

## Manresa Musical Society (written by Marj Coghlan)

Dad (Bill Box) began the Manresa Musical Society in the early 1950s before the advent of TV. He had the support of many wonderful people including George Angione who was invaluable in providing costumes and props directly from J.C. Williamson. Lighting and sound were provided by Phonse Bryce and Jack O'Brien, at least in the early productions and parents and friends of the performers altered costumes and did hair and make-up, not to mention catering etc.

The orchestra was capably led by Dad, supported by Lorna Perkins, a first violinist in the Vic. Symphony Orchestra. Eldon Hogan (Xavier College) was an invaluable support with stage managing etc.

The first production was a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, Iolanthe.

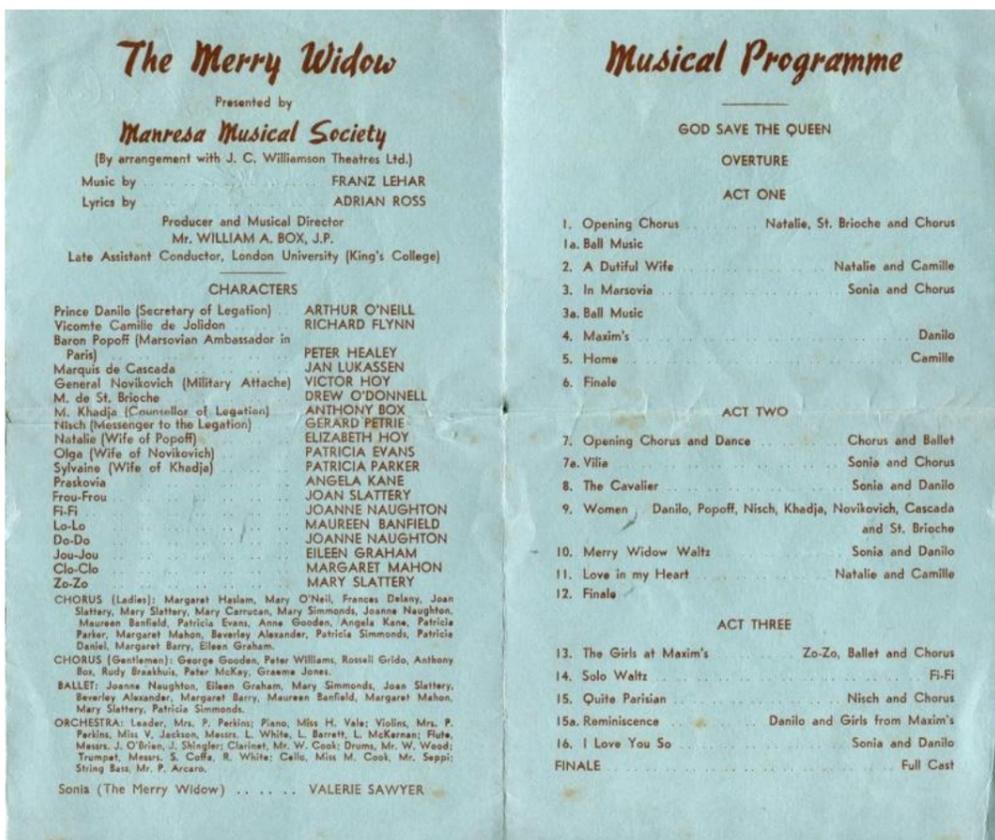
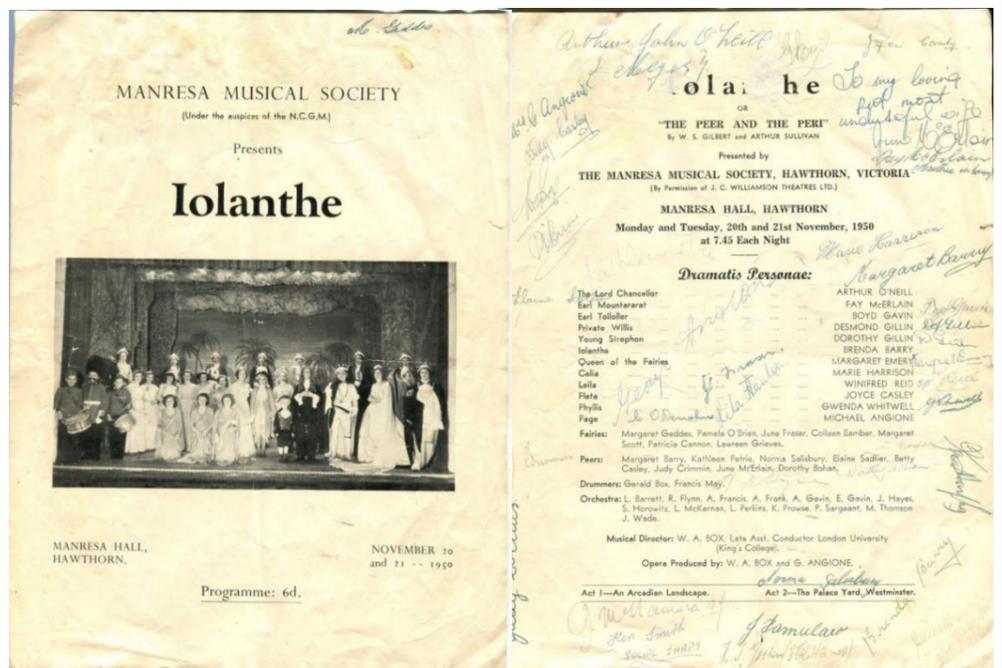
One thing I particularly remember was the full dress rehearsals when about 200 nuns from nearby congregations were invited as guests. They were a wonderful audience and obviously enjoyed 'getting out' for this rehearsal. (Don't forget that the nuns rarely went out in those days!). Incidentally Dad taught many nuns to play the organ – in his spare time!



**Back Row:** Arthur O'Neill, Joe Williams, Andrew O'Donnell, Gerard Petrie, Len Thomas; **Middle Row:** Valerie Sawyer, Loreen Wade, Pat Raleigh, Gwenda Whitwell, Bernece Naughton; **Front Row:** Elizabeth Hoy, Gladys Spieer

### Productions

- 1950: Iolanthe
- 1951: The Arcadians
- 1952: Little Nellie Kelly
- 1954: Rio Rita and 'Light is Come' (Nativity Play)
- 1955: The Merry Widow
- 1956: Our Miss Gibbs
- 1957: The Girls of Gottenberg



Above Left: Valerie Box and Arthur O'Neill



Above Right: Valerie Sawyer and Tony Box