

NEWS



ST. LUKE'S PLAYERS

COMMUNITY THEATRE SINCE 1948

SEPTEMBER 2020

2019-20 EXECUTIVE

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



So, I think we can definitely say that 2020 has not been a great year, but definitely a year to remember! How different our lives are now. Although the pandemic has been hard on everyone, the arts, which rely on people to attend openings, concerts and performances, have been particularly hard hit. It has taken a lot of talented and creative people in our community to come up with exciting ways to keep the name St. Luke's Players out there in the world.

After the successes of *Play On* and our Christmas Panto *Treasure Island*, the well received drama, *I Never Sang for My Father* had to close after only one week of performances. Janine Longy and Geli Bartlett directed a very talented cast and it was unfortunate that Covid shut them down. Everyone involved should be very proud of their work!

Earlier this year, the executive made the decision to cancel our first two shows of the 2020/2021 season. At our August meeting, we cancelled the rest of the season. It was not an easy decision for us to make, but we did leave things open to putting a show on if things change and the Ministry of Health allows groups to gather.

I am constantly amazed at the performances I am finding around Victoria. Outdoor performances of music, theatre and dance are all over. I can sit on my new balcony between 2:00 and 4:00 on Sunday and hear the Spiral Swing Band playing in a house nearby. Last night I walked past a seniors care home and there was a band playing on the front steps; when the music stopped someone started a dramatic poetry reading!

St. Luke's Players is also planning some exciting "Pandemic Projects!" Mitch and Jo Barnes will be presenting a Zoom version their play *Firehoses and Family*. Mitch will be directing, auditions have

IMPORTANT NOTE:

SLP's **Annual General Meeting** tentative date is **Sunday, November 28th.**

We're looking for volunteers for the nominating committee, and of course we'd love to see some new faces on our executive. Think about it. It's a rewarding experience being an integral part of such an energetic, friendly and fun-loving group. ■

been held and a cast is set. There is one performance on October 17th. Watch for emails and check the SLP website for more details about tickets and how to view this locally written play! The executive is very excited about this project and we are encouraging everyone to attend!

Janine Longy and Heather Lee had a very successful program this summer

with Theatre Games in the Park, and they have proposed some more fun, socially distanced events for the fall and winter. Watch for play readings, theatre games and talent nights. Again, the executive is encouraging all of our friends and members to get involved and have some fun!

As we move forward this year, we will work on keeping our name out there

and having fun! To all of our friends, family and fans, stay safe! Wear your mask, wash your hands often and listen to Dr. Henry's instructions. We miss all of you and look forward to welcoming everyone back to St. Luke's Players as soon as possible! ■

Peace and best wishes to all!

~ Michael King

Theatre Games in the Park



Theatre in the Park premiered July 11th at Beacon Hill Park where the crowd shivered, competed with the loud cries of the local peacocks and played on undaunted.

A smile starts on the lips,
a grin spreads to the eyes,
a chuckle comes from the belly;
but a good laugh bursts forth from the soul,
overflows, and bubbles all around.

— Carolyn Birmingham

And laugh we did! Starting with the Panto zoom enthusiastic group, we spread the word: Come join us for an afternoon of fun and games in the park. At Beacon Hill Park and Willows Beach Park we welcomed all ready to play. With 6 feet carefully measured between bubbles, we were able to accommodate everyone.

Wonderful to see that not only actors jumped in to have fun but partners and crew. New talent has been discovered. We welcomed our friends, our love of theatre and laughter.

We have only just begun. Lots more ideas coming. Please spread the word. We can't be stopped. We will continue to offer safe group theatre activities. ■

~ Janine Longy and Heather Lee



Theatre in the Park on July 19th at Willows Beach was warm and funny.





Theatre in the Park on August 29th at Willows Beach was oh so much fun in the sun!

Thanks and kudos to Heather and Janine for organizing these events and getting us out to play in the park. ■



COMING UP & IDEAS:

- Theatre activity of 1-1.5 hours in the hall September – December 2020
- St. Luke’s Church COVID protocol will be followed
- The activities will take place in the hall in a large circle similar to the park activities





- **September 25 & 26:**
Play Read-thru

Is He Dead, a wonderful mad cap comedy by Mark Twain adapted by David Ives.

The Wall Street Journal wrote: "Shrieking funny —I don't know when I have heard a New York audience laugh louder or longer."

A different cast each evening will read the script in the hall. See the article on page 7.

- **October: Let's perform:** Bring your poem, a favorite story, excerpt from a script, or perform a monologue, or skit. Maximum time 3-4 minutes each performer.

- **November: Let's share:** St. Luke's Players got talent. Show and tell your talent: knitting, unicycle, burlesque, juggle, flute, spoons, art, guitar, jokes and more.
- **December: Let's entertain:** TBD. Let us see what ideas we may have. ■

WE'VE BEEN PLAYING!!



June 9, 2020 This gang read through the Beauty and the Beast Panto via Zoom.



June 30, 2020 We Zoomed a read-thru of Robin Hood. Too fun!

Many thanks to Heather Lee and Janine Longy yet again! They organized and set up and cast these read-thrus for all of us stage peeps going through performing withdrawals. ■



August 11, 2020 We giggled our way through Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves



August 25, 2020 We had a great time reading through Snow White and the Magnificent Seven Dwarves

WHAT HAVE YOU ALL BEEN DOING THESE LAST FEW MONTHS?

