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**Group:** Woodfield Entertainers  
**Show:** Santa Claus and the Last Christmas  
**Venue:** Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall  
**Director:** Mel Elgar  
**Producer:** Kenny Menet-Hawkins

*Santa Claus and the Last Christmas* is a new-ish pantomime, by Tom Humphreys, that is crammed with the classic panto ingredients.

The Peace Memorial Hall was full of festive decorations and a noisy excited audience, as we arrived with seconds to spare.

This was Woodfield Entertainers' second panto of the year...M'sieur you spoil us.

The programme listed cast and crew. It was informative and well-illustrated with cast photographs. A list of songs and singers would have been nice.

Music was loud and lush...but the singers were mic'd up to match it. All was clear, all was bright. Dancing and ensemble movement were well performed throughout.

Lighting was spot on. Everyone showed up well

The scenery was beautiful. You have some fine artists & designers. Props also looked good...particularly in the Twelve Days of Christmas (more on that later).

Costumes were very attractive. Particularly liked the elves' red & green; and the Dame looked divine. Make-up must have been challenging, but all appeared fine.

The Ice Queen (Elaine Denny) gave a fine, dominating performance Well costumed and made up, she was evil personified, especially in her two good solos...*I put a Spell on You* and *Are You Looking for Trouble* ?

Her reluctant assistant, Frostbite, seemed a little stiff and lukewarm at first; but soon thawed into a very camp and comic characterisation. Played by Kenny Menet-Hawkins, his singing, too, was extremely good ...particularly in *Let it Snow*.

Elise Child played their opponent, The Spirit of Christmas. She was warm, funny and passionate to save Santa. They duetted on the opening number *Wish it Could be Christmas Every Day*.

Brian the Elf (Simon Gadd) enthusiastically "whipped-up" the audience and gave great energy to his role. Along with the Elves, he sang *Merry Christmas Everyone*.

*I Can Walk 500 Miles* was the rousing finale to ACT I.

After the interval, ACT II commenced with the rousing ....*I Can Walk 500 Miles*. Recycling is so useful and fashionable.

The Dame was excellent. Neil Edwards was clear & very confident and stayed in character throughout. *Crazy Right Now* was a fine rap number. The classic *Filly Knickers* routine, with Brian, was slick and enjoyable.

The shy lovers, Eddie the Elf and Ice Ickle, were played by Heather Chatfield and Cara Turner. Despite an early duet, *Warm this Winter*, it wasn't until the end of ACT II that they finally paired up...amidst a flurry of engagements.

Tim Waters played Santa Claus and, once again, elicited an assortment of prompts from his co-stars ("Oh do keep up, Santa" Ice Queen). However, he gave us a nicely relaxed *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*.

Ensemble Elves and Ice Minions all performed their songs and dances with eagerness and precision.

The highlight of the evening was the wonderfully zany *Twelve Days of Christmas*. Were the presents in the wrong order or was this part of some cunning plan? Whatever it was, the repeated confusions and recoveries were hilarious.

The Wedding walkdown scene ended with the finale, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*.

There was good audience interaction, during and after the show. So nice to see the costumed actors meeting up with their fan base.

Thank you Mel. You and your talented team have produced a thoroughly enjoyable, old-fashioned Pantomime.

Graham