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The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre



The Pond Playhouse

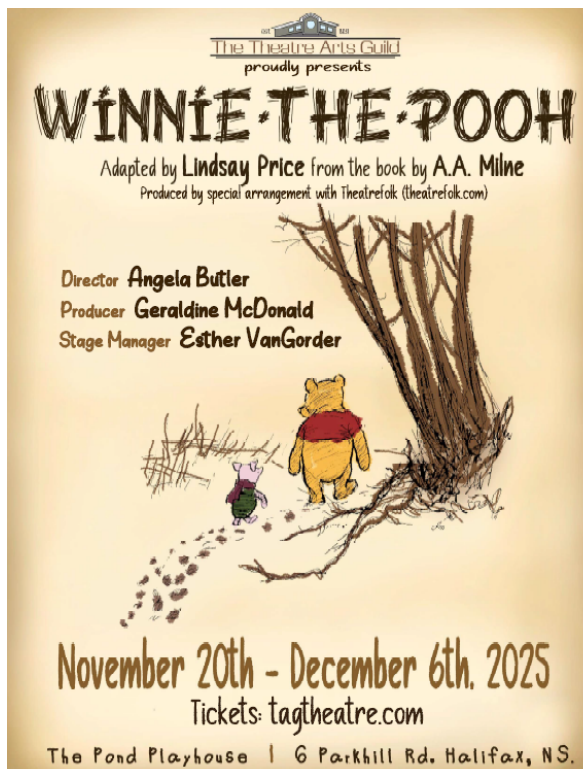
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OCTOBER 2025

UP NEXT AT TAG



Poster created by Mike Barnaby

WINNIE-THE-POOH

Theatre Arts Guild at the Pond Playhouse invites audiences of all ages to experience the magic of **Winnie-the-Pooh**, a stage adaptation by **Lindsay Price**, directed by **Angela Butler**.

Produced by **Geraldine McDonald** and Stage Managed by **Esther VanGorder**.

Heartwarming family entertainment.
Plays from **November 20 to December 6, 2025.**

Follow Pooh Bear, Christopher Robin, Piglet, Eeyore, and all their friends as they hunt for Woozles, search for lost tails, brave floods, and head off to find the North Pole—all with the same warmth and charm that first enchanted readers in Milne's original classic.

Winnie-the-Pooh began as a story shared between a father and his son. In 1926, A.A. Milne introduced the world to a boy named Christopher Robin and his honey-loving bear through gentle tales set in the Hundred Acre Wood—stories inspired by real childhood adventures and a well-loved stuffed bear bought at Harrods. Nearly a century later, those timeless friendships and quiet wonders continue to warm hearts everywhere.

This heart-warming family play will be loved equally by adults who grew up with Pooh and by children today, wholly captivated by the portrayal of adorable animals cavorting about the stage. It's a joyful reminder that imagination, friendship, and a touch of honey never go out of style.

See **Winnie-the-Pooh** at the Theatre Art Guild's Pond Playhouse, 6 Parkhill Road, off the Purcell's Cove Road just past the Frog Pond at the east end of Williams Lake Road. Step into the world of Winnie-the-Pooh and Christopher Robin in the Hundred Acre Wood.

As Eeyore might say—don't worry, it probably won't rain, and everything will end happily ever after.

Tickets available for members on Thursday Oct 23rd and the general public on Thursday Oct 30 at www.tagtheatre.com Buy your tickets NOW. The holiday family show always sells out very quickly.



HOW A REAL CANADIAN BEAR INFLUENCED WINNIE-THE-POOH

The connection between Winnie-the-Pooh and Winnipeg, Manitoba traces back to a real bear cub from Canada who inspired A. A. Milne's famous stories.

In 1914, a Canadian Army veterinarian named Lieutenant Harry Colebourn, who was originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, purchased an orphaned female black bear cub at a train station in White River, Ontario for \$20 while en route to serve in World War I. He named her "Winnipeg Bear"—or "Winnie" for short—in honour of his hometown.



