

A stop-gap, but an OK stop-gap

One Singular Sensation Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society

THIS prolific group's latest show at Chelmsford's Civic Theatre served as a stop-gap between productions - and it showed.

It was a thoroughly entertaining evening of songs from stage and screen.

And while some were so well performed that it brought a tear to the eye, others were clearly under-rehearsed.

But no matter. The singers were obviously having a good time - after a shaky start - and they swept you along with them.

Highlights included wonderful performances from Kim Anderson with the classic Send in the Clowns and Kirstie Wooldridge belting out Ain't it Good from Children of Eden.

But while they have more impressive female singers than they know what to do

with, the male talent is not quite so obvious. Barry Hester was as reliable as ever with impressive vocals and a real connection with the audience during Minnie the Moocher.

But an all-male version of Up Where We Belong was toe-curlingly embarrassing. Perhaps they were distracted by the truly appalling pink shirts they had been forced to wear.

David Pridige proved there may be hope for the boys during a touching duet with Christie Booth and Neil Laker made the most of his two minutes in the spotlight during the Beatles Medley.

The whole evening was a cross between a Pop Idol audition, a karaoke competition and a sing-along around the old Joanna - with a range of performances to match.

A perfectly pleasant way to spend an evening, but not a patch on the slick, stylish productions this group is known for. Don't miss All 4 One in the Spring to see what they are really made of.

NIKI EVES