

POOP POOP

Well it has happened again, that Shawford magic which is THE Pantomime. If any readers missed it then make a note in your forward diaries for January 2019. This year Toad of Toad Hall was very ground breaking as it was performed in the round (or more accurately in the dissected Square!) This gave the set designers the chance to use the gap as a river for brilliant rowing boat, AND as a road for speeding car pursued by fantastic police car, but to start at the beginning, the clever set with beautiful woodland backcloth on one side and an arch leading to mole hole and later badger set on the other was attractive from both sides of the divide.



Enter the Newscasters, Simon Theobalds and Nick Wells, keeping us wittily in touch throughout with the "goings on" both appearing later as Jailer and busty Bargewoman.

The main characters Toad, Ratty, Mole and Badger, played by Marcus Whitfield, Jon Hawkins, Sheila Forbes and Jenny Walmsley, each captured the essence of these much loved animals perfectly.



Marcus, who also co-operated with Simon Theobalds in the writing of the script, threw himself into the part of the ebullient toad with all his charm and charisma, always driving the pace of the performance (as well as the stolen car) which never flagged.

Of course every pantomime needs the baddies to boo and we were extremely well supplied with these in the shape of Weasels, Ferrets and Stoats many of whom turned up as other characters.

Felicity Pennycook, as Willy Weasel, in a kind of RAF uniform was a convincing baddie ably helped by Bryan Green as Steve Stoat and James Marshall as Fred Ferret and then they were well supported by a gang of stoats and weasels, Ella Turner, Freya

Murchison, Lili Chaplin-Rogers, Juliet Russell, Megan Palser and Cecilia Kime, who all sang and played the chorus of wicked ones with huge enthusiasm. Lili turning up again as 2nd Policeman in wonderful police car behind Bryan Green as 1st policeman, who shone in the Court scene as Fat Face.





The Court Scene was fantastic with Anthony Fanshawe as Judge Fingers in wig and red gown, adding humour as well as colour to the proceedings he was well supported by the Usher, Laurel Hurst, helping to get the Toad a very long sentence (71 years!).

Next we saw Toad in prison with the jailer's charming daughter Wendy bringing toast and then a washerwoman aunt to enable the escape of toad. Anthony has now become a washerwoman, divesting himself of his clothes to the Stripper music, a moment much loved and

catcalled by the audience on Friday night. Toad now a rather unconvincing washerwoman trying to get back to toad hall has narrow escapes from police and meets two very attractive rabbits, Mrs Rabbit and Baby Rabbit, with Carol Chaplin-Rogers and Cecilia Kime.

Then the busty Bargewoman and her amazingly talented dancing horse (James Marshall and Sarah Hawkins) who deservedly were a great hit with the audience.



The ending, of course, was happy with the four main animals overcoming the wicked weasels and the Judge and regaining Toad Hall.....HURRAH!

Now who has had their backs to the wall all evening? Why have they not been mentioned before? Because one leaves the best till last? Well, yes, you've guessed THE MUSICIANS – Martin Harris, David Woodward, Gordon Munro, Fin O'Sullivan and Richard Croker. What would the pantomime be without Martin writing the songs and arranging all the music? Very quiet! Very dull! Thank you to all of them.

This great production was directed by Eileen Gorrod and Sarah Hawkins, Not mentioned on the programme the really beautiful backcloth (?Side cloth?) was painted by Sarah Hawkins.

The invisible crew: Stage Manager – Simon Forbes, Prompt – Pam Theobalds, Designer – David Woodward, Construction –Mark Hegan, Box Office - Kate Kime, Make Up – Jude Vallis and Bee Welch, Front of House – Mel Panario and Daniel Ruiz. Lit by Kevin Hughes.

We wish Emily Gaul who ran the refreshment in aid of a VSO project a successful three months in Nairobi.

TMB

Age Concern

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- Freephone advice line
- Home visits
- Funding for boiler repairs or replacements
- Provision of electric oil filled radiators
- Grants for winter emergencies
- Home Fire Safety Visits
- Help to switch energy provider

To contact Hitting the Cold Spots: Tel: 0800 804 8601

Email: staywarm@environmentcentre.com

Website: www.hants.gov.uk/cold-spots