the *Show Focus Group* are in the process of reviewing all the suggested shows that appeared in the February poll. Don't forget to **let us know any time** if you have any suggestions, and if you'd like to be considered to be on a production team for any shows. i.e. Director, Assistant Director, Musical Director, Choreographer, Production Coordinator... You can contact anyone in the Show Focus Group - Amanda, Hannah D, Jemma, Josie, Roger and myself.

We are also proposing to introduce a **Welfare Officer** for each show. More info to come

about this, but if it sounds like something you might be interested in, please let me know.

Thanks also to those who submitted proposals for this year's fundraiser. We are very excited to get going with **'The Great Musical Sing Off'** at the intro night on **Thursday 16th May!** Rehearsals also on Mon 20th, Thurs 23rd & Thurs 30th May, then throughout August as usual.

And of course, we are also very excited to have our intro night for our November show **'High Society'** on **Mon 3rd June**, with auditions on Sunday 16th June! I hope to see you there...

Graham

WAOS Chairman

chairman@waos.info



Elizabeth Wright in prison cast-offs!

MOLL FLANDERS TIMELINE

Never let the facts stand in the way of a good adaption of a story when moving Moll Flanders from its original dates of C1613 - 1683

Our story starts in **1711** because in Act 1 scene 2 I have to whistle the March from Handel's Rinaldo. This was first performed in London on the 24th February 1711. So allowing for time for the tune to get round town and the usual 9 months we could give our Moll a tentative birthdate of 1st Jan 1712.

Moll is born. Mother is subject to the King's mercy and transported to the colonies (Virginia). Source is Elizabeth's dialogue in Lullaby. Transportation of women was not that common and from 1670 the State of Virginia had not accepted transportation ships. In addition the War of Spanish Succession 1701 – 1714 reduced the number of merchant ships available to carry them. (Transportation was a commercial transaction.)



The Lord Mayor of Colchester

In Act 1 scene 3 we are told that she ran away from Gypsies when she was 5 in Colchester. So it is now 1717, and she appears before the Mayor and again 3 years later, and is with the nurse for a further 4 years. So she is 12 when she joins the Constable household.



Betsy, Corrinde's maid

(Note: the name "Betsy" may be an author's error as "Betty" was the general name applied to maids as "Jeeves" is used for men today.) The next phase from 1724 to about 1733 is a bit of a supposition. If she was in service for 4 years it would take her to 16. However seduction of a 14 year old would not have been unusual at that time. It is not clear how long she is married to Robert but there are children. So, for the sake of argument I have assumed a marriage of 5 years before becoming a widow at age 21.

Off to London and a visit to the Spring Gardens in Vauxhall. A popular meeting place that had opened about 1660 and finally closed in 1880. However her suitor bites into his Bath Beauty apple but not before 1864!



Portrait faces

The marriage to Henry lasts 3 years until he has lost everything and is in prison for debt 1736 Moll flees to the mint. An alternative to debtor's prison but The "Mint in Southwark Act of 1722" had abolished it and at the same time you could no longer be jailed for debts of less than £50. Generally people in the Mint were either murdered or died from malnutrition. Because Southwark was in Surrey and not London it fell to the High Sheriff of Surrey to clear the mint area.

Moll goes to the seaside as bathing in seawater was starting to be promoted on health grounds. The 1730's saw the first bathing machines – used by the upper classes to take the waters. Rather like Bath. Having hooked up with her sailor they take passage to Virginia (Act 1 scene 11). Passage was expensive and few had the resources to pay for such a trip.



18th Century Merchantman

Moll when she leaves is probably in her mid-twenties, the length of time she is there is not indicated but she is there long enough to have more children. Tobacco was the main crop of Virginia and was largely exported to England.

1747 – 1753 Moll is back in England, goes to Bath and is Mr Biggins mistress. In Act 2 scene 2 Moll tells us that she was his mistress for 6 years and in scene 3 she declares she is nearly 42 hence the more exact dates. It was during this period that Bath became fashionable.



Daisy writes a letter

At the end of the scene Daisy is writing letters to Liverpool. Whilst we know that Moll gained an education with Corrinder, most were illiterate. Postage was paid by the recipient and was somewhat unreliable as post boys carried a bag of letters from town to town. Moll and Daisy take the coach to Liverpool. Prior to 1850 there were two coaches a week leaving London on Mondays and Thursdays for Liverpool and taking 8 days in the summer. Average speed including stage stops 4mph. Road improvements made the journey faster and with steel spring suspension the journey, advertised from 1753, came down to 3 days if all went well.



Your secret is safe with this landlady

Moll, pregnant, is back in London hiding from Mr Honest whose letters are miraculously forwarded from Liverpool – who paid the postage?



