

HFT 2007 SCHEDULE

Plays

Murder Served Family Style

January 12 and 13

The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree

March 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18 (matinee)

Love Letters

June 8 and 9

The Odd Couple

July 20, 21, 27, 28, August 3, 4, 5 (matinee)

1st Baptist Church of Ivy Gap

October 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21 (matinee)

Gerard's Decree

October 26 and 27

Somethin' Special for Christmas

November 23, 24, 25 (matinee), 29, 30, December 1, 2 (matinee)

Concerts

Jon Kemper's Fourth of July Extravaganza

June 30

Heidi Mueller and Bob Webb (Folk Music)

June 16

Blackbirds and Thrushes (Irish)

June 23

Merry Hanning sings the Queens of Country

July 7

New River Youth Orchestra and Chorus

December 6

Evening performances begin at 8:00 p.m. and matinees begin at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for seniors 55 and older and children 12 and under. We recommend that you make reservations for each show by calling the box office at (304) 574-4655.

Historic Fayette Theatre

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HISTORIC FAYETTE THEATRE

STAGE WHISPERS

Winter / Spring 2007

CAPTAIN BREE SETS SAIL AT HFT

Gangway, Southern WV, here comes *The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree!* Upon sighting pirates in the distance, Captain Jennings' crew jumps ship. He is left with a makeshift crew of motley prisoners and a sailor who can't swim to protect his wealthy passengers from the inevitable attack. But these are no ordinary pirates. Led by the indomitable Captain Bree, a crew of lady pirates take over the defenseless Kayla May. You are in for a swashbuckling musical comedy with a host of hysterical characters on deck and a spectacular musical score.

The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree is

produced by Millie Petersen. The annual spring musical has always been an impressive production. This year the sets and costumes have been designed by Paul Contin. The play features a large cast of regulars and newcomers. Sharing the title role of Captain Bree is Sharon Bibb and Cindy White. Sharon will be featured on Friday evenings and Cindy will perform the role on Saturdays.

The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree opens Friday, March 2 and runs for three weekends. Evening performances, at 8:00 p.m., will be March 2, 3, 9, 10, 16 and 17. A 2:00 p.m.

Sunday matinee will close the show on March 18. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$7.00 for seniors over 55 and children 12 and under. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling the box office at the Historic Fayette Theatre at (304) 574-4655.

The Historic Fayette Theatre
would like to thank
Access Health for sponsoring
The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree



HFT PRESENTS MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS AND A SECOND SEASON

Just what is a Second Season? This year, the **Historic Fayette Theatre** is offering a Mainstage and Second Season performances. Mainstage performances are traditional plays: musicals, comedies and dramas. All of these plays are open to the public for auditions. Usually, HFT presents four Mainstage productions a year. Second Season productions offers the theatre a chance to do alternative programs. Usually these shows are pre-cast and offer HFT regulars new opportunities. The annual *Mystery Dinner Theatre* is a good example. The cast is a

part of the *In Cahoots Players* and have experience with audience participation mystery plays. It is a fund raiser for the theatre and is offered each winter.

Two other Second Season productions are a part of the HFT 2007 season. *Love Letters* will give two HFT regulars a chance to do a Reader's Theatre play. *Gerard's Decree* is a one-man play written by Josh Whisman. It is a suspense filled monologue about a vampire hunter and will be presented Halloween weekend. Second Season productions are also priced differently than Mainstage productions. The

ticket for the Mystery Dinner Theatre includes dinner at a local restaurant. All seats for *Love Letters* and *Gerard's Decree* are \$5.00. Second Season productions are not included in the Season Ticket.

HFT carefully plans each season and is proud to be able to offer a variety of productions for audiences as well as unique opportunities for local actors. If you have an idea for a Mainstage or Second Season production, please contact the theatre's Artistic Director, Gene Worthington. You can leave a message for him at the theatre at (304) 574-4655.

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THE SUSANNA ADAMS NEIL FUND

The **Susanna Adams Neil Scholarship Fund of the Historic Fayette Theatre** has been expanded. While applicants can still apply for a one-time college scholarship, the fund has been extended to include other projects that will allow Fayette County students to experience the performing arts.

The fund was established in the name of the late Susanna Neil, an excellent musician and music director. She was well-known to audiences at the **Historic Fayette Theatre** for her work as the Music Director of the popular *Smoke on the Mountain*. "Susanna's gift was to bring a cast together and give individuals confidence in their own musical abilities," stated HFT Artistic Director Gene Worthington. "We think this is a fitting tribute to her dedication to the performing arts."

Applicants interested in applying should:

1. Apply by June 1st of each year.
2. Apply for up to \$250.
3. Submit a letter of intent with a description of how they will use the money.
4. Include the **Historic Fayette Theatre** in all publicity or allow the

theatre to publicize the award.

5. Be a current student or a graduate of a Fayette County school, on the faculty or staff of a Fayette County School or a non-profit community group serving Fayette County students.

