

Faringdon Dramatic Society

Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders

by Derek Webb

A lovely warm welcome from Faringdon DS and a tasty ploughman's to set the scene for a nice evening out. First glance at the programme and I can see that we're in for a treat, most of Faringdon's 'big guns' are acting tonight. The full house indicates that the locals appreciate the talent that is FDS.

A fun script by Derek Webb with lots of play on words - quite difficult for the actors to master, but no call on the prompt, Amanda Linstead, all night.

Set in a village Hall, Jo Webster made good use of the village Hall we were in, playing 'in the round'.

I was a bit distracted by the exits and entrances - the back of the Hall seemed to be the entrance from the 'street' although when going 'out' again some actors left by a door at the other end of the Hall. And why did the cleaner (lovely performance by Jeni Summerfield) lock her cleaning cupboard without leaving her mop and bucket inside? She should have left them offstage and then we wouldn't have noticed.

Small points but eagle eyes used to 'Midsomer Murders' notice them. Director, Helen Thrower, did an otherwise safe job.

Sadly, we missed some of the lines of Verity Roberts as a funny, squeaky voiced committee member - performing 'in the round' often brings this problem when actors may have their backs to some members of the audience.

We liked the choice of music from old TV murder mysteries, played at the end of each scene - all playing 'spot that tune'.

Just a suggestion - actually a plea - can we please have a slow fade as the lights go down? A sudden black-out is an unpleasant shock - I didn't even have time to put my glass down on the table in front of me before we were plunged into darkness. I get the feeling that the 'sparks' think it's funny.

The large cast of eleven, as I expected, all gave top notch performances and I thank FDS for a most entertaining evening.

P.S. I have deliberately not mentioned the plot as requested during the interval.

Deidre Jones ODN

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