

# CONTACT

January, 2006

www.tagtheatre.com  
info@tagtheatre.com

The Official Newsletter of



Canada's oldest continually operating  
community theatre. 75 years and growing!

## President's Message

—Esther VanGorder, President



**H**appy New Year! I hope everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season. Another Holiday Pantomime goes into the TAG history books. Congratulations to writer/director, James Boyer and his talented cast and crew for a hugely successful effort. The Panto is probably the most ambitious show we produce all year—a large cast requiring creative costumes, fanciful sets, and a script that includes music, dance, and

drama. On top of all of that, we do five more performances than our other productions, requiring a great deal of stamina and commitment from everyone involved, and right before Christmas at that! A huge thank you to all the inhabitants of Storybook Land. James tells me he already has an idea for another Panto percolating in his brain and I, for one, can't wait to see it.

January 7<sup>th</sup> was TAG's 2nd Annual Puzzle night. John and Lyn Gratwick, with the help of Nick Jupp and Patti Morse, put together a great evening that served as a successful fundraiser for the Building Fund. Twenty-five teams circulated around the theatre trying to solve sixteen brain teasers and challenges (all of which came out of John's head). In between puzzles, we all enjoyed Nick Jupp's world famous vegetarian chili. Grand prize winners were the team of Joe O'Brien and Cheryl Theriault. Oh, did I mention we try to preserve marital bliss by not allowing spouses or partners to work together? As far as I could see, it worked because everyone left smiling. It was so nice to see some new members coming out to join the fun. This event is becoming very popular so watch for it next year. John has already created some of the challenges for next year.

2006 marks The Theatre Arts Guild's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, our Annual Variety Night will be combined with anniversary celebrations under the able management of Producer (and Vice-President) Debora Post. See Deb's article later in this newsletter for details, including another silent auction convened by Cheryl Theriault.

Progress continues on the Lobby Expansion Project. The final I's are being dotted and T's being crossed to officially obtain the building permit from the Municipality. Once that's achieved, the committee will move to a new phase, obtaining quotes and securing contracts with contractors and suppliers. Although our capital account is healthy, it's not enough to fully complete the project. The fundraising committee is shifting into high gear to ensure we don't end up with "half a lobby."

Our next production, *Enchanted April*, is well into rehearsals with a wonderful cast and a dream team behind the scenes. Okay...as stage manager, I'm only slightly prejudiced. The show opens on Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> and runs to March 11<sup>th</sup>. Book early!

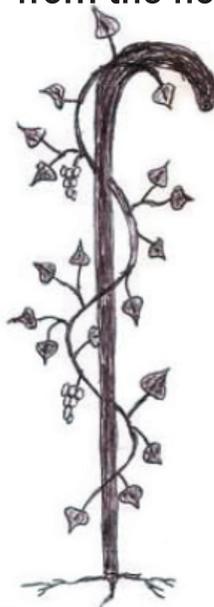
—Estherprezzie

## Our Next Production...

# ENCHANTED APRIL

BY MATTHEW BARBER

from the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim



Directed by  
Gisela O'Brien

Produced by  
Ann Miller

February 23<sup>rd</sup> to March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday  
Evenings at 8:00 P.M.

with matinées

Sunday March 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M.  
& Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M.

The box office opens January 26<sup>th</sup> for members  
and February 2<sup>nd</sup> for non-members.

For Reservations Call

477-2663

or visit

www.tagtheatre.com

## TAG Board, 2005-2006

President ..... Esther VanGorder  
Vice President..... Debora Pollock-Post  
Secretary ..... Rebecca Humphreys  
Past President..... Frank MacLean  
Treasurer ..... Carolyn Boyer  
Artistic Director..... Nick Jupp  
Executive Producer..... Bill VanGorder  
Technical Director ..... Austin Reade  
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Building Manager ..... J Carruth  
Props/Costume Manager ..... Judy Reade  
Reservations Manager ..... Lynn Bungay  
Membership Manager..... Helen Goodwin  
Newsletter Editor ..... Eric Rountree  
Special Projects Manager..... Rich Knowles  
Member at Large..... Hugh Vincent  
FOH Manager ..... Frank MacLean

## Saraguay Club Closed for Winter No Dinner & Theatre Package

TAG regrets it is unable to offer the usual Thursday and Friday evening dinner and theatre package in conjunction with the Saraguay Club, as the Saraguay has closed for the winter this year. Watch this space for the return of the dinner/theatre package with the arrival of spring.

