



JANUARY 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (+mat.), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 (+mat.)

TOAD OF TOAD HALL

by A. A. Milne (Music by H. Fraser-Simpson)

CAST:

Marigold	...	JUSTINE JEWKES, JENNIFER BEALE
Nurse	...	MARY JAMESON
Mole	...	JEREMY HEYNES
Water Rat	...	KEN THOMAS
Mr. Badger	...	DENZIL PUGH
Toad	...	BOB SNELSON
Alfred	...	PETER PHIPPS
Beak Legs of Alfred	...	JAN JONES
Chief Ferret	...	DAVID HENSON
Chief Weasel	...	JOHN FENNER
Chief Stoat	...	JOHN HERITAGE
Fieldmice	...	Pupils of Arnold Lodge School
Policeman	...	GUY BARTLETT
Lisher	...	MARTIN O'CONNELL
Judge	...	JOHN DILLAM
Turkey	...	PENNY VAN SPALL
Duck	...	NANCY HOWELL
Phoebe	...	LIZ DALTON
Washerwoman	...	JEAN STEPHENSON
Mama Rabbit	...	SHANNON BEVITT
Lucy Rabbit	...	JUSTINE JEWKES, JENNIFER BEALE
Harold Rabbit	...	MATTHEW PIETTE
Bergewoman	...	CAROLE DAVIES
Wildwooders: Ferrets, Weasels, Stoats, Squirrels	...	PAULINE BARTLETT, SHANNON BEVITT, PAT GRIFFITHS, LIZ DALTON, ANNETTE JONES, ANGELA PALMER, DIANA PHIPPS, JANICE RAFFERTY, MEGAN SNELSON, PENNY VAN SPALL, JEREMY HALL, ADAM PIETTE, MATTHEW PIETTE, GEOFF MOUNTFORD



LOFT THEATRE FIFTY - FIFTH SEASON 1976 - 1977

Director: CHARLES MULRAINE
 Musical Director: ALISON BIDDOR
 Dance Director: ANN MULRAINE
 Synopsis of Scenes:
 PROLOGUE - Down by the Willows
 ACT I - The River Bank
 Scene I The Wild Wood
 Scene II Mr. Badger's House
 Scene III The same (some weeks later)
 ACT III
 Scene I The Courthouse
 Scene II The Dungeon
 Scene III The Canal Bank
 ACT IV
 Scene I Rat's House by the River
 Scene II The Underground Passage
 Scene III The Banqueting-room at Toad Hall
 EPILOGUE - The Wind in the Willows

There will be two intervals of 15 minutes, after Acts II and III.
 Coffee will be served in the coffee lounge, and pop in the downstairs foyer.
 The theatre bar will be open for members from 7 p.m.
 The play will end at approximately 10.20 p.m., matinees at 5.20 p.m.
 Set Design ... David Ellis
 Stage Manager ... Robin Piette
 Deputy Stage Manager ... Karen Tagg
 Lighting Design ... Phil Harvey
 Lighting Operators ... Richard Pemberton, Martin Sabin, Barry Lidstone
 Sound ... Ken Enston, Dorothy Dillam, John Gough
 Wardrobe ... Vicky Pickering
 Construction Manager ... Kenrick Badger
 Assistant Stage Managers ... Celia Adams, Margaret Rees, Mike Kerby, Avril Chater, Jane Armstrong, Clive Johnson
 Stage Crew ... Telgarth Badger, Nick Welch, Gregory Bellamy, Stove Ekins, Edis Bevan, Dawn Holly, Christopher Gibbs, Nigel Dixon, Brian Johnson, Peter Tagg, Roger Harris
 Photographs ...
 Costumes from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford.

TOAD ONE WAY OUT OF HOLE

Escape into a fantasy world by the riverbank, meet animals with human personalities and join in their adventures.

That is the invitation which the Loft offers children and adults alike who want to forget - if only for a while - the depressing reality of day to day life.

"Toad of Toad Hall" has all the colour, imagination and vitality to whisk you away and be kept spellbound for more than two and a half hours.

Director Charles Mulraine's policy of using only the most experienced of actors has paid dividends. Each of the principals has blended his considerable ability with experience and produced the finest of characterisations.

All four have discernible personalities which are easily latched on to.

Toad (Bob Snelson) bears all the traditional traits of the animal - and at first this realistic approach is quite startling.

But within minutes this stylish performance wins over the whole audience and continues to captivate throughout the show.

Bob Snelson has this con-ceted, arrogant but lovable animal off to a tee.

Ken Thomas is a fine Ratty. The Water Rat exudes warmth and friendliness, and while living a simple life is the sharpest and brightest of the four.

Jeremy Heynes embodies all the nervous impatience of Mole, the little animal who has yet to meet many of the other creatures.



The magic of the fantasy "Toad of Toad Hall" is currently being relived at the Loft in their first production of the New Year.

Bob Snelson stars as the Toad, and is joined by (from left to right): Denzil Pugh as Badger, Ken Thomas as Ratty, and Jeremy Heynes as Mole, and in the middle Jennifer Beale as Marigold.

The old, distinguished and slightly perverse elder statesman Mr Badger is excellently presented by Denzil Pugh.

Credit must also be given to Alfred, the horse, and his back legs - Peter Phipps and Jan Jones - for their superb coordination. There is not a good pantomime horse but a great one.

Fine performances are given by all the main actors and even the more junior ones are good.

The secret of success is not only that the acting should be first class and the scenery excellent, which it is, but that attention is paid to the smallest of details.

Here the Loft has rounded out the sharp edges and applied the varnish. The consequence is a very good show.

A 'Toad' for all

THEATRE

By DAVID ISAACS

TOAD OF TOAD HALL - Loft Theatre, Leamington until January 15 (running time: about 2hrs, 50mins.)

THIS perennial favourite is one I'm always happy to encounter. A. A. Milne's adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows" is strangely indestructible - yet it is a show few productions get entirely right.

Such is the case with Charles Mulraine's generally very pleasant production here. It lacks a certain amount of discipline and organisation on occasions in spite of its ideas and appeal.

The part of Toad is a severe test of any actor. It is tackled here with energy and application by Bob Snelson, but few people manage to keep it firing on all four cylinders through-

out and Mr Snelson's performance, for all its many qualities, lacks an essential charm.

Quite the best performance of the evening comes from Jeremy Heynes, whose restraint lends an admirable consistency to the part of Mole. Denzil Pugh has invested Badger with a Scottish accent - a master stroke which works perfectly to add character to a part which few actors have explored more rewardingly.

Ken Thomas's Ratty is an adequate if somewhat indeterminate performance and I'm not convinced of the wisdom of making him

carry his tail virtually throughout the show. His solo song is thrown away by unimaginative staging. Elsewhere, there's a particularly good contribution from John Fenner as the Chief Weasel.

It's a pretty, rather than elaborate set by David Ellis and it is quite beautifully lit - notably in the early scenes - by Phil Harvey.

But whatever reservations one may have about certain aspects of the production - and it's true that some of these will probably be ironed out in the naturally lubricative effect of performance - this is on balance an enjoyable seasonal show and one which seems sure to give a great deal of pleasure to audiences of all ages.

