

Acting is fun. It's like being in  
a sandbox and pretending...  
William Shatner

October 2011

The Newsletter  
of the  
Heritage Hunt  
Little Theater



# Play Time

Come play with us!

## Calendar

### October General Meeting

Thurs Oct 20, 7pm—Craft Room

### Fall Production

Nov 9, 10 & 11—Ball Room  
Show-7:45pm—Cash Bar-6:45pm

### November General Meeting

Thurs Nov 17, 7pm—Craft Room  
Elections

### Classic Movie Night

Sat Nov 5, 7pm—Joyce Mancini's Home  
*Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*

### Thanksgiving Dinner

Sun Nov 20—3pm  
See Pg 5 for more Info

### Site & Bite Night

Dec 4-FCT-A *Christmas Carol*  
See Pg 5 for more Info

### December

No General Meeting

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## Update: AFGY

by Bill Harrison

Our next production, *A Few Good Years*, is proceeding well. The production crew is first class and the actors and actresses are seasoned HHLT professionals. We are already off book and the blocking is working well. Even though we have had a glitch or two it hasn't caused us to stumble. The props have almost all been acquired, set production has been defined, and lights and sounds will be under control in a few days. The mimes are really getting into their roles and everything is going smoothly. As Ina and Bill told the performers recently, "You are making our tasks easy." The HHLT will have another production to be very proud of. ▲



Who is this odd character?.

## Another Great Picnic

by Bets Knepley

HHLT did it again with an abundance of food and drinks at our potluck picnic. The participants outdid themselves providing a great variety of delicious appetizers, entrees, sides and desserts. Wine, beer, soft drinks were provided by HHLT.

Many many thanks to Betty Hitchcock for hosting the event at her beautiful home. The cold rainy weather prevented us from using her elegant screened-in porch. So we all had a cozy time inside. We ate, drank and were merry! See more photos on our website. ▲



## Local Theaters: II

by Bets Knepley

Winchester Little Theatre (WLT) is my second little theater to discuss, as it's my favorite this season. It is celebrating its 81st season, making it the oldest local little theater.

Their first production was *Ario de Capo*. (In case you are curious, it is a fantasy by Edna St. Vincent Millay.) Through out the years, their plays were performed in high schools, churches, motion picture houses, empty store fronts, warehouses and even an abandoned swimming pool building! In 1974, WLT stayed "on track" as it moved into the old Pennsylvania Railroad freight station, which they paid off in only three years. The stage is a modified "thrust" stage with the audience on three sides of the stage.

WLT has a children's program, as well as sponsoring some unusual events (such as their "Train Wreck," a weekend where participants wrote a play on the first night, rehearsed the second and performed on the third.) It is also sponsoring a 2011 Playwright Competition.

Their 2010-11 season is *The 39 Steps*, *The Foreigner*, *The Love List*, *Rabbit Hole* and *The Porch*. This sounds like quite an exciting season with several plays I haven't seen. Have you? Their tickets/season subscriptions are reasonably priced and you can order on-line. Their website is [wltonline.org](http://wltonline.org) and their address is 315 West Boscawen St, Winchester VA 22601

VpStart is up next month. ▲



## Actor's Quirks

by Bets Knepley

Have you wondered about how your acting experience compares to other HHLT members? I asked some members a few questions about their acting experiences. And, as you can expect, the answers were quite a mixed bag.

Thanks to Tina Mullins, Nanette Ross, Gene Schmiel, Dot Scheutze, Joyce Mancini, Jack Merleman, Goldie Grandy and Walt Meyer for taking time to answer my nosy questions.

**MEMORIZING:** Most participants did find it difficult to memorize until they found a good method that suited their own personal needs. Many use a tape recorder as an aid. And many replied that if you fully know your character, it is easier to learn your lines.

**PAST EXPERIENCE:** None of the participants were first time actors—the acting range ran from three to over ten roles. Also the size of the role didn't matter to many.

**FAVORITE ROLE:** It was difficult for the participants to chose a favorite role. I guess because they liked each one at the time. Many preferred the roles in a comedy, but felt that the dramatic ones allowed them to grow as an actor. A few would like to participate in another musical comedy again!

**MOST DIFFICULT PART IN ACTING:** Memorizing, staying in character, blocking, being real and believable on stage.

**AUDITIONING:** Most have no problems with auditioning for HHLT, but do admit to being a little nervous, especially if it's a "cold reading."

**STAGE FRIGHT:** Most only admit to stage fright at opening night. If they are well-prepared, their stage fright is negligible.