## The Theatre Arts Guild

### Location:                      Mailing Address:

*The Pond Playhouse*      *287 Lacewood Drive*  
*6 Parkhill Road*            *Unit 103, Suite 412*  
*Halifax, NS*                    *Halifax, NS B3M 3Y7*

**Telephone:** (902) 477-2663

**Internet:**                    [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com)  
   [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com)

## TAG's 75<sup>th</sup> Season: Upcoming Productions

### *Enchanted April*

by Matthew Barber  
from the novel by Elizabeth Von Arnim  
February 23<sup>rd</sup> to March 11<sup>th</sup>  
Director: Gisela O'Brien

### *Variety Night*

Saturday, April 1st

### *Red, Hot and Cole*

Book by James Bianchi, Muriel McAuley,  
and Randy Strawdman  
Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter  
April 27<sup>th</sup> to May 13<sup>th</sup>  
Director: Rebecca Humphreys

### *Dial "M" for Murder*

a mystery by Frederick Knott  
July 6<sup>th</sup> to July 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Director: Frank MacLean

## Audition Notice

Auditions for TAG's spring musical, *Red Hot and Cole*, will be held on Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. and Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. at Saint Augustine's Church, 290 Purcell's Cove Road.

It is a two-act show that blends Cole Porter's music with a biography of his life. The show is a party, one continuous evening that moves back and forth in time. It slips from the party today to parties of the past, in other places during the decades of Porter's life. The singers/actors are required to play multiple roles within the show, except for the two people who are cast as Cole and Linda Porter.

If you are interested in auditioning, come with a prepared song (Cole Porter preferred, but not required). Please be prepared to sing *a cappella*. We will also be doing readings of scenes from the show. Please contact the director, Rebecca Humphreys (877-6879) for further details. For a synopsis of the show and a song list please visit [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com). \*

## The Yard Sale with a Difference Advance Notice

John Gratwick and his team are reviving the annual TAG Yard Sale in support of the Building fund. It will be held on Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> (Rain date May 28<sup>th</sup>). We are looking for "quality" items for the upscale section of the sale. If you have items to donate, or want to volunteer to help, please call John Gratwick at 423-1606. \*



# April in February

We've all experienced it. Particularly in February. A glimpse of a travel brochure for some green and beautiful place unleashes a sudden desire to escape from the humdrum round of work, family, and social obligation.

That's what happens to Rose and Lotty one rainy afternoon at a women's club in London, England. In the grey aftermath of the First World War, there is precious little romance in their lives or their marriages. Then they read an advertisement.

*To Those who Appreciate Wisteria and Sunshine. Small medieval Italian Castle on the Shores of the Mediterranean to be Let Furnished for the month of April.*

Who could resist? Lotty convinces Rose to take a gamble; they defy their pin-striped husbands and find two other women to share the rental. And during their enchanted April in Italy, they learn a lot about each other, about life and, especially, about love.

*The Enchanted April* by Elizabeth Von Arnim has been a best-seller since its first appearance in 1922. It has twice been filmed, most recently and successfully in 1991 by Mike Newell. Miranda Richardson and Joan Plowright headed a magnificent British cast. Like the book, the film has acquired an almost cult-like following among women of all ages.

As soon as she heard that Matthew Barber had written a new stage version of *Enchanted April*, Gisela O'Brien wanted to direct it at the Theatre Arts Guild. "I knew it would resonate with our audience. And I can't think of a better way to brighten up a Canadian winter than to take a trip to Italy with these remarkable women."

