



ST. LUKE'S PLAYERS

COMMUNITY THEATRE SINCE 1948!

65 SEASON, NO. 4

APRIL 2014

EXECUTIVE 2013-14

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President's Message

Spring has come at last! The days are getting warmer and the gardens are bursting with star magnolias and sweet-smelling hyacinths. It's the perfect time to come to the theatre.

St Luke's final play of the season is the dark and spooky "**Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb.**" Full of weird and wonderful characters, this gothic thriller is fast-paced, funny and full of surprise twists. It opens on May 21 until June 1 so consider getting your tickets early from our outlets at Petals Plus Florist, Ivy's Bookshop,

Russell Books and Dig This on Royal Oak Drive. You can log on to our website www.stlukesplayers.org for more information.

Looking back over our 2013-2014 season, I am thrilled to report that our plays have been extremely well-received. We have attracted new directors and our audience numbers are growing. Our most recent play, "**Welfarewell**," written by Canadian playwright Cat Delaney, received a glowing review and drew over 900 people.

We have more exciting news. **Next season, due to popular demand, our evening shows will start at 7:30 p.m.** More than two thirds of our audience asked for an earlier start and we are happy to comply. This will make it easier for our older patrons to come to our shows. So please note our evening shows beginning in October this year will start at 7:30 p.m. Our matinees will remain at 2 p.m.



We are also offering a new approach to our Season Ticket subscription. **From now on, patrons will be able to choose between a three play Season Subscription, excluding the Panto, or a four play Season Subscription that includes the Panto.** The two types of subscriptions will be priced accordingly.

Our new 2014-15 season of plays has been announced and it looks exciting! In early October, our first play will be "**Steel Magnolias**," a well-known and much-loved drama. This will be followed by a fabulous new version of Snow White as our Panto at Christmas, entitled "**Snow White and the Magnificent Seven Dwarfs.**" Set in the wild west and complete with cowboys and a medicine man, this Panto offers a new twist on an old theme. In March 2015, we will present the gripping thriller "**Victoria's House**" and in May we will be performing the fast-paced and hilariously funny "**Barely Heirs.**" I know you will enjoy them all.

Rosalind Coleman

President of St Luke's Players

Who Dunit? (Oct. 2013) • Puss in Boots (Dec. 2013) • Welfarewell (Mar. 2014) • Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb (May 2014)



The cast and crew get together for the traditional Meet and Greet Potluck Dinner before one of their rehearsals.

Death on Parade in Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb

Submitted by Jon Scheer, Director

When the family business is murder, it should be no surprise that someone is always dying. And how they die – knife cut, poisoned saucer, specially spiked brandy, injection, gunshots, even with a kiss. Will anyone survive? Will the fog ever lift? And what's with that smell?

We had a good turnout for auditions with only one role that took extra time to pin down. The cast is mostly faces familiar to St. Luke's Players but includes some new talented performers as well.

After only two weeks of rehearsals, the cast are jumping into their roles, coming up with ideas to keep the director on his toes. When virtually

no one is without a secret agenda, the challenge is to drop clues for the audience yet not give the whole story away.

The set designer for this production is the same person I have used for the two other plays I directed for St. Luke's, Tony Gilsean. The only problem this time was that Tony moved to Cambridge, England, last summer. The internet came to our rescue. After

a couple of Skype conversations, the design was roughed out and a formal set put in the mail.

Even though we have a lot of work yet to do, I look forward to a fun evening of gore, mayhem and a lot of laughs.

Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb runs from May 21 to June 1, 2014.



Tickets for Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb will be on sale

April 21

They make a great Mother's Day gift!

Adult: \$15
Senior/Student: \$13

Do you have an interest in sitting comfortably during our shows?

We require help in looking for new chairs for our next season.

If you'd like to volunteer your services for this task, please email us at stlukesplayers@yahoo.ca



Want to Know More about Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb?

The director and a cast member will be giving a short talk about the show at the Nellie McClung library on

May 10th at 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Register: www.gvpl.ca (click Programs and Events and go to the Programs Calendar) or by contacting the library.

