

THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD IS CANADA'S OLDEST CONTINUALLY OPERATING COMMUNITY THEATRE. 76 YEARS AND GROWING.



# CONTACT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD



**TAG BOX OFFICE**  
**477-2663**

THE POND PLAYHOUSE 6 PARKHILL RD. HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA WWW.TAGTHEATRE.COM INFO@TAGTHEATRE.COM

## NEXT AT TAG

### **THE FOURSOME** **A COMEDY**

**BY NORM FOSTER**

Directed by Frank MacLean  
Produced by Helen Goodwin

Four old buddies come together for a fifteen-year college reunion. During the weekend, the men go out for a game of golf, and it is during this game that the four catch up on each other's lives sharing their successes and failures amidst hilarious one-upmanship, unexpected revelations and surprising role reversals. A warm, funny play that takes place entirely on the eighteen tees of a golf course. As the game progresses, truths gradually emerge as we realize they're just ordinary guys and that they all have faults and failings. Norm Foster takes a thoughtful and amusing look at how time has a way of sneaking up on us all.

## STARRING

Darrel O'Neil as Donnie,  
Norm Ferguson as Cameron,  
Arno Van Heyningen as Ted  
Jonathan MacDonald as Rick



The Theatre Arts Guild proudly presents

## A comedy by **Norm Foster**



# THE FOURSOME

Directed by **Frank MacLean**

Produced by **Helen Goodwin**

## June 26th to July 12th 2008

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday Evenings at 8:00 P.M.  
with a matinee Sunday July 6th at 2:00 P.M.

At the Pond Playhouse

6 Parkhill Road  
(off Purcell's Cove Road, just past the Frog Pond)

**For Reservations, call 477-2663**

or visit [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com)

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Mailing Address: THEATRE ARTS GUILD 287 Lacewood Drive Unit 103, Suite 412 Halifax, NS B3M 3Y7



Phil Reid

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT ON LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME

After weeks of intensive rehearsal, set construction and decoration, location of costumes, props, set pieces and the creation of sound and lighting effects, Lord Arthur Savile's Crime opened to full and welcoming audiences. As with other TAG productions, many folks waited until the second and third week to reserve seats for the shows and some had to be turned away or rebooked. Feedback from patrons with regard to set, costumes and, of course, the acting, was very positive. It was heartening to acquire some fine "new" acting talents to join our TAG veterans.

The production boasted wonderful actors who hit their collective stride and became friends very quickly in the process. With the incomparable "Podgers" in attendance backstage, the dressing rooms hummed with laughter each night. There were a few tense moments in the booth, particularly with the collapse of an elderly patron during the Saturday Matinee, but all was resolved successfully as, during the melee, three actors stranded onstage began Victorian-style improvisation and calmed the audience!

It is never easy to master the quirkiness of the Wildean language whilst achieving the necessary flow and subtlety

but I feel that this was achieved and the play definitely had wide appeal to the TAG throngs, young and old alike.

Thanks to an amazing and resilient cast and crew, I can truthfully say that it was a distinct pleasure to direct this production.

Phil Reid



*Phil Reid*  
Director



*Willie Reid*  
Stage Manager



*The Cast of LASC*  
*April 2008*



Nick Jupp

## RENOVATIONS AT THE POND PLAYHOUSE

Following construction of the new lobby and rehearsal hall, the next phase of renovation at the Pond Playhouse will be carried out this summer. The single largest change will be a complete realignment of the seating with properly designed access steps, hand rails and improved spacing. More specifically, the seating and all the other changes resolve two outstanding requirements. Firstly, the changes will bring the older part of the building in line with current building code and fire regulations. Secondly, the work will complete our accessibility plan so all our patrons can enjoy a show with ease and without stress or safety concerns.

The work begins after *The Foursome* closes on July 12th and continues right through to the opening of the holiday Pantomime. There will not be a fall show this year in order to allow sufficient time for the work to be completed. The changes will be dramatic, and we hope you will appreciate the differences:

- Improved alignment of the seating and access stairs
- A new removable front row of seats
- New accessible emergency exits
- Removal of the ceiling to create a loft effect improving ventilation
- Improvements to the heating system

There are many incidental changes necessary to get the above completed including electrical, plumbing, oil tank removal, fire alarm system upgrades and the installation of new partitions and doors. The design work has been approved by a specialized fire safety and accessibility engineering firm and planning is in the final stages.

Commencing July 12th TAG volunteers will tackle a list of advance work. This includes striking *The Foursome* set, moving costumes and lights to a safe area, securing plastic protection over valuable assets and removing all the seats. This will take a few days, and then the current seating support structure will be removed followed by the insulation and ceiling panels over the audience area. When this is all done, various professional companies will move in to cut new doorways in the concrete walls, remove the oil heating system and begin construction of the new seating support structure.

