



UNTOLD TALES OF FALMOUTH

from the archives of Museums on the Green

CLOC Reminders

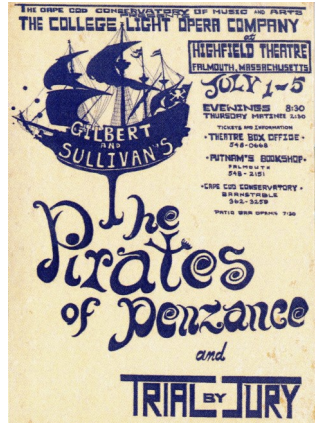
“Ephemera” is a word you don’t hear much in conversation, but in the archives we use it often. The dictionary defines ephemera as “things that exist for only a short time; things of no lasting significance.” A second meaning is more positive: “paper items (such as posters, broadsides, and tickets) that were originally meant to be discarded after use, but have since become collectibles.”

Ephemera serve as doorways to a past that everyone can relate to. Tickets, flyers, programs, even matchbooks and swizzle sticks—all these remind us of the less serious side of life, of what we and our forebears used to do, and maybe still do, just for fun.

The Museums’ collection of theatrical ephemera is growing rapidly. This summer we’ve been especially busy sifting through cartons of memorabilia entrusted to us by the College Light Opera Company. CLOC and Museums on the Green are collaborating on an exhibit that showcases the company’s 50-year history of entertaining the people of Falmouth.

While paging through the yearly scrapbooks compiled by CLOC staff, we were reminded of many things we’d forgotten. We also learned some things we never knew.

Who today remembers the volleyball game played between CLOC and the crew of the Soviet stern trawler *Belogorsk* in 1973? The ship was docked in Woods Hole on a scientific mission.



Poster, 1969, first CLOC season.

Photo, ca. 1969, tired tech.

Photo, “The Pajama Game,” 2006.

Twenty-seven crew members attended a performance of *Paint Your Wagon*, and were asked to join the post-show party on the patio. Vodka was consumed, and songs were sung in both Russian and English. Highfield publicity director Bob Apfel recalled that everyone broke into a snake dance while singing “Those Were the Days.” The Russians then invited CLOC to play volleyball on the deck of their ship the next day.

Another incident, now largely forgotten, occurred in 2001, when the power went out during a performance of *Titanic*. (Disaster on the *Titanic*—how fitting!) The show went on, and CLOC board member Doug Shanklin wrote a letter to the company, saying “The proud tradition of theater was reaffirmed tonight. . . . thirty years from now, it will be said . . . with apology to Winston Churchill, ‘this was your finest hour.’ ”

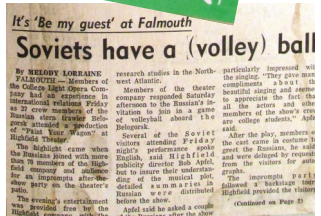
Decades of photographs and brochures reflect changing fashions. Children of the 1980s will love CLOC’s 1983 brochure, printed in preppy pink and green. Photos of a 1971 “mod” version of *Princess Ida*, featuring actors with shaggy hairstyles and floral patterned trousers, inspire giggles—and gratitude that we live in a less groovy era.

Sorting through such ephemera calls up happy memories. It also reminds us that our daily lives and simple pleasures are part of a history that is ever marching on. But as long as there is always another season, and another new spin on an old favorite like “Pirates” or “Pinafore,” the stream of ephemera will never end.

Meg Costello

Learn more:

Visit the Museums’ exhibit, “Celebrating 50 Years of the College Light Opera Company,” July 16–August 21, 2018.



Graphic, *Most Happy Fella*, ca. 2003.

Brochure, 1983, in preppy colors.

Cape Cod Times, August 26, 1973.

Photo, *Princess Ida*, 1971.

Graphic, *Titanic*, 2001.