

## President's Message

—Esther VanGorder, president



It's hard to believe that another TAG season is coming to a close with our final production for 2004/05: *The Hollow* by Agatha Christie, opening on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

But even before the 2004/05 year ends, the 2005/06 season is gearing up. You'll find the announcement of next year's slate of productions later in this newsletter.

Congratulations should go to Artistic Director Brenda Tyedmers and her committee for creating what promises to be an exciting and varied season. A lot of factors go into the choice of plays: the mix of genres (comedy, drama, mystery, musical, etc), what will be audience pleasers, what will challenge our actors and technical crews, what will be successful at the box office, and what we can afford to stage. Last summer, in our audience survey, we asked what shows our patrons would really like to see. We do our best to stage productions that will encourage people to attend and enjoy, but there are some factors that prevent us from producing shows that, while they are certainly popular, are not suitable for the TAG stage for various reasons:

Anyone who has toured the backstage area of the Pond Playhouse will know how cramped for space we are. Because our dressing room and wing area are so small, casts of more than fifteen are virtually impossible to accommodate. Cast size also has a direct effect on our production costs; the larger the cast, the higher the costume budget.

Some shows call for elaborate sets. We are able to accomplish a lot on our stage, but when plays have multiple scenes, the cost to build and "dress" the sets are sometimes beyond our means. By the same token, there are shows that call for sets with complicated special effects and scene changes that we simply do not have the technical equipment to produce. (One suggestion from a patron was *Miss Saigon*, a show that has a helicopter landing in the final act.)

Musicals are always popular, and we're very pleased to present *Red Hot and Cole* next April. Many of the most well known Broadway-type shows, however, call for large choruses, multiple scenes and—often—more than just a piano accompaniment. This is not to say we can't do Broadway musicals on the TAG stage, but we have to choose carefully. Musicals also carry higher fees for performance rights. A popular, recent musical can have rights that are as much as an entire show's budget, usually in American funds. Speaking of performance rights, we cannot always obtain them when we want them. If there is a professional production in progress, community theatres are often denied the rights, and sometimes rights for new scripts are not released to non-professional companies until they have been successfully produced professionally.

(continued on next page)

## Our Next Production...

# THE HOLLOW

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE



DIRECTED BY IRIS PATERSON  
PRODUCED BY JOYCE MACDONALD  
STAGE MANAGER: L. A. BEITENMAN

JULY 7<sup>TH</sup> TO JULY 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2005

THURSDAY, FRIDAY, AND SATURDAY  
EVENINGS AT 8:00 P.M.

WITH ONE SUNDAY MATINÉE ON JULY 17<sup>TH</sup>  
AT 2:00 P.M.

THE BOX OFFICE OPENS JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup> FOR MEMBERS  
AND JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> FOR NON-MEMBERS.

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL

# 477-2663

OR VISIT

WWW.TAGTHEATRE.COM

## TAG Board, 2004-2005

President .....	Esther VanGorder
Vice President .....	Nick Jupp
Secretary .....	Michele Moore
Past President .....	Frank MacLean
Treasurer .....	Carolyn Boyer
Artistic Director .....	Brenda Tyedmers
Executive Producer .....	Louise Renault
Technical Director .....	Austin Reade
Publicity Manager .....	Bill VanGorder
Building Manager.....	J Carruth
Props/Costume Manager....	Judy Reade
Reservations Manager .....	Lynn Bungay
Membership Records .....	Helen Goodwin
Newsletter Editor .....	Eric Rountree
Special Projects Manager...	Rich Knowles
Member at Large .....	Hugh Vincent
FOH Manager.....	open
Fund Raising Manager .....	open

## Saraguay Club—Dinner & Theatre

The Saraguay Club and The Theatre Arts Guild offer a dinner and theatre package (\$37.00 plus tax and gratuities) on Thursday and Friday evenings during TAG's productions.

During the run of *The Hollow*, this package will be offered on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Arrive at the Saraguay at 5:30, enjoy a three-course dinner, and then travel to the Pond playhouse by 7:30 for an evening of entertainment.

