

# **MACK and MABEL**

**Jerry Herman's musical**

**Poole & Parkstone Musical Theatre Society**

**May 2001**

JERRY Herman's musical about the relationship between a film studio boss and his brightest star flouts convention by not providing an ending in which people live happily ever after – but no matter. The enthusiasm and pizzazz that P&P have put into this production ensures that no-one is likely to be downcast as they leave the theatre.

It is a superbly-staged show with plenty going for it. Nick Guy is ideally cast as Mack Sennett, and Sarah Chapman brings a touching, wistful vulnerability to the role of Mabel Normand, with other roles also well-played.

The music, under musical director John Stringer, is lively and Pat Donovan's direction brings out the story's humour and pathos. But where the show particularly scores is in Mike Capri's stunning chorus choreography, which is absolutely outstanding and a joy to watch.

Sets and costumes are also impressive and perfectly evoke the early 1900s - so it is a pity that no-one thought to dress the scene shifters in similar fashion. They were frequently required to move sets in full view of the audience while the company was on stage, and their ordinary clothing looked jarringly out of place. And they really should watch those sight lines when waiting in the wings!

Linda Kirkman

Courtesy of the Bournemouth Daily Echo.