



CONTACT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD



TAG TICKETS
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phone (902) 451-1221 or
at Atlantic Superstore Locations

THE POND PLAYHOUSE - 6 PARKHILL RD. HALIFAX NOVA SCOTIA INFO@TAGTHEATRE.COM

THE SPIRIT IS A GROWING!!

The one thing I like most about October is that one starts to get the initial stirring of the Festive Season, not here yet, but hiding just around the corner.

At Theatre Arts Guild, the Festive Season culminates with the annual pantomime. With the beginning of October came the call for auditions, the first inkling of great things yet to come, and as a first time director at TAG, that whole process was a very pleasing experience. A varied, talented and experienced group of actors came forth. Some were old hands at the pantomime process, some were brand new to the theatre world in general, and then there was me - somewhere in between with tons of theatrical experience but if the truth were known - this is to be my first panto.

Skillfully encouraged and guided by TAG masters, (Michelle Moore producing, Bunny Shore on musical direction and Bill Barnaby on design) any nervous thoughts I may have had about the project vanished about five minutes into the first production meeting. What a well greased wheel TAG is. You should all be proud.

This year's offering is entitled "The Spirit of Evermore" a musical romp through a magical kingdom that may be 'cash

strapped' but has a beautiful young unmarried princess as one of it's many assets, second only to a tap dancing dog named Floyd, an evil villain named Skulk and Willow, a will-of-the-wisp spirit that changes the direction of the plot in a variety of ways. I'm not going to go into plot details here, for there is lots of time for that to unfold, but I would like to convey that we have an excellent cast, a lot of unusual design concepts, a dozen or so musical numbers, and some production numbers choreographed by Melanie Abramson that will guarantee the audience will indeed "Tap Their Troubles Away".

If you want to get into the festive season early and carry that feeling through to late December, The Spirit of Evermore is catching. Anybody know the recipe for 'Shoo Fly Pie and Apple Pan Dowdy'?

~ J. Frederick Brown, Director



**Tickets
on sale
Nov. 6th**

Buy Your Tickets

- * Ticket Atlantic Box Office
- * Charge by Phone at (902) 451-1221
- * Online at www.ticketatlantic.com (\$4 fee)
- * At the 17 participating Atlantic Superstore outlets
- * At the door (subject to availability)

Mailing Address: Theatre Arts Guild 287 Lacewood Drive Unit 103 Suite 412 Halifax N.S. B3M 3Y7

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

With our first production, Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet), closing to a boisterous full house, we turn our attention to the Christmas Pantomime and all the fun and excitement this show invariable generates. A Spirit for Evermore has good guys, bad guys, music, colourful costumes and despite setbacks, a happy ending - the hallmark of our Pantomime productions. We look forward to seeing you and your whole family at TAG for this special seasonal show.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on September 14th with a new slate of Directors and Managers elected. To those Board members who retired, we say thank you for the years of volunteer service, and to the incoming Board we welcome you and look forward to the work of running Canada's oldest continually operating community theatre. It's easy to forget that TAG exists and thrives simply because the community wishes it so. There are no operating grants, sustaining sponsorships or any other form of guaranteed financial support. TAG is sustained financially by ticket sales and private donations and is run completely by unpaid volunteers.

By the time you receive this message, The Pond Playhouse will have a new roof and insulation, which is badly need-

ed. You will have noticed last winter the theatre did not have any insulation following the internal renovations carried out the previous year. We simply could not afford to have the work done at the time, so we thank you for surviving the occasional chilly show night. The insulation is being added externally with new shingles on top so visually the theatre is not changing on the inside. We are looking forward to vastly reduced heating bills this winter!

Our dear friend Lyn Gratwick passed away recently and the many of that knew her you would not be surprised by her wish for donations to be made to TAG in lieu of flowers. This was typical of Lyn's practicality and deep concern for TAG. The significant donations Lyn caused to arrive will go directly against the insulation project, something her partner John says Lyn would definitely approve.

