

The Shaw Guild

President's Message

Spring is just around the corner, as the song goes, and so it is at Shaw. Rehearsals are in progress for "Sunday in the Park with George" and "Brief Encounters". Next up is "Born Yesterday".

The Guild is busy with plans for 2009.

Peggy Bell and her 25 gardening enthusiasts can't wait for the beginning of April to continue their work enhancing the gardens at the Festival Theatre. They are taking a trip to "Canada Blooms" in Toronto for inspiration.

Peter Barwell is busy organizing training sessions for the 29 docents who will lead backstage tours this season.

Jim White has the task of assembling a schedule for 490 shows, including those presented on the new stage in the Production Centre, to be hosted by close to 300 volunteers.

Last year the Guild provided nearly 8000 hours of volunteer time to Shaw Festival. This represents a tremendous cost savings and the Administration and Board of Shaw Festival continue to express their gratitude to the Guild.

By the time you receive this newsletter some of us will have enjoyed the trip to Soulpepper and the Scene Shop visit. Next on the events calendar is the President's Luncheon and Show and Tell on April 5. I hope to see you there.

Carol Reid

President

Tonight at 8.30 is a cycle of ten one-act plays by Noel Coward. In the introduction to a published edition of the plays, Coward wrote, "A short play, having a great advantage over a long one in that it can sustain a mood without technical creaking or over padding, deserves a better fate, and if, by careful writing, acting and producing I can do a little towards reinstating it in its rightful pride, I shall have achieved one of my more sentimental ambitions." *Tonight at 8.30* was first produced in 1935 in Manchester and on tour and played in London (1936), New York (1936–1937) and Canada (1938). The plays were performed in various combinations of three at each performance during the original run. Below are photos of Gertrude Lawrence and Noel Coward in various plays.



Mark Your Calendar

The President's Luncheon and Show and Tell is at Noon on Sunday April 5 in the lobby of the Festival Theatre. This is the first opportunity this year for all the members to gather again over a delicious lunch and be given a preview of the coming season by Colleen Blake. The cost is \$30 and please make your cheques payable to The Shaw Guild and mail it to The Shaw Guild, Box 83, Niagara On The Lake, L0S1J0. Please mail your cheque to arrive no later than March 31. If your name does not appear on your cheque please make sure it is on the envelope. Thank you.

The Guild Dress Rehearsal for *In Good King Charles's Golden Days* is on Thursday April 16, at 8 pm at the Royal George Theatre. Guild members may want to arrive starting at 7 pm to collect their tickets which are on a first come first serve basis. Please wear your name badges.

A Trip to Guelph is planned for Thursday May 7 at 9:30 am. The University of Guelph library contains one of the most extensive Shaw Archives as part of The Leonard Conolly Theatre Archives. In 1983 the University of Guelph invited The Shaw Festival to deposit its archives at the University and the Shaw Festival continues to use the Shaw Archives. The Dan H. Laurence Collection was acquired in 1986. Mr. Laurence assembled a remarkable collection over a period of 35 years in the course of his work on Shaw. He was the dramatic advisor to both The Shaw Estate and The Shaw Festival. The archives contain many first edition books, pamphlets, programs, posters and articles about Shaw. The Hamon collection is also included in the Archives as well as many other smaller collections.

A complete program is planned beginning with a bus trip from Niagara On The Lake at 9:30 to the University of Guelph. An introductory session will take place before lunch. After lunch an accompanied tour of the Archives and a wrap-up session hosted by the collection curators and faculty and graduate students who use the collection. This is expected to be a fascinating look into details of Shaw's work and a history of The Shaw Festival. Details will follow via email.

A Moon For The Misbegotten

Set in a dilapidated Connecticut house in early September 1923, it focuses on three characters: Josie, a domineering Irish woman with a quick tongue and a ruined reputation, her conniving father, tenant farmer Phil Hogan, and James Tyrone, Jr., Hogan's landlord and drinking companion, a cynical alcoholic haunted by the death of his mother. As a joke during one of their drunken bouts, Tyrone threatens to sell his land and evict Hogan, which propels the latter to set into motion a scheme that will take advantage of the mutual affection between his daughter and Tyrone.

It was Colleen Dewhurst's breakthrough stage role, which began a career as an highly acclaimed and successful actress, after 27 years of acting. Dewhurst was born in Montreal, Quebec, the only child of a hockey player turned businessman.



VOLUNTEERING FOR THE SHAW GUILD

Simply put **Volunteerism** is the willingness of people to work on behalf of others without being motivated by financial or material gain. There are 280 volunteer members in the Shaw Guild. What follows is a snapshot of why our members volunteer their time and what they receive in return. This will be an on-going column in the newsletter. If you would like to share your thoughts send them to Lenkooperman@aol.com.

*I see my volunteering for The Shaw Guild as a privilege of giving back to this amazing theatre company. Phoning for hosting, tearing tickets, taking part in fund-raising, answering a call for help in the workshop such as gluing leaves on scenery and other events are a pleasure for me. The advantages are getting to know other Guild members, having access to the various tours in the workshops and backstage and even getting to know some of the actors. Volunteering for the membership terrace give us the opportunity to meet patrons from all over the world, welcoming them and having conversations with them. We try to promote Niagara On The Lake and also give them recommendations on other productions. **L. Fraser, hosting and fund raising***

*I began volunteering for The Shaw Guild after I retired and became a widow. I felt I needed to re-invent myself and here in The Shaw Guild I found new friends who met me as "me" rather than a couple. As a docent I am acquiring new knowledge about the theatre. Attending workshops and seminars for docents energizes me and I find, through these events, that I have no fear of being stale or bored. I am learning about gardening by helping out in the gardens once a week. Interacting with people who share like interests make all the social activities engaging. **M. Fairman, docent and gardening***

*There are so many ways volunteering for The Shaw Festival enriches my life. The love of the theatre originally drew me to The Shaw Guild. Being a docent I assist The Shaw in remaining the focal point of our community. Volunteering provides me with professional development and continuous learning. A major benefit for me is having met and continue meeting like minded people. **G. Collins, docent***

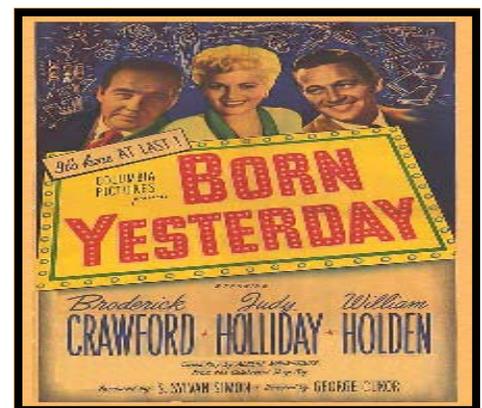
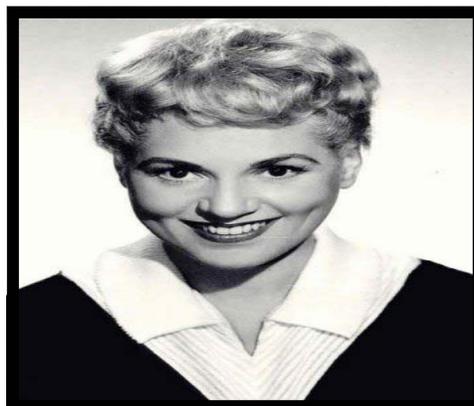
*Volunteering gives me great satisfaction in knowing that I can help The Shaw Festival in some way, and also you get to talk to so many interesting people and know that they look forward to hearing what is going on at The Shaw Festival. **Elsie Kubow, Contact Committee***

*Being a docent enriches my interest in the theatre through learning about various aspects of production. Through the tours I have met so many interesting people from as far away as Australia and South Africa. Publishing this newsletter taps a modest bit of creativity never before realized. Most important are the Guild members who have become friends. **L. Kooperman, docent and communications.***

BORN YESTERDAY

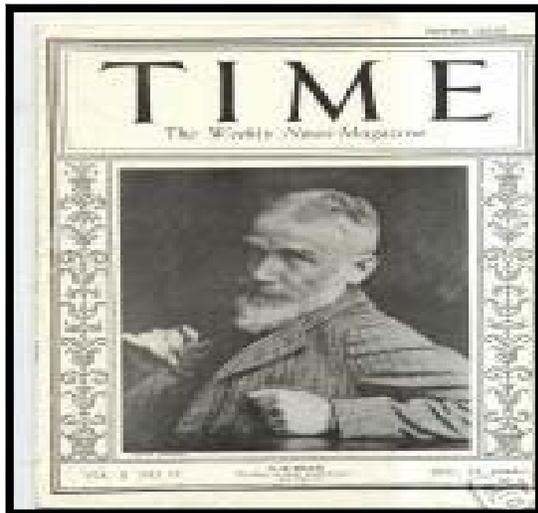
Garson Kanin wrote the play, *Born Yesterday* for Jean Arthur, who dropped out right before opening night February 4 1946. Judy Holliday learned the role in 3 days, and played it on Broadway for 4 years, opposite Paul Douglas. The film version brought her an Oscar, beating out Gloria Swanson in *Sunset Boulevard* and Bette Davis in *All About Eve*.

She was called before the House on Un-American Activities Committee right after making this film. She mystified the questioners who accused her of Communist activities by answering in the voice and illogical logic of her *Born Yesterday* character, Billie Dawn. She wasn't officially blacklisted by the HUAC, but her refusal to cooperate cost her at least part of her career. She was a good businesswoman and became rich, but died of breast cancer in 1965 at the age of 43.

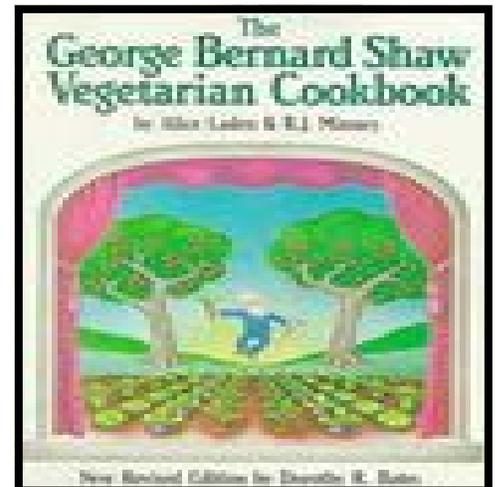


Executive Committee

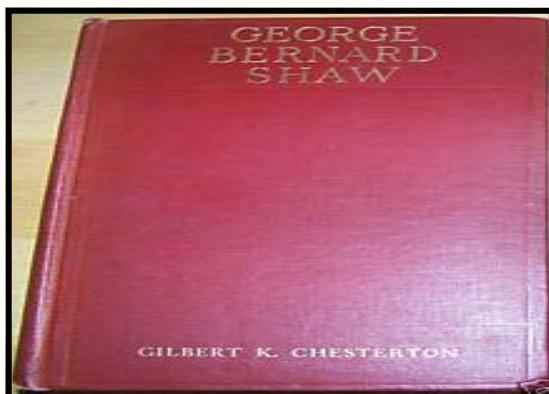
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