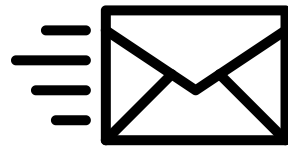
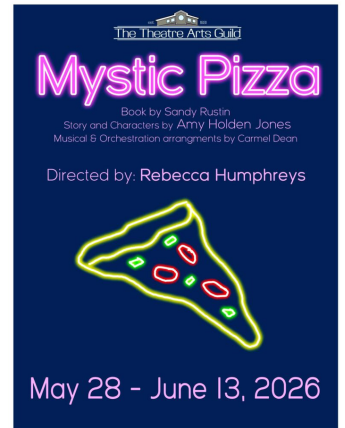
Winnie travelled with Colebourn to England, where she became the beloved mascot of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade. When Colebourn was sent to the front lines in France, he left Winnie in the care of the London Zoo, where she became one of its star attractions thanks to her gentle nature and fondness for children.

Among her regular visitors was Christopher Robin Milne, the young son of writer A. A. Milne. The boy adored Winnie—so much that he renamed his stuffed bear "Winnie-the-Pooh," combining "Winnie" the bear's name with "Pooh," the name of a pet swan. This real-life encounter directly inspired Milne's 1926 book *Winnie-the-Pooh*.

Today, Winnipeg proudly recognizes this special link. A bronze statue of Harry Colebourn and Winnie stands in Assiniboine Park, celebrating the city as the namesake and birthplace of the world's most beloved bear.



Don't miss TAG's 2025-2026 season!



TAG's Mailing List

TAG sends out regular email bulletins about productions, auditions, special events and other local community theatre news. Emails from your contacts are considered trustworthy and are less likely to be flagged as spam, ensuring they reach your inbox instead of the junk folder.

Please add communications@tagtheatre.com to your contact list to ensure delivery of TAG emails to your inbox.



Give the gift of theatre with TAG's e-gift cards, allowing loved ones to enjoy live performances with ease. Perfect for any occasion, these cards can be used for online and in-person ticket purchases, making every theatre visit special.

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THE HISTORY OF TAG – Heading Towards 100 Years (1931/2031)

Episode 22 – There are bears, there are teddy bears, and then there's Winnie-the-Pooh

And yes, I'm a fan! Proof of this can be found in the bookcase in our house, a copy of *The Christopher Robin Story Book* (first published in 1929), a compilation of stories and poems from the works of A. A. Milne which was received as a school prize many, many years ago. Other authors have written books about animals - think of the Beatrix Potter series, the *Br'er Rabbit* stories of Joel Chandler Harris, and in more modern times, those about the bear with the blue coat and red hat, Paddington, who has his own statue at the London railway station where he first arrived in England. All of these tales have their own attraction, but to me, the appeal of Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends is that they are *human* - and I know that that is a strange term to use as a description. The inhabitants of the Hundred Acre Wood (a real wooded area close to the Milne family home in Hartfield, Sussex) are fallible, they make mistakes, they suffer disappointments, they have habits (eating honey) which are hard to break, in other words, they display the good and not-so-good qualities which human beings possess. Christopher's toys are, in one sense, a miniature human society and he has determined their strengths and weaknesses and how they function as a group, how they support each other and particularly how they enjoy the simple joys which life brings.

One of the reasons that the stories' popularity has remained constant I think is due to Milne's skill in transforming what he observes into words on the page. He sees his son creating personalities for each of his much-loved toy animals and placing them in surroundings that the father and son know well. It's somewhat ironic that this father had already made a name for himself as a playwright and novelist, but those successes would be eclipsed by the creation of the stories built around Christopher and his toys. (The real Christopher Robin Milne as an adult found the attention which the books brought him hard to bear. In the public's eye he remained forever a little boy).