Nellie McClung Branch
3950 Cedar Hill Road • 250-477-7111

The Skype is the Limit!

Submitted by Dave Hitchcock, Construction Head

Many members will be familiar with Tony Gilsenan's set designs for St Luke's Players over the past 10 years or so. He created and was also been involved in building them.

Last year, Tony relocated to Cambridge, England to live closer to his daughter and grandson.

Although he will miss working with the set building crew at St Luke's Players, Tony offered to design the set for "Prepare To Meet thy Tomb" from across the Atlantic, and director Jon Scheer immediately took him up on the offer.

The set design was developed with Tony's daughter scanning early drafts and emailing them to Jon from England, followed up by Skype calls with Tony to discuss modifications. The final plans arrived by regular mail a few days before set construction was due to start. As with many set designs, minor changes are sometimes needed, but having worked with Tony for so long, it was easy to adapt his scale drawings.

In a recent email from Tony, he noted: "Glad to know that all is going well and that you were able to adjust things from the drawings to suit the needs. It is so hard at this distance to cover all the probables! Nonetheless I enjoy knowing that it is on track and wish you another great success. My only sorrow is that I will not be there to see the polished performances."

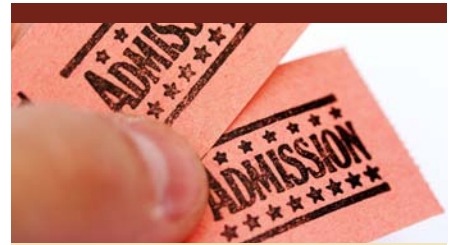
Certainly Tony's cheerful and experienced presence is missed during set construction, but the next best thing is to work with his designs and know that he is only an email or Skype call away! Hopefully, Tony will be able to design sets for St Luke's Players for many years to come!



Simon Key and Martha McNeely show off their bookshelf building skills to Dave Hitchcock.



Graham Thomson, Paul Frost, Don Lambton, Martha McNeely, Harry Edwards and Dave Hitchcock are some of the talent assembling the Tomb set.



Our Members Around Town

Kathy Macovichuk is playing the role of Odysseus in Langham's production of *The Penelopiad*.

Gary Johnson, Jane Krieger and Peter McNab performed with Target Theatre in their production of *Firewall* which was presented at The Belfry's Spark Festival.

St. Luke's Players were represented at the Langham Court's ACTivate Festival with the performance of *The Wind Among the Reeds*, starring **Elaine Lewis** and **George Morfitt**.



Neville Owen was the director for the show and **Susan Nicholl** was Stage Manager. **Beverly van Druten-Blais** and **Kathy Macovichuk** photographed Langham's festival.

Jess Bambrough recently was Stage Manager for Victoria G & S Society's performance of *HMS Pinafore* while **Dee Roger** appeared on stage for the production. **Neville Owen** and **Dave Hitchcock** helped with set construction, **Virginia Landucci** with costumes and **Kim Furey** with photographs.

Farewell to Welfarewell

Submitted by Michael King, Director

"No heat, no lights and spring three months away. What ever shall we do Puss Puss?" (Esmerelda Quipp, Welfarewell)

Well, what we did was gather a talented cast and crew and offer a very funny but bittersweet play called Welfarewell and we made it to Spring! St. Luke's Players third offering for this season turned out to be a great success. Audiences were pleased and left the theatre in good spirit, commenting all the way. I heard comments about the sets, the costumes, the performances and the story. We also landed in third spot for largest number of patrons in seats!

When I took on the job of directing Welfarewell, I knew I did not want the audience to be particularly comfortable. The subject matter, although presented with humour, is not comfortable. When I talked to Lisa Preston, the set designer, she ran with my thoughts and with Neville, Dave and crew, created one of my favourites sets I have ever worked with. The grey

and minimalist backdrop was perfect for all the scenes that moved around the stage. "Grey, it's a universal colour. You'll see." (Esmerelda) It certainly was universally grey and it worked!

