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If you have not visited us before - we should advise you that the store is in Stanway on the western outskirts of Colchester. It is not easy to find so please make sure you bring this map with you. Better still, telephone and we will be pleased to send you precise directions and a more detailed map.

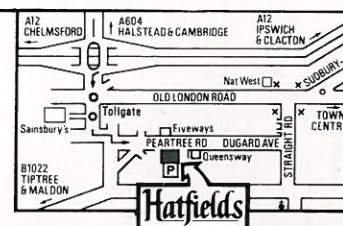
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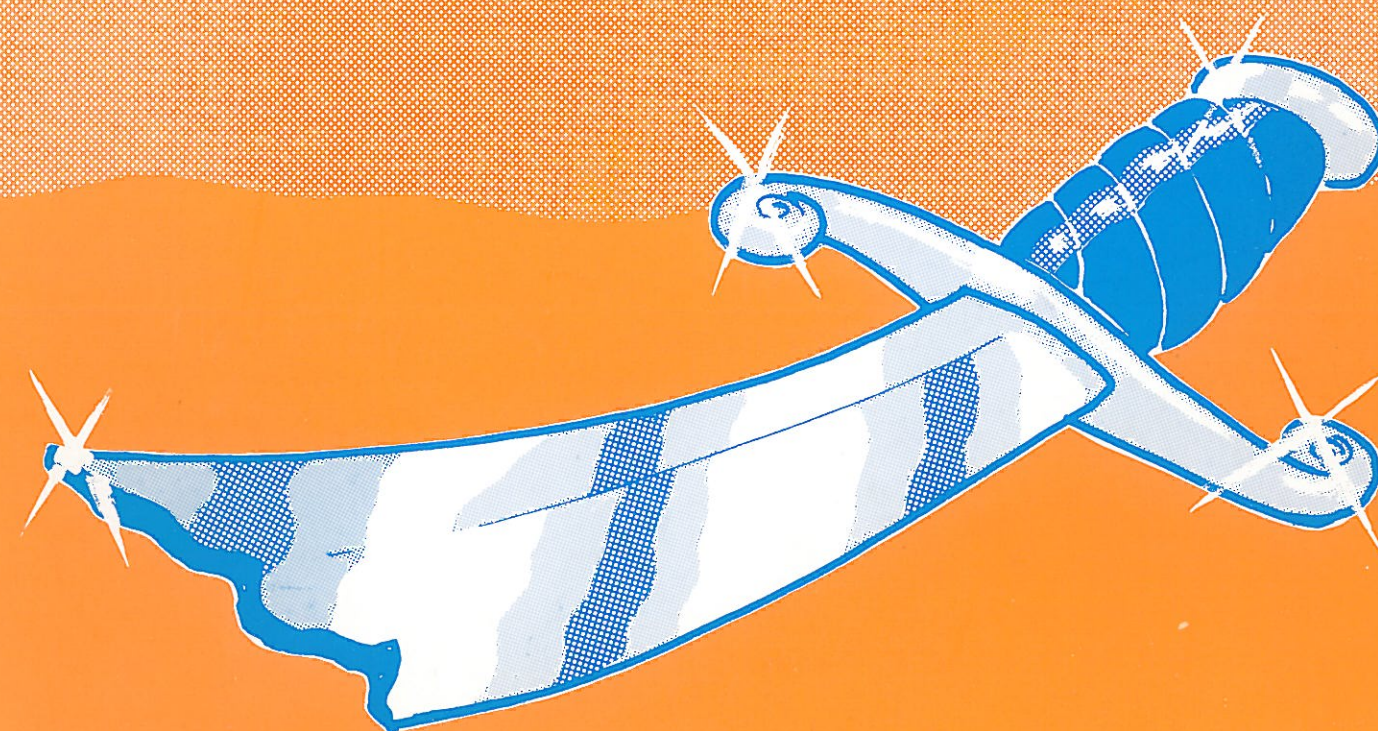
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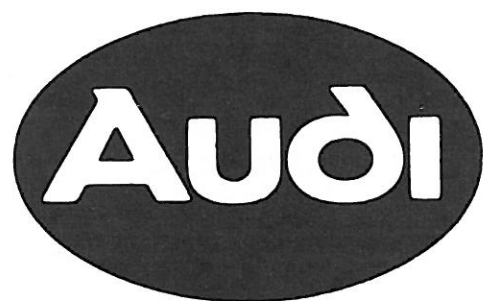
The Desert Song



