

A lot of hard work must have gone into producing this musical with the young cast giving of their best in the re-telling of this well known tale. Lots of really good street scenes with everyone milling about and trying to keep warm in that Dickensian winter and looking as though they had come straight out of the novel.

Harvey Laing dealt with the character of Scrooge well and his non-singing version of the songs somehow made the miser more sinister, but he was very jolly at the end having been shown the error of his ways. Bertie Beeching's narration of the plot was ideal and Paddy Stewart was a very scary Jacob Marley.

The Cratchit family acted like the family they were with Bethany Holdsworth as Mrs Cratchit keeping the family together and venting her righteous indignation against Scrooge in just the right manner. Bob Cratchit was played by Zak Willis, having a good heart and putting up with a lot from his employer. Louis Nicholls was Tiny Tim and I am sure he pulled at the heart strings of many members of the audience with his performance.

Charlie Milner as Young Scrooge and Hayley Huggett as Belle worked well together and the Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present were extremely well played by Heather Tingley and Ed Towey. The Fezziwigs (Joel Riddington and Kat Slaymark) put over their immense enjoyment of the Christmas season beautifully. There was good acting from Zane Verna as Fred, and Cat Houston and Melissa Thomson as Mrs Dilber and Mrs Filch.

Sometimes the diction in both singing and speaking from the principals wasn't all that clear but as I have said on previous occasions, I wonder if the sound system is geared to younger voices. There was a lot of lovely movement from the chorus and it was great to hear all those young voices singing their hearts out.

Everyone looked as though they had come out of a Christmas Carol and the programme, as usual for EODS, was excellent and a good read. A lovely article about Kath Clarke, Deputy Stage Manager and where would we be without the backstage crew? They are an absolute necessity, always working their socks off.

This production certainly got us in the mood for the season to come and many thanks are due to Director Moira Brooker, Assistant Director Daisy Milner, Stage Manager Tom Lynn and all involved.

Brenda Gower Regional NODA Representative