

Mr Scrooge - Bispham Castaways - 15.12.2018 - by Eddie Regan

There was a lively and exciting atmosphere at the Bispham Community Centre, where seating was arranged in Cabaret style. There is a great Community Spirit and one of the aims of this new Society is to encourage and further this spirit. We were firstly introduced to a group of young people from the local charity Aspired Futures who performed a moving production.

Their coordinator Aine Frith, was delighted to be asked to showcase the talents of these youngsters and give them an opportunity to improve their confidence by appearing, in public, at this event. They produced a very moving and poignant piece, giving the audience food for thought about attitudes, acceptance and inclusivity.

The script, for Mr Scrooge, which followed, was written by Brian Luff and incorporated the original story and the cast worked well together to create the correct atmosphere. Apparently, due to technical difficulties, there were many stops and starts, which meant it was difficult to follow the thread and keep the required atmosphere of the piece.

The experienced Tony Woolmington was very well cast as Mr Scrooge and used all his stagecraft to give an excellent portrayal of the iconic miser who, in the end, sees the error of his ways. Susan Hope was completely immersed in her role as Mrs Fezziwig and commanded the stage at all times. Helen Findlay as Jacob Marley made an impressive “ghost” helped by a very original costume. Shannon Poleon as Belle, Emma and chorus used her lovely vocals well and was always in character. Mark Marsden as Nanny Fanny Trollop tried to keep the audience involved but I am afraid I found him a distraction, though I thought he was a convincing Master of Ceremonies for the other part of the evening. Costumes, accessories and props were all in keeping with the Dickensian Characters.

I am certain this new Society will continue to improve and I am pleased that they are ensuring live Theatrical Productions are continuing in this area. Thank you for the very warm welcome to my wife and myself.