

GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY

Kapunda Musical Society

Chapel Theatre, Chapel St, Kapunda
Until April 30

Review by Simon Slade

Andrew Lloyd-Webber take note. George M. Cohan was America's first show business superstar producer. Once known as "The Man Who Owned Broadway" most of his work is forgotten today - aside from a few of his songs like "The Yankee Doodle Boy" and "Give My Regards to Broadway" are American classics.

Combine some of Cohan's best loved show tunes with a sparkling story by Schubert Fendrich and it adds up to an entertaining, charming, toe-tapping musical, in a similar vein to "42nd Street."

Entrepreneur Dick Foster, played by James Kerrigan, is struggling to open a Broadway show. A cash flow problem and temperamental leading lady Mona Monroe, played to a tee by an elegant Jo Hough, present insurmountable problems.

Enter Mary Collins an aspiring actress from New Rochelle (only 45 minutes from Broadway!), played by Sarah Wildy. She is a delight. With a pure quality to her voice and acting talent to boot, she is the wide-eyed hopeful, given her big break.

There are some fine performers in this cast. Kerryn Bolt is excellent as, Trixie, the girlfriend of "Legs" Ruby, a bookie on the run from the mob, played by Jamie Nietschke. Chris Starkey stands out as Betty, with her fine voice and dancing.

Michael Hoskin has a difficult role in this show. His character appears late, is not directly involved in producing the show, and takes a back seat in most of the musical numbers. Lesser actors would fade into the scenery in this role, but his combination of fine acting and comedic talent carries him through.

A seven piece orchestra does well under the guidance of Peter Murphy, and the trumpets, ever the problem for an amateur theatre company were better than most!

It is not all plain sailing. Some of the accents were very uneven, and there was a hesitation on the part of some cast members at the beginning of musical numbers. A couple tended to only be in character when delivering lines.

This is a true community theatre with its own home in the Chapel Theatre. The stage is small and has not a single lighting bar above it. The follow spot is cobbled together from a stage lamp and an overhead projector.

And that's what makes it special!

So give your regards to Kapunda, only 45 minutes from Gawler!