Do watch for notices and messages from our Artistic Director Debora Post who has begun the process of selecting plays for the 2010/11 season. If you have seen or heard of a play you think would suit TAG, Debora and her committee will welcome your suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you at TAG over the winter for all the warm and wonderful upcoming productions. ~ Nick Jupp, President

AUDITION CALL Thirteen Hands by Carol Shields

Thirteen Hands by Carol Shields, directed by Louise Renault, produced by Bill VanGorder and stage managed by Esther VanGorder. This cast will comprise of four women, who can play a variety of ages ranges and characters, and who must be comfortable singing on stage. Thirteen Hands show will run from February 11th – 27th, 2010

Audition Dates & Times:

Sunday Nov. 15th 7-9 p.m.

Monday Sept. 16th 7-9 p.m.

Location: Pond Playhouse

6 Parkhill Rd. (off the Purcell's Cove Rd.)

Set around a bridge table through different generations of players, the women in Thirteen Hands discover family histories, the tricks of getting old and a companionship that gets passed on, like an exquisite heirloom, to a next generation of bridge players.

Playwright Carol Shields spoke often of redeeming the lives of people by recording them in her own works, "especially that group of women who came between the two great women's movements.... I think those women's lives were often thought of as worthless because they only kept house and played bridge. But I think they had value."

For more information, contact Louise Renault at Irenault@ns.sympatico.ca or Bill VanGorder at Bill@MRCassociates.ca

Meet the 2009-2010 Board

Back Row: Carolyn Boyer (Treasurer), Helen Goodwin (Past President and Secretary), Beth VanGorder (Publicity Director), Nick Jupp (President), Cheryl Theriault (Volunteer Coordinator and FOH), Louise Renault (Voice of TAG), J Carruth (Building Director),

Front Row: Debora Post (Artistic Director), Judy Reade (Props/Costumes Mistress, Archivist), Angela Butler (Vice-President), Austin Reade (Technical Director)



Missing from photo: Bill VanGorder (Executive Producer), Valerie Dubois (Newsletter, Webmaster), Cathy MacAuley (Membership), Frank McLean & Darrel O'Neil (Bar)

October 2009 CONTACT

A BIG THANK YOU
TO ALL OF OUR
MANY VALUED
TAG VOLUNTEERS

TAG Tickets

We have been hearing from you regarding our new policy of selling tickets to TAG through Ticket Atlantic. Some folks who live out “in the country” have said they really enjoyed the convenience of receiving their tickets in the mail. Others would prefer to stick with our former method of phoning in reservations and paying at the door. As a Front of House Manager I can say I have enjoyed the very relaxed atmosphere in the lobby as patrons wander in with tickets in hand, linger at the bar and read the program. I really expect to appreciate this when the temperature drops to -20 C and the door doesn't have to stay open!

So for now we will proceed with Ticket Atlantic who has been very helpful and accommodating and we will continue to discuss how it's working for you, the patrons, as we all grow used to this

latest change.

A quick reminder that for any evening during which a show is running you can drop by the theatre and purchase a ticket for that evening's show (subject to availability) or purchase a ticket for a future performance of the current production. Yes, we have our own ticket printer, and we take cash or cheque when you purchase tickets at the theatre.

And if you're keeping track, especially as the Panto season approaches, tickets for the next show will always go on sale at Ticket Atlantic on the Friday that falls 3 1/2 weeks prior to the opening of the show. (That's November 6th for the Panto!!!)

We look forward to seeing you and your family this holiday season! ~ Cheryl Theriault, Volunteer Coordinator and Front of House Manager.

TAG Raises the Roof

We have begun the latest phase of our building improvements, which is the replacement and insulation of the original portion of the building's roof. We struggled through last winter, taking some very large hits from the power company (one bill was for more than \$3,400!) to keep the building habitable. With all the previous construction work carried out, there was no window of opportunity or money available to replace the roof. We did, however, make the decision to complete the work this year. We simply had no choice.

So with the opportunity, minus the money, we will be replacing the entire roof over the costume storage and technical booth, including new trusses. The remaining part will be stripped of shingles, insulated with rigid foam, re-decked, and shingled. This will make heating a reasonable proposition, making the theatre much quieter, and giving us at least 20 to 25 years of life from new shingles.

