



MENU

[Home](#) / [Regions](#) / [Wales & Ireland](#) / [Show Reports](#) / Once Upon A Time In Pantoland

Once Upon A Time In Pantoland

DATE	28th January 2024
SOCIETY	Aberdyfi Players
VENUE	Neuadd Dyfi
TYPE OF PRODUCTION	Pantomime
DIRECTOR	Angie Sykes and Su Tacey
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Lisa Daley Allan
CHOREOGRAPHER	Sarah Verity Gibbons and Penny Gibbons.

Report

Author: Jackie Titley

A quote from Louis Hiatt, Chairman:

"The magic of pantomime goes beyond the stage; it's in our hearts, bringing families, friends and neighbours together in jubilant harmony. Our production team have not only entertained audiences but also served as a catalyst for fostering bonds and nurturing the spirit of togetherness within our close-knit community."

When you look at the credits in the programme plus the cast there are so many people involved both on and off the stage. We felt at home and comfortable as soon as we entered Neuadd Dyfi. We are also made very welcome, especially by Desmond George, who often, along with the company, has lots of new technical ideas to extend opportunities. The skills from all joined together to produce this panto. There were youngsters from the age of 4 through to 'older' members.

This year the Spirit of Pantomime (Alison Sayes) was flying above the performers. What a wonderful way to open the show; of course she was the good fairy. She actually appeared to be quite comfortable and delivered all of her lines perfectly.

There was beautiful scenery plus brightly coloured market stalls and characters from lots of pantos: Peter Pan, Jack and The Beanstalk, Snow White, Hansel and Gretel and many others. We noticed many as the show progressed. There was also a working fountain on the stage.



tiny policemen under the watchful eye of P.C. Pete Potter (Bethan Edwards). She gave a fun performance. Baxter The Dog Sam James) had amazing make-up and was a big help to P.C. Potter. Not stopping at policemen, the youngsters performed as little kittens and did a well-choreographed "Singing In The Rain" number with their rainbow brollies and yellow sou'westers. They also did a brilliant Matilda" song and dance wearing appropriate blazers. The Fairy Grandmother (Maureen Owen) in Hogwarts outfit. It was notall over as the youngsters were also Ghouls Ghosts and Skeletons in the opening of Act 2. There was another opportunity to fly the Ghosts too in the "He's Behind You" sketch.

Tommy Tickle (Louis Hiatt), a part that Louis revelled in and which was full of jokes and laughter. Tilly Tickle (Leila Hiatt) enjoyed competition with Tommy, swapping jokes etc. Dame Tiffany Tickle (David Gosney) wore costumes comfortably. I loved the sunflower dress, on top of that he sang well. King Charming (Ed Moss) had very clear speech and appeared to be pitch perfect and an excellent voice. He and Tommy Tickle still managed to add extra laughter throughout the panto. He had a very funny wheelbarrow nonsense incident – he was looking for his lost Princess "Cinderella". Postal Worker (Meurig Lumley) was able to send up couriers and air mail. Up to date jokes.

Mouldywart (Su Tacey) had great costume and make-up and didn't immediately get lots of 'boos' but it didn't take long. In contrast, to P.C. Potter she had Snitch The Cat (Honey Hiatt), lovely make-up and real feline body language. Fancy wanting to take laughter away from the world, a complete contrast to their previous panto characters. There was a very clever costume change from witch to a happy person.

With so many characters it is impossible to mention everyone who played their parts with gusto. People performing or back-stage have wonderful opportunities to learn the craft of theatre. We are not only dependant on those on stage but also the technicians. It was a pleasure to be introduced to Brendon Hansford, a young boy on lighting. Obviously talented already. The music under the baton of Lisa Daley-Allan was both modern and suitable and enhanced the panto.

Suffice to say that the Aberdyfi pantos are very popular both for their community and far and wide.

Well done everyone. I am looking forward to the next one.

ADDRESS

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