

THEATRE ARTS GUILD

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TAG

Canada's Oldest Continuously Operating Theatre Company



THE POND PLAYHOUSE

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The official newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

What's Happening for the 2021-22 Season?

While many theatre companies have announced plans for a 2021-22 season, we at TAG have decided to be cautious in our planning amidst Nova Scotia's phased reopening plan, and the fears of a fourth wave of the pandemic. Rest assured, when we do reopen to audiences, all necessary protocols are already in place. Based on current information, we fully expect that the wearing of masks and social distancing will still be required well into 2022.

All this is not to say we have no plans for the fall. Watch for future announcements of specific dates for three events, to be presented live or online, or a combination of both.

First of all, the sequel to *Mrs. Walford*, Brenda Tyedmers' entry in the 2019 Playwrights @ TAG Festival. *Mrs Walford – A Month on Halsey Street* continues the story and we find out what brought Sarah nearly to the brink in the original play. This beautiful script is directed by Cheryl Theriault and features Rayna Smith-Camp reprising her role as Sarah Walford and Terri Coolen as Dr. Hubbard. Later in the fall, we're planning a musical event with one of our Jollymore celebrities. And in December, in lieu of the annual Pantomime (to return in 2022) we hope to present a fun performance suitable for the whole family.

As long as the stars align, and Dr Strang allows, in early 2022 the curtain will finally rise for *Dracula – The Bloody Truth*, postponed after dress rehearsal night in March, 2020.

Watch for further announcements.

Esther VanGorder
Artistic Director
Chair, TAG COVID-19 Response & Implementation Committee

The Sun



Written by: John Galsworthy

Directed by: Joshua Law

Produced by: The Telescope Theatre Project

Starring: Skylar Sullivan, Evan Toth-Martinez, and Justin Mozel

The Theatre Arts Guild presents *The Sun*, an audio presentation. Jack is returning home three years after The Great War to his fiancée, Daisy, but she has jilted him for another man. Will Jack have the will to fight for her, or the love to let her go?

Watch on YouTube here: https://youtu.be/MQ_4eb4rTdM

Thank you so much for your contributions!

Friends of the Theatre Arts Guild: <https://tagtheatre.com/friends.html>



Poetry Nebula Series 2

In June, The Theatre Arts Guild, in association with The Telescope Theatre Project, embarked on a journey to seek out new and obscure works of poetry. In this series, Fourteen poems of love, loss, and adventure were shared by ten tellers of tales, beginning our journey with Enheduanna in ancient Akkad, to the Greek lyricist Sappho, Lady Mary Wroth of Shakespeare's era, into the fields, gallumping toward the Jabberwocky, the 1912 Olympics with Pierre du Coubertin, right to the present day joining up with Michael Ardenne, and Richard Brautigan. Joining us, sharing their pieces, were Felix Perry, K.A. Murray, Cheryl Theriault, Jacob Wilson, Melinda Antle, and Beth Doucette.

In July, we released a B-Side, four original poems from Cheryl, Jacob, Beth, and an anonymous contributor. The last series was presented in 2018 by Joshua Law and Melinda Antle of The Telescope Theatre Project. Joining them this time were Rayna Smith-Camp, Jennifer Robbins, Nick Jupp, and Judy Reade.

To listen to the full series, click here: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLY6tRj7mpE4Lc0c3VfDcdXTUg2ksyy7D->

TAG's Annual General Meeting

Monday, September 20, 2021 7:30 PM

All members in good standing are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Theatre Arts Guild. The current Executive Board will present annual reports including the financial statements. Elections will take place for the 2021-2022 Executive Board. A Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

The Meeting is expected to be held online or through your phone on Zoom. Details will be provided as soon as available.

Become a TAG Member Today!

A TAG membership is the ideal way to help your community theatre thrive while developing your own theatrical skills & interests and making new friends.

Join or renew your membership today:
<https://tagtheatre.com/membership.html>

Want to support TAG? Donate today by credit card or PayPal:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/the-theatre-arts-guild/>

The History of TAG: 90 Years and Counting Episode 5: Illustrious Patrons

We're coming to the end of TAG's 90th Anniversary season, which has been rather a different one compared to recent years! With the Annual General Meeting next month, it's time to reflect on what has been achieved in this pandemic year and make plans for future activity.

Ninety years ago, in the spring of 1931, the Board of the newly-formed Guild was making plans for the opening season of the newly-merged Little Theatre Movement and the Halifax Dramatic and Musical Club. It was the custom of the time for many cultural (and sporting) groups, as one of their first tasks, to establish a list of patrons. It was considered desirable that an organization should assemble a list of eminent citizens whose names could be featured on the back of every programme, thereby demonstrating to TAG audiences that they were prepared to endorse this new dramatic venture.

A financial donation to the new venture was not always forthcoming (!) but at least there was a list of prominent persons who thought amateur drama was a good thing. The personalities on this list always included those who held prominent positions in the community: The Mayor (of Halifax only since HRM came into existence only in 1996), leaders of the main church groups, the police force and the highest-ranking members of the Army and Navy units stationed in Halifax. (The Garrison Drama Society, based at the Citadel, had taken part in the productions of the Little Theatre Movement and connections to the Navy continued in TAG's use of the theatre in the Maritime Command Building

Illustrious Patrons continued from page 3...

on Brunswick Street from 1935 to 1939 and the use of a gymnasium at the naval dockyard when the War ended). For the first few years, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce also provided encouragement and support.

I have no record of how many of these illustrious personalities attended the actual performances (!) but there were always some of them present on the opening night of each season. Some served in executive positions and some also took part in plays. There is even a record of the Lieutenant-Governor attending a 1958 performance at the Guild's former home, the College Street School. Many of the names on the list will be unfamiliar to our present-day audiences but others are remembered by their work for the community as a whole or by the businesses which they founded.

The Abbie Lane Memorial Building commemorates a tireless campaigner for health and public causes, who was a keen TAG member – and a good actress! There is also a fountain dedicated to her memory by her husband, located in the Halifax Public Gardens. Besides being an Alderman (sic), Abbie Lane served as Halifax's first Deputy Mayor (reportedly the first woman to hold that position in the entire country). Another long-time member of City Council, Margaret Stanbury was also a successful amateur actress and participated in TAG productions which represented the Maritime region in the Dominion Drama Festivals. There is a street named for her in Halifax's West End. You've probably driven past the Oland Brewery on Agricola Street (now part of Labatt Canada). Colonel Sydney C. Oland figured on the Patrons List and was a strong advocate for the 1931 merger. He became the President of the family company in 1938.

The fashion of compiling an (eminent) Patrons List has now fallen into disuse, or been replaced by patronage from commercial firms who provide either financial support or support in kind to an organization. TAG still has patrons, of course, and you don't have to be a Mayor, or a Fire Chief, or a dignitary of any kind for that matter! Financial support is still valuable to us and has been particularly appreciated during the trying time of the pandemic, when we were unable to present our usual programme. Due acknowledgement of these contributors has been made through our website and social channels.

Our only stipulation for a patron nowadays is to have an interest in supporting community theatre and helping us ensure that this form of cultural activity continues to survive. We look forward to welcoming you all as patrons once again for our 91st season!

~Judy Reade, TAG's Archivist