With the plethora of animal characters that we now have in books, films and television programmes for children, we tend to forget that in centuries past animals in tales intended to be read to young people were not generally friendly or amenable! I say stories for narration to children and not children's literature because these tales came out of an oral tradition. Children's literature, meaning writing which children can read for themselves comes much later. For there to be books for children to read unaided presupposes that a child has learned to read, which in turn presupposes a school

system which provides a learning environment for all young people. (Upper Canada introduced legislation towards a mandated school system in 1846. In England the date was 1870). For many centuries, particularly in England and Europe, the opportunity for learning to read was the privilege of the wealthy and limited to boys. There were some exceptions of families whose daughters were allowed to share lessons with their brothers, but this was not the norm.

As regards friendliness, Goldilocks was very apprehensive of the bear family whose home she entered and whose food she ate. The bears felt equally uncertain about the little girl. The wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* is definitely *not* friendly and in the original version of the tale does devour the youngster. This uncertainty and outright fear of some animals stems from the moralistic nature of the early versions. Little Red Riding Hood is warned not to go into the wood by herself when darkness falls. She ignores this warning and suffers the ultimate fate, since children must always obey their parents. Charles Perrault, who compiled the first printed collection of fairy tales in 1697, known in English as *Mother Goose*, even included a poem at the end of each story detailing what one should learn from the selections, which included *Cinderella*, *Puss in Boots* and – another gory setting – *Bluebeard*!

I would never associate anything threatening or fearsome with Pooh Bear and his friends. In their own world they celebrate life, its mysteries and its pleasures. They enjoy being on the bridge, holding sticks. The sticks are thrown into the water and they cheerfully change their position so that they can spot whose stick appears first. They attempt to decipher the messages which Christopher Robin leaves and wonder where he is and what he does when he cannot come to the wood. They are a society whose members are respected and cherished for who and what they are, even though their behaviour can be irritating at times – Tigger can bounce so, and Pooh cannot resist a jar of honey, no matter what the time of day!

Maybe I've been 'preaching to the choir' in this piece and know that you will buy tickets for our holiday presentation. If you don't know Pooh and Piglet, Eeyore, Kanga, Roo, Owl and Rabbit (plus Rabbit's relations), then come and make their acquaintance and see their story transferred to the stage at the Pond Playhouse, November 20th to December 6th. I think you'll make some new friends!

Judy Reade, TAG's Archivist



Memories of *Sealed for Freshness*

September 25 to October 11, 2025

🎭 Directed by: Kathryn Piché

🎬 Produced by: Rayna Smith-Camp

🎫 Stage Managed by: Mark Monk



Membership Has Its Benefits

Not only do members receive a **discount** on tickets,
now there is a **NEW BENEFIT** to membership.

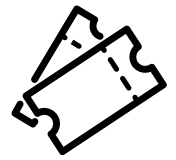
EARLY ACCESS TO TICKET SALES!

Members can choose their performance dates and seats
before tickets are available to the public.

**All memberships are \$15 and are valid from
September 1st to August 31st.**

JOIN ONLINE TODAY!

Visit tagtheatre.com/membership for more information.



Mrs. Walford Book Launch

The launch of TAG Member Brenda Tyedmers' new historical fiction novel, *Mrs. Walford*, took place on October 15th.

The evening was hosted by CBC's Louise Renault, and featured readings by Brenda, Louise Renault, Rayna Smith-Camp (who played *Mrs. Walford* on the TAG stage), and Debora Pollock (who played *Mrs. Sheraton*).

Congratulations to all the raffle winners! Thank you to all the authors who donated their books for the raffle. Half of the royalty from the books sold at this event will be donated to The Theatre Arts Guild and Ovarian Cancer Canada.