O'Brien has assembled her own collection of remarkable women to create the two worlds of the play – gloomy London and sunny Tuscany. Brenda Tyedmers has designed an ingenious set, painted by Vivien Marvel and dressed by Roz Marshall, filled with period costumes by Roberta Palmer and props by Judy Reade. Ann Miller is the producer and the unflappable Esther VanGorder the stage manager.

The cast is equally strong, with Debora Post, Vicky Strand, Alice Woodbury, and Iris Paterson as the women who travel to Italy. Michele Moore takes on the warmly comic role of the housekeeper, Constanza.

But it's not all about women – there are three intriguing men in the cast as well – played by Phil Reid, David Chambers, and Jonathan MacDonald. On the production side, Austin Read looks after lighting while Bill VanGorder is in charge of sound design. Joe O'Brien heads the construction crew.

*Enchanted April* runs at the Pond Playhouse, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 pm from February 23 to March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006. There is a matinee at 2 P.M. Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup> and a **special added performance** Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 2 P.M. \*



# 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Variety Night and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, at 8:00 P.M.**

**Bar opens at 7:30 P.M.**

**Phone 477-2663 for reservations.**

TAG's seventh annual entertainment extravaganza, Variety Night, falls appropriately on April 1<sup>st</sup> this year. April Fools, or people who want to play the fool, or those who just want to have a fantastic evening of surprise entertainment should gather at the Pond Playhouse on Saturday April 1st. Our Variety Night producer is Deb Post (479-0228)

Don't dare miss it. The world's next Jim Carrey, Donald Sutherland, Joni Mitchell, or Milton Acorn might just light up the stage with eye-popping, mind-boggling world-class talent.

Not only will there be original skits and music provided by our very own TAG members, but there will be, for the second year running, a silent auction organized by Cheryl Theriault (492-0838).

To book your seats at the Pond Playhouse just call 477-2663.

AND, since Variety Night is a superb showcase of the talents of TAG members, we are also beginning a new tradition, that of celebrating the anniversary of the Theatre Arts Guild on that night. We invite any TAG members with fond memories and stories to share them.

If you would like to be *in* the show, here's your chance to show us your stuff. Any member of TAG is invited to perform a skit, sing a song, do a dance, recite a poem, perform a mini-play, do some stand-up comedy, etc. Find a friend, or go solo... Group and individual acts are accepted.

This is a two hour show, so here are the rules of the game:

Submit your act idea (be able to describe it and know its length) to the Variety Night producer, Deb Post (479-0228 or [debpost@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:debpost@ns.sympatico.ca))

The number of acts accepted is limited by the length of the show. We like to give as many performers as possible an opportunity, so please, limit your act to six minutes or less. Because we do not see all the acts before Variety Night, please assume that this is an adult entertainment event.

Part of the creative process is to find your own costumes/props/music. This is a fun, unrehearsed evening which means we can't provide fancy lighting or do complex sound cues. It's a "get up onstage and perform" type of gig. The producer reserves the right to stand just off-stage with a large hook!

Book Your Act Early to avoid disappointment!

## Silent Auction

Is there anyone who cannot find something to donate to a silent auction? No! Of course not! If you have that special something that you know someone else would *love* to own, and you want it to have its moment of fame and glory, give it to our TAG silent auction. Call Cheryl Theriault at 492-0838 to make very simple, easy arrangements.

Variety Night Producer: Deb Post (479-0228

or [debpost@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:debpost@ns.sympatico.ca))

Silent Auction Organizer: Cheryl Theriault (492-0838) \*

# Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary

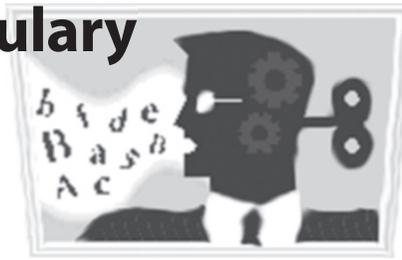
## Now You See It—Now You Don't

(The thirteenth in a continuing series)

