

# Ali Baba pantomime marks 10th year

By Ruth Patterson  
Stouffville This Month

'Open Sesame!' The tenth anniversary of a traditional English pantomime by the young people of Christ Church Anglican will reveal gold and treasures, bags of money, intrigue, treachery and hilarity.

*Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* hits the stage Feb. 28 and March 1. The story, from *Tales of the Arabian*

*Nights*, has been adapted by church member Charlie Parker to include comedy, song, dance, satire and local, national and international humour.

Stouffville may lack a proper theatre and still have to look enviously towards Uxbridge and its wonderful old Music Hall, but English pantomime is alive and well in this town. Since its first performance of *Aladdin* in 1994, the Christ Church group has

gone from strength to strength, producing ever more elaborate performances by ever larger casts, always at Latham Hall, the closest thing to a theatre that this town can offer. Joe Sweeney has some special effects tricks up his sleeve for the anniversary production and Nancy Feasby and Susan Fockler have created some marvellous Middle Eastern costumes. Audiences will be

deceived by the duplicitous Jahandar, Grand Vizier of Baghdad, who masquerades as a dedicated public servant while working to take over the city with his motley band of thieves of various nationalities. "And most of the time, these thieves are on strike, not unlike our own public servants," said Peter Markle, who gleefully plays this evil role.

Theatregoers will also meet Ali Baba's elaborate-

ly dressed mother, played by scriptwriter Charlie Parker. "The unusual tradition of males playing female roles has its origins in theatrical history, when women were prohibited from appearing onstage," said Mr. Parker. "Nowadays, the role of the Dame is the most showy

part of traditional pantomime productions, and this year's will be no different."

The young people of Christ Church Anglican, who have been rehearsing since September for the special anniversary production, will play all other

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Christ Church Youth Group will hold its 10th annual pantomime Feb. 28 and March 1 at Latham Hall. Among the cast of *Ali Baba* are: back row, left to right: Amber Daniels, Laura Probst, Russell Patterson, Sara Peters, Jenn Tubb, Vanessa Fockler, Rachel Peters, Lara Feasby. Front row: Chad Wallace, Rachel Wallace, Rebecca Parry.



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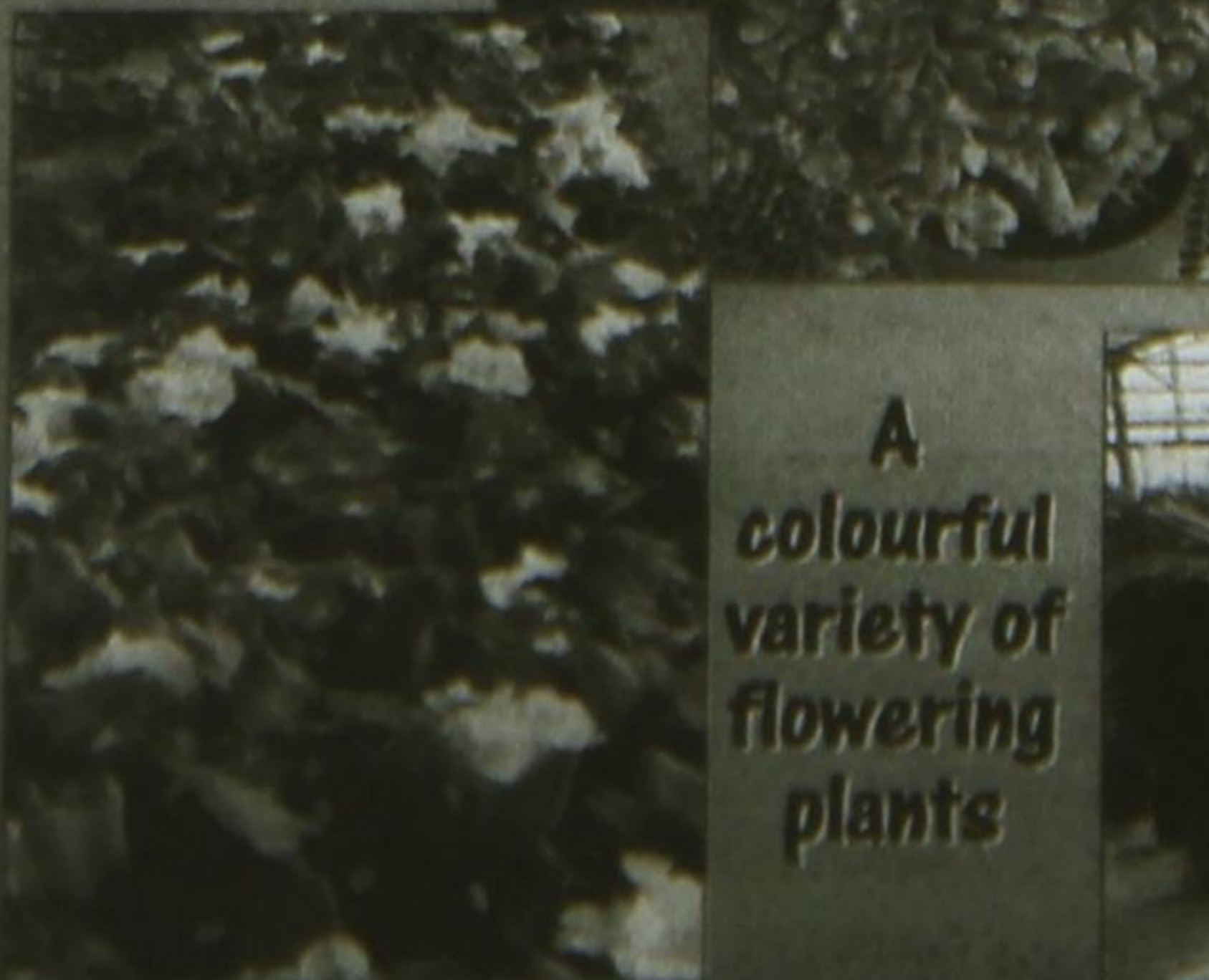
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