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presents

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and Frank Mandel

Music by
Sigmund Romberg



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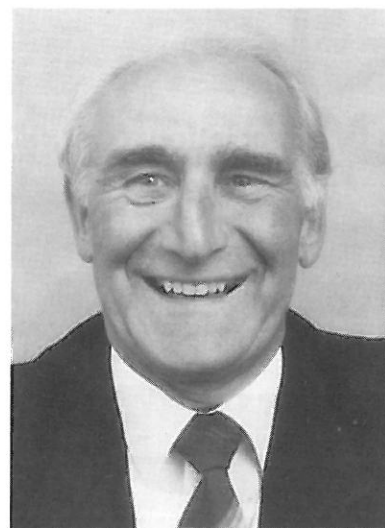
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Once again we warmly welcome Ray Jeffery to direct and Andrew Denyer to conduct "The Desert Song". Is it really "only" 38 years since it was last produced in Colchester? (Not that I remember it, of course!)

I have, in the past, mentioned a number of "unseen heroes" working backstage. This year I would particularly like to mention Valerie Massey and Angela Rankin who have spent many hours rehearsing the Principals and Chorus during the absence of the Director.

Rehearsals for CO2's production "West Side Story" are now in full swing under the direction of Ray Jeffery, and the baton of Peter Humphrey. Do come and see the Show in September at the Colchester Institute.

Finally, on behalf of Colchester Operatic, my sincere thanks to you, the audience, for your continued support.

John Enfield
Chairman

THE STORY

The scene is set around a typical garrison outpost in French Morocco under the command of General Birabeau, whose chief assignment is the suppression of the lawless activity of Riff tribesmen led by an elusive character known as the Red Shadow.

Captain Paul Fontaine, an officer attached to the garrison, falls for the charms of a native girl, Azuri.

Life in the garrison centres around General Birabeau's house, and at the time of the story Margot Bonvalet becomes a guest at the General's house, and her future is understood to be linked with that of Captain Fontaine.

The General's son, Pierre seems to be a simple fellow who shows little interest in service life, and is consequently a source of embarrassment to his father.

This attitude arouses Margot's sympathy and she tries to persuade Pierre to seek the chivalrous honours of a military career. Realising her failure to change Pierre's outlook Margot affects an admiration for the daring displayed by that elusive character, the Red Shadow. At this stage a surprise attack is made on the garrison and Margot is carried off to the Harem of Ali Ben Ali. Here she is courted by the Red Shadow whose persistence has completely won her affection.

The Riffs resent their leader's interest in Margot and this resentment reaches a climax when their leader refuses to accept General Birabeau's challenge to single combat. The Red Shadow is outlawed by his men and driven into the desert with only a broken sword.

Azuri, now thrust aside by Fontaine, maliciously seeks revenge on both Paul and General Birabeau, whom she believes to be responsible for the break in her association with Paul. She offers to reveal the identity of the Red Shadow upon payment of a considerable bribe, which the General hands over, and thus learns that Pierre, his own son, is masquerading as the leader of the Riff tribesmen. Unfortunately he has already set a trap for the notorious raiders, and Azuri's motive is now painfully obvious to the General. Pierre, however, successfully evades the ambush and abandons his leadership to receive his father's blessing upon his betrothal to Margot.

Throughout the story Benjamin Kidd, a war correspondent and Susan, his self-appointed assistant, experience a series of trying adventures which provide the comic relief.

We invite you to join the

SUPPORTERS GROUP

which continues to expand. Members of the Group have the right to book up to four seats for our Productions after the Society Members, but before the tickets are offered for sale to the general public.

We believe that our Supporters Group is ensuring that Colchester Operatic Society will enjoy the continued support of those people who have been our mainstay for many years, as well as that of the general public.