18th Century stagecoach

Moll having passed the child on marries Mr Honest so it is now 1754 and Moll is 42. At the end of scene 8 Moll says “I am now 50” and the South Sea Bubble has ruined them. The South Sea Bubble ruined many but it burst in 1720, when our Moll would have been 8! Mr Honest, if he lived up to his name, would probably have not lost money. He worked for the Bank of England Company



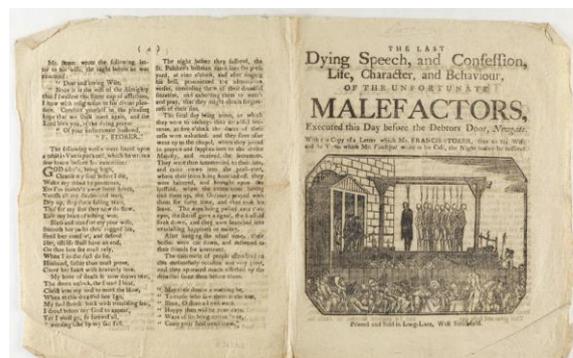
Insignia of the Bank of England Company

and the South Sea Company was a rival bank trying to become the bankers for the Crown and government.



Crest of the South Sea Company

1762-1772 (Moll 50 at start) Mother Midnight tells us of the 10 years of crime with another child at the beginning of this period. Daisy is sent to the gallows – although this is portrayed as a sombre occasion this was not the case. Hanging were a public spectacle that pulled in crowds of people. Like today the best seats were at the front and akin to a festival there were vendor’s stalls around the sides. It was even possible to get a broadsheet containing the supposed last words of those to be executed.

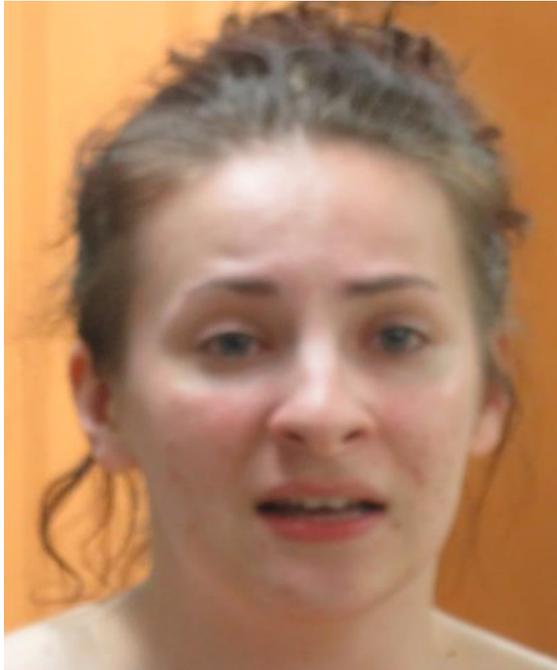


Broadsheet of “last words” for a Newgate execution

Your intrepid Top Notes roving reporter managed to catch up Daisy to get her final words before her execution. “Dont snivel or cry, I knew I would die if me fingers weren't nimble and true. It's the way of things I know we've all got to go, but just before I do. Tell of my tale in stories bold tell of my whit and my cheek. Say my name and carry the tale on. So long as you whisper it” Daisy then slipped me this short verse she had written last night after final prayers had been said for the Lord’s forgiveness for the sins of all those about to be executed.

When I am lying in the dust
Think not too harshly of me
I only did just what I must
To keep myself alive see

When Moll is caught she would have been 60 and transportation was a commercial venture to build populations in the colonies. A 60 year old woman wouldn't be worth taking as the chances of completing the 10 year contract were slim.



Moll gets more bad news

Into the finale "and 10 years go by and they make a tidy sum" and return to England. As indentured workers it was hard to make money. The tobacco market was weak in the 1860's and virtually ground to a halt during the American war of Independence 1775 - 1777. Tobacco was replaced by food crops to feed the army. Would our Moll really have wanted to leave the new United States?

Editor

MOLL FLANDERS THE DIRECTORS VIEW

16 years ago I came across Moll Flanders the Musical and could not put the script down till I had finished reading it. 10 years ago, I convinced the Committee to let me direct it

and it has been a real privilege to be given the opportunity to direct it again 10 years hence.

This time, the show is more technical with projections and smoke, fog and haze effects, and lighting and sound matching the set and actions (Oscar, Mark, Tom and other team members). We have a much bigger cast. It presented directing challenges as more "group" moves have to be used due to the logistics of the ratio of cast and space, particularly as more "choreography" was added than in the previous production. This is why the set design is so important and all credit goes to Mike B for his imaginative set and the Mike G and team, who built it and the scenic artists (not painters!) Lolly and Dianne. And of course, there is more going on in the background, Julia doing all the research in the projections, Lisa, who not only is the Stage Manager, but also designs the programme, flyers and posters, let alone the tickets management with Keith. We are so very lucky to have these people in the company and we need more leaning these skills for future productions.

