

Lots of people are needed both on and off stage for this production and it is one of those where we all have a great time participating. Please come to auditions if you are interested in performing or working on some other aspect of the show. If you cannot come to either audition, please contact Helen or Bob at 569-3870, or Carol Bense at 569-1396.

ART AUCTION FUNDRAISER

The joint energies of the Village Players along with the Governor Wentworth Arts Council is delighted to present and evening of creative arts... "Art for Art's Sake" Auction. This live bidding auction will take place Nov. 8, 7pm, at the theater on Glendon Street. A diverse array of gallery-quality pieces, donated by local and regional artists and artisans, will be up for auction to the highest bidder. All proceeds will be donated to the reconstruction efforts of the Village Players Theater on Glendon Street. Once renovations are complete, it is the group's hope that the theater will be host to quarterly art exhibits, and showcase all forms of arts and entertainment for the community on a continual basis.

The Auction crew; Jeannette D'Onofrio, Terri Harriman, Jo-el Cookman, and Barbara Grey with considerable contributions by GWAC member Debbie Hopkins, has been hard at work planning the details for this gala evening. Tickets to attend at \$20 each, will be on sale in mid-October along with the preview program booklet. Tickets must be purchased in advance by contacting auction chair, Jeannette D'Onofrio (aka Virgo Design) at 569-0078 or stopping by #17 Grove St. (just past

Johnson's Paint). No tickets will be sold at the door. Only 200 seats are available, so be sure to get yours early. Watch for signs around town detailing the event and in the Granite State News for more about the artists who are donating. If you are interested in lending a hand on the evening of the event, (ie. servers, ushers, or PR help in the community) please contact Jeannette ASAP at 569-0078.



Newlyweds Helen and Bob Rautenberg



October, 2003

The Prompter

All The News That Fits, We Print

GOOSEBUMPS GALORE IN *HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*

Beware the moonless nights on the moors as you step back in time for The Village Players' upcoming presentation of "Hound of the Baskervilles," that classic Sherlock Holmes murder mystery.

Performance dates are October 24 and 25, and October 31st, November 1st and a matinee Sunday, November 2. Tickets will be available from cast members and at Black's Paper Store on Main Street several weeks before the production dates.

Directed by Michael Wilkes, this thriller by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was adapted and dramatized for the stage by noted playwright Tim Kelly, who has written or adapted a number of other scary thrillers for the stage. "Hound of the Baskervilles" is set in the early part of the 20th century at the manor of the Baskervilles, found in the dark rolling moors of the English countryside. Sir Henry [Russ Ellis] has just become heir to the vast Baskerville fortune, a legacy that comes complete with the family curse---death at the fangs of a prowling blood-thirsty beast of the moors. Only Sherlock Holmes [Wayne Gehman] and his faithful companion, the blustery Watson [Bill Fluhr] can stop the beast from striking again. As sinister lights flicker from the moor and the hound terrifies the countryside, the sleuthing begins. Suspicion falls on the heads of mysterious servants, butterfly collectors, ladies in distress, and escaped convicts.

Spine-chilling questions abound. Why do the hound's eyes seem to emit flame? Who wrote the letter that summoned the hound? Is Sir Henry's romance with the lovely Kathy [Laura Cooper] doomed before it can begin? What is the story behind the servant Barrymore [Clark Cowen] and his mysterious wife [Willie Mork]? Does the maid Perkins [Mariel Fluhr] know more than she lets on? What role does Lady Agatha [Diane Sullivan] play in the deadly events that surround the manor? Does the innocent-appearing Laura [Joyce Wood] have more to reveal about her brother Jack [John Gillette]?

Produced by Carol Light, the show benefits from the talents of set designer / creator Jay Sydow, who will also stage manage, assisted by Matt Johnson. Ben King returns to put his talents to work at lights and sounds, including the eerie howls of the beast. Diane Sullivan



assists castmates with costumes, with help from Betty Sherwood and Chris Fluhr, and Louise Horton returns to head the makeup team. The terrifically terrifying posters and billboards will be created by our crack husband-and-wife team, Jeannette D'Onofrio and Jerome Holden. The King family has also graciously agreed to house manage once again. Publicity for the show is being handled by Carol Bense and Carol Light.

The Players are still looking for a couple more people to fill out some production roles; all you need is the interest in participating and we can teach you the rest. Please call Carol Light at 569-7920 if you have questions.

So as you step out for the theater this creepy Halloween season, be prepared for an evening of chills, shrieks and humor as the tension rises and Holmes and Watson hunt down the murderer [or murderers] in this favorite of all Sherlock Holmes mysteries. And keep an eye on what follows you home-----you never know when those flashing red eyes might be lurking behind the next hedgerow!

