

Review

Daisy Pulls It Off

By Denise Deegan

Directed by Margaret Jowett

Production: March 2011

What a simply spiffing evening as the audience were transported to the 1927 fantasy world of Grangewood School. Madam Jowett's prep paid off as she really did pull it off by recreating a world of superlatives and snobbery in this scholarly production. The introduction of the West Indian Scoblowski [*Justin Archibald*] was a knickerbocker glory with not a trace of Yorkshire in his accent! And, I say – what magnificent costumes and set. All praise must go to the wardrobe mistress [*Barbara Siddall and team*] for capturing the period in true blue style.

Emma Ayling was masterful in the lead role as Daisy Meredith. She demonstrated uncommonly good narration skills and versatility as an actress. She kept the pace and humour flowing as she recreated this privileged world of giddiness, fair play and one-upmanship.

Trixie Martin, played gloriously by Rachel Cockburn, was a real trump. Befriending Daisy, the pair cleverly sidestepped the beasts as they searched not only for the hidden Beaumont treasure but also for the right for Daisy to enter the privileged world of Grangewood. They succeeded brilliantly despite the personal war effort of Sybil and Monica to set spite traps and throw devious grenades.

Sybil, frighteningly well played by Lydia Cockburn, would have been an excellent arch rival for Harry Potter as a stand in for Draco Malfoy. The excellent direction of both Sybil and the sycophantic Monica, played convincingly by Luka Phoenix, was packed full of the nuances and facial expressions of two nasty but insecure schoolgirls reminiscent of the glory days of *Bunty* and other boarding school stories.

The highlight of the play was the cliff top rescue, a jubilatory piece of RoCo production. The audience was on the edge of their seats as the knotted sheet was dropped down the cliff edge, hauling the beasts to safety and securing Daisy's future. Daisy's narration and the slow motion mime created a memorable moment.

When it was lights out, "jubilate" lit the hall. Well done to the cast and crew of this very "tidy" RoCo production. You all pulled it off!

Pauline Pitman