—Judy Reade, *Props/Wardrobe Mistress*

I don't want to give too much away about *Enchanted April*, but an important technical aspect of this play is an almost invisible curtain which marks the divide between Act I and Act II, i.e., between the action which takes place in England and the subsequent happenings in Italy. The technical term for this curtain is *scrim*, which consists of a cotton (or polyester) fabric with a rectangular weave which has certain unique properties – the scrim can be opaque, transparent or translucent. You as the audience can see through the scrim only when is lit from the back of the stage, with the audience side dark. And the process can be reversed – with the light from the back removed, and the audience side lit, the curtain becomes opaque.

With that explanation, I think you can see why the scrim is sometimes referred to as a *reveal*. It's a very useful device for obscuring a scene which at some point must rapidly become visible to the audience, or for portraying or indicating action in a distant place



or at a different time. If you've ever seen *The Nutcracker* ballet, it's a scrim which enables the Prince to show Clara the Sugar Plum Fairy's Kingdom of Sweets before they take the long sleigh ride to get there.

But just because I've called the scrim a kind of curtain, we mustn't confuse this with the other types of curtains we see on a stage. When you take your seat at Neptune prior to a performance, what hides the stage there is the *front curtain*, a large drape which parts to the right and to the left (also called the *main, act, or grand drape*). If there happens to be another curtain filling the entire stage during a particular piece, say half-way down or at the rear, then this is a *draw curtain or traveller*. And if the curtain is in a u-shape and goes all the way around the stage, then the term is *surround curtain*.

Which is quite enough vocabulary for this time around! Of course, having hung your scrim, you must very often make it disappear, as what lies behind becomes the focus of the action. Do we achieve this in *Enchanted April*? Why not come and see for yourself! \*

## A Good Shipwreck!

—Cathy MacAuley, *producer*

This year's Panto, *Shipwreck on Fable Island*, (an original script by James Boyer) finished its very successful run on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> with a sold-out matinee performance. The fun-loving and dedicated cast (of sixteen) and crew put on an amazing fifteen shows in eighteen days, braving the rain, sleet, and snow on more than one occasion. Great job, everyone!

Many new friendships were formed and more than a few tears were shed as the final show drew to a close. But we have our memories!! The cast has plans to hold a vocal recording session early in the New Year.

Many, many thanks to the cast, crew, and to you, our valued patrons, for helping to make this show so successful. \*



## Fable = Sable?

When April Hennigar, president and chair of the Sable Island Preservation Trust, heard TAG's *Shipwreck on Fable Island* advertised on CBC radio, she thought she had heard "Sable Island." She immediately checked out TAG's website for more information, and got in touch with TAG Publicity Manager Michele Moore, who in turn asked writer/director James Boyer if he'd intended a connection.

According to Boyer, "When we first starting writing this, we actually choose Fable Island as another name for Sable Island and Ferdinand's role was to look after the Fable Island ponies. That part was one of the many cuts that happened during the editing process." He also says, "The little Wuzzels are meant to represent the seals on Sable Island and the seal hunt that has raised so much turmoil."

The play has a strong environmental message, one that points up how fragile island ecosystems can be. Hennigar finds it "amazing and comforting to see how Sable Island inspires so many people in so many different ways."

This is just one more example of the social conscience artists bring to our often impersonal modern society. \*

## Support Our Friends

Dartmouth Players

presents

*Prelude to a Kiss*

January 18<sup>th</sup> to February 4<sup>th</sup> 2006

Crichton Avenue Centre, Dartmouth, NS

Tickets: \$12.00 adults; \$10.00 students/seniors

For reservations call 465-PLAY (7529)

[www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca](http://www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca)

CentreStage Theatre

presents

*If the Good Lord's Willing*

January 7<sup>th</sup> to February 18<sup>th</sup> 2006

Fridays & Saturdays at 8:00 P.M.

61 River Street

Kentville, Nova Scotia

For information call (902)678-8040