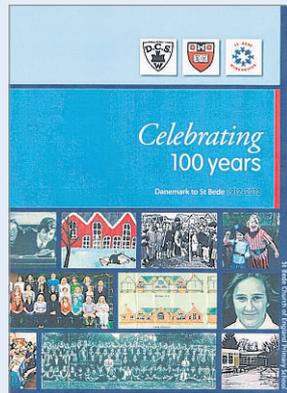


Bookshelf



Celebrating 100 years: Danemark to St Bede 1912-2012

FROM the team that in 2010 produced the excellent *Hyde in Living Memory*, this new book chronicles the history of the school currently called St Bede.

When it opened in 1912 it was called City of Winchester Danemark School and the 128-page book tells the story of its creation and how it has evolved.

That could be a bit dry and lifeless but this elegant book is a triumph of research, with the authors combining thorough delving in the archives with interviews with former pupils and staff (headteachers and dinner ladies, nice to see), including a profile of one pupil, Ray Parry, who started there in 1929.

There are scores of evocative photos as well as maps, plans, reports, exam papers, newspaper cuttings and odds and ends that help bring the story to life.

Obviously it will be of primary interest to those who either attended or whose children have links with the school. But there is much to attract the general reader — those faded photos from the 1970s sparked instant memories of this writer's schooling.

As well as educating tens of thousands of children, Danemark/St Bede has faced numerous challenges including the Luftwaffe and in 2000 the Great Flood that saw the school exiled to Bereweke Road for more than two years. But out of adversity a new school emerged with much better facilities and one that in the last few years has proved so popular that an extension had to be built on part of the St Peter car park, opening at the start of this term.

So congratulations to the team of Genevieve Baker, Venetia Bocchetta, Mandy Hodges, Sarah Perrin, Alison Royall, Madelaine Smith, Stella Swain and to the crisp design by Keith Woodall.

The book is available from the school price £10. Excellent value for money.

★★★★ Andrew Napier

Participation encouraged

PREVIEW

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at The Anvil, Basingstoke

An all-star cast is coming to Basingstoke for the Christmas pantomime, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, this year at The Anvil.

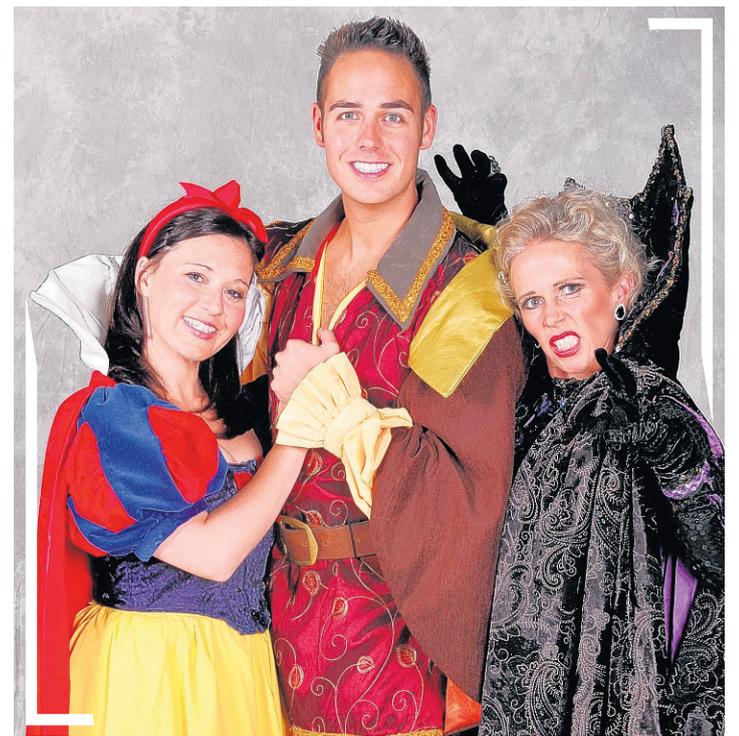
Lucy Benjamin, best known for playing Lisa Fowler in the BBC's *EastEnders*, stars as the Wicked Queen. She is joined by Luke

Roberts, of CITV television show *Hi-5* as the handsome Prince Frederick, while comedian Noel Brodie returns to the Anvil as Muddles.

