BERYL’S DAY OUT Press Copy Synopsis

**Beryl’s Day Out** is a trip down memory lane. Nostalgia is the order of the day. Beryl’s having a lovely time at Bristol Zoo. She’s all on her own as she happily wanders round the enclosures remembering all the times she’s been there before. The staff aren’t having such a good day though and the brilliant **Kim Hicks** certainly has her work cut out with all the quick-changes backstage! All sorts of chaos is brewing behind the scenes. This two-hander is written from personal testimonies and family stories from four generations of visitors. Maybe that’s why this excellent piece of theatre strikes such a chord. Songs from the era, beautifully sung live by local legend, **Kate McNab** (Sweet Substitute) ensures a highly entertaining evening. The clue is in their name: Ministry of Entertainment.

*133 words*

Bristol’s Nostalgia Theatre Legends, The Ministry of Entertainment, have another hit show for you. Packed full of true stories, crazy encounters and marvellous songs, this two-hander cannot fail to entertain all ages.

*48 words*

A raucously fun-filled retro trip to Bristol Zoo, bringing stories and characters back to life through the rose-tinted colour rinses of hairdresser Beryl.

*25 words*

 ‘We had tears running down our faces.’ ‘Hilarious.’ ‘That’s what we call Entertainment.’

‘A great evening. Thank you, Ministry of Entertainment.’

**Reviews**

 “The Retro Theatre Company has set up shop in The Alma Theatre to bring us an entertainment. How to describe it? It’s a kind of love note to Bristol Zoo whisked up with early sixties nostalgia and some gentle comedy that likes to flirt with the surreal, occasionally developing a sharp edge without actually cutting.” **Stage Talk Press Review by Graham Wyles** *(Google for full and glowing review.)*

“Every seat occupied, we buckle up and hang on tight with this retro coach trip back to the 1960s, our guide being the Ministry of Entertainment’s very own hard-working hairdresser Beryl who takes us on a whirlwind mini break exploring Bristol Zoo. With true life stories woven into this unique tour, Kate McNab (Beryl) delivers anecdotes fished from a deep pool of nostalgia, surely heightened for many since the Zoo’s recent closure. Her comedy partner Kim Hicks provides a contrasting backdrop, performing antics under numerus guises, including zoo staff who brilliantly portray ongoing chaos when working with animals. Interspersed with atmospheric songs that charmingly enhance the journey back to this bygone era, this play has as many goosebump moments as it does belly laughs.

Beryl oozes enthusiasm for the zoo as she visits the various enclosures, recounting her own childhood memories as well as the stories she has collected: watch out for mischief with the monkeys, earring stealing parrots and being hypnotised by fish! With a mind -boggling number of costume changes, we are treated to a vast array of supporting cast courtesy of Ms Hicks, from a rebellious new employee to a nun in the nocturnal house. Tapping into the Zoo’s broadcasting era of Animal Magic to tales of a rogue car park attendant, Beryl’s Day Out superbly reaches out to all corners of the Zoo’s rich history in one visit. With a final twist to the plot, the laughs and rousing applause from the Alma tour party can only mean maximum stars on trip advisor.

*By Anita Joyce (Independent)*