To reserve this package, call TAG at 477-2663.

## The Theatre Arts Guild

### Location: Mailing Address:

<b>The Pond Playhouse</b>	<b>287 Lacewood Drive</b>
<b>6 Parkhill Road</b>	<b>Unit 103, Suite 412</b>
<b>Halifax, NS</b>	<b>Halifax, NS B3M 3Y7</b>

**Telephone:** (902) 477-2663

**Internet:** [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com)  
[info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com)

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In the last issue of *Contact*, I announced our exciting summer construction project: the expansion of the lobby portion of the theatre. Since then, the board has authorized the Lobby Expansion Committee (chaired by Rich Knowles) to go ahead with plans for the construction. Many discussions and meetings have been held, and more ideas than I can count have been presented, discussed, accepted, and discarded. With a lot of help from architect Monique MacEwan, plans have been drawn up for a 24 x 33 foot, 2-story addition to be built on the front of the theatre. The main floor will be the extension to the lobby and bar area and will house additional washrooms—all wheelchair accessible. The second floor will be a large open space where we can hold meetings, workshops, auditions, and rehearsals without disturbing the production in rehearsal on the stage.

The plans are being submitted to the city, and we hope to have the necessary permits to start construction very soon. By early autumn, we hope to have the concrete slab poured, the walls framed, and the roof constructed. In order to not disrupt the ongoing operation of the theatre, our plan is to have a weather-tight structure built against the existing wall of the building before the snow flies. Only when construction has proceeded to a point where the new space is safe and useable will an opening be made between the existing building and the addition.

We believe we can build this and stay within our means. The board has determined a minimum point below which our bank balance will not go. But in order to accomplish this, and to finish the interior, it is essential our fundraising efforts continue aggressively. While we can and will save a lot of money through the expertise and labour of our own multi-talented members, there are jobs that must be done by trained & certified professionals who, as anyone who has done renovations or repairs knows, are expensive. So are building materials. It is essential that we tap all the resources we can.

Now is the time to make that donation you've been considering. Now is also the time to honour any outstanding pledges. In my last message, I told you about a very generous member who has agreed to match all pledges to the building fund up to a total of five-thousand dollars. We've been given permission to reveal the identity of this very generous benefactor (details of this fundraising effort are later in the newsletter), and I want to extend my personal thanks, and that of the board, to The Gratwick Partnership (John & Lyn Gratwick, long-time and Honourary Life Members) for this incredible donation. John & Lyn have given so much to TAG over the years and are often unsung heroes behind the scenes. Let's bring them into the spotlight and publicly give them a standing ovation.

—Estherprezzie \*

## Summer Readings

This year's Summer Readings performance will be on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. For the Gratwick Partnership, this is their Readings' swan song; the best of the twelve years' accumulation will fill the bill on the 30<sup>th</sup>. \*



# TAG's 75<sup>th</sup> Season!

Next season is a big one for TAG, Canada's oldest continually-running community theatre. This fall, it will have been continually running for seventy-five years. Needless to say, our artistic committee has been working especially hard this time around to ensure that we have a stellar season with something for everyone.

Here's the line-up for this upcoming landmark season:

## ***The Affections of May***

a comedy by Norm Foster  
September 29th to October 15th  
Director: Cheryl Theriault  
Producer: Louise Renault

## ***Shipwreck on Fable Island***

a pantomime by Jamie Boyer  
December 1st to December 17th  
Director: Jamie Boyer

## ***Enchanted April***

by Matthew Barber,  
from the novel by Elizabeth Von Arnim  
February 23 to March 11  
Director: Gisela O'Brien  
Producer: Ann Miller

## ***Red, Hot and Cole***

Book by James Bianchi, Muriel McAuley,  
and Randy Strawderman  
Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter  
May 4th to May 20th  
Director: Rebecca Humphreys

## ***Dial "M" for Murder***

a mystery by Frederick Knott,  
Publisher, Random House, New York  
July 6th to July 22nd  
Director: Frank MacLean

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## More on *The Hollow*

An attractive man, his wife, his mistress, and his ex-mistress are present during a weekend at the home of Lord and Lady Angkatell. This explosive combination turns into murder. Everyone is suspect as the plot unravels, but "who done it?" This vintage Christie mystery is full of the usual "red herrings," which Inspector Colquoun must avoid in order to unmask the murderer.

Director Iris Paterson and her team are bringing to the TAG stage all the intrigue and humour of one of the world's most beloved mystery writers, Dame Agatha Christie. This production, lovingly produced by Joyce MacDonald and expertly stage-managed by TAG newcomer L. A. Beitenman, has everything you need: quirky characters, period costumes, and a lavish set. Brenda Tyedemers is once again working her magic as set designer, and several-time stage manager and poster designer Gayle Sabo will be bringing her considerable creativity to bear in the design of the lighting scheme.

TAG costume/props mistress Judy Reade will be coordinating the costumes, Deb Jewett will be handling props, and Dan McCormick will be taking care of publicity. The show's in good hands, and it promises to be a fun ride for cast, crew, and audiences alike.

Speaking of the cast, we have a large one this time around. No less than a dozen actors and actresses, some familiar faces and some new to TAG, will be treading the boards. Big casts are always a challenge for TAG productions, so let's hope they all get along, because they're going to be cozy backstage!

Here's the cast list for *The Hollow*:

Lord Henry Angkatell ..... Edward Paterson  
Lady Lucy Angkatell..... Michele Moore  
Henrietta Angkatell..... Val Mackenzie  
Edward Angkatell..... Colin MacGillivray  
Midge Harvey ..... Susan Keefe  
Gerda Cristow ..... Kerry McNeil  
John Cristow ..... Roy Ellis  
Veronica Craye ..... Melissa Sorenson  
Gudgeon ..... Michael Roche  
Doris ..... Julie-Ann Stodolny  
Inspector Colquhuon ..... David Ridley  
Detective Sergeant Penny ..... Curtis Skinner

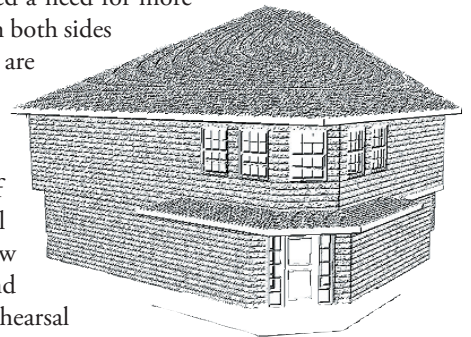
Be sure to make your reservations early. The popularity of TAG, combined with the popularity of Agatha Christie, is sure to make this a sold-out production. \*

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## Lobby Expansion News

—Rich Knowles, Project Manager

Thanks to several years of successful shows and the tremendous support of our members and friends, TAG now finds itself in the enviable position of having enough funds in the bank to consider some improvements to the building. Comments and surveys have repeatedly indicated a need for more space to benefit those on both sides of the footlights. We are therefore embarking on the construction of a two-story addition to the south end of the building which will provide us with a new lobby, washrooms, and bar downstairs and a rehearsal space above.



In the latter part of 2004, the board appointed a building committee to work on a design, which was finally approved at the beginning of June 2005 and subsequently taken to HRM for a building permit on June 20<sup>th</sup>, with work to begin soon after. Our objective is to complete the foundation and envelope and make the building weather-tight by the end of September. The interior will then be completed as money becomes available. We will be hiring a contractor to lead the construction process with the assistance of any able and willing volunteers.

You are invited to participate by donating time, materials or cash. For details, please refer to the project information page at [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com) or phone Bill VanGorder (453-4077) or Joe O'Brien (422-9859). All donations will be most gratefully received with special recognition given to major donors. \*

# Guild Build!

## Double Your Donation

### You Can Double Your Donation to Expand TAG's Lobby

Did you know you can double your donation to the TAG Lobby Expansion Project? As you may be aware, this summer TAG intends to complete Phase One of the theatre lobby expansion. While we have funds in hand to get started, we need to raise funds for the project this year to enable as much preparatory work as possible to be done for Phase Two next year.

As an incentive to "kick-start" this Lobby Fund Drive, the Gratwick Partnership (long time TAG members John and Lyn Gratwick) have generously agreed to match all donations of one-hundred dollars or more, up to a total of five-thousand dollars. Thanks to the generosity of the Gratwick Partnership, this should put the first ten-thousand dollars in place quickly.

The addition will be a two-story southerly expansion, incorporating the current lobby space and including new, expanded washrooms and a second floor suitable for rehearsals and other activities.

If you wish to donate to the fund, please send your cheque to our treasurer, made out to the "Theatre Arts Guild Building Fund." You will receive a charitable donation receipt for income tax purposes (thus allowing the federal and provincial governments to make their contribution to our new lobby!)

We know that many of you will want to support the Gratwick's effort on behalf of TAG. To do so, send your donation of one-hundred-dollars or more to:

The Theatre Arts Guild Building Fund  
c/o The Treasurer  
287 Lacewood Drive, Unit 103  
Halifax, NS  
B3M 3Y7

## TAG Collects Sobey's Tapes

Help support TAG by saving your Sobey's cash register tapes. Sobey's will give us a donation for every cash register tape redeemed. We have had this support for many years, now.

Just bring them to the theatre and put them in the box by the door the next time you attend. "Every dollar counts," says John Gratwick, coordinator of this fund raising project. \*

# Hollow Pursuits

## Christie's Play Comes to Us Via Circuitous Route

—Eric Rountree, editor

When TAG first announced that Agatha Christie's *The Hollow* was to be part of its 2004/2005 season, little did we know what a firestorm of controversy would be set in motion. Amateur sleuths everywhere inundated the TAG board with pieces of evidence to support their claim that we had misinformed our patrons and blackened the name of their patron saint, Dame Agatha.



Sounds like the makings of a great mystery story. If only it had been so dramatic. ("Bite your tongue," I hear our president saying.) In reality, TAG simply presented a synopsis of *The Hollow*—in this very newsletter, if memory serves—that incorrectly named Hercule Poirot as the hero of the play.

Now, the venerable M. Poirot was indeed the detective on the case in the *book* version of this mystery. It was, in fact, his twenty-second appearance in a novel. *The Hollow* was published in 1946 in both the U.K. and the U.S., but for some reason it was retitled *Murder After Hours* for the American market.

Interestingly, Christie herself describes *The Hollow* as the one "I had ruined by the introduction of Poirot." A strong statement, to be sure, even blasphemy to some. But perhaps Dame Agatha was tired of Poirot, or perhaps she felt he had become too much a larger-than-life character. Whatever the full story, it seems that she was not as enamoured of the Belgian detective as she had once been.

Therefore, when she adapted *The Hollow* for the stage, she summarily dismissed him. Fired. Canned. Pink slip at the door. She had the chance to do it again, and do it right, if one reads her comments correctly.

Enter Inspector Colquhoun, a heretofore unknown Scotland Yard detective who would neither inspire preconceptions nor upstage the other characters. Here was the man who would investigate this scenario the way the author had originally wanted it done.

Rarely does an author get the chance to rewrite history, and whatever we might think of her decision, Dame Agatha did what she thought would do justice to her story. For us, it's win-win. We now have two versions to enjoy.

*The Hollow* first opened in at the Fortune Theatre in London on June 7th, 1951. \*



## Support Our Friends

Dartmouth Players

presents

*Kiss Me, Kate*

June 8<sup>th</sup> 2005 to June 25<sup>th</sup> 2005

Crichton Avenue Centre, Dartmouth NS

Tickets: \$12.00 adults; \$10.00 students/seniors

For reservations call 465-PLAY (7529)

www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca

CentreStage Theatre Society

presents

*Sarah, Plain and Tall*

June 10<sup>th</sup> 2005 to July 23<sup>th</sup> 2005

Community Theatre, Kentville NS

2:00 p.m. Matinée on July 17<sup>th</sup>

For reservations call (902)678-8040

www.centrestagetheatre.ca