

President's Message

Frank MacLean, president

As I write this, we have just completed the run of *The Wisdom of Eve*, and everyone is now scurrying around like bees getting ready for the next production, *I Hate Hamlet*. At the same time, we have our in-house construction crew insulating and recovering the back walls. Soon our actors will be toasty warm while waiting to go onstage during the winter productions, and our patrons will be cooler during our summer plays.

Speaking of seasons, I want to thank everyone for their patience and perseverance during "White Juan." We were all disappointed that we had to cancel three of our performances, but our audience was right there to support us the next week after we'd all dug ourselves out. Thank you all for your support. Being in the show, I was able to hear the appreciative comments from our audiences.

I was also present during some of the not-so-smooth-running moments that sometimes occur during a production. I want to take this time to ask a few favors from our audience, which, I hope, will make your theatrical experience a more enjoyable one.

First and foremost, we are a small, intimate community theater, and although we love full houses, we cannot have more than 107 people in our audience at any given performance. The fire regulations forbid it. Unfortunately, once we are full, we must perform the unpleasant task of turning folks away at the door. It's not that we don't want you to see us, but we only have so many seats, and we have no place to put you!

Please understand that we love to accommodate, but we cannot put you in the aisle. Patrons who walk in off the street are most welcome, but we must first cater to those who have reserved their seats in advance. We are as disappointed as you that we have to say "no more room in the theater," but remember, we have ten shows during each run of a play, so there will usually be a next time.

Second, I have noticed that we have a very hard time trying to get audience members to come and see us during the first week of the run, in spite of the fact that we have a very efficiently-running publicity machine. I could hear the cries of disappointed fans all the way backstage when

(continued on page 2)

Our Next Production...

I Hate Hamlet

by Paul Rudnick

Directed by Bill VanGorder
Produced by Louise Renault &
Cheryl Theriault
Stage Manager: Esther VanGorder

April 22nd to May 8th, 2004
Sunday Matinee May 2nd

Successful TV actor Andrew Rally has the opportunity to play Hamlet. The young star's real estate agent is John Barrymore's former lover. This prompts



a séance, during which the ghost of John Barrymore appears to tutor Rally as Hamlet. The plot is complicated by Rally's ditzy girl friend, his agent, and his fast talking west-coast friend.

Starring

Gary Brown	as	Andrew Rally
Tony Marshall	as	John Barrymore
Jocelyn White	as	Deirdre
Scott Murphy	as	Gary
Ruth-Ann Flemming	as	Felicia
Vanessa Walton-Bone	as	Lillian

Box office opens March 25th for members
and April 1st for non-members.

For reservations, call
477-2663

Board of Directors, 2002-2003

President	Frank MacLean
Vice President	Tom Pattillo
Secretary	Esther VanGorder
Treasurer	Carolyn Boyer
Past President	Nick Jupp
Technical Director	Austin Reade
Artistic Director	Brenda Tydemers
Executive Producer	Louise Renault
Membership Manager.....	Helen Goodwin
Publicity Manager.....	Michele Moore
Props & Costume Manager	Judy Reade
Reservations Manager	Lynn Bungay
Building Manager.....	J Carruth
Special Projects Manager.....	Rich Knowles
Community Relations/Capital Campaign.....	Bill VanGorder
Newsletter Editor	Eric Rountree

Upcoming TAG Productions

April 22nd– May 8th: *I Hate Hamlet*, by Paul Rudnick, directed by Bill VanGorder.

July 7th– 24th: *Dead Guilty*, by Richard Harris, directed by Frank MacLean.

August 7th: The Annual Gratwick Partnership Readings.

Auditions for Front-of-House Volunteers

- Everyone is guaranteed a part.
- Watch the play and play a role.
- Qualifications – a smile.
- TAG members, friends of TAG are all welcome.
- Training on the spot – everyone's a natural.
- Phone 477-2663, leave your name and number; Lynn will call.

Saraguay Club—Dinner & Theatre

The Saraguay Club and The Theatre Arts Guild offer a dinner and theatre package (\$37.00 plus tax and gratuities) on Thursday and Friday evenings during TAG's productions.

During the run of *I Hate Hamlet*, this package will be offered on April 22nd, 23rd, 29th, and 30th and May 6th and 7th. Arrive at the Saraguay at 5:30, enjoy a three-course dinner, and then travel to the Pond playhouse by 7:30 for an evening of entertainment.

To reserve this package, call TAG at 477-2663.

