

REVIEW - 'NODA' review of 'Meet Me In St. Louis' - Nov 2014



SERVING AMATEUR THEATRE SINCE 1899

This is a copy of a review of our last major production 'Meet Me In St. Louis', written by Lloyd Bamber of 'noda' (National Operatic and Dramatic Association) who provide professional support for amateur theater. Our thanks, as always, to 'noda' for their ongoing support.

Date: 13th November 2014
Venue: The Grange Theatre, Hartford
Type of Production: Musical
Producer / Director: Helen Mayne
Musical Director: Jackie Drennan

Review

Author: Lloyd Bamber

It was my first time visiting The Grange Theatre and I was made extremely welcome by the Mid Cheshire Musical Theatre Company's front of house staff, so I would firstly like to thank them.

'Meet Me in St. Louis' is a musical based on the 1944 film, which was adapted from a series of short stories by Sally Benson. The plot revolves around the Smith family who live in St. Louis, around the time of the 1904 World Fair. The show follows the trials and tribulations of the family's daughters, who learn things about life and love throughout the show. With the prospect of upping sticks and moving to New York as a family around Christmas time, not sounding too appealing to most of the family members, the father has a change of heart and chooses to keep his job in St. Louis. This makes for a great musical as they all live happily ever after.

It was nice to see such a mix of ages on stage, both as principal leads and also in the company. The convincing accents should be commended as they were maintained throughout the show. The orchestra sounded excellent and its members seemed to enjoy the show as much as those on stage. The costumes were fabulous, all in period dress, all looking tailored and well fitted to each and every cast member.

The musical was staged very cleverly with an effective set design which worked well throughout. The way the cast entered and exited the stage through the aisles of the theatre was different, but made sense as they were exiting the scene. Also the use of both the full stage and set was well used thought out. When it came to the full company numbers they managed to fit the whole cast onstage without it looking cramped.

The sound and lighting was absolutely superb, with the audience able to hear every note, without any of the breaking down, which is usually predominately heard when using radio microphones. The way the stage hands performed the quick and clean set changes between each scene should also be commended.

All in all this was a fabulous show of which the company should be proud. The standard of the voices, and the acting talents were a pleasure to witness. I would like to thank all at Mid Cheshire Musical Theatre Company for their warm welcome and hospitality and look forward to meeting them in the near future.