The title role is played by Sarah Louise Day, who is also choreographer, while director Ian Good will also play dame Nurse Dotty Dettoll.

It promises glittering costumes, hilarious jokes and great songs with audience participation encouraged.

The show runs from Thursday, December 13 to Sunday, January 6. For more details and tickets call the box office on 01256 844244 or visit anvilarts.org.uk.



Sarah Louise Day as Snow White, Luke Roberts as Prince Frederick and Lucy Benjamin as the Wicked Queen

Large forces cope admirably with complex textures

REVIEW

Benjamin Britten: War Requiem at Winchester Cathedral

WINCHESTER Music Club choir and orchestra, Winchester College Glee Club and Quiristers and Southern Pro Musica came together for a concert in aid of Combat Stress, a charity which supports service veterans with mental health problems.

The conductors were Nicholas Wilks and Carl Clausen with soprano Claire Rutter, tenor Justin Lavender and baritone Stephen Gadd.

This concert began with a very effective move. Actor Harry Culverhouse, dressed as Second Lieutenant Wilfred Owen MC, read one of Owen's letters to his mother from the Western Front, followed by

his famous poem *Dulce et Decorum Est*.

The opening funeral tread of the *War Requiem* was handled most effectively — the dissonant, deliberately mournful sound of the choir contrasting with the angelic sound of the boys. In the vastness of the cathedral acoustic musical detail can often be swamped, but the large forces coped admirably in the complex textures of the *Dies Irae* and *Libera*

Stephen Gadd held the cathedral in absolute silence as he brought the poem to its climax

Me. The *Lacrymosa* was most moving and soprano Claire Rutter floated her sobbing phrases over the choir with exquisite control,

while tenor Justin Lavender gave a poignant rendition of the poem *Futility*. Later on he was equally poignant in *One Ever Hangs*.

Both male soloists made a fine blend in the *Offertorium* poem about Abraham and Isaac. Their narration of the slaughter of the 'seed of Europe' was excellent, as was their final contribution, Owen's magnificent *Strange Meeting*, where the baritone, Stephen Gadd, held the cathedral in absolute silence as he brought the poem to its climax.

The great choral eruptions of the *Dies Irae* and *Sanctus* were suitably spectacular and the *Libera Me* had moments of real terror. All credit to the Music Club orchestra in this challenging score: many excellent solos were heard in the course of the performance.

The transitions to and from the main orchestra and Southern Pro Musica (admirably conducted by Hampshire Youth Orchestra's



Claire Rutter and Stephen Gadd

conductor Carl Clausen) were skilfully handled and Nicholas Wilks presided over the massed forces with his usual flair and authority. But, in the end, the evening belonged to Benjamin Britten: he modestly thought 'the idea was good', but we all recognised a work of genius.

The concert raised in excess of £11,000 for Combat Stress. The final amount has yet to be confirmed. **Duncan Eves**

Dark day for Portsdown Hill poetry reading

ANDREW JORDAN'S Poetry Field Club 'field trip' (on Saturday November 24), one of a number of events celebrating his book *Hegemonick*, involved a walk and in situ poetry readings on Portsdown Hill.

The day was dark. It was already raining as we approached the Royal Armouries Museum at Fort Nelson. Once inside, we went underground, following a

tunnel to a series of rooms.

There, Jordan read *Fieldnotes: Fort Nelson* and *A Paulsgrove Bestiary*, the latter poem concerning the 'Paulsgrove paedophile riots' of 2000. It ends with a journey through the tunnels beneath Fort Nelson, where the poet unearths his own childhood self: "My dark side,/a naked boy, like a fossil/or root/ hauled from the

chalk..." Oddly, during the reading, we heard children screaming in a distant tunnel.

The day was already reminding me of *Stalker*, Andrei Tarkovsky's film, and this impression grew after we left the fort and made our way along the ridge of the hill.

Memorable moments included Nelson's monument, the perimeter fence of Portsdown West (a defence research

establishment where we were confronted by a picket line of video cameras on poles) and the underground fuel bunker portal, a brick built structure that outcrops in the middle of nowhere. This is the tunnel exit referred to in the poem *Inside Mary Millington*.

Portsdown Technology Park, another defence research facility, also held a peculiar aura, brightly lit in the gloom. **Emily Trig**