Our stage hands and ASM choreographed the scene changes into a ballet that worked so well they were hardly noticed even though the set pieces made a lot of noise.

The actors that I cast in all the roles were perfect! I was so pleased that I cannot single anyone out. I will mention Jane Guy and Paul Gillan. Jane, as Esmerelda, had some of the most complicated lines and long speeches and was in every scene but one. Paul Gillan took on the role of Alfred David, the lawyer, after having only had two previous walk-on roles with no lines. I am so proud of the work he did. Congratulations to all of the cast of Welfarewell. You all worked hard and deserve the accolades!

All in all, Welfarewell was a success from start to finish.



Colleen Davis, Wendy London, Jane Guy, Paul Gillan, Gail Straughan, Beverly van Druten-Blais and Wendy Cornock pose in their prison scene (missing from cast photo: Steve Eastman, Vanessa Bloomfield, Deb Taylor and Joy Farrell).



Langham Court Theatre Auditions

Boeing Boeing

by Marc Camoletti

Directed by Toshik Bukowiecki

Play runs July 23 to August 2, 2014

AUDITION DETAILS:

Located at Langham Court Theatre

Saturday, May 17, 1 – 4 pm

Sunday, May 18, 11 am – 3 pm

Call backs – Tues, May 20, 7 – 9 pm

Auditions and callbacks will take place in the Rehearsal Room at Langham Court Theatre (enter from the parking lot door).

NOTE: Please arrive on the date / times mentioned above. The theatre is located at 805 Langham Court, off Rockland.

For more information, please visit Langham's website at www.langhamtheatre.ca/support/auditions/



Rosalind Coleman and Mike Chadwick will be performing a short one act play.



Next season you will have to eat earlier. The shows will start at 7:30 p.m.

At our last show, *Welfarewell*, 475 audience members were kind enough to fill in a survey form to help better understand those who plunk down your hard earned dollars to sit through an evening of St. Lukes Players.

Seems like people are getting older! Compared to our last survey, there has been a 3% shift to the older age group with 90% over the age of 50 and 75% over 65.

About half of our audience go to other theatres like Langham Court and The Belfry where they prefer to watch mostly Comedies and Murder Mysteries.

They are very loyal to SLP as 63% watch three or four of our shows every year.

In this age of electronic media it was nice to see that most learn about our shows from family and friends followed by the Times Colonist and our brochures. A surprisingly small number used the Internet to find out about us.

And only a quarter of those surveyed wanted on line ticketing.

A large majority would welcome an earlier start to our shows and the Board have responded quickly with a decision to move to a 7:30 p.m. start next season.

A quarter (25%) of our season ticket holders said they would like to be able to choose to have season tickets for only three shows (by excluding the panto). The board has also responded to this and an option for three shows will be included in our brochure for next season.

And then there were the comments and suggestions for improvements ranging from the impossible (could we have an escalator to get me up from

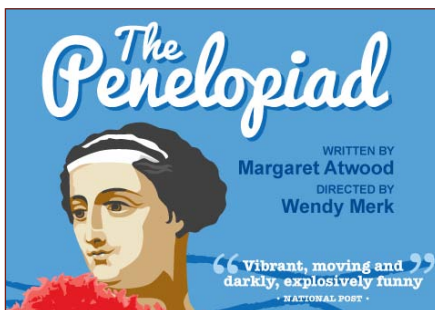
the car park) to the possible (herbal tea at the concession).

It was very heartening to read all of the congratulations which applauded SLP for the job we do in providing plays which the audience enjoys in an environment they find pleasant and welcoming.

A number of people did mention less than comfortable seating, some requested more cushions. One suggested a sloping auditorium. Alas there is not much we can do to help in the short term – we are looking for better seats, there is no storage space for more cushions and sloping the floor would create interesting challenges for dancing classes and Church pub nights.

