

Noda Report

Show	Carousel
Date	23 rd March 2011
Venue	Cecil Hepworth Playhouse
Director	Lynda Barrett
Choreographer	Jenny Hughes
Musical Director	Fiona Wimblett
Reviewer	Helen Mills

This was the second of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musicals first produced on Broadway over 60 years ago and my goodness it has certainly stood the test of time with so many 'standards' in it and a tear-jerking plot. This entails a lot of co-operation between the principals the chorus, the dancers not to mention the children! I thought that Molesey really pulled it off. [review here...](#)

The two main principals were excellent, good acting and singing. There had to be a real gamut of emotions for both of them sadness, happiness and even the violence and Jenny and Steve both achieved those states, well done. Billy's 'Soliloquy' was very evocative and the duet 'If I Loved You' was very good. The secondary plot line with Carrie and Enoch. again with some conflicting emotions, was carried through with style, Peter had some minute difficulties in his singing but altogether acted and sang well and Karen did too, Their 'When the Children Are Asleep' was well done. Nettie gave us some wonderful singing, what a lovely role and a beautiful voice, she was the real 'rock' for Julie and 'auntie' to the girls. Anne made Mrs Mullins a real Irish 'slut' with a true fairground mentality alternating between bossiness and wheedling, her costume really gave the role authenticity. It was right and proper that we should not like the conniving Jigger and Ziggi played the role well. Kevin acted well in his two roles as the Starkeeper and the Doctor, as did Annie as the Heavenly Friend. Lucinda as Louise played and danced her role excellently.

The cameo parts, the Bascombes, the Policeman, Arminy, and the Captain all acted well as did the Carnival Boy, Tom, and Anthony, the young Enoch. Which brings me to the chorus and the children; it is a rewarding show for the chorus and they took full advantage of it, there were some nice individual characters emerging amongst them, this applies both to the mill girls and the fishermen. It was good to see that wherever one looked in the scenes there was always something going on. The children also acted well.

The orchestra under Fiona's baton was excellent. The chorus songs ; The Carousel Waltz, June is..., Clambake, Stonecutters and What's the Use of...? are such well known standards one can hardly go wrong and all were rendered extremely competently. And then, of course, there is the tear-jerker 'Walk Alone'. Nettie and Julie were excellent. Could there have been a possibility

that after the curtain calls the audience could have been gone home with 'Walk Alone' in their thoughts? A song at the end makes a nice full-stop. A fairground is always a difficult scene to set with the carousel going round and all the various showmen's activities taking place, and it worked. The carousel itself was excellent. The backcloths worked well, I was not too sure about the island/beach one, but then I know you have to take what you can get. The others were fine, especially the star cloth and the waterfront. I was rather disconcerted about the use of the front tabs for a change of scene and one change was particularly long in duration, was the use of number one tabs not an option? I also found that the appearance of the Heavenly Friend in many of the scenes was extremely distracting. Was this done as a type of flashback of Billy's life? There seemed to be little point in it neither during the prologue nor during the scenes.

Jenny's choreography was fantastic! She really worked you all very hard and it paid off. The chorus, the girls and the men all did their bit, and then the 'speciality' dancers put the icing on the cake. The Ballet, never an easy one to stage, was fantastic all playing their part. Lucinda I have already mentioned. Well done Jenny. Lynda, the direction was first class I congratulate you and the company !

The costumes were colourful and of the period, and the makeup was good. Both the Steves 'on sound and lighting did an excellent job. The props were well-thought out and looked authentic. The programme was interesting and informative. The Front of House Manager and her team were attentive and of course The Chairman, Roy.

Thank you for inviting me and making myself and my guest so welcome. I look forward to seeing " Boarding Now" in November.