



COMMUNITY PLAYERS

CURTAIN CALLS

Vol. 9.4

January, 2014

Inside this Issue

9 to 5 *The Musical* Auditions2
 2014-2015 Season Preview3
 Historian's Corner.....4

Players Begin 2014 with *The Diary of Anne Frank*

by Bob McLaughlin

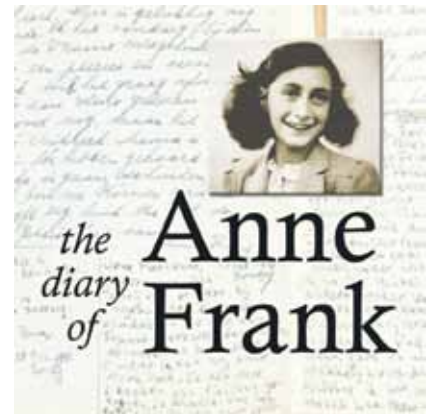
Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* is familiar to readers around the world; indeed, it serves many of us as our introduction to the horror of the Holocaust, Nazi Germany's systematic attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe. It's hard to imagine that this document was almost passed over by history, but it's true.

The Franks and another Jewish family, the van Pels, tried to escape the Nazi persecution of the Jews in Amsterdam by moving into a secret annex in a building where Anne's father worked. There they hid for over two years, Anne recording the day-to-day events of their lives and her reflections on the war, life, and growing into womanhood. In August 1944 the refugees were betrayed to the authorities, arrested, and transported to the death camps. Anne died at the Bergen-Belsen camp a few weeks before it was liberated in April 1945.

Otto Frank, Anne's father, was the only member of the family to survive. After the war, when he returned to

Amsterdam, the diary, having been recovered after the arrest, was given to him, and he vowed to have it published.

After a number of rejections, it was published in Germany and France in 1950, and, after several more rejections, it was published in the United States in 1952, where it was favorably reviewed, including a rave review in the *New York Times Book Review* by Meyer Levin. It was Levin who initially proposed that a dramatic adaptation of the diary be made, but after closing a deal with Otto Frank, completing a draft, and approaching some Broadway producers, playwright Lillian Hellman, a friend of the producers, suggested that Levin's version was too Jewish. Hollywood screenwriters Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett were brought in to rewrite the play, and their version opened on Broadway on October 5, 1955, with Susan Strasberg as Anne, Joseph Schildkraut as Otto, and Jack Gilford and Lou Jacobi among the other cast members. During its 717-performance run, it won the Tony Award for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize in Drama. It was adapted into a successful film in 1959. In 1997 the play was newly revised by Wendy Kesselman, making use of parts of the diary that Otto Frank had



The cast rehearses a scene from *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Continued on page 4 . . .

Jan. - Feb. 2014

Board Meetings

January 21, 6:00 p.m.
February 18, 6:00 p.m.
Community Players Theatre

The Diary of Anne Frank

Preview: January 16, 2014
Performances: January 17-19,
and 23-26, 2014

9 to 5 the Musical

Auditions: Jan. 27, 28, and 29, 7
pm at the theater.
Preview: March 20, 2014
Performances: March 21- 23rd,
27-30, and April 3-6, 2014



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We are always looking for
writers, artists, designers, and
story ideas. Send comments and
suggestions to kalmbach@ilstu.
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Curtain Calls is published six
times a year for the voting mem-
bers of Community Players.

For information about joining us,
please contact our membership
chair, Wendi Fleming at
cplayersmember@aol.com.

Back issues of *Curtain Calls*
are available on the Commu-
nity Players web site. Click on
"Newsletter Archive."

9 to 5 the Musical

9 to 5: The Musical, with music and lyrics by Dolly Parton and book by Patricia Resnick, is based on the 1980 hit movie *Nine to Five*.



Pushed to the boiling point by their boss, three female co-workers concoct a plan to get even with the sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical bigot they call their boss. They conspire to take control of their company and learn there's nothing they can't do -- even in a man's world. Set in the late 1970s, *9 to 5: The Musical* is a hilarious story of friendship and revenge in the Rolodex era. Outrageous, thought-provoking, and even a little romantic, *9 to 5: The Musical* is about teaming up and taking care of business.