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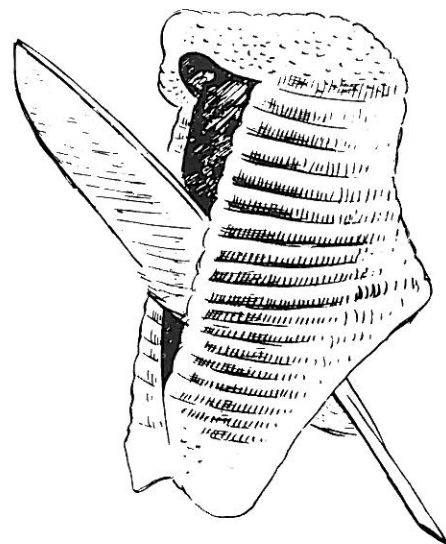
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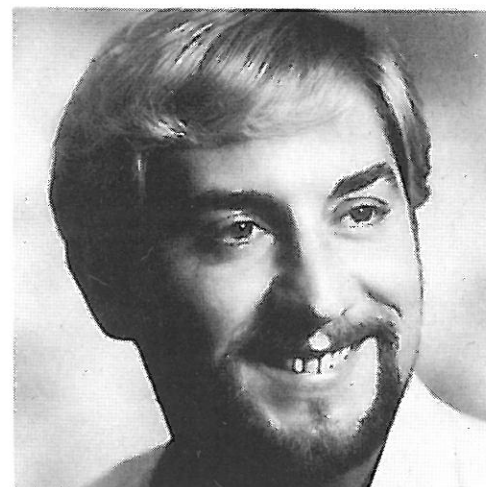
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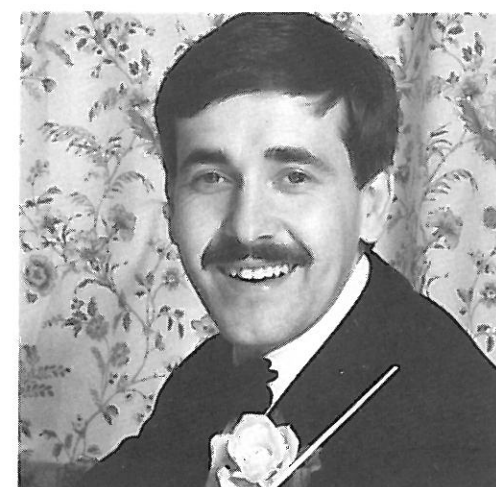
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THE DESERT SONG



RAY JEFFERY
Director



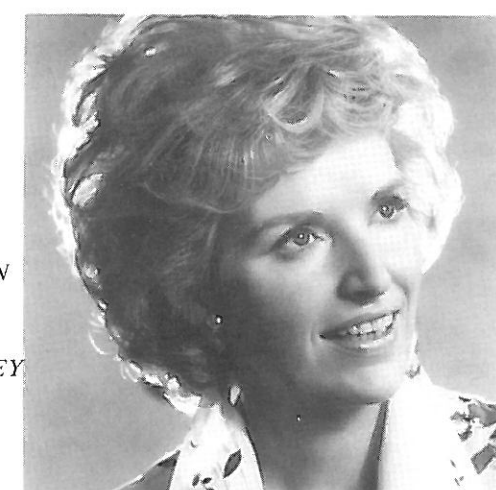
ANDREW DENYER
Musical Director

PRODUCTION TEAM

Entire Production by RAY JEFFERY



ANGELA RANKIN



VAL MASSEY

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Director's Assistants - ANGELA RANKIN
VAL MASSEY
Chorus Mistress - VAL MASSEY
Accompanist - PETER HUMPHREY
Rehearsal Pianist - JOHN WOLTON

