

Account of Purley on Thames

Rain or Shine -Top Hats and Tinsel

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The Rain or Shine Theatre Company made their Christmas visit to The Barn on Friday, December 2nd to present a Victorian-style evening of music hall entertainment. There was no afternoon performance for schools, but the actors arrived from Gloucester early in the afternoon so that they could carry out a full rehearsal, this being the first scheduled date of their winter tour.

Yet again the evening show was virtually sold out, with many of the audience entering into the spirit of the occasion by wearing period dress - feather boas, long dresses, top hats, waistcoats, braces and even the occasional aristocratic moustache were all in evidence.

The first half of the show comprised popular music hall songs, in which the audience joined lustily, some monologues and recitations, traditional Christmas carols and, most rapturously received of all, a hilarious Sand Dance.

After interval refreshments provided by Project Purley members, the audience returned to their seats for the second part of the evening's entertainment, a comedy playlet entitled "Nurse Chickweed." The five-strong cast are clearly better actors than they are singers, and obviously enjoyed romping round the stage in a farce of mistaken identity and cross-dressing. However, the enthusiasm of the crowd prevailed throughout the entire evening, and the generosity of those attending was shown by the donations received as they left The Barn.

The profit on "Top Hats and Tinsel" amounted to exactly £500, and this will be donated to the Berkshire branch of The Red Cross. Thanks go to all those who contributed to the success of the occasion.

The Rain or Shine Theatre Company will return to The Barn on Friday, July 6th 2012, when they will perform one of the lesser known Shakespeare plays, "Pericles, Prince of Tyre."

David Downs