

Jack and the Beanstalk

Author: Jackie Titley Information

Date

31st January 2025

Society

Aberdyfi Players

Venue

Neuadd Dyfi

Type of Production

Pantomime

Director

Angie Sykes

Musical Director

Lisa Daley Allan

Choreographers

Sarah Verity, Penny Gibbons, Leila Hiatt

Visiting Aberdyfi is one interesting event even before the Pantomime. Lots of busy, smiling welcoming people, all with their own tasks or audience. The programme sports many pages, principal cast and childrens' groups ranging from 7 to 11 yrs with their chaperones; the Band with Lisa Daley-Allan MD keeping them in order, even when playing their cazoos; supporting cast, youth chorus, production team set designers; the list is endless.

As a celebration of their 30th anniversary there was a black tie event. Ian and I are always made very welcome.

Now to the Panto. Jack and the Beanstalk was their first Pantomime and I guess things have moved on since then. The staging and technical have really developed and I sit there wondering what it will be this time. The technical team are to be congratulated along with Des George who lets his enthusiasm spill over to everyone.

Even before the show one of the pianists could be seen knitting for charity while waiting!

The opening scene was of the village of Pennyfarthing, a very pretty village with scenery to match. The children were all in green satin outfits – very cute with several changes through the show, gold, bright t-shirts, even cows and sheep being auctioned by King Satupon (David Gosney). The Vegetable Fairy (Su Tacey) was confident and funny, always in control. She was quite a match for Fleshcreep (Edward Moss). A big change for him as the baddie. He revelled in it. He and the vegetable Fairy sang a song together, reflecting panto parts from 30 years. They even had past members singing up on stage wearing “costumes”.

Silly Billy (Louis Hiatt) gave us an excellent portrayal which matched his name! He was constantly talking to the audience, not sure how many were “ad libs!”. He manages to raise lots of laughter.

Another comedian was Dame Trott (Bethan Edwards). She manages to encourage the youngsters especially in “gangham” style, and in a duet with the King. She was hilarious when she needed to drag Fleshcreep off the stage while “dead” on the floor. They were both very funny.

Princess Melanie (Leila Hiatt) is certainly following in dad’s footsteps with her comedy. Quite a strong character and nice portrayal of the Princess.

Sergeant Spick (Annette Pullan) and Corporal Span (Jessica Jeavons) played the funny duo to a “T”. Jack (Victoria Croysdale) was quiet at times but certainly showed us how she could climb the beanstalk, and worked well with Daisy the Cow (Sam James and Kelly Watkinson). Always great to see kicking buckets over, etc. They were ‘hoof’ perfect.

Mrs Blodwyn Blunderbore (Cheryl Rendall) supported the Giant’s scene very well. Giant B (Des George and Louis Hiatt) were able to work the huge giant in his chair. Very effective, as I said there is always a technical surprise.

The Dreaded Dragon (Jane Lewis) fooled everyone by her small size. The Dragon fooled us all with another take on the black scene and continued it with the ghost scene along with the Giant’s wife.

We do look forward to the Aberdyfi panto and are never disappointed.

Of course principals are not the only ones on stage. All of the chorus and small scenes play a huge part and they all did. Obviously well rehearsed and great to watch.

I have always admired the Company’s inclusivity. It shows within the chorus and Mark Jones, who have helped one another, so much so that I am impressed by the confidence on stage which will help you in the community.

I haven’t mentioned costumes specifically yet. How you manage all the changes and fittings on stage impresses me.

Well done all of you.

Here’s to next year!

The view in this report are solely of the author.