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

1925	Gondoliers	1951	The Student Prince	1971	Die Fledermaus
1926	Mikado	1952	Harmony Hill	1972	Mikado
1927	Princess Ida	1953	Show Boat	1973	Robert and Elizabeth
1929	Iolanthe	1954	Brigadoon	1974	Orpheus in the Underworld
1930	Yeoman of the Guard	1955	Pink Champagne	1975	The Merry Widow
1931	Trial by Jury and Pirates of Penzance	1956	Vagabond King	1976	My Fair Lady
	Les Cloches de Corneville	1957	White Horse Inn	1977	The Great Waltz
1932	Quaker Girl	1958	Summer Song	1978	Fiddler on the Roof
1933	Mikado	1959	The Merry Widow	1979	The King & I
1934	Gondoliers	1960	Song of Norway	1980	Show Boat
1935	Merrie England	1961	Naughty Marietta	1981	Hello Dolly
1936	Duchess of Danzig	1962	The Dancing Years	1982	Camelot
1937	Vagabond King	1963	Kismet	1983	Half a Sixpence
1938	Country Girl	1964	The Most Happy Fella	1984	Brigadoon
1946	Beggar's Opera	1965	They Came to a City	1985	Guys & Dolls
1947	Tom Jones	1965	The Student Prince	1985	Carousel
1947	The Arcadians	1966	Hay Fever	1986	Pirates of Penzance
1948	Waltz Dream	1966	La Belle Helene	1986	The Sound of Music
1949	New Moon	1967	Carousel	1987	South Pacific
1950	The Wind and Rain	1968	Count of Luxemboug	1987	Oliver
1950	The Desert Song	1969	Oklahoma		
		1970	Kiss Me Kate		

THE DESERT SONG

CAST

Sid El Kar	...	...	...	...	...	...	Derek Massey
Hadji	...	...	...	...	...	...	John Enfield
Neri	...	...	...	...	...	...	Gill Plumtree
Benjamin Kidd	...	...	...	...	...	...	Peter Smith
Capt. Paul Fontaine	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mark Fincham
Margot Bonvalet	...	...	...	...	...	...	Dawn King
General Birabeau	...	...	...	...	...	...	Derek Collins
Pierre Birabeau	...	...	...	...	...	...	John Davies
Susan	...	...	...	...	...	...	Sally Cook
Edith	...	...	...	...	...	...	Belinda Pedder
Azuri	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mandy Rosoman
Ali Ben Ali	...	...	...	...	...	...	Andrew Jeffers
Clementina	...	...	...	...	...	...	Janet Collins
Mindar	...	...	...	...	...	...	Chris Austin
Hassi	...	...	...	...	...	...	David King
Lieut. La Vergne	...	...	...	...	...	...	Chris Barrell
Sergeant De Boussac	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mark Leggett

Riffs and French Soldiers

Chris Austin	David King
Chris Barrelll	Mark Leggett
Andrew Cook	Derek Massey
Jason Davis	David Moye
Roger Dobson	Andrew Parker
John Enfield	Nigel Smith
Mark Fincham	Colin Thorne
Andrew Jeffers	Bob Wilson

Spanish Girls and Soldiers' Wives

Debbie Andrews	Brenda Green	Sarah Pawsey
Jenny Broom	Sally Hammond	Belinda Pedder
Janet Collins	Clare Joseph	Angela Rankin
Lin Curtis	Sandra Moorhouse	Ann Rozier
Sharon Cook	Nicola Massey	Barbara Ryan
Jill Enfield	Jayne McKerchar	Jenny Spurgeon
Debbie Gifford	Sue Nicholson	Jennifer Woolsey

Azuri Dancers

Janet Collins	Sharon Cook
Clare Joseph	Nicola Massey

STAGE MANAGEMENT

For the Mercury Theatre:

Chris Snow, Jim Bowman (Chief Electrician), Rob Fenner (Lighting Design), Andy Shaw, Jonathan Barden, Lucy Nightingale, James Monro

For Colchester Operatic Society:

David Sage, John Andrews, Bernard Polley, Mike Spurgeon, Graham Thompson.

Prompter:

Marion Spurgeon.

Props:

Beryl Balls, Karen Balls, Gill Edwards, June Harris, Sue Joyce

Make-up Team:

Gil Gray, Ann Dye, Margaret Norfolk.

Wardrobe:

Mary Fletcher, Margaret Pedder.

Costumes:

Theatrical House, Westcliff-on-Sea.

