

# Review leisure

## Gang show all in the preparation

SCOUTS and Guides from across St Albans are getting ready for their big moment when they take to the stage in the 2005 Gang Show at the Alban Arena this week.

Promising more talent than The X Factor and Pop Idol put together, the show runs from tonight (Wednesday) until Saturday and every show has sold out.

Audiences can expect the usual thrilling, action-packed extravaganzas of song, dance and comedy sketches all enthusiastically performed by local youngsters.

The Gang Show has come a long way since its wartime roots, with today's shows including chart hits and numbers from West End shows.

Now in its 26th year, the show has a cast of 125 St Albans Guides, Scouts and Explorers and is a thoroughly professional affair, attracting loyal fans from around the country, and even abroad.

by Sally-Anne Johnson

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Box office manager Nicola Wells said: "It's the same every year.

Tickets always go quickly and audiences return year after year, with some travelling from as far as Canada and the United States."

The show has 128 cast members, aged from 11 to 25 years old, who over the last four-and-a-half months have attended over 150 hours of rehearsals to learn their lines and perfect their singing and dancing.

They will perform 40 songs and 32 dance routines, and the wardrobe for the show consists of 18,000 items.

The lighting rig alone takes over three days to programme and uses over ten kilometres of cabling.

This year's producer is David Barker, who was invited to take the helm after many

years of involvement with the event.

He said: "We have an amazing team of people behind the show.

"In show week we have over 100 adults who help with sound, lighting and set building.

"It's all about what the youngsters get out of it, the friendships and the amazing sense of achievement.

"It's not every day that people that age perform in front of 850 people.

"People who come to see the show for the first time always go away saying they didn't realise how good it was going to be.

"They have an image of something taking place in a draughty scout hut but they're always gobsmacked by the variety and how professional it is.

"Audiences can expect a real rollercoaster ride of entertainment."



King song: Members of the Gang Show pay tribute to the music of Elvis.

Picture 2055337: SIMON DE TROY/WHITE