Director Brett Cottone needs a cast of 20 or more men and women from the ages of 18 - 60s.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN - Character Ages - Casting is Flexible

VIOLET – 40s to early 50s. Attractive, strong, ambitious woman. Stands up for what she believes in. Head secretary and Mr. Hart's administrative assistant. She is also a single mother of a teenager. (Lily Tomlin in film)

DORALEE – late 20s to late 30s. Sexy in a wholesome country singer way. Character should "suggest" Dolly Parton-like character but not an impersonator. Needs to sing country.

JUDY – late 20s to late 30s. Attractive, insecure, at first afraid of being on her own but later becomes empowered and strong. She is the "new" girl. Husband just left her for his secretary. (Jane Fonda in the film)

ROZ KEITH – late 30s to 40s. The office kiss-up and second to the boss, a gossip, has an unrequited love for her boss and will do anything to win his approval

FRANKLIN HART – 40s to 50s. Arrogant, self-absorbed, male chauvinist corporate 70s boss. Is capable of a surface, smarmy charm. (Dabney Coleman in the film)

MISSY – 40s to 50s. Hart's wife. Fluttery and ditz.

JOE – 20s to 30s. The cute, young, office accountant. He's smitten with VIOLET.

DICK – 30s to 40s. Judy's soon-to-be ex-husband. Average middle-aged guy, sporting a little less hair and a little more paunch than he did ten years ago.

DWAYNE – 20s to early 30s. Doralee's husband, very supportive of Doralee.

JOSH – 18 to early 20's (must look young) Violet's teenage son.

MARGARET – any age. Secretary. The office lush.

ENSEMBLE (singers / dancers) – 18 to 60s

Auditions are Monday Jan. 27, Tuesday Jan. 28, and Wednesday Jan. 29 7 pm at the theater. Be prepared to dance, sing 16 bars to piano accompaniment, and read from the script.

Any questions? Contact Brett Cottone at brett.cottone@gmail.com

Community Players Announces 2014-2015 season

The Community Players Board of Governors recently announced their 2014-2015 season. Please note that all shows are subject to change pending licensing agreements.

The Philadelphia Story

(Play)

A Comedy by Philip Barry

Auditions: July 21 and 22, 2014

Preview: September 4, 2014

Performances: September 5-7 and 11-14, 2014

Philip Barry's romantic comedy *The Philadelphia Story* opened on Broadway at the Shubert Theatre in March 1939 and ran an entire year for 417 performances. Katharine Hepburn played the lead, Tracy Lord in one of Barry's biggest successes. The play tells the story of Philadelphia heiress and socialite Tracy Lord. After getting a divorce from C. K. Dexter Haven, she prepares to marry again. However, in the days before her wedding, Haven and a reporter, posing as her brother's friend, show up at her doorstep. From there, Tracy is forced to choose among her past love, her present love, and her new love.

Rent

(Musical)

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Jonathan Larson

Auditions: September 15-17, 2014

Preview: November 6, 2014

Performances: November 7-9, 13-16 and 20-23, 2014

Set in the East Village of New York City, *RENT* is about falling in love, finding your voice and living for today. Winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *RENT* has become a pop cultural phenomenon with songs that rock and a story that resonates with audiences of all ages. Based loosely on Puccini's *La Boheme*, Jonathan Larson's *RENT* follows a year in the life of a group of impoverished young artists and musicians struggling to survive and create in New York's Lower East Side. How these young bohemians negotiate their dreams, loves, and conflicts provides the narrative thread to this ground-breaking musical.

Of Mice and Men

(Play)

A Drama by John Steinbeck

Auditions: November 24 and 25, 2014

Preview: January 15, 2015

Performances: January 16-18 and 22-25, 2015

John Steinbeck's heartbreaking 1937 American classic comes to life in his own stage adaptation. The play, which predates the Tony Awards and the Drama Desk Awards, earned the 1938 New York Drama Critics' Circle for Best Play. The 1937 production opened while the novel was still on best seller lists. It tells the story of Lennie and George—farm workers