We had many suggestions for plays – mostly comedies and classics – like those by Norm Foster, Alan Ayckbourn and classics by Noel Coward, Oscar Wilde and Agatha Christie. The Board will try and include at least one of the suggestions in the 2015-16 season and more beyond that.

So finally a big thanks to all who filled in the survey forms. We really do want to respond to our audience and provide the kind of theatre they enjoy. Surveys like this go a long way to help the Board to do just that.



Congratulations to the winners of complimentary tickets to the Langham Court Theatre's production of *The Penelopiad*.

Vanessa Bloomfield and Steve Eastman

We Need Your Help

St Luke's Players next production "Prepare to Meet Thy Tomb" opens on May 22. We are looking for volunteers to help serve drinks and treats in the concession and to help front-of-house taking tickets.

This is a fun way to get involved with The Players.

If you volunteer for two or more shifts, you and a friend will be invited to the preview performance on May 22nd.

Please contact Susan Nicholl (susannicholl@shaw.ca) if you're interested in helping.



St. Luke's Players is happy to announce their 2014-15 season of plays

Steel Magnolias drama/comedy

By Robert Harling / Directed by Michael King

October 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Matinees: October 11, 12, 18 and 19 at 2 p.m.

Revolving around Truvy's Beauty Parlor in a small parish in modern-day Louisiana, STEEL MAGNOLIAS is the story of a close-knit circle of friends whose lives come together there. Filled with humor and heartbreak, these "Steel Magnolias" make us laugh and cry as the realities of their lives in tiny Chiquapin Parish unfold.

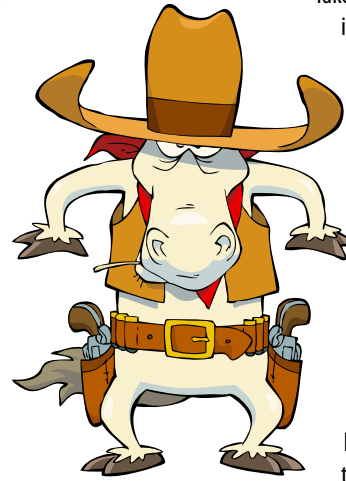


Snow White and the Magnificent Seven Dwarfs panto

By Damian Trasler, David Lovesy and Steve Clark
Directed by Allan Hayes

December 22, 23, 27, 29, 30 and January 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Matinees: December 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, January 1 and 3 at 2 p.m.



Take a trip to the Wild West in this innovative reworking of the classic fairy tale! Snow White, heiress to the 'Happy Ever After Cattle' ranch, is the fairest girl on the prairie – but her wicked and jealous stepmother, Widow Blackheart, plots to separate her from her fortune! Can Snow White survive her treacherous schemes and win the hand of Sheriff Vince Charming? A band of seven brave miners, her lifelong friend, Nanny Oakley, a pantomime horse and a brainless idiot, Silly Billy the Kid, are there to help her!

Victoria's House mystery/ghost story

By Fred Carmichael / Directed by Jon Scheer

March 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m.

Matinees: March 14, 15, 21 and 22 at 2 p.m.

Neil and Victoria Bannister have returned from their honeymoon to Victoria's House. All should be bright in the new couple's life but Victoria has fallen ill and even though her husband administered her special medicine, her health worsens. When Victoria dies, the house seems to come alive to seek revenge. The play is intricately woven and features some fine moments of theatrical surprise, both real and unreal. With chills and thrills this play recaptures the fine art of the turn of the 19th century Gothic romance and mystery.



Barely Heirs comedy/farce

By David Lassig

Directed by Neville Owen and Sharon Sutherland

May 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29 and 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Matinees: 23, 24, 30 and 31 at 2 p.m.

Jane is about to inherit a fortune. The only stipulation is that she was to be married for six months and all would have gone without a hitch, had Jane really been married. With the help of her neighbor's husband, Tom, she just needs to keep the truth from the lawyer; Tom's wife, Claire; Jane's ex-boyfriend; Jane's mother and a cop. It sounds as if things are about to get a little complicated...!

