

Goldilocks and The Three Bears

Wickham Bishops Drama Club

Wickham Bishops Village Hall, 10/01/2025

It is always a treat going to see a Wickham Bishops Panto. Not only am I well looked after by the lovely front of house team but this society produces one excellent production after another – and Goldilocks and the Three Bears was no exception.

Wickham Bishops have a wonderful knack of keeping their Pantomimes family friendly while injecting just the right amount of naughtiness to keep the adult viewers entertained. Innuendo is always done well and they are masters of the double entendre!

The superb Ross McTaggart was in his usual role as the Dame, this time as the cheeky Dame Gertie Dollop. Leading the cast with a command of the stage, excellent comic timing and funny adlibs. He knows just how to work an audience and had everyone in fits of laughter throughout the performance.

Debbie Irby played a suitably daft and very likeable Silly Billy playing opposite Robyn Tyler who made a lovely Goldilocks. Both very enjoyable performances and they worked well together.

Of course every Panto needs a villain and Nick Hewes as Ringmaster Heinkel did a wonderful job. I hadn't seen Nick on stage before but certainly hope to again. A very confident performer with good stage craft. He was supported perfectly by Sue Walker as Snot, his poor servant that the audience instantly liked and felt sorry for.

The three bears were well cast, James Milne as Daddy Bear, Leigh Perry as Mummy Bear and the very sweet James Pugh as Baby Bear. All three sang and moved well and made for a lovely family unit.

There were gasps from the audience as Teresa Paddon entered the stage looking beautiful in her costume as Mystic Sharon. I last saw Teresa in the previous Panto and was so pleased to see how much she has grown in confidence since then. She directed her dialogue nicely to the audience when called for and we were even treated to a little acapella singing!

Completing the line up was Charlie Willett as Baron Wasteland, Goldilocks' father and Paul Welton as Colossus. Charlie can always be relied on to give an experienced performance and while Paul's was only a small role he still got laughs from the audience.

Sets and costumes as always were vibrant, well made and detailed. Congratulations to everyone involved, clearly a lot of work had gone into the visuals. Lighting was

also very good. Sound was fine for dialogue but the volume was too quiet during the group musical numbers with the backing tracks overpowering the singers. If the vocals could be turned up a notch these numbers would pack more of a punch. This is the only area I found lacking and is consistent with my last Panto report so it would be great if this could be addressed going forward.

I understand from the programme that this is the first Panto Pauline Roast has directed. I can only say that I hope Pauline does another! Panto's are harder to master than they appear as the balance between on stage performance between the Players and the consistent breaking of the fourth wall to include the audience is a tricky one to get right. But Wickham Bishops nailed it and coupled with Pauline's colourful vision and direction the result was funny and heart warming – for me the two most important elements in any Panto.

I understand this Society are eager to expand their membership and I wholeheartedly urge people to give it a go! You will be hard pushed to find a friendlier, more welcoming group to be a part of. The local community are lucky to have such a talented and hard working society on their doorstep and I truly hope they go from strength to strength. Perhaps when my role as a Noda rep comes to an end I may even be tempted myself to make the switch from musical theatre to Panto. If I do I will be giving Wickham Bishops a call...

Thank you so much to everyone involved in the production. I am already looking forward to the next.

Victoria Carey

Noda Rep for District 8

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