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

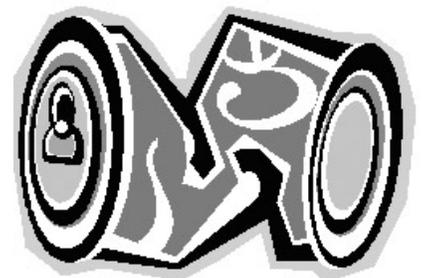
the front of house staff had to tell them we were full and this was the last show of the run. I also was informed of a massive waiting list of those who, unfortunately, waited until the last week to book a seat.

So, please make your reservations early in the run to ensure you get a seat. It's now easier than ever. You can find a schedule of plays on our new web site at www.tagtheatre.com, and while you're there, why not book your seat early in the run using our new on-line reservation system?

Once you have booked your seat, I have another favor to ask. Please arrive by 7:45 p.m. to ensure you get the seat you reserved. We usually have a significant number of people who drop in to see us on "standby," and if some patrons with reservations cannot attend, we can sell those seats to the folks waiting in the lobby. We want everyone to have a chance to enjoy a live theatrical experience, and we want to be as fair as possible. Our policy is to sell those seats that have not been filled by 7:45, so I implore you to arrive by then to avoid disappointment.

Finally, and I hope I am not being too draconian, but I ask that you not bring any food or drink into the theater seating area. Our lobby is admittedly a bit tiny, and we are working on a fund-raising campaign to build a bigger one, but when folks bring drinks or food inside, we have a devil of a time cleaning up any accidents that occur. As an actor, I have had the unfortunate experience of being distracted by the sounds of pop cans rolling down the aisle and the heart-breaking sounds of rustling candy wrappers. Even as an audience member I can remember those annoying sounds taking me out of the world the actors have so eloquently drawn me into. We actors desperately want our audience to have the best live theater experience possible, so please keep the food and drink out in the lobby.

I cannot express enough appreciation for your support, and I hope you will continue that support and continue to enjoy your theatrical experience. My intent here is to enhance that experience, and I hope I have done that. Please feel free to send me your comments in the "critic's corner" section of our new website. *



TAG Plays at Neptune

TAG stages A.R. Gurney's *Later Life* at Neptune Studio Theatre

June 9th to 13th, 2004

Evenings at 8:00 P.M. June 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

Matinees at 4:00 P.M. June 12th and 13th

Reservations: Neptune Box Office

(Stay tuned for when to call to reserve your seat)

Back in 2003, Chris Shore of Theatre Nova Scotia helped TAG and Dartmouth Players produce *The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon* at Neptune's second stage (Neptune Studio Theatre). This year, your board of directors is pleased to announce that TAG will be at Neptune in June with its third A. R. Gurney play, *Later Life*. In previous seasons, TAG produced *Sylvia* (remember the dog?) and—just last spring—*The Dining Room* by this contemporary American playwright.

Gurney's *Later Life* takes a different slant on the coming-of-age theme. When Ruth and Austin are reunited at a Boston cocktail party, will they re-ignite a spark that happened many years ago, or have the cards life has dealt in the intervening period built a wall too high?

It's a play about youth and age, hope and love, self-discovery and humor. For anyone who once in a while thinks about that special person they knew many years ago, *Later Life* is a must-see play.

Cast

Mike Chandler	as Austin
Deb Post	as Ruth
Angela Butler	in multiple roles
Terry Coolen	in multiple roles

Crew

Director	Nick Jupp
Producer	Hugh Vincent
Technical Director	Austin Reade
Stage Manager	Patti Morse
Set & Sound Design	Rich Knowles

The board of directors of the Theatre Arts Guild gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement of Neptune's Ron Ulrich, Robin Creelman, and their staff, without whose enthusiasm, mentoring, and collaboration this production would not have been possible.

Don't miss what is sure to be another landmark production for TAG! *

No More Freezing Our Assets Off

The stage right and backstage walls of the Pond Playhouse, from near the front row seats all the way to the back and across to the stage manager's usual position, has been un-insulated concrete since TAG acquired the building in 1961. Countless actors and crew have endured the unpleasant experience of standing next to frozen concrete, and we have been sending many dollars through the walls in the form of our oil bills.

Thanks to our technical director, Austin Reade, something concrete has finally happened (pun intended). Austin got a budget approved, and the project was launched! A team of volunteers, captained by our building manager, J Carruth, designed a new internal wall to cover and insulate the offending area. TAG's special projects manager, Rich Knowles, did his magic at Piercy's and negotiated better than contractor pricing and free delivery.

