



Society : Lane End Players
Production : The Foreigner
Date : 27th April 2012
Venue : Lane End Village Hall
Report by : Rita Carpenter

Report

INTRODUCTION

Due to road closures we arrived just a few minutes before the start of the play but during the interval Director **Tom Everitt** came over and we were able to have a chat about both previous and future productions. This is Tom's first time as director of a full length play although last summer at the Players mini festival he directed a short play which was very successful and received praise and compliments from the adjudicator.

THE PROGRAMME

Designed by **James Wood** and printed by **John Trett** it had a very colourful front cover. There was a very small mention of NODA with the logo, but thank you for that. On the back page was a notice for their summer production. There were no photos or C.V's of the cast which can be very helpful but all those responsible for the production from the Director to the tea ladies was clearly set out. It would also have been helpful if acts and scenes had been listed.

THE SET

It was a very interesting set and gave the audience an indication of what was to come. The interior was a log cabin well furnished with the American flag in one corner. There were three entrances/exits. There was a strong door which opened to the outside, an exit leading to the upstairs bedrooms and one leading to the kitchen. There was a circular table with three chairs. A bear's head decorated the back wall and there was a dresser with ornaments and cans of beer. A settee to one side and a Confederate flag over the door. completed the set which was very well constructed. Set construction was by **Peter Rose, Dave Bowden, Podge Page** and **Martin Hailey**. I would like to mention here that there was a poster and photograph on the wall of the village hall of Podge. He has been a stalwart of the group and sadly he died suddenly just before the opening. The director told

me 'if anything seemed too difficult we would call on Podge'. He could make things work and I was told his speciality was stairs. He will be sorely missed.

LIGHTING AND SOUND

The play opened with a realistic thunder storm **Martin Hailey** and **Roisin Dullard** were on lighting and **Janet Schrieber, Tom** and **Peter Sims** were on sound. You always seem to offer both great sound and lighting and are fortunate in having such proficient members. There were some very clever effects especially when Ellard was foiling the Klu Klux Klan intruders.

COSTUMES

Members of the cast were listed under costumes. Whether the cast provided their own or they came from various members they were very authentic. I particularly liked Betty's pink outfit which suited her perfectly. The dungarees worn by Ellard and David and Owen's backwoodsman's attire together Froggy's military outfit were realistic. The Klu Klux Klan outfits were very impressive but there was no mention in the programme of who made them, I wonder did each member make his own?

THE CAST

Set in the Southern States of America meant that with the exception of the two Englishmen the cast had to have accents. I remember their superb Welsh accents in Under Milkwood so this should not have been too much of a challenge and on the whole they managed it well.

Nigel Bacon played Froggy the military man with ease and humour. **James Wood** gave an exceptional performance as Charlie the man purporting to be the foreigner. He was superb, his facial expressions, his broken accent and this whole demeanour was great. He had the best and funniest lines and played them like a professional.

Sheila Keatings was Betty the owner of the establishment. She was well suited to the role and was jolly and comforting. She had problems sustaining her accent but when she shouted at James as people often misguidedly do when speaking to foreigners it was hilarious.

Peter Rose was David the vicar. He purported to be a decent caring man but when he proved otherwise such was his performance that the audience booed his every appearance. He gave a fine interpretation with an excellent accent.

Sophie Marshall played Catherine David's finance. She also sustained her accent throughout. Her empathy towards Charlie was endearing and she demonstrated her emotions with ease.

Dave Bowden was impressive as Owen the red neck. He ably demonstrated the prejudice and hatred bred in the deep South of foreigners. His accent was good and his understanding of his character was inventive.

The Townspeople, **Luke Bond**, **Kate Plummer** and **Richard Tysoe** although clothed in the Klu Klux Klan robes and were therefore unidentifiable were an important part of the plot and credit should go to each of them for their convincing performances..

Last but by no means least was **Jake Everitt** who was outstanding as Ellard, Catherine's simple brother. He lived and breathed his part and was accomplished in his remarkable interpretation of the character. He gave a great performance.

IN CONCLUSION

Very competently directed by Director **Tom Everitt** this was a very funny play with some twists and turns in the second half . Due to the fact that this was a very long play it might have been better to have opened at 7.30 so that it was not so late finishing. The audience loved it and at times the atmosphere was almost that of pantomime when they joined in cheering and booing at times. You can be justly proud of this production.