Once a year, applications will be accepted in the following areas:

1. High school or middle school teachers can apply for money to fund a play production in their school. The money can be used for royalties, sets or costumes.
2. High school drama groups attending state, regional or national competitions.
3. Youth Symphonies and Choruses
4. A freshman, sophomore, junior or senior in college may apply for a one-time scholarship to a college or university if he or she is majoring in the performing arts.
5. Other projects that encourage students to become involved in the theatrical arts.

The **Historic Fayette Theatre** will carefully consider all applications and fund as many as two projects a year. The **Historic Fayette Theatre** reserves

the right to select projects based on the quality of the application.

The Historic Fayette Theatre will not consider the following:

1. Individual lessons.
2. Church dramatic programs.
3. Music for school choirs.

Anyone interested in applying to the **Susanna Adams Neil Performing Arts Fund of the Historic Fayette Theatre** should call the theatre at (304) 574-4655 or write to the theatre at P.O. Box 448, Fayetteville, WV 25840.



AUDITIONS FOR A VERY "ODD" SUMMER SHOW

Everyone is familiar with neatnik Felix Unger and his mismatched roommate Oscar. The play, *The Odd Couple*, by Neil Simon went on to be a smash television hit. But, there is another Odd Couple that will be a part of the 2007 HFT season. Neil Simon has re-written his hilarious comedy, this time with women in the roles. In this version, prissy & feminine Florence is sharing her quarters with her sloppy friend Olive and the results are just as uproarious as the original.

The Odd Couple will be directed by HFT veteran Steve Hambrick. Steve has been in a number of plays on the HFT stage, creating roles such as the lovable ghost Luigi in *Rest Assured*. The play will be the HFT summer production with performances on July 20, 21, 27, 28 and August 3 and 4 at 8:00 p.m. and a matinee on August 5 at 2:00 p.m.

Auditions for this show will be held at HFT on Monday, April 23 & Tuesday, April 24 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Roles

are available for 4 women and 2 men. The two men's roles are Hispanic.

Anyone interested in participating is welcome to attend the open auditions. There is no need to prepare an audition, just attend the audition at the theatre that evening. For more information, call the Historic Fayette Theatre at (304) 574-4655.

JUNE IS FOR LOVE

As a part of HFT's Second Season, Josh Whisman and Erin Thompson will present the popular reader's theatre production *Love Letters*. *Love Letters* is a series of letters between a man and woman over the years of their lives. The play has been performed throughout the nation by a number of notable actors. The **Historic Fayette Theatre** is proud to present the play with two actors who have grown up in Fayetteville's community theatre. Josh and Erin are both graduates of Fayetteville High School and currently attending college, studying the performing arts. Both have been quite involved in HFT shows over the years.

Love Letters is performed Reader's Theatre style. While the actors extensively rehearse the play, the performance is actually a dramatic reading of the script.

The HFT production of *Love Letters* will be June 8 and 9 at 8:00 p.m. As a Second Season production, all seats for these performances are \$5.00. For more information, or to reserve your seat for a performance, call the **Historic Fayette Theatre** at (304)574-4655.

SCHEDULE CHANGE

Due to circumstances beyond our control, *'Night Mother* will not be offered this April.

A HISTORY OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

In one sense we've always had community theatres, because theatre is so often the expression of a particular community. In fact, the very origin of Western drama was community theatre, as Greek theatre was a community celebration and the first actor, Thespis, was originally a member of the Chorus. But in the sense of community theatre as we know it in this country today, we are talking about a much shorter history.

America had amateur acting companies in Boston before the Revolutionary War, and one of the oldest continuing community theatre groups in the country, The Footlight Club, founded in 1877, makes its home in that city today. In the West, a Community Theatre was founded in Salt Lake City in 1853; and in the South, the Thalian Association of Wilmington, North Carolina, has been in existence since the 1788, hosting a number of community theatre groups.

But the community theatre movement didn't really take off until the turn of the last century when, with the advent of movies, the small-town professional playhouses either closed due to the competition from this new

art form or were converted to movie-houses. Theatre-lovers in these small communities still wanted the real thing -- live theatre -- and they took heart from such European examples as the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, Antoine's Little Theatre in France, and others, and began to produce amateur theatre in small groups and associations all across the country.

At first known generically by the term "little theatres", these groups soon came to prefer the appellation "community theatres" as more accurately reflecting their goals and ideals: to celebrate, promote and perform the dramatic arts using the pooled talents and resources of the community. Today, there are literally thousands of community theatre groups around the country from gypsy troupes that have just started, to more established companies in remodeled movie houses such as the **Historic Fayette Theatre**, to larger associations that have built their own six and seven figure theatre houses in larger metropolitan areas. In the spirit of community, many sponsor competitions, play writing contests and scholarship programs.

The average community theatre doesn't aspire to professional status, although most aspire to professional standards. Only a small percentage of members go on to pursue a career in professional theatre. All of them, however, share a love and enthusiasm for theatre that pre-dates the present movement and is rooted in the history of the dramatic arts dating back to Thespis and beyond.

(This article was adapted from the *Tupelo Community Theatre website*.)



The **Historic Fayette Theatre** continues the American tradition of strong community theatres. In *Rest Assured*, a comedy presented last October, the ghost of Luigi played by Steve Hambrick has fun with the housekeeper played by Janice Wiseman.