

Frankly Ben

The Palace Theater was built from 1920-1922 In Waterbury, Connecticut. It was built by Sylvester Z. Poli, and was used as a movie theater. Sadly, the Palace was closed in 1987. In 2002, they started to fix it. So after 18 years, (in 2004) it was finally opened again. The organ pipes to the left and right of the stage were built as decorations. There used to be a working organ, but it was destroyed during the time the theater was closed. There was also a river under the orchestra section called Mad River. It had to be re-routed so the Palace Theater could have an orchestra pit.

When we went to the Palace Theater, we watched the play, *Frankly Ben*. It was about 15-year-old Ben Franklin. Ben wants to form a club called Junto. But while Ben thinks their club is just about having fun, his club mates think otherwise.

In the play, Ben Franklin was not the elderly, wise, famous Benjamin Franklin we all know for discovering lightning was electricity. He was 15-year-old Ben Franklin, an apprentice to his older brother, James. His first idea is to form a club called Junto. He thinks the club is just for fun, but it isn't. Silence Dogood, Poor Richard, and the rest of the Junto make sure he reaches his potential and fulfills his destiny. Ben has to learn to stand up in front of his brother, James, as well as making the right choices.

I think the actors did a very good job presenting it realistically, like when James was talking to Ben. He made it look like a real person was up on the second floor, looking down at him and talking. I also think they had the right costumes and props for their personalities. Even though they were older, I think they did good jobs acting younger. I also think they picked the right rhythms for the songs so it was understandable.

I enjoyed the play, but I think it went by very fast and would be better if it was lengthened. I would recommend it to any kid or parent that wants to learn more about the history of our founding fathers. I think it was both an enjoyable and understandable learning experience that not many children that watch it will forget! I would give it 4 ½ stars for being humorous and historical.

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