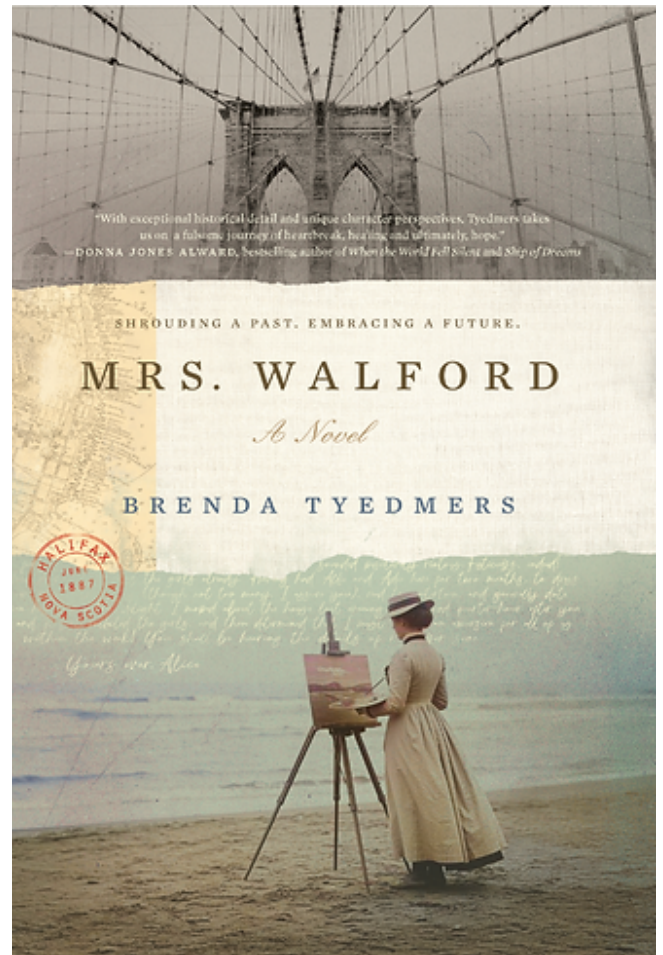
"With exceptional historical detail and unique character perspectives, Tyedmers takes us on a pulsing journey of heartbreak, healing, and ultimately, hope."

DONNA JONES ALWARD, bestselling author of *When the World Fell Silent* and *Ship of Dreams*

A dark secret. A second chance.

In mid-June of 1887, Sadie Walford, the wife of a prominent Brooklyn, New York, ship broker and mother of two, registers at the upscale Queen Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia, using a false name. Two weeks later she is buried in the local cemetery. Or is she?

Inspired by actual events and set in Halifax, Manhattan, and on Long Island during the Gilded Age, *Mrs. Walford* is a story of found family, love delayed, and the power of friendship in turbulent times.



Where can I buy *Mrs. Walford*?

In HRM:

Dartmouth Book Exchange - 1187A Cole Harbour Rd., Dartmouth

Trident Booksellers & Cafe - 1256 Hollis Street, Halifax

Carrefour Atlantic Emporium - 1869 Upper Water Street, Halifax

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Ask your local bookseller to order the paperback in for you:

ISBN 978-1-0695457-0-1

Also coming soon to: Chapters/Indigo/Coles



Fight Direction Workshop - October 18, 2025

On Saturday, October 18th, ten enthusiastic actors, directors and stage managers enjoyed learning the basics of fight direction and choreography from Certified Fight Director/Choreographer, Karen Bassett.



During the three-hour workshop, Karen taught the basics of stage fighting including the responsibilities and limitations of the fight director while working with the play's director and cast to create the illusion of violence on stage.



Participants were able to participate in exercises in rolling, pushing, kicking and punching, as well as other scenarios of violence on stage, while keeping at top of mind the inviolable rules of safety for armed and unarmed fighting on stage.



Karen's enthusiasm was contagious as she demonstrated all the techniques and regaled us with stories of the 40-plus shows for which she has the fight direction credits in Nova Scotia, across Canada and beyond, including the play she wrote to showcase her stage fighting skills: Heroine is being produced by Theatre New Brunswick in March 2026 and will have her reprise her original role of pirate and calvary sword wielding Mary Read. Shows will be presented at TNB and also in Halifax at the BusStop theatre.

Photo credit: Esther VanGorder



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