

# Their 'finest production'

**Fiddler On The Roof —  
Chelmsford Civic Theatre  
Amateur Operatic and  
Dramatic Company**

RAY Jeffery's production of *Fiddler on the Roof* is arguably the finest production I have ever seen by the Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society.

For their Diamond Jubilee Production the company has pulled out all the stops and responded to the inspired direction and to the masterly playing of the orchestra under the direction of Ian Hayter. There is a tremendous feeling of warmth and togetherness in this most warm and convivial show. The company can rarely have assembled such a large cast; and each player contributes positively to the earthy, rich story of the Jews in Russia and the final expulsion of the group from Anatevka.

The whole show is a hymn to humanity and a celebration of that infinitely varied and various creature Man, his strengths, his weaknesses, his capacity for pain, love, enjoyment and compassion.

Ken Cooper is a splendid Tevye. I have heard more

vocal projection in the Civic Theatre but his superb clowning and intuitive acting carried the evening. Audrey Hinton was a lovely wife to him, a typical, Yiddisher Earth Mother, proud, fierce; but patient and loving, too.

The daughters were nicely differentiated: Lynette Bandall, lovely as Tzeitel, so anxious to marry her poor, but lovable tailor (a beautiful and affectionate performance from Peter Smith); Christine Young as the independent Hodel, leaving to marry her revolutionary (Patrick Tucker, a superbly keen and bright-eyed visionary) was very moving; and Sally Lorkin, unwisely falling in love with a Russian (an excellent performance by Simon Fisher) caught at all our heartstrings.

The Civic show simply fizzles out. However, that one bad moment cannot detract from all that has gone before. Nor can the one cheap dropcloth detract from the overall look of the show which is stunning.

**JON RICHARDS**