Scenery:

Designed by Christopher Snow from an idea by Ray Jeffery; constructed by David Sage and Mike Spurgeon, and painted in the Mercury Paintshop.

Please Note: Taking photographs during the performance is not permitted.

ACT ONE

Northern Africa 1925

Scene 1 – The Retreat of the Red Shadow in the Riff's Hide-out

Scene 2 – Near General Birabeau's House

Scene 3 – General Birabeau's Garden

ACT TWO

Scene 1 – The Harem of Ali Ben Ali

Scene 2 – Outside the Harem

Scene 3 – The Room of the Silken Couch

Scene 4 – The Edge of the Desert – at dawn

Scene 5 – The Courtyard of General Birabeau's House

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Society expresses grateful thanks to all who have contributed, and in particular:—

The Society's Non-Playing Members for their loyal support in Publicity, Programme Sales and essential duties.

Mick Hemstedt for programme cover.

The Arena Sports and Leisure Club for rehearsal facilities.

Stephen Goody for props.

Staff and Management of the Mercury Theatre.

Peter Nason for Front of House and Programme Photographs.

Loan of props from Chelmsford Operatic Society and the Mercury Theatre.

Materials from "Doreen's" of West Mersea.

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and

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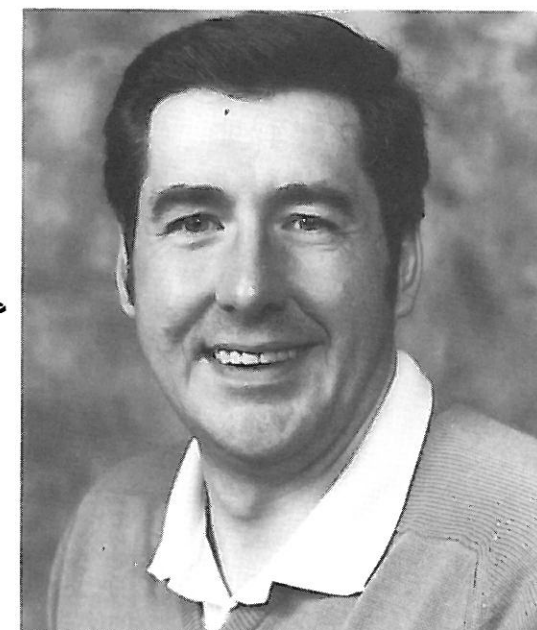