WHAT DID WE DO?

By Carol Bense

Some of us had one idea and some had another, but Richard Croteau was firmly in control and plenty of work got done. You might think wire brushing rusty nuts and bolts and then painting them with red paint is not important, but Rich assured us that when the inspectors come to look at the compressor for the sprinkler system, they will be very impressed and will give us a gold star.



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I'm talking about the workday we held Saturday morning, September 20th. Phoebe Von Scoy, Wayne Gehman and I did the above-mentioned critical tasks, while Richard, Russ Ellis, John Gillette, Jay Sydow and Michael Wilfert played around putting up forms in the basement so that we can have a concrete wall poured to make sure no water comes in to spoil our flats and other materials stored down there. The wall will also help retain heat so the pipes won't freeze and our heating bills may go down a little. Dan Charlton cleared brush in back of the building and Willie Mork worked upstairs cleaning up the costume room. She and Dan then took gathered up all our hazardous waste (i.e. paint) and trash and Dan took the refuse to the appropriate places.

This is the kind of work that has to get done, but doesn't get much notice. A round of applause to our hardy crew. Try and join us next time, if you can. We actually have fun doing this stuff.

COME BY TO SEE OUR ENTRY IN THE SCARE-CROW CONTEST

The Wolfeboro Chamber of Commerce is holding a scarecrow contest from September 27th through October 5th. We entered the contest and after finishing up the manual labor on Saturday, Carol Bense, Richard Croteau, Wayne Gehman, Phoebe Von Scoy and Michael Wilfert worked on constructing our entry. We put together a scarecrow on the form made by Russ Ellis, doing our best to make it obviously Sherlock Holmes. (Don't say a word about the corn cob pipe - we know it's not a Meerschaum - how do you spell that? - but it's what we had on hand.)

Sunday morning, Michael Wilfert created the Hound with help from Carol Bense and Helen Rautenberg. He is quite spectacular and a tribute to Michael's creativity.

So we have a scarecrow tableau, which is pretty scary, and we hope you will stop by to take a look.



The Sherwoods: Men in Green Blazers

They arrived at our theater on Glendon Street on Friday evening, September 12th, not in a convoy of emerald sport utility vehicles, but in green sport coats. They stepped from the late afternoon sun into our theater lobby right along with their audience, and in those snappy blazers there was no mistaking them as the evening's entertainment. Outside on the steps, Carol Bense and Jay Sydow greeted the assembling multitudes;

in the lobby, Jan Croteau, Louise Gehman, Diane Ducret-Mork and Wayne Gehman collected the tickets and counted the "happy happy happy people." Inside the theater, ushers Jerome Holden, Jeannette D'Onofrio, Richard Croteau, Michael Wilfert, and Russ Ellis assured that the seating would not be chaotic, and a good thing, too, because almost 200 people came! And from way up in the light booth, Corky Mork saw to it that The Sherwoods did not perform in the dark. And they certainly looked great in the partially completed sitting room of Baskerville Hall, its walls adorned with tapestries from the palace of the King of Siam.

The Sherwoods is an ensemble of men who began singing together when they were undergraduates at Cornell University in the late 1950s. They have continued their friendship and a cappella singing ever since. Last Friday they shared with Wolfeboro their friendship and love of singing in an uplifting evening of ballads, Beatles, calypso, and Cornell songs, all sung in four part harmony and interspersed with humorous stories. It was a treat to hear "When I'm 64" sung by guys with gray and thinning hair and out of college for at least 40 years. And deeper affection for one's school than the Sherwoods singing "Far Above Cayuga's Waters" would be hard to find. This performance was a special one for the Village Players. The Sherwoods were happy not only to be able to sing together in our theater, but also to have their performance be a fundraiser for the Village Players. Little did we dream that over the course of the evening \$1000 would be contributed!! Thanks for the Sherwoods! They gave us far more than a concert. They invited us to share in their reunion and presented us the opportunity to come away from the evening a little more conscious of the value of close friendship. Friday September 12, 2003 – Men in Green Blazers!

WORKING BACKSTAGE

By Phoebe Von Scoy

It all starts innocently enough. Carol Bense sends me an email:

Dear Phoebe,
You're such a fabulous person. It was so wonderful working with you in the last couple of shows. It's nice to have someone with your talent and good looks and charm and intelligence and spirit involved in our group. Take Care,
Carol
P.S. Oh, and by the way, would you be interested in helping me out with props for "The Foreigner"?