Doing a period piece is always a challenge, the way to hold yourself on stage, the way to move and the accessories, the correct props (thanks to Sue) ... Creating a period outfit is not for the faint hearted and Cathy, Anne-Marie, Sam S, Tasha and myself are very proud of the end result. It is true that we have hired more costume this show than we normally do, but we have also created totally new dresses, but we have certainly used a lot of our own WAOS wardrobe and "cannibalised" various dresses to create new ones. As for the wigs, without Lynda's input, aided by Dianne and Julia, it could not have been done as well as they have.

CIVET CAT PERFUME!

I love every aspect of this production, the set design, the fluidity of the scene changes, the lighting and sound, the correct prop at the correct time, thanks to Sue. The cast, principals and chorus alike who are telling this story and constantly engaging the audience. The cast engagement on stage is total and I am utterly proud of you all.

Directing a musical is a huge undertaking and I would not have done it as well had it not been for the support of Ian and Jon, our respective MD and Rehearsal pianist. But two other people have been crucial in maintaining the momentum, Sam Moylan-Heydt who took over the role of Assistant Musical Director without hesitation, and Elisabeth who has worked so hard and with such enthusiasm.

I have often asked myself: “why am I so interested in directing?” It must have to do with being a control freak! There are moments when one really doubts of the ability to keep on top of the schedule, with no control over absences or lateness, managing the time it really takes to block a scene (always much longer than anticipated), managing cast various personalities and expectations, always expected to have the correct and accurate answers at any time... Or may be the answer is simpler... just for the pleasure of seeing a creation come to life show week and seeing the end product of an over vivid imagination.

Thank you all. And I am looking forward to be on stage for High Society and the Fund Raiser, when I am going to enjoy being directed and not to have to make any decision!

Thank you all.

Martine

Ralph, one of the suitors in Act 1 Sc.8 offers to show Moll round his Civet Cat perfume business and get her to invest. Defoe had himself dabbled in the Civet Cat perfume business without, it seems, much success. Perhaps he didn't have the nose for it – but guess what civet is still used today!

Perfumers love animalistic notes – including civet – for the raw sexiness they deliver to perfumes, and for that reason it is found in many of the world's most notoriously seductive scents.

It is not known who first thought of using the soft, paste-like glandular secretion from underneath the swishy striped tails of civet cats which they use to mark their territory. It is extraordinarily powerful and even stomach-turningly obnoxious in its concentrated form, basically concentrated cat's pee, except that it isn't actually a cat!



A civet cat

There are two types of civet a bit like elephants an African one and an Indian one. Civets in Britain had to be held in captivity which meant cages as the animals had to be stressed in order to produce the secretion. Today civet is synthetically recreated for use in perfume.

The use of civet first became common with 10th Century Arab perfumers and then spread across Europe. In a highly diluted form the civet creates a scent that is lustily musky and inviting, adding warmth and radiance to floral scents especially, and working as a fixative.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday 10th May – after show meal at the Beijing in Horsell. Sign up list in the backstage theatre lobby.

Saturday 11th May starting at 11.30pm after show party at Cherry Trees, Morton Road, GU21 4TN. Look at the Indicative list (backstage theatre lobby) of what food others are bringing and add to it to avoid excessive duplication.

Thursday 16th May - WAOS Fundraiser Intro Night

Wednesday 22nd May – Saturday 25th May BLOS presents **The Sound of Music** at the Nomads theatre East Horsley. Directed by Martine, Choreographed by Hannah Dare, Musical Director James Marr and with a number of other contributions both on and off the stage from WAOS probably including the Constable's chaise-longue!

Tickets from

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/nomadtheatre>

Monday 3rd June - '**High Society**' Intro Night

Sunday 16th June - '**High Society**' Auditions

Saturday 22nd June - Horsell Garden Safari fund-raising event for WAOS at Sue and Mike's house

Monday 15th July - WAOS AGM

30th & 31st August - WAOS Fundraiser Performances

5th - 9th November - 'High Society' Show Week

THE CIVET CAT PERFUME COMPETITION

All these perfumes apparently have Civet (or the artificial equivalent) as one of their ingredients so can you name the maker and the perfume?

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| |  |  |  |
| Names | | | |
| Makers | | | |
| |  |  |  |
| Names | | | |
| Makers | | | |
| |  |  |  |
| Names | | | |
| Makers | | | |
| |  |  |  |
| Names | | | |
| Makers | | | |