

**FOOTLIGHT FOOTNOTES**

Kudos to the following for their extra effort at *Forever Plaid*:

◆ **Bill Quinlan** and his staff – **Pam Martin, Kate Hoover and Kate Lankey** – for an outstanding show to start off the 2008-09 season.

◆ To the cast: **Drew Ochoa, Nick Gordon, Matt Zwyer and Tim Bruno** for capturing the essence of “four-part guy groups.”

◆ **Lois Dietzer** for the wonderful opening night reception in the lobby. It was exceptional – and delicious. A grand touch

◆ **Tom Wagner** who kept the house in order and running smoothly.

◆ **Sam Macera** for the pre-show PowerPoint presentation of upcoming shows, advertisers and patrons and vintage Playshop photos that entertained until showtime.

◆ Producer **Gary Buerk** for assembling an efficient crew that kept the show moving and for a set that suited the show to a “T.”

◆ To **Pam and Tom Montgomery** for the excellent accompaniment that often sounded like a full orchestra.



Ooops! Help! Oh, Good Grief! Too late!

Are these familiar phrases heard anywhere near a production? I'm sure they are plus a few unprintables. This column is dedicated to all of your troopers who have had some experience along these lines.

**Brigadoon (1978):** The curtain arises on a scene showing the return of the sleeping Brigadoon – Whoops! Don Aldred is caught spread eagle trying to hold the town drawing in place.

**Lily, the Felon's Daughter (1992)** (Melodrama): The rehearsals for this show were held in the parlor of Wells Mortuary. The heavy, brass catafalque was moved out of the way – Ouch! – right over Ken Dickey's foot! Added melodrama.

**Mame (1992):** As Mame, Suzie Hanifan had very quick changes, so she did the back stage (old AWHs auditorium). Wow! A certain teenager got his jollies with his own peep show.

**Mame (2007):** and other autumn shows, John Nicholson – Yum! – feeds the casts with his wonderful home grown watermelon.

**Lend Me A Tenor (1993):** Ken Cahoo relates the incident of how he dropped, on stage, a suitcase holding filled wine bottles. Whoops! The bottles were needed intact for the next scene. Oh, good grief! What to

do? Panic! Ken left the stage, ran around the back (old AWHs auditorium) and told a stage-hand to find a bottle. The bottle arrived just as they needed it. Whew!

These are some of the many incidents surrounding show business. Please send me some of yours:

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**AUDITORIUM (cont'd)**

the spring it was hot. When they operated the heater, the blower was so loud often you couldn't hear the actors. There was no air-conditioning.

But, it was intimate setting: no microphones! Your voice carried to the far corners of the auditorium with its natural timbre. You could stand on the edge of the stage and whisper and be heard. No worries about if the sound was up or not.

Large-handled variable controllers operated the lights. And the light operator was back stage within voice of the stage manager so there was no delay or confusion in the light cues.

Lights had to be set individually while standing on an A-frame ladder with an extension up the center of the A. It was necessary to climb down and move the ladder for each light adjustment. Dave Taber did it for years. So did Gary Waugh.

Many fine actors and directors walked the boards in the old auditorium. Their names are like a who's who of Playshop.

When attendance and finances dipped in the mid-60's it was the musical, long advocated by Dick Dean that turned the tide. Again in the 70's it was a trio of directors that carried Playshop from a fragile economic condition to success: Marty Beaber,

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## OCTA UPDATE

by Joe Barton

"Oh, we got trouble, right here in River City," well not exactly River City but OCTA is in a bit of trouble.

As the economy as dipped, so did attendance at our Annual Conference over the Labor Day weekend. Because attendance was low, hotel reservations were low. So, the hotel had to charge OCTA for the unused rooms. Some of that debt has been paid off but we still owe a little over \$6,000.

Due to the debt, OCTA has made some tough decisions.

First, OCTA has placed the position of Executive Director on hiatus for a year. That will save almost \$20,000; secondly, OCTA has given more responsibility to its officers and Board Members.

To help eliminate the debt, OCTA will be asking its member theatres to give an additional amount of money with their regular dues.

Our President, Harold Poppe, from Northwest Region, has resigned for personal reasons. Thank you Harold for a job well done. OCTA will miss you.

Ginny Morrison from Northeast was appointed President and Aara Chapman from Central Region was elected new First Vice-President.

In local news, the Northwest OCTA Regional meeting will be held at Kostumes, Ltd., in Holland OH on November 8. The meeting will begin at 11:00 AM and conclude with a small luncheon provided by Kostumes. Anyone can attend, as the meeting is open to the public. We hope to see a lot of Playshoppers in attendance.

Kostumes will also be presenting a small costume demonstra-

tion as well.

Mark your calendars for November 8.

I have been appointed by the OCTA Board to be the State Conference Chair for 2010. The State Conference will be held in the Toledo area, hopefully at the newly opened Hilton Garden Inn in Perrysburg.

Look for more details in the future about this event.

Remember that "The Best Comes From the Northwest!"

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### AUDITORIUM (cont'd)

Herb Wyandt and Joe Bush. Among the three they presented some of the most successful shows of the time. Marty specialized in the musical while Herb and Joe concentrated on the comedies and dramas.

The show that started the resurgence of Playshop was *Guys and Dolls*, directed by Marty with one of the most perfect casts in Playshop history. *Guys and Dolls* was followed in consecutive years by the more successful *Kiss Me Kate* and *South Pacific*.

But Herb and Joe did their

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part as well, each directing highly successful comedies. Joe directed *Blithe Spirit*, still the #1 non-musical in attendance with 605; Herb scored with *Out of the Frying Pan* (528), *Macbeth Did It* (526) and the drama, *Inherit the Wind* (400). Attendance figures we'd love to see today!

From the mid-70's into the new century, the old auditorium rocked with such shows as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jesus Christ, Superstar* (the last musical presented there in 1996), *Music Man*, *L'il Abner* and *Oliver!*

Our first show in the old auditorium was *The Happiest Days of Our Lives* in 1953; our first musical, *Fiorello!* (1962) and our last show, *Chicago* (2008).

We presented a total of 156 shows (one show and one performance cancelled) over 55 seasons.

The old auditorium was "home" for Playshop – we knew every nuance of the building, every creak in the floor, when to use wire and string to keep a light working. If it could speak, what stories it could tell!

We were all like family and it was home.



**Gary Waugh working the light board in the old auditorium for *Bear Witness*, January, 1979. Note large control handles.**