A normal, rational person would say, hmmm, what's with all the flattery? I, however, am delighted to be thought of so lovingly and think to myself: "Props? How hard could it be? Make a few calls, gather up some stuff from home that I don't use anyway... It's really the least I can do since I had such a great experience on stage in the last couple of shows. And, come on, it's Carol. Can I really say "no"? She wouldn't say "no" to me, I'm sure."

And so, after giving the matter the same amount of thought that one dedicates to picking out a brand of mustard, I reply:

Dear Carol,
Of course I'll help out with props. It will be a hoot!
See you soon,
Phoebe
P.S. I had no idea how fondly you thought of me. You're pretty swell, too.

It's hard to believe that I was ever that naive.

Come to find out, the prop list for "The Foreigner" is equivalent in length to that of the parts list for your average Boeing 747. Hotel keys, fried chicken and grits, hub caps, a copy of The Atlanta Constitution, dynamite.... the required items seemed to get weirder and weirder as the inexhaustible list went on. Lucky for me, I was splitting the task of getting these items with Carol. It took a bit of searching and begging, but between us and with the help of many other Village Players, we found all the necessary items for the play. Phew!

Trouble is, then there was Russ. Oh, Russ Ellis is a great guy. He was the stage manager for "The Foreigner" and really had his stuff together for this production. Most impressive-and probably just slightly less complicated than the Hubbell Telescope-was his work on the trap door special effect. This miracle of modern day community theater technology involved every simple machine you learned in elementary school plus a few laws of physics that I'm fairly sure Russ made up just for this show. One day I got an email from Russ:

Dear Phoebe,
You're such a fabulous person. It was so wonderful working with you in the last couple of shows. It's nice to have someone with your talent and good looks and charm and intelligence and spirit involved in our group. Take Care,
Russ
P.S. Oh, and by the way, would you be interested in helping me out with trap door effect for "The Foreigner"?

Wow, what a nice fellow. And of course I'd help Russ. Who could be more deserving of my assistance? I'd be at all the productions preparing fried chicken and grits anyway!

Next rehearsal, I found myself in the bowels of the theater with John, Russ, Athena, Matt, and Special Ambassador of Love and Happiness, Jay Sydow. Russ had worked it out beautifully: a body to mic the actors, a body to blow air through the hoses, a couple of bodies to finagle the ladder and door and latches and whoozits... and Jay to tell us how horrible it looked and that we would have to do it again. My job, I was to soon find out, was to work the smoke machine. Cool, I thought. It'd be like making a bad '80s music video! After a few false starts, I learned something: hold-

ing a boiling hot, 20 pound smoke machine over your head while precariously standing on a ladder while members of the special effects crew scurry around lifting and pulling and fastening and manipulating this miraculous contraption is, actually, kind of hard. Not to worry, Russ created a safe perch for me that was easily accessible by climbing backwards up a ladder, squeezing myself between 18 inches of lumber and squatting gracefully amongst the dust of shows gone by. (Russ DID bring me a blanket to sit on and an oven mitt to hold the smoke machine, though, which I thought was quite nice). Thankfully, the audience was never privy to the raucous we were creating because for the most part we managed to complete this effect in relative silence. And I heard rumors that even Jay thought that the final effect was "cool". High praise, if you know Jay!

As you can imagine, I now open emails from members of the Village Players with a lot more trepidation. Sure, working on The Foreigner I laughed a lot. Sure, I had the privilege of being involved in one of the group's most successful shows. Sure, I got to eat all the chocolate I could hold thanks to Brooks Campbell, who shares my addiction. Sure, I spent hours working backstage with some of the most wonderful people you could ever want to meet. Still, there's NO WAY I will get talked into doing something else like this again. For example, check out this email Carol just sent me:

Dear Phoebe,
You're such a fabulous person. It was so wonderful working with you in the last couple of shows. It's nice to have someone with your talent and good looks and charm and intelligence and spirit involved in our group. Take Care,
Carol
P.S. Would you be willing to write a piece for The Prompter on your experiences backstage during The Foreigner?

Yeah, right, Carol! Like I'll fall for that again!

FIRST NIGHT AUDITIONS COMING UP

Once again The Village Players will be presenting a rollicking musical melodrama for first night. This year we will be performing at Kingswood Auditorium at 7pm on December 31st. Helen (White) and Bob Rautenberg have agreed to direct this year and Wayne Gehman will accompany on piano. Jay Sydow will be responsible for the set.

At press time, the specific show had not been selected, but you can be sure it will be funny and have some wonderful parts for lots of people. Helen and Bob are tentatively planning auditions for October 12th and 13th at 7:30pm at the theater (possibly upstairs if a rehearsal for Hound of the Baskervilles is in progress), but please call them at 569-3870 just to double check the dates and times.