



Show Report

Burtonwood AMADS

The Sound Of Music

26 November 2025

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION	The Sound Of Music
SOCIETY	Burtonwood Amateur Music and Drama Society
VENUE	St Michael's Parish Hall
GENRE	Musical
CAST SIZE	28
DIRECTOR	Leigh Nash
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Izzy Nash
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Izzy Nash
ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Jayne Harnick
CHOREOGRAPHER	Bronte Tranter
PRODUCTION TEAM	Ant Gleeson, Mary Anne Gleeson, Nathan Higham, Leigh Nash, Mike Nash & Bianca Tranter
SOUND & LIGHTING	Nathan Higham, Izzy Nash & Mike Nash
STAGE CREW	Gary Cunningham & Ant Gleeson
COSTUMES	Rebekah Denton, Marie Gleave, Mary Anne Gleeson & Leah Turton
POSTER & PROGRAMME DESIGN	Hannah Smith & Mark Smith
PHOTOGRAPHER	Colin Drinkwater
CHAPERONES	Debbie Hurst, Carolyn McMillan, Helena Pennington & Hannah Smith
FRONT OF HOUSE	Janet Harnick, Harry Haynes, Chloe Hughes, Beth Millman, Helena, Pennington, Mike Pennington, Natalie Richards, Jasmine Smith & Leah Turton

CAST LIST

Maria Rainer	Jayne Harnick
Cpt Georg von Trapp	Jim McMillan
Liesl von Trapp	Mia Hurst
Friedrich von Trapp	Oliver Matthews
Brigitta von Trapp	Faye Cunningham
Louisa von Trapp	Freya Turton
Kurt von Trapp	William Pennington
Marta von Trapp	Lily Harnick
Gretl von Trapp	Lyla Turton
Mother Abbess	Leigh Nash

Elsa Schraeder	Rebekah Denton
Max Detweiler	Herb Moore
Rolf Gruber	James Gleeson
Frau Schmidt	Mary Anne Gleeson
Franz	Simon Burgess
Sister Berthe	Bronte Tranter
Sister Sophia	Hannah Fenwick
Sister Margaretta	Amy Hurst

ENSEMBLE

	Arran Abbey
	Emma Bonnar
	Pauline Carr
	Evie Evans
	Gemma Ewen
	Anne Fackey
	Marie Gleave
	Oliver Hankin
	Holly Ranson
	Bianca Tranter

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	Wednesday 26th November 2025
DATE REPORT PUBLISHED	Friday 28th November 2025
ADJUDICATOR ID	NSAI002
NSA LOGO ON POSTER	Yes
NSA IN PROGRAMME	Yes
PROGRAMME CLASS	<<Programme Class>>

THE REVIEW

REVIEW WORD COUNT

1479

STRONGEST ELEMENTS

Powerful Performances

- **Jayne Harnick** as Maria, Jayne delivered a powerful performance, combining emotional depth with confident vocals that created several standout moments.
- **Nuns of Nonnberg Abbey** The ensemble of nuns produced harmonies that were a genuine wow factor. Their blend was strong, controlled and atmospheric, adding a striking musical highlight to the production.

Bold, Intelligent Direction and Structure

- **Izzy Nash** demonstrated bold and intelligent musical direction, shaping the score with clarity and purpose. Her structured approach ensured every vocal element was secure, expressive, and well supported.

Striking and Cohesive Design Choices

- The costume team delivered striking and cohesive design choices that complemented the period and tone of the show.

This was my first time seeing a production by Burtonwood Amateur Music and Drama Society, and honestly, I didn't quite know what to expect. I've always loved the film *The Sound of Music*, so finally getting the chance to watch the story unfold on stage felt special. Thankfully, the production didn't let me down. Under **Leigh Nash's** direction, the company put together a thoughtful and well-organised version of the show that showed real commitment from everyone involved. For a first experience with the society, the standard was genuinely impressive and gave me a good sense of what the group is capable of.

Taking on the enormous role of Maria Rainer, **Jayne Harnick** gave a warm and confident performance. She had an easy, natural way with the children that made their scenes feel relaxed and unforced. I noticed quite a few moments where she subtly supported the younger cast members during tricky sections, which was lovely to see. Her expressions, posture, and the general way she carried herself all fed into a believable character. She acted, sang, and moved with clarity and assurance. Vocally, she showed excellent control and a real emotional range. Her opening of "The Sound of Music" gave both me and my assistant actual goosebumps – not something that happens often.

Jim McMillan delivered a steady, believable Captain von Trapp. His posture and overall demeanour suited the character extremely well, and his accent didn't slip once. He worked particularly nicely with the children, and the scenes near the end had a warmth that felt earned.

His shift from the stricter, closed-off father to the softer, more supportive figure was handled gently and convincingly. His musical numbers were presented with thought and care, and it felt like he had really studied the emotional weight of the character. In the final scenes especially, he brought out the political tension of the story with real sincerity.

Mia Hurst, making her debut with the society as Liesl, gave a promising performance. Her vocals were strong, and she carried the children's numbers with unexpected maturity. She always seemed to know exactly where she should be and moved with a clear sense of purpose. Her dancing was confident too, and she captured Liesl's innocent, dreamy quality quite well. Over time she'll develop a wider emotional palette, but for a first outing with the group, she showed real potential and awareness.

Oliver Matthews brought a lively energy to Friedrich von Trapp. He reacted well to everything happening around him and kept the energy on stage from dipping. His accent stayed consistent, and although he's still growing into his teenage voice, his singing carried well. His sheer enthusiasm for performing was obvious, which made him genuinely enjoyable to watch.

