

Jack and the Beanstalk

A pantomime by John Crocker
Performed in January 1988
Directed by Brenda Keith-Walker

Jack lays Phantom with a lot of fun

JACK and the Beanstalk, Faringdon Dramatic Society's pantomime this year, played to capacity audiences for its, five performances last week.

Scripted by John Crocker, it stayed faithful to the fairy tale we old'uns remember, while sparkling with lively comic action, superb original songs astoundingly well sung and such splendid choreography - well, I didn't mind missing The Phantom of the Opera after all!

Jack was Debbie Lock and enchanting Princess Felicia was Emma Woodyer. Jack's Mum, Dame Durden (Mike Clark) captivated younger members of the audience on sight while Simple Simon (Carolyn Taylor) clinched it by getting total vocal support through his wobbly shyness.

Higher up the social ladder, Carole White and Gail Mander had energetic roles as Sirs Bubble and Squeak, courtiers to the magnificently laid-back King Umpty the Umptieth (Nigel Keith-Walker).

Nigel Murrin made persistently explosive entrances as the wicked Demon Pestblight, countered by Sandra Holland as Good Fairy Evergreen.

Sarah Woodyear appeared as the Pie man, Carole Tappenden and Lorraine France bringing up the rear as Daisy the Cow, and the quite incredible double-headed Jake the Peg Giant Blunderbore, harnessing the ever unpredictably outrageous talent of Mike Durham and Alan Taylor.

It was a fabulous show. The costumes were, magnificent. The "whispers" of toddler first-timers were, as ever, to the point.

The soulful farewell to Daisy the Cow being led off to market was punctuated by one mite's observation: 'She's wearing shoes.:!'

The chorus comprised a highly-talented, hugely- attractive. bunch of young people I shall look forward to seeing as full-fledged members of FADS.

I happen to know some names were missing from the programme and others were. mis-spelt so, this time around, the chorus shall be nameless - but not unnoticed.

Ivy Curzon