

Theatre Review

The Three Musketeers

The time before a theatre curtain goes up is spine-tingling with anticipation of the thrills to come; the many excited children all but reached fever pitch, as



they waited, sitting on the floor right beneath the stage. Nor were they or we, who were rather more soberly seated in our chairs, disappointed. From the first entrances, the cast captivated and the audience lapped up every moment. Were there ever such delightful piglets? Or superb King's Guards? Was evil ever more successfully personified than in the villains, or chivalry more thrillingly displayed than by D'Artagnan, Porthos and Aramis, not to mention Athos. Was King Louis the XXVLIIXVLIIXXXXVIII ever more majestically portrayed? Was there ever a better snail than the inspired Gerald Drippy-Drew playing himself?

So Much Hard Work

Anyone who has ever had anything to do with Amateur Dramatics knows that they involve a tremendous amount of hard work, often undertaken round the edges of a full time job, running a home and family, perhaps doing homework. The Wychwood Players' 2014 Pantomime was no exception and enormous credit is due to the cast, the director, the stage manager, the set designer, the stage and construction crew, those who painted the set, and found or made the props, made the costumes, planned the lighting, sound, music, and choreography, did the hair and makeup, organised and manned the Box

Office, designed and sold the programmes, organised Front of House, manned the bar, and not least acted as 'prompt' - for the possible

heart-stopping moment when the mind of someone on stage goes blank. That list does not include the cast, who cope with line learning, moves, entrances and exits, costume changes, scene remembering, and besides knowing their own part, supporting others in the cast, some on stage for the first time.

What Alfie Thought

When I was asked to review the pantomime my initial thought was that really the better person to write it would be someone young - so I had a chat with six year old Alfie in the interval between the First and Second Acts, asking him how he was enjoying the pantomime, "Yes of course he was enjoying it". He told me, and when I asked, "and what is it about?" he eyed me sternly, "haven't you been watching?" he wanted to know. "Well, of course, but I wanted to know what you think?" Alfie explained the plot succinctly. "There are Goodies", he said, "and Baddies". "And what happens?" I pressed. He gave me a second scornful look. "The Goodies win." He said. Suitably chastened I returned to my seat. I can hardly wait for the next production, which is expected to be *Dangerous Corners* from **7th to 9th May 2015**. Put a note in your diary now, and don't miss it.

Catherine Hitchens