

A Christmas Carol.....being a ghost story of Christmas.

Ormesby St Margaret, Scratby Village Hall

Sunday 10th December 2015

The novel "Fahrenheit 451" describes a dystopian future in which all books are burned and in order to preserve the best, dedicated individuals learn a book by heart in order to be able to recite it, word for word. Judging from the performance of "A Christmas Carol" on Sunday Jan 10th, the Rain or Shine Theatre Company have no less than two individuals who could repeat in its entirety this, the most accessible of Dickens novels. Both Craig Rogers and Emily Lomax recited flawlessly the long sections of narrative which set the scene for the story enacted before the packed hall.

A Christmas Carol, first published in London in 1843, tells the story of a bitter old miser, Ebenezer Scrooge, and his transformation into a happy and generous man by visitations from the ghost of his former partner Jacob Marley, and the ghosts of Christmases Past, Present and Yet to Come. It is no small task to adapt and present a whole book, even a short one, for performance by 5 players and within a couple of hours. As ever, the Company succeeded admirably and **delivered an evening's entertainment which amused, thrilled and warmed the heart in equal measure.**

A Christmas Carol was inspired by Dickens own childhood experiences when his father's imprisonment in the Marshalsea forced him to accept employment in a blacking factory and exposed him to the lives of the very poor. The *Carol* was written not just to earn money but also to encourage people to address the issues of poverty and especially at Christmas. The Rain or Shine players **cleverly balanced the scary ghosts with the humour of Scrooge's transformation** and performed their usual miracle of presenting us with 11 distinct and believable characters portrayed by 5 actors with minimal sets and costume change.

They are truly worthy successors to the travelling players of ancient Greece and Shakespeare's England.

Another great evening's entertainment for all.

Heather Peck