

Crediton Operatic and Dramatic Society (CODS)

Sounds of the 80s

September Evenings

Musical Director

Mike Canning

20th September 2025

Take every single one of your favourite songs from the 80s, and they were almost certainly playing it at CODS this evening.

As you walk into Crediton's Boniface Centre, the space has been transformed into a speakeasy of tables equipped with flowers, cutlery and napkins but more importantly, unique tools fashioned in the style of hands for you to alert the bar staff that another round of drinks is required!!!

The stage, with its star cloth backdrop was further enhanced by the glitter ball bunting throughout the room and bar, the creative lighting plot and the glorious dress code of the singers. Gorgeous cocktail dresses and ball gowns and very smart black tie suits, the hall and stage were well and truly set for a glittering night of entertainment and, boy, did it glitter!!!!

After a welcome and introduction from the suave and talented musical director Mike Canning, the ensemble and band sprang to life, setting the scene with a lovely arrangement of Lionel Richie's All Night Long followed by Dancing in the Street. These were lovely, beautifully arranged ensemble numbers – no fluke as every piece presented tonight maintained the dizzy heights at which the bar was set for the evening as CODS proffered one fabulous number after another, with some absolutely stupendous solos, trios and duets.

First up was Jason Bomford singing Elton John's iconic 'I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues'. Followed by some more ensemble classics. Next up were Helen Clarke, Lyndsey Betts and Sadie Moden, a powerful trio of singers who absolutely knocked it out of the park with their vocals on 'Holding Out For a Hero'.

Whether you are an ABBA fan or not, Super Trouper, Sung by Yvonne Youles and Simon Webber along with the ensemble was a treat with truly stunning harmonies, as was The Rose which was performed by Ruth Towers. I was trying not to mention every single song, but I have to tell you that 'When Doves Cry' by the ensemble was an absolute treat – superb harmonies and great vocals - what a brilliant number.

As Act One closed to Toto's Africa, the audience was rather left wanting more.

And as it happened, they were not disappointed because next came the CODS Youth Theatre Academy under the tutelage of Holly Harris, CODS Chair. This was a lovely moment where the children belted out in perfect harmony, music by Starship, A-ha and Journey. Don't Stop Believing (Journey), contained two delightful solos by rising young stars, Toby (9) and Amelia (13). The Youth set ended with the audience rising to their feet in an very well deserved extended ovation.

After a delicious meal, presented with admirable organisation, with large numbers of the very talented cast serving, Act 2 got underway, beginning with Thriller. A really entertaining opening which also featured dancing by Erin Zorlu, Rosanna Clarke and Zoe Weetman – some excellent moves very reminiscent of the iconic film. It was further enhanced by the lovely and scary voice over by Paul Walker, it was a great opening and much enjoyed by the audience.

Again, it is hard not to mention every single number Where do Broken Hearts Go, had the audience in raptures with the lovely vocals of Dani Gwyn. This was followed by the plaintive melody of Like a Prayer which was stunning as were the vocals of Ceci Brayley and Charlotte Ireland.

Rosanna Clarke brought a lump to many throats as she sang Unexpected Song from Song and Dance.

Abba made another appearance which raised goosebumps as we were treated to a bewitching arrangement of The Winner Takes It all. I Know Him So Well is such a well-known piece, it can be a risky choice but in the hands of Buffy May and Gillian McKenzie, it was enchanting.

Glittering with voice, jacket and personality, Katt Davies-Young, began the show wind-down with a bang with 'Nothing's Gonna Stop us Now' Starship before the ensemble sang 'Eye of the Tiger' and then all too soon this sparkling night was ending with Barry Manilow's One Voice, kicked off by the delightfully animated Tasha Currie.

This was a beautifully considered, superbly curated evening, performed with energy and passion. What a show, CODS, you smashed it. Congratulations and please don't stop doing them!!

Katie Jones - (for Lyn Burgoyne)
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NODA REPORTING:

Any observation made by the reviewer can only be based on what he sees at the performance in question. The reviewer may have received information in advance of the performance and it is inevitable that his assessment will be effected by that knowledge.

The N.O.D.A. Representative's intention is to give an objective critique of the overall production and in particular the performance viewed. It should be remembered that any review of this nature can only be objective as far as the techniques used during the performance observed. Any criticisms expressed may not have been valid at other performances, and are only made to encourage higher standards in Amateur Theatre.

It is hoped that the audience's appreciation of your efforts will have given everyone a lift and encouraged you to greater achievements in the future and that the observations made by the reviewer will prove helpful in improving future productions.