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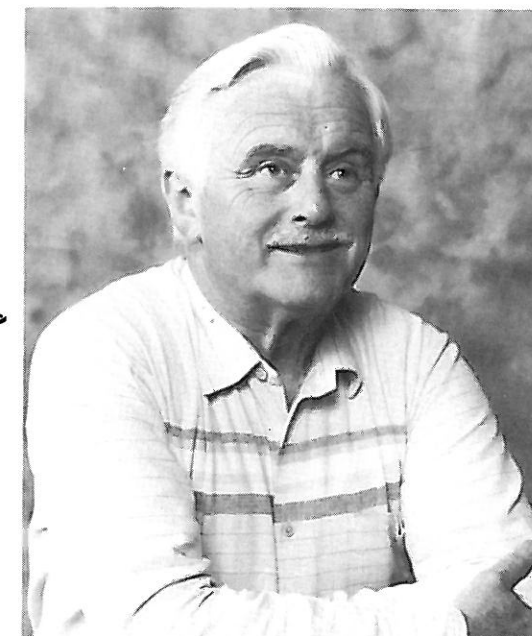
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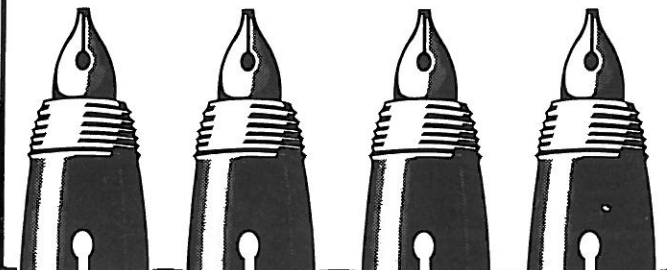
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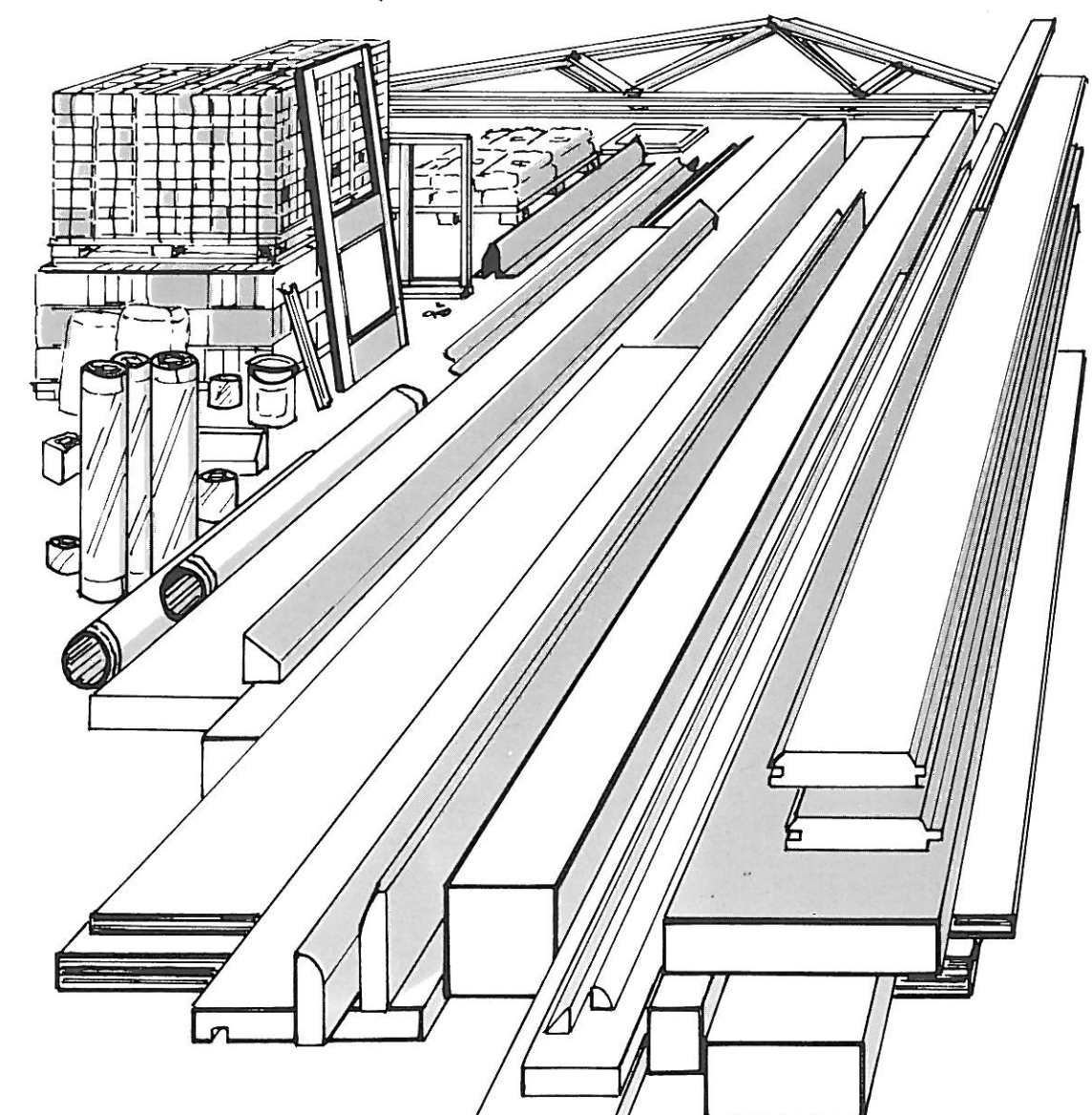
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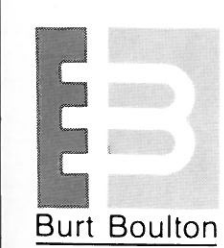
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