

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the “**Stoke Youth**” presentation of the award winning musical “**HONK!**” This is the first production under our new name, **Stoke Youth Musical Theatre Company** and it is a major step for us as we stand alone without the backing of our founders, **The City of Stoke on Trent Amateur Operatic Society**, which unfortunately disbanded earlier this year. Thanks to the determined effort of committee and cast members, past and present, we are proud to be in the position to continue, to introduce musical theatre to the youth of North Staffordshire.

We are particularly delighted that **Jackie Trent** has agreed to be our Patron. As an acclaimed singer and song writer, Jackie has a busy international schedule but maintains close contact with her home city and is a great supporter of **Stoke Youth**. Furthermore, she continues to sponsor her “**Scholarship Award**”, a bursary offered annually to a member of the cast who shows exceptional talent, to assist them in attending a Performing Arts College.

Our production this year, “**HONK**” – is a modern musical based on the story of the Ugly Duckling. The lively score and witty dialogue won the show the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Musical in 2000, and now makes it's local debut under the very capable direction of Craig Armstrong, assisted by David Morrey. Our first class orchestra is led by Laura Bowler; this is Laura's debut as Musical Director, although she is certainly not new to the Company, having played a number of leading roles in past Society productions. Staging is under the experienced direction of Phil Callan with original set design by Charlotte Johnson.

On behalf of the Company I would like to sincerely thank the production team for their efforts and dedication. For this first show it is also particularly important to give special thanks to the “behind the scenes” helpers, stage crew, make-up, chaperones, bar staff etc.

Their kind and generous support is much appreciated.

The cast of “**HONK**” have been rehearsing since June. Their determination, commitment and talent do them great credit and result in a performance of the highest quality.....

Sit back and enjoy the show.

**Paul Hassall**                      **Chairman**