

Let's hear it for Juniors

HOW I remember the shock, the tragedy, the sheer disbelief when the news came through nearly five years ago that the Co-op Juniors were being booted out of their traditional panto slot at the Regent theatre.

Life would never be the same for some people – it was as if Christmas had been cancelled!

But what a great decision that was! It was the making of the Juniors and has meant the town has a great professional panto in its largest theatre.

And it has done nothing to dilute the appeal of the town's other great Christmas tradition – the rock'n'roll panto at the New Wolsey.

The Juniors' new show, the Christmas Spectacular at Snape Maltings, has rapidly become a tradition in its own right.

The sad thing is, of course, that this year some of us didn't make it.

Like many others, Mrs T and I were forced to abandon our trip up the A12 by the time we got to Martlesham on Thursday evening.

The show went on and I understand it was as good as ever. The Juniors can concentrate on what they are really good at – singing and dancing – and the show never seems to go on and on like their old pantos did.

I remember one year going along to the Regent somewhat reluctantly on Boxing Day afternoon – safe in the knowledge that I'd be home in time to watch Leicester v Ipswich on Sky at 6pm after the 2pm show . . . and I still managed to miss the first 15 minutes!

That doesn't happen at Snape. They provide two hours of great Christmas entertainment and that's that.

I'm looking forward to seeing Jack



LITTLE AND LARGE: Evening Star entertainment writer Wayne Savage has to use the chair to interview Regent panto giant Blunderbore.

and the Beanstalk at the Regent tomorrow – and I've already had good reports about it.

Hopefully it will live up to them, because it has a tough act to follow after I went to Aladdin at the other end of town at the start of the month.

It never fails to amaze me where the New Wolsey finds all these actors who can play musical instruments – or should that be musicians who are great comic actors?

Whatever, with the big day now less than a week away we've got plenty to get ourselves in the festive spirit in Suffolk's theatres and concert halls.

■ While on the subject of Jack and the Beanstalk – how did our shortest journalist, entertainment writer Wayne Savage, cope with interviewing the giant?

He had to get on the giant chair, of course!