Next were **Faye Cunningham** (Brigitta), **Freya Turton** (Louisa), and **Lily Harnick** (Marta). All three displayed strong reactions, believable accents, and a sense of fun that suited the younger von Trapps perfectly. Their vocals blended well in the group numbers, and they each added their own little spark to the scenes they were part of.

As Kurt, **William Pennington** showed impressive bravery for his first time on stage. He projected well, stood confidently among the family, and managed the dancing with real assurance. His confidence will naturally increase as he builds experience – definitely someone to keep an eye on.

Then there was little **Lyla Turton**, just six years old, who played Gretl and absolutely shone. Her expressions were adorable, she had a bright, endearing presence, and she demonstrated a level of awareness that's unusual for someone her age. She fitted beautifully within the group, and she's clearly a young performer with real promise.

Leigh Nash gave a thoughtful, calm performance as Mother Abbess. Her accent stayed secure throughout, and aside from a brief, visible moment of panic during one of her solos – which she recovered from quickly – she delivered strong vocals. Her scenes with Maria had a warm, grounded feel that added real emotional weight.

Rebekah Denton (Elsa) and **Herb Moore** (Max) were an enjoyable pair. Their comedic timing was nicely judged, and their songs were performed with confidence. They appeared entirely comfortable working together. A little clearer diction from both would have lifted the scenes further, but they still added a lightness that balanced the more serious parts of the story.

James Gleeson gave a well-considered performance as Rolf. In "Sixteen Going on Seventeen", he partnered Liesl confidently, both in dancing and singing. What stood out was his shift from innocent delivery boy to a more hardened young Nazi – it felt natural, and he handled the darker turn with care. He's definitely someone with potential for larger roles.

Mary Anne Gleeson brought sharp, well-timed humour to Frau Schmidt. She reacted quickly to others and formed natural connections in every scene. A little more projection at times would have helped, but overall she supported the pacing of her scenes well and kept the humour from tipping into exaggeration.

Simon Burgess delivered a clean and focused performance as Franz. His stern manner suited the character, and he kept his accent consistent from start to finish. He always seemed to know exactly where he needed to be. His transition from dutiful butler to the more intimidating Nazi presence later in the story was handled with surprising ease.

Bronte Tranter (Sister Berthe), **Hannah Fenwick** (Sister Sophia), and **Amy Hurst** (Sister Margaretta) worked smoothly together. Their expressions and stage presence were confident, and they interacted in a way that created a believable convent environment. Their harmonies were particularly solid and added real musical depth.

The ensemble, made up of **Arran Abbey, Emma Bonnar, Pauline Carr, Evie Evans, Gemma Ewen, Anne Fackey, Marie Gleave, Oliver Hankin, Holly Ranson** and **Bianca Tranter** added a real depth to the production. They supported each scene with thoughtful background acting, helping to build the world of the story without ever pulling focus. Their harmonies were particularly beautiful, lifting the musical numbers and adding richness to the overall sound. As a group, they contributed greatly to the flow and atmosphere of the show.

The direction from **Leigh** and **Izzy Nash** kept the show moving steadily. Scene changes flowed sensibly, and there was always something happening on stage to maintain interest. The production as a whole reflected their natural ability to guide a cast.

Musical direction from **Izzy Nash**, with support from **Jayne Harnick**, resulted in strong, confident vocals across the board. It was clear that each musical moment had been shaped with care.

Choreography by **Bronte Tranter** suited the cast well and supported the story without overwhelming it. "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" stood out in particular for its charm and confidence.

The sound and lighting team — **Nathan Higham, Izzy Nash**, and **Mike Nash** — kept the design simple but effective. Atmospheric touches like the lightning strikes worked especially well. The use of projected images to the right of the stage also added atmosphere and set the tone for the scene. A few cues were off, but considering it was opening night, these things tend to settle quickly.

Set changes by **Gary Cunningham** and **Ant Gleeson** were handled smoothly overall. A few transitions were slightly slow, but given the limitations of a smaller stage space, it was completely understandable. The set itself was simplistic but effective, with a permanent garden area that worked well throughout. The use of a flower-covered board added colour and helped establish the tone of outdoor scenes. The moving stained-glass windows used during the nuns' sequences were also a strong addition, creating a clear hint in atmosphere and setting. The

props were well chosen and suited to the period of the piece, supporting the authenticity of each scene. Every item used on stage felt appropriate and helped maintain the overall style of the production.

Costumes created by **Rebekah Denton, Marie Gleave, Mary Anne Gleeson,** and **Leah Turton** were well thought out and fitting for the period. Each character's look felt carefully chosen, and the children's curtain-made outfits were a particularly charming touch.

Front of house created a warm, friendly atmosphere right from the start. They were helpful, welcoming, and ensured everyone found their seats without any fuss. There was a real homely feeling when walking into the venue, which set the tone nicely.

Overall, *The Sound of Music* was heartfelt and well put together, showcasing the dedication of Burtonwood Amateur Music and Drama Society. The cast received a well-deserved standing ovation, and they should be incredibly proud of what they accomplished on stage. A big thank-you to Chairwoman **Bianca Tranter** and to **Izzy Nash** for the warm hospitality – it was lovely speaking with you both and getting to know your group better. Their family-centred ethos really shines through, both on stage and behind the scenes. I wish you all the very best for the rest of the run and for everything the society creates in the future. I'm genuinely looking forward to seeing what comes next.

PHOTOGRAPHS









PROGRAMME

Burtonwood Amateur Music And Drama Society
presents

The Sound of Music

Music by RICHARD ROGERS
Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN
Book by HOWARD LINDSAY and RUSSEL CROUSE
Suggested by "The Trapp Family Singers" by Maria Augusta Trapp

26th - 29th November
2025