

Arthur's Adventure

A pantomime written and directed by Peter Webster
Performed in January 2000 at Faringdon School

Faringdon Folly

Camelot comes to stage in full colour

LET'S hear it for the costume department! They deserve a local Oscar for the brilliance of colour and quality which turned Faringdon Dramatic Society's annual pantomime, Arthur's Adventure, into a dazzling stage spectacular.

Given that this two-and-a-half hour show was written totally by local member Peter Webster, who also directed it, and given that the lead part of the young King Arthur was sustained by the remarkably mature talent of 13-year-old Ashley Bates, backed by a cast which included dozens of enthusiastic youngsters, it becomes clear why this is a local group that the town of Faringdon must be encouraged to nurture and appreciate with all means at its disposal.

Ashley and his father Gary - camping it up as the dame - and the author's wife, Jo Webster, who was the wicked witch, inevitably led the way in this imaginative and most entertaining production. But there were other less obvious show-stoppers, too, such as the mini-skirted moppets who won the audience's hearts with their well-drilled and charming dance routines as a troupe of mice.

Indeed, song and dance played a major role in this tale, loosely based on the elements of good and evil struggling to take the throne of Camelot. Naomi Bullock's emotive solo in particular, and the 'Stand by Your Man' contribution from Gary Bates were especially well received.

As usual, Dominic Bullock pulled out all the dramatic stops in his faultless interpretation of Merlin the Magician - quite literally throwing himself into the part with his usual energy and commitment.

But as always, this was a team effort, and one which fully maintained the FDS tradition of providing top quality productions from which fresh talents and new potential continue to emerge on a regular basis to complement the bedrock of established acting excellence.

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