Penny Pitcher:

Thanks to Heather Lee and Janine Longy, I have participated in several pantomime readings on Zoom, as well as enjoying Theatre Games at Beacon Hill Park and Willows Beach. Target Theatre has also had Zoom sessions every couple of weeks to keep in touch, and just recently we were able to sit in a circle in the garden of one of our members. So nice to be physically, rather than virtually, present. I get out first thing every morning for a long walk, camera in hand, and have enjoyed walking with a couple of other friends. Wish I could say my house is spotless and decluttered, mais non, I always seem to find enough to keep me occupied so I don't have to resort to that. ■

Gloria Mossman:

I would like everyone to know the exciting thing I did this summer was buy a new stove... see if anyone can compete with that!!

Other than that... not much except staying safe and healthy. ■

Sandra Allen:

Maybe we should have a contest to see who read the most books and did the most puzzles LOL since INS had to close down.

Hope you're all doing well I look forward to hearing how others entertained themselves. Cheers! ■

In response to Editor Beverly's question: "What did you do that was interesting this summer?", the following response occurred to Dave & Helena Hitchcock.

With apologies to the original version sung by Bing Crosby, William Bendix and Cedric Harwicke, here is a Covid-19 inspired version of "We're Busy Doing Nothing". And panto-goers may also remember hearing the panto version during "Aladdin" with St. Luke's Players in 2007 and 2016!

WE'RE BUSY DOING NOTHING

"We're Busy Doing Nothing (thanks to Covid)"

Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. . . etc.

We're busy doing nothing, is it the same for you?

Thanks to Covid-19, there's not been a lot to do.

"Never Sang" was ended quickly, just half way through its run,

Soon after we all got started, we had to shut down the fun.

Performances were cancelled, who could believe our luck,

Everyone disappointed, not even the set was struck.

Agatha Christie had to be cancelled, and that tone was just the first,

We all went into lock-down, live theatre was truly cursed.

Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah etc.

No opening season production, not even a panto this year,

Who knows when live theatre will open, when no longer Corona we fear.

We're having fun with Zooming, panto readings have worked out well,

Who knows when we'll re-open, not even the Fairy can tell.

But thanks to Janine and Heather, we've had theatre sports in the park,

They're moving into St. Luke's now, as the evenings begin to get dark.

And we keep on listening to Bonnie, following every word,

"Wash your hands", "Wear your mask", "Social distance", is often heard.

We're adhering to her guidelines, to keep us all out of harm,

Remember those golden words now: "Be safe, be kind, be calm"

So we're busy doing nothing, is it the same for you?

Please brush up on your rhyming and pen us a verse or two!

Please send your contributions to davehitchcock@gmail.com



Beverly van Druten-Blais:

For a whole year we anxiously awaited our pre-booked 4 separate weeks of camping, paddling, sailing and generally enjoying leisure life at our favourite spot on Cowichan Lake. However the mojo was definitely not with us when it came to weather. In true rainforest fashion it rained like mad for 10 of the 16 days. The sun

shone for 2 separate days and the rest were cloudy and fairly warm. We're still finding things we need to dry out, that we stashed in our haste to pack up during the torrential downpour.

Meanwhile I've thoroughly enjoyed the Theatre in the Park, Panto Reads. Now fitness classes, Newcombe Singers rehearsals and play read-thrus beckon.

WHAT DO SET BUILDERS DO DURING A PANDEMIC?

With no productions in rehearsal at St. Luke's due to Covid-19 and, therefore, no sets to construct, Helena and Dave Hitchcock turned their "need to build something" in a different direction over the summer.

At the request of their daughter Heidi, they designed and built a "catio" for her house in Central Saanich. This enclosure is to provide her cat, Everest, with a taste of the outdoors, while remaining an indoor cat.

Unlike some stage sets, the catio came in under budget (well, almost!!) and was completed on schedule (for Heidi's birthday!).

Also, unlike a stage set - it looks good from less than 20 feet away and it is hoped that it will last for more than 12 performances—but time will tell! ■



LOST (Lawyers on the Stage Theatre) is holding 3 nights of play readings in St. Luke's Hall for members. Hopefully 1 of these 3 readings will be able to be staged in 2021! Merry Hallsor is organizing these events.

Is He Dead?

A play by MARK TWAIN

Written by Twain in 1898, it was first published in print in 2003, after Mark Twain scholar Shelley Fisher Fishkin read the manuscript in the archives of the Mark Twain Papers at the University of California at Berkeley. The play was long known to scholars but never attracted much attention until Fishkin arranged to have it published in book form.

1846 Barbizon, France. Jean-Francois Millet is a brilliant but impoverished painter, and he's a man with a singular problem: no one will pay good money for his paintings while he's still alive. When his friends persuade him that the secret to success lies in convincing the world he's dead, Millet hatches a scheme which could make him rich, famous, and able to marry the girl of his dreams—if only he didn't have to be a corpse to do it!

Members of St. Luke's Players were invited by Janine Longy and Heather Lee to participate in a read-thru of this hilarious play. They've set it up with the church and social distancing etcetera so that we can use the hall.

There was such an overwhelming response that they've organized two separate groups reading on two evenings with a few audience members allowed:

Friday, September 25th and **Saturday, September 26th** at 7:00pm.

Costumes, make-up and accents are encouraged. It should be a blast!



*Check out this timely comedy
premiering as an online
production!*



FIREHOSES & FAMILY

*Written and
directed by*
Mitch & Jo Barnes

The Stanton family have a wedding going on and timing is everything. The parents haven't yet met the bride and the youngest son has decided to reveal an intense secret. Mom is anxious about everything. Dad is so distracted that he's not terribly reliable. How is this all going to work out? Join us for some laughs and tears, joy and fears.

**ONE PERFORMANCE • Sat., Oct. 17th
7:30pm via ZOOM**

Tickets \$5 (plus additional donation option) • online via eventbrite for the Zoom link.
Like us on Facebook • www.stlukesplayers.org • 250-884-5484 • stlukesplayers@yahoo.ca



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