Even though things will look the same when you come to the panto, the theatre will be cosier and quieter, and much less expensive to heat. Enjoy! ~ J Carruth, Building Director



Want to Volunteer?
email info@tagtheatre.com
for more information

Send your newsletter
submissions to
newsletter@tagtheatre.com

Renew Your TAG Membership Today!

visit tagtheatre.com/membership.htm for more information

\$15	Regular	\$10	Senior (60+)
\$25	Family	\$10	Student

Membership benefits include: \$3 discount off admission, newsletters and invitations to special members-only events

Ladies and Gentlemen, Please Take Your Seats!

Dedicate a Seat for \$500 and take a permanent place in the history of the Pond Playhouse Your seat will be identified with an engraved plaque.

**50+%
SOLD!**

- ▶ Celebrate a special occasion/event
- ▶ Cherish the memory of a loved one
- ▶ Record a milestone
- ▶ Raise your company's community profile
- ▶ Show your support for the arts

Your contribution is tax deductible.

All proceeds to the TAG Capital Campaign.

Visit www.tagtheatre.com or email seatsale@tagtheatre.com
for more information about this exciting fundraiser.!

THE MAGIC OF PANTOMIME

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary - the 29th in a continuing series...

I envy those who will be seeing their first pantomime with us this holiday season. Pantomime is such a difficult theatrical form to define, being such a unique blend of fairy tale, farce, vaudeville, plus traces of its ancestral links in the Commedia dell'arte improvisational theatre of 16th century Italy. (The Commedia legacy laid the foundations of the array of stock characters on which pantomime depends. In the Commedia, these included the 'hero' and principal manipulator of the action, Harlequin; the simple, but faithful servant Pierrot; Harlequin's love interest, the maidservant Columbina and Harlequin's wily and unscrupulous counterpart, the servant Scaramouche). (The word pantomime, by the way, has even older roots in the popular theatre of Ancient Greece and Rome, and means 'all imitating').

An immensely popular form (Commedia troupes toured the countryside, and would often adapt stories to include references to local happenings, using colloquial phrases), by the 18th century English and French companies

had embraced pantomime and adapted the form for national use. In England, pantomime was often paired with operatic performances, and to the Commedia base was added certain elements from this musical form – glamorous sets and costumes, extravagant musical ensembles and the transitioning of scenes (think Cinderella's kitchen to Prince Charming's palace).

By the time a young man named Charlie Chaplin began his career in pantomime at the beginning of the 20th century, the English pantomime had settled into the mould we see today. The hero (Principal Boy) is now usually played by a woman; the foolish clown character of the Commedia has evolved into the 'Dame' (usually played by a man!); an evil counterpart to the hero still tries to thwart his plans, but good triumphs and the Prince finds his Princess! The adaptation of the earlier form to local conditions is still present and the interaction between actors and audience (heavily frowned upon in other theatrical endeavours) is heartily encouraged!

Into this mix is thrown yet another element – the pantomime animal. Primarily stemming from those components which are a staple of children's tales and nursery rhymes, the pantomime animal can have several functions. The character can be used purely for fun and laughter, (particularly the horse or cow created by two actors, the second of whom must have his/her hands around the waist of the actor in front!); as a companion to the hero ("Dick Whittington and His Cat", for example) and sometimes in a leading role, to assist human beings to achieve their aims – usually finding a fortune and marrying the King's daughter! Our pantomime animal is Floyd, a dog, the faithful companion of George Jones, who seems to be a simple youth who finds himself one day outside King Harry's palace (but who will probably, in true pantomime tradition, turn out to be someone else by the time we get to the final scene!).

Whether you're an aficionado or a newcomer to the form – enjoy our pantomime! ~ Judy Reade

COMMUNITY NOTES

Bedford Players presents *Sorry! Wrong Chimney!* a wacky, lighthearted Christmas farce full of mistaken identities and zany foul ups, with a smattering of slapstick comedy. Written by Jack Sharkey and Leo W. Sears the show runs November 5th to 21st. Visit www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca or call 832-3300 for more information.

Dartmouth Players presents the

musical comedy *Anything Goes*, November 4-21st. The age-old tale of Boy-Meets-Girl, and the complications which ensue, intrigue every audience, and no musical puts it on stage better than *Anything Goes*. This show is an amusing story wrapped around one of Cole Porter's magical scores. Visit www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca or call 465-PLAY or for more information.

Support
the
Pond
Playhouse.
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Donation
Today!