



Review – The Pickwick Papers – outdoor theatre

23 June 2026 Reviews

We were delighted to be invited to see The Pickwick Papers from Rain or Shine Theatre Company as they performed at Eaton Bishop in Herefordshire.

We arrived to a lovely garden setting, with our camping chairs and picnic, and settled down in anticipation. Some of the crowd had gone all out, with picnic tables, table cloths, tea services, even vases of flowers and full sets of cutlery! We must have missed the memo that this venue had put on a prize for the best picnic table, but the bar was set too high for us by some of the others in the crowd, so there was no way we stood a chance, no matter how much notice we had! It was fun to see everyone enjoying their picnics, with the actors milling around before the show too, **the atmosphere was fantastic.**



This is **a fast-paced play, the speed and changes of set and characters adding to the humour.** One of the most delightful aspects of the show was seeing the actors take on so many roles! With just 5 actors covering 17 characters, the quick costume changes, and pronounced mannerisms required to portray each character fully, were **incredibly funny.**

The play is based on Charles Dickens first novel The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, which began life as a monthly tabloid serial. The novel became a huge works; the challenge to turn this into a play wasn't a small one! **Hats off to the Director Jonathan Legg** for tackling that feat so well, and to all the actors who pulled it off so brilliantly. The play cleverly focuses on some of the best adventures of the Pickwick Club members during their quest to 'experience novelty, knowledge, sport and true love'.

Whenever I see a show, I end up having one or two favourite actors. But now I realise I actually have favourite characters! My favourite actor during The Pickwick Papers changed with each scene, then changed again and again as other characters played by other actors revealed themselves. Suffice to say **we loved all the actors, their interaction with each other, with the audience, and the characters they brought to life were so much fun, and so full of energy.** What better way to spend a summers evening than enjoying a picnic and then being so **thoroughly entertained?** We **highly recommend** the show and the experience – it was great fun!

Age range: We saw a few families with children of around 9 years old – they seemed to enjoy the show just as much as the adults – something about being outdoors feels far more relaxed, and a lot of the comedy is very visual, which always gets a few giggles.

Rain or Shine is a Gloucester based professional theatre company which performs outdoor open air theatre shows across the UK. With over 50 shows of The Pickwick Papers, there are plenty to choose from, many are taking place in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The show was adapted and directed by Jonathan Legg, and produced by Jayne Lloyd. The **amazing actors** and the main characters they play are Anthony Young (Mr Samuel Pickwick), Nicholas Taylor (Tracy Tupman), Marshall Lockwood (Nathaniel Winkle), Adam Wright (Augustus Snodgrass) and Pippa Meekings (Sam Weller).

You can find out more on their website www.rainorshine.co.uk

Local shows can be found in our What's On guide too!