As you can tell, these are significant renovations and there is opportunity for everybody to help. If the volunteer advance work is something you can help with, and you have time starting July 12th, please show up with work gloves and a supervisor will assign you to a task. Some of the tasks are lightweight, others such as seat removal a little heavier, and some tasks are extremely dirty, fiberglass removal for example. If you are unable to help, please drop by anyway to get a sense of the changes and - no doubt the volunteers will welcome some encouragement - and maybe juice and cookies.



Proud cast and director of *The Lover* at the closing ceremonies of LITF with the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Mayann E. Francis and RCMP honour guard.

## THE LOVER WINS ACCOLADES AT 2008 LIVERPOOL INTERNATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL (LITF)

TAG's entry at LITF was the first competitive performance on the opening day of the festival and was well received by audiences and adjudicators alike. Particularly pleasing were the warm greetings and praise extended to actors Jonathan MacDonald, Phil Reid and Vanessa Walton-Bone by Liverpool residents and other competitors during the run of the festival. (Encouraged by such hospitality, Phil has already registered for the Liverpool Privateer Days five-mile road race for the end of June!)

Those who could stay in Liverpool for the remainder of the Festival were treated to some exemplary theatre, particularly from the international troupes. Most of the cast of *The Lover* along with director Eric Rountree managed to return for the closing night ceremonies which immediately followed an amazing Syrian production of *The Solitary* which garnered Outstanding International Production and Outstanding Actor awards. TAG's representatives were delighted to be honoured with the Outstanding Canadian Production award and, for Vanessa Walton-Bone, Outstanding Actress award!

Special thanks go to Nick Jupp and Rayna Smith-Camp for technical support as well as to friends and spouses who came to support the production.

**THANK YOU!**  
**THE GARAGE SALE AT**  
**TAG IN SUPPORT OF THE**  
**BUILDING FUND**  
**WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!**  
**OVER \$1200 DOLLARS RAISED**

## EXPANDING YOUR THEATRE VOCABULARY

# “MEN ONLY”

## (THE TWENTY-THIRD IN A CONTINUING SERIES)

Judy Reade

Norm Foster's *The Foursome* brings together a quartet of former high school buddies with varying levels of skill in hitting a small, white ball across some grass. The fact that an all-male cast is somewhat unusual for TAG is perhaps a good point to stop and remind ourselves that – had you been sitting in the Pond Playhouse any time before the middle of the 17th century, all you would ever have seen would have been male actors!

To explain this situation, we must reintroduce someone we met in an earlier column – the Greek actor Thespis, who, in 534 B.C. started this whole crazy business of acting by becoming the first person to actually assume the role of a character in a story being presented to an audience. (Such stories had previously been portrayed in song and dance and with a narrative in the third person). Even though Thespis and his friends were all men, the stories they presented often contained female roles. For these, the men wore masks and strapped on wooden structures, one above the waist, and one below,

which showed the contours of the female body! This all-male tradition was carried into the Roman theatre and on into the Christian era, with the feeling that a woman to act on the stage was simply a disgrace (sometimes supported by actual legislation barring women from performing). Even though, by Medieval times, the value of plays as a teaching tool was well recognized, the Mystery and Morality plays performed to rich and poor alike again had male actors, often members of the clergy.

At least by Shakespeare's time, it was possible to pursue an actual career as an actor. Still a male profession, various acting troupes were in existence in England and Europe, generally under the patronage of a nobleman or Court official. Queen Elizabeth herself had a company formed in 1583, and actors were already becoming known for the type of role in which they excelled. There were even tours to towns outside the capital! But still no ladies!

The evidence that this particular glass ceiling eventually cracks comes from Venice, where in 1611 a traveller

noted that some theatrical performers were women. The first certain female recorded in a Shakespeare work was Margaret Hughes, who in 1660 played Desdemona in *Othello*. Until that time, as noted above, all of the Bard's heroines had been portrayed by men or boys. One of Margaret Hughes' contemporaries, Eleanor ("Nell") Gwynn was to achieve even greater fame as a mistress of Charles II, a great supporter of the theatre. Nell had started on the road to fame as a seller of oranges to the audience, but was given acting and dancing lessons before making her debut in 1665 at what is now known as the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in London.

So, enjoy your time with the foursome, as the 'guys' make it round the course and though there are no female actors, you will certainly hear about the females in their lives!

Judy Reade

*Props/Wardrobe Mistress*

### THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS OF BEING A TAG MEMBER:

- \* You receive a discount of \$3 off admission to all shows.
- \* You can book seats earlier than the general public.
- \* You learn about TAG productions and auditions before the general public.
- \* You receive six informative newsletters each year.
- \* You are directly notified of upcoming auditions.
- \* You can attend special members only events.

\$10.00 per year. Join today at

[http://www.tagtheatre.com/join\\_tag.htm](http://www.tagtheatre.com/join_tag.htm)



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