Construction was supervised by J. His laborers were Austin, Nick Jupp, and Joe O'Brien, all of whom are now fifty percent fitter or fifty percent more decrepit, depending on your point of view. To finish off the job, Rich built a permanent stage manager's workstation and props shelving, and Austin painted the new walls black and re-installed the 110-volt wiring and headset cables.

Some people say that the building feels warmer and more pleasant the minute you walk in the door. An added bonus to the procedure is that the theatre's acoustics have improved without all that exposed concrete.

Here's to Austin and J for leading the charge on this major project. *

Audition Notice

Auditions for *Dead Guilty* by Richard Harris will take place Sunday April 25th from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. and Monday April 26th from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. The production, directed by Frank MacLean and produced by Bill VanGorder, runs from July 7th to July 24th.

Actors are needed for the roles of Julia Darrow (mistress, female, age 25 to 40), Anne Bennet (psychologist, female, age 30 to 50), Gary (home helper, male, age 25 to 45), Margaret Haddrell (wife, female, age 35 to 55), and the Voice of the Coroner (male, any age, must sound like a doctor). Julia and Margaret need to compliment each other and need to be strong performers.

For further information, call director Frank MacLean at 454-0417 (home) or 499-7541 (cell) or stage manager Esther VanGorder at 453-4077. *

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary

Judy Reade, Props Mistress/Wardrobe Mistress



Of Divas and Other Actresses

The sixth in a continuing series

The two leading characters in our most recent production, *The Wisdom of Eve*, illustrate perfectly some terms often applied to female actors. Margo Crane is a *diva*, proud of herself, proud of her craft and her theatrical achievements, but not always easy to get along with! The term is borrowed from opera, and is meant to describe a distinguished female star of the operatic stage. The word is Italian in origin, meaning literally 'goddess.' In recent years, the term has taken on a pejorative tinge, implying that an actress or singer displays a vanity which is greater than her talent!

Eve Harrington, on the other hand, though she aspires to become a *diva*, hides behind a cloak of *naïveté* and ingenuousness. In the theatre, the actress who fills the role of a young, innocent girl is called the *ingénue*. In Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Phantom of the Opera*, the heroine, Christine Daae, is snubbed as being an *ingénue* by the *diva* Charlotta, wife of the opera manager.

You may also have noticed that Eve Harrington has quite a way with men, and manages to meddle in a few

people's lives on her climb up the ladder of fame! In contrast to the *ingénue*, a role which requires the actress to portray a pert, flirtatious creature is that of the *soubrette*. The *soubrette* (usually to be found in comedies) can be more than flirtatious; she enjoys making mischief and poking her nose into the affairs of others. The role is often equated with that of a lady's maid, and when Madame turns her back, the saucy maid is up to no good!

We'll end with a general term—one that encompasses *diva*, *ingénue*, and *soubrette*—that of *thespian*. You've probably heard it more than once, and wondered why it is applied to all actors. The link is with ancient Greek drama, one of the main building blocks in the development of theatre. Thespis of Attica, who was both actor and director, is credited with being one of the founders of the form. Little is known of this man, and none of his works have survived. However, he is said to have won the first drama competition held in Athens in 534 B.C. and to have founded the concept of the touring company. He took his troupe to various Greek cities traveling in a cart, which doubled as the stage! *

Sound for the Amateur Theatre

Judy Reade, Workshop Organizer

The latest in our series of workshops was held on Saturday, March 13th, when fourteen people gathered for the day with instructor Charles Culver. Mr. Culver was for sixteen years head of sound for Neptune Theatre and is recently returned from Memorial University, where he taught a class on sound design to students in the theatre programme there.

Our day included sections on "What Does a Sound System Do?," "Parts of a Sound System," "Frequency,"

and "Phase Shift and Polarity." In the afternoon, Charles concentrated on how to set up sound cues and how sound fits into the production process.

I think almost everyone taking the workshop now realizes how little he or she knew about sound and how complicated the whole process is! However, we now know a whole lot of new terms with which to bamboozle directors and producers!

Our thanks to Mr. Culver for sharing his extensive knowledge and experience with us. *

Support Our Friends!

Dartmouth Players

presents

Beside Yourself

Starts April 14th

Call 465-7592 for reservations.

All Saints Bedford Players

presents

Drinking Alone

Starts April 29th

Call 832-3300 for reservations.

Contact is produced five times annually.

Please send comments or contributions to Eric Rountree, newsletter editor, at eric@routree.com