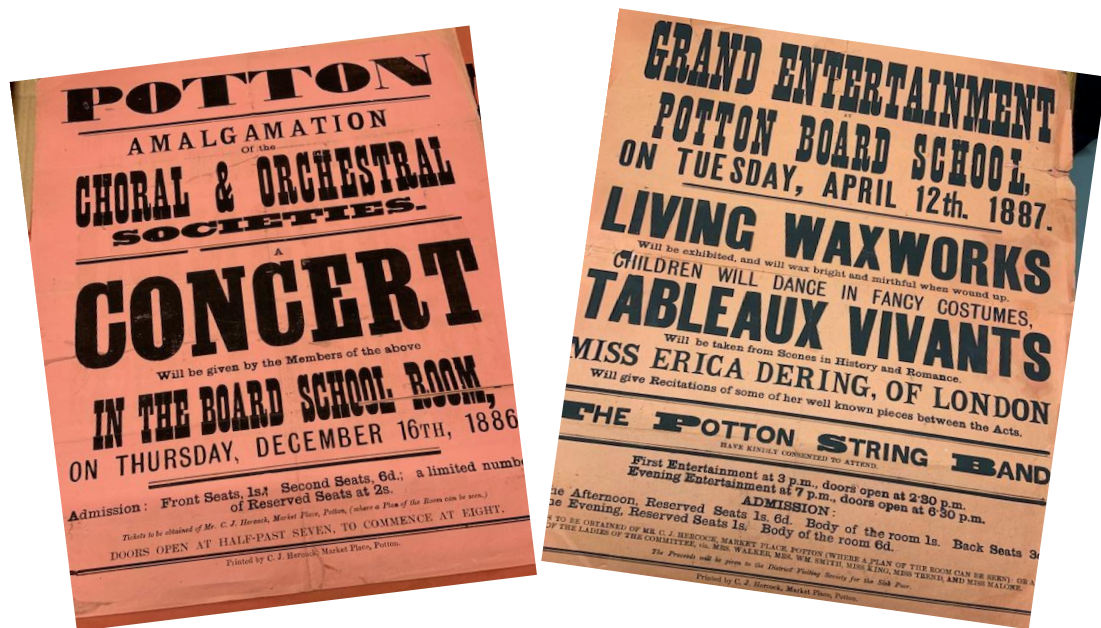


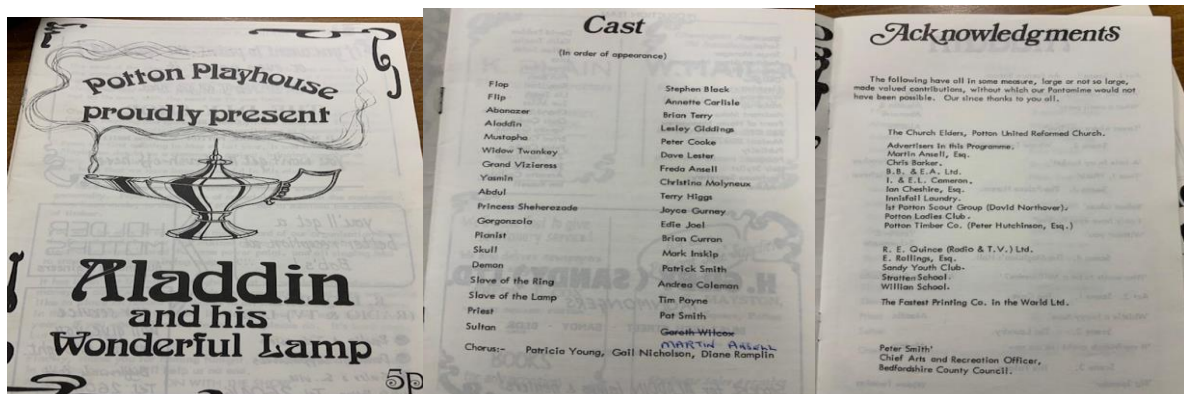
## A DRAMATIC HISTORY OF TALENTED POTTONIANS

Potton has a long history of performing arts from choirs and choruses to amateur dramatics to tableaux and living waxworks!

The earliest record is a poster dating from 1886 with an orchestral performance taking place in the Board School Room. The following year local people were treated to Living Waxworks and Tableau Vivants performed by school children. Reserved seats cost the grand total of 1s 6d or you could stand at the back for 3d.



Potton Playhouse started out as an offshoot of the Flower and Vegetable Show in 1975. A Panto was suggested as a way to raise funds for the show, and members were recruited via a column ad in the back of the Biggleswade Chronicle - 'Potton Panto Needs You'.



The Panto, Aladdin, was performed in the Congregational Hall which would become the home of Potton Playhouse for many years. It was supposed to be a one-off but was such a success that the cast and crew made it official and formed the Potton Playhouse.

The Panto was sponsored by local business only too happy to help out. Fundraising efforts included a jumble sale, coffee morning, disco and even a sponsored swim!

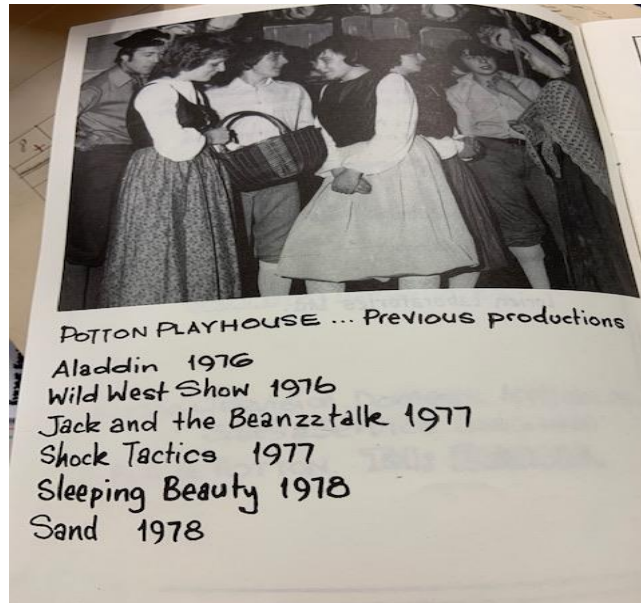
There were two caravans out back for make-up and costumes and the cast had to walk through ice to get onto the stage. It wasn't all plain sailing – during the first musical rehearsal the electric organ and kettle shared the same plug so everything stopped for tea!

More shows followed thick and fast, the first being a Wild West evening complete with a break for sausage, mash and beans.



The state of the toilets in the Congregational Hall was a concern – they were so bad in 1978 the Environmental Health Officer refused a licence until they were improved.





POTTON PLAYHOUSE ... Previous productions

- Aladdin 1976
- Wild West Show 1976
- Jack and the Beanstalk 1977
- Shock Tactics 1977
- Sleeping Beauty 1978
- Sand 1978

It was a busy first few years. Special effects astounded audiences, with optical special effects in Cinderella and a bridge that turned in Wizard of Oz.

The Potton Playhouse went on to win some awards starting in 1986 at the All England Theatre Festival where Philip Odell won best actor and Maggi Cheshire best supporting actress.

Potton Playhouse started involving children almost from the onset, after a few years running holiday clubs which culminated in a performance.



The Potton Playhouse is very much alive and thriving and is always on the look out for new members. We don't just want actors – if you fancy helping out backstage, trying your hand at costumes or set design or even front of house, come and join us. We're also a social lot with regular get togethers.

Our next production, once we are allowed to perform again, will be the comedy *Out of Focus*.

For more details take a look at our Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/pottonplayhouse](https://www.facebook.com/pottonplayhouse) or contact Marcia on 0771 3739519

