

## BRIDGES MUSICAL THEATRE

### ‘THE WIZARD of OZ’ - DECEMBER 2025

The pantomime was opened traditionally and the scene set by the good fairy Glinda, played by Claire O’Neill. Her diction and projection were first class, her singing good and she looked every inch a fairy in her beautiful pink organza dress.

A lively opening number followed with cowboys/girls dancing to a catchy ‘Christmas on the Farm’ – they were just bursting with energy. This was followed by the most well-known song in the story of Dorothy and her new friends and their journey to the land of Oz.

Heather Rogerson gave an excellent performance as Dorothy and her rendition of ‘Somewhere Over the Rainbow’ was a delight. I liked the way that the company were included in the number and that they sang in harmony.

In the role of Aunty Em, Rob Franck was very good. His timing was spot on and he extracted absolutely everything from the comedy in his part - and there was plenty of it!

The first of Dorothy’s travelling companions, Scarecrow, was of course stuffed with straw and therefore without a brain, Dan gave a confident, relaxed performance and he involved the audience at every opportunity. Jo Hayes played Tin Man who feels ‘heartless’ and she too gave a good performance with the appropriate stiff-jointed movements.

In the role of The Lion, who is in desperate need of courage, Chaz Fearnley made an endearing Lion. His antics on stage were very much enjoyed by the audience and he made his first appearance with B.M.T a memorable one.

Lucy Curtis took command of the stage as The Wicked Witch. She has a powerful singing voice and she gave an impressive performance making her one of the most convincing ‘Baddies’ I’ve seen.

The smaller supporting roles were;

Queen Monkey - Carol Martin made strong, realistic movements in the sinister role and her facial expressions were good.

Megan Rogerson gave a secure performance as the Mayor.

Peter Gerbert entertained the audience with his stylised marching.

Spencer Cole’s clear diction and accent were a joy to hear in his role as the Wizard of Oz.

The company were praiseworthy and they added much to the overall presentation of the pantomime. The final number was a very lively one - the pantomime ended as it started - full of energy.

Costumes were impressive throughout. I noted The Emerald City ones looked super and the Tin Man must have taken some putting together!

Sound and lighting were good and the animated projections worked really well. The addition of musicians flying across the sky all added to the fun. Props and set were suitable for the piece.

Choreography, as always, was splendid and the company had worked hard to perform it with assurance and gusto. As well as being the choreographer, Annelly had put pen to paper this year and wrote the script too.. There were lots of local mentions, the farm in Chertsey etc; and I particularly enjoyed the first Act which was packed with jokes that I hadn't heard before!

Lynne's direction was good and along with the choreography made a visually entertaining show. The 'Twelve Days of Christmas' was hysterical – we all loved it and the cast must have been exhausted!

The children were well-trained, always had a smile and looked delightful – they had a lot of numbers this year and I enjoyed them all.

Guy Bunce did a splendid job with the music, and harmonies where none were expected was a real bonus. The band were well balanced.

Thank you for inviting me to see your pantomime which I found very entertaining and also my thanks to Dawn for her hospitality on the evening and to Gail for taking a moment away from her chaperoning to say 'hello'.

I wish you all at Bridges Musical Theatre a very happy Christmas and a healthy and successful 2026.

E. Gloria Smith

NODA. S.E. Regional Representative – District 12



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