So, how do you compare? ▲

## November Elections

The 2011 Nominating Committee, Joey Wagner, Jack Merelman and Ina Mayer, has found five great members who volunteered to run for the four open slots. Many thanks to them.

The slate is: Mary Glascock, Arlene Maroney, Walt Meyer, Art Moscatello and Kathryn Schmiel.

Elections will be held at the November General Meeting. Absentee ballots will be available. ▲



## The Prez Sez...

**A Few Good Years!:** Rehearsals continue for our new play, and ticket sales are moving ahead. Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors to get their tickets soon, and we hope to see all of you there on November 9, 10, or 11. Ina and Bill will give a progress report at the next meeting, Thursday October 21 at 7pm in the Craft Room. By the way, immediately after the general meeting there will be a rehearsal, so we will not have the usual refreshments this month.

**Storage of HHLT Inventory:** We are still looking for volunteers to allow the use of their lower level (aka basement) for storage of our inventory. A stipend is a definite possibility

**Elections:** We will soon be electing new board members (4 in all), and VP Mayer will announce the candidates at the next meeting. The election will take place at the November meeting.

**Picnic:** Many thanks to Betty Hitchcock for hosting this year's picnic. Good attendance, great company and food, the best hospitality.

**Newsletter:** Thanks also to our communications chair Bets Knepley for producing a fine newsletter. By the way, if you have any contributions to that effort, please let Bets know.

**Play-Writing Contest:** We hope to see numerous entries for this contest, sponsored by HHLT. See the Horn for details.

**Leadership Note:** In my absence, VP Ina Mayer will preside at the October general meeting. ▲

Gene Schmiel

## Memorizing Tips

Get Up and Move!

Whenever possible, incorporate your stage directions while you say your lines aloud. According to *a scientific study conducted by psychologists Helga and Tony Noice*, the combination of movement and speech strengthens a person's ability to recall the next line.

Here's how Ms. Noice explains it: "Memory is aided by physical movement. In one study, lines learned while making an appropriate motion — e.g., walking across a stage — were more readily remembered by actors later than were lines unaccompanied by action." So, during the early stages of learning the script, make certain you join the words with appropriate movements and gestures.

**Think Positively and Don't Panic!**

Don't let the butterflies in your stomach torment you too much. While a certain amount of nervousness can get the adrenaline going, too much anxiety over lines might hinder your performance.

Actors forget lines now and then. It happens. When it happens, however, most of the time the audience never notices. Forgetting a line is only disastrous *if the performer breaks character*.

So, if you forget a line in the middle of your performance, don't freeze. Don't get flustered. Don't look out to the audience. Stay in character. Keep the scene going to the best of your ability, and with the help of your fellow cast members you will get back on track.

Take solace in the fact that if you forget a line once, you will probably never forget that line ever again! Sometimes embarrassment is the strongest and toughest method of memorization! ▲

## Early Thanksgiving with HHLT

by Bets Knepley



The Hostess with the Mostest, Joyce Mancini, is inviting members to HHLT's annual Thanksgiving feast at her home (13278 Fieldstone Way) on Sunday, November 20 at 3pm. She will cook the turkey and

the participants will bring the side dishes and desserts.

Joyce will have a sign-up sheet at the October meeting. If you can't make the October meeting, contact Joyce IMMEDIATELY at 703-743-1622. Don't miss out on this fabulous fun filled day! ▲



## The Spotlight is on Jean Gentry

by Bets Knepley

Did you know that Jean is a "California Girl?" She was born in Los Angeles, grew up there and graduated LA's Occidental College with a major in speech and drama.

She, with her husband Richard and mutt Sara, dwells on Cobbler Green Court since 2007. They live near their two children (one in Lansdowne and one in Falls Church).

Jean is on Manassas's VpStart Crow Board of Directors. She has performed and/or helped in many of their plays. While performing in their *MacBeth* (as the Old Woman/Lord/Dr. #2), Jean stated that she "appreciated the opportunity to end her 50+ year hiatus from the stage..." And for the first time, she is appearing in our upcoming HHLT production, *A Few Good Years*, as a Mime. Lucky for HHLT!



She also belongs to the HH Knitting Group. Outside our gate, she tutors two days a week for Beacon, the adult literacy project at the Benedictine Sisters of Virginia Monastery.

Be sure to mime "hello" to Jean next time you see her. ▲

## Site & Bite Info

by Bets Knepley

Organizer Joyce Mancini extends an invitation to HHLT members to join the Jersey Jewels, Big Apple and Pennsylvania Clubs for a grand start to the holidays.

Be at the Fauquier Community Theater on Sunday, December 4 at 2pm to see their production of *A Christmas Carol*. After the show, amble across the road to The Inn at Vint Hill for a buffet style dinner (beef and chicken entrees, salad, rolls, side dishes, dessert and coffee and tea).

Cost is \$33 inclusive for the play and dinner! If you plan to go, please contact Joyce IMMEDIATELY at 703-743-1622. Time is of the essence here. ▲



## Pat Dews Does it again!

by Bets Knepley

Member Pat Dews has been HHLT's Costume Designer for a great many of our productions. Now we can see her other creative ventures! Pat won second place in the clothing category in the 2011 Hoffman Challenge, a worldwide sewing/quilting competition. This is an annual contest in which entrants use a specific fabric in a quilt, a garment (wearable art), a doll or an accessory. Her garment consisted of a jacket and dress and was titled, "Passion for Purple." Her prize was money and assorted sewing notions. The top entries are grouped into traveling collections and visit quilt and fiber shows, seminars, quilt shops and quilt-and doll-makers guilds nationwide and in Canada. A quilt she made for the contest was also selected to travel. This is not the first time Pat has won prizes for her beautiful quilted pieces. Congratulations, Pat!! ▲



## Classic Movie Night

by Bets Knepley

Joyce Mancini has hosted these monthly evenings of academy award winning musicals for quite some time.

Please join this fun group which meets the first Saturday of each month at 7pm at Joyce's home (13278 Fieldstone Way). Popcorn, cookies and coffee will be served.

November's movie (Saturday, November 5) will be *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*.

Come for a good time. Contact Joyce for more info. ▲

## HHLT BOD

### President

Gene Schmiel

### Vice President

Ina Mayer

### Secretary

Sandy Mills

### Treasurer

Treva Whyte

### Activities

Betty Hitchcock

### Membership

Ed Prendergast

### Member-at-Large

Goldie Grandy

## Did You Know?

by Bets Knepley

Did you know that the words— audience and theater both come from the Greek? Theater is a place where one “sees.” Audience are those who “hear.”

Most of us work strictly in an “amateur” theater—which is from the French for doing something “for the love of.”

Did you know that there are several types of stages that vary as to the usage and the relation of the audience to them? The four different types are: the **proscenium**; the **thrust** stage; the **theater in the round**; and the **fourth type** incorporates created and found stages which may be constructed specifically for a performance or may involve a space that is adapted as a stage. What type of stage do we have in the HH ballroom? ▲

Newsletter is edited & published  
by Bets Knepley

**HHLT Website**

[hhlittletheater.wordpress.com/](http://hhlittletheater.wordpress.com/)

🎭 Treasurer Treva Whyte reported a balance of \$9502.60 in the treasury.

🎭 Activities Chair Betty Hitchcock announced that the Annual Potluck Picnic will be held at her home on October 2.

🎭 Co-director Ina Mayer reported the our upcoming play is well under way. There are flyers for members to distribute at their other activities.

🎭 Ed Prendergast reviewed the possibilities for storage of HHLT assets.

🎭 Bets Knepley made a motion to donate annually \$100 to a local little theater group. The motion passed and the first donation will be made to Wayside Theatre in Middletown, VA

🎭 M.J. Brickach discussed the dates for the 2012 fall production. Motion was passed to firm up the dates.

🎭 Gene Schmiel announced that he had an email requesting help with costumes, scenery from Gainesville Middle School for their upcoming production.

🎭 The complete minutes can be found on our website at <http://hhlittletheater.wordpress.com/> ▲



## Highlights of the September Minutes



## Write-Write-Write

If you're looking for something new, different and challenging, why don't you write a play for our Play-Writing Contest? The Committee already has one entrant! I'm sure that Roger Delrosario, Sharon Ferguson, Jack Merelman, Walt Meyer and Ed Prendergast, the members of the Play-Writing Committee, would love to have your play, too. Information about the rules can be found on the HHLT website under Miscl. Good luck to all entrants.

Kill two birds with one stone—You may want to submit your play in Winchester Little Theatre's *New Virginia Voices Playwright Competition*, which is also offering monetary prizes. More information can be found at [www.wltonline.org/](http://www.wltonline.org/) under the *New Virginia Voices* section. ▲

## 2012 Directors

How lucky HHLT is! Members have volunteered as Directors for our 2012 Spring and Fall productions. Kathryn and Gene Schmiel will co-direct our Spring Production and M.J. Brickach, our Fall one. Thank you. And “Break a leg!” ▲

