

Wizard a successful mix of music, comedy

by Darren MacDonald
The News

A full house was treated to a seamless performance of the Wizard of Oz last Sunday night, as the musical wrapped up with a final show at Lake Superior High School in Terrace Bay.

Siân MacKay played Dorothy, and she was a strong anchor for a very good all around cast, in a delightful performance directed by Kim Alexander.

A six piece stage band warmed up the crowd before the actors took to the stage. The band played flawlessly in support of the actors all evening.

The opening scene in Kansas featured the perennial favourite, Somewhere Over the Rainbow, and included the first of several choruses.

The scene quickly shifted to Oz and its impressive sets. The Good Witch, played wonderfully by Sandra Costa, literally arrived with a bang, thanks to a flashpot effect.

The reactions of the munchkin choruses were all perfectly timed during the performance of Ding, Dong, the Witch is Dead. It was one of the evening's highlights, involving no less than seven separate performances, and a great deal of coordination and good timing.

Brenda Moffitt, who played Scarecrow, was the first to join Dorothy on her way to the Wizard. Moffitt's physical agility made her perfect for the role, displayed by her uncanny ability to fall down without a sound, as though she really was stuffed with straw.

Derek Sitko, as Tinman, also gave a very good performance. His initial scenes when he was still a bit rusted were particularly convincing.

As the cowardly lion, Sal Figliomeni could do no wrong. He had the audience laughing with every line he delivered.

Another of the show's comedic highlights was Suzanne Thibault's Wicked



The performers take a well deserved bow after Sunday night's performance at Lake Superior High School. The standing room only crowd gave them a standing ovation.

Witch. In an original take on the character, a great deal of the witch's menace was softened by the fact that she kept doing pratfalls all over the stage, much to the delight of the crowd.

But the strongest overall performance was by MacKay, who had a major part in nearly every scene of the play.

The most impressively choreographed number of the night was the Jitterbug Song. It included a surprising number of lifts and twirls, and the performances were remarkably synchronized.

The Jitterbug brought Act I to a close, and Act II opened with the display of yet another impressive set, this time the Emerald City.

After the Wizard sends the group on their way kill the witch, the audience was treated to yet another well designed set. In a scene not in the Hollywood version of Oz, three witches sat around the castle, each making dreadful puns.

The movie's crystal ball gave way to a simulated Sony Television set, an effective way

to allow the wicked witch to monitor Dorothy and her friends as they approach the castle.

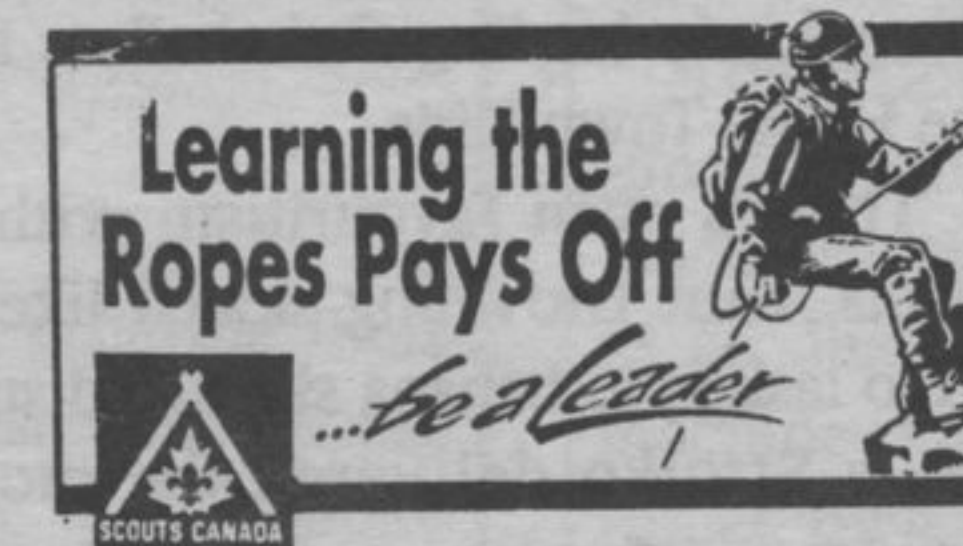
One of the night's funniest moments was when the wicked witch, having been pushed into the cauldron to shrink away to nothingness, hops out again in miniature form. She makes her last appearance the size of a hand puppet.

After some delay, The Wizard, played by Jeff Mikus, gives each of them what they seek, except for Dorothy.

It's left to the good witch to make Dorothy realize she's had the power to return home all along.

The stage filled with smoke as she wishes herself back home to Kansas, ending the show.

In a compliment to all the performers, the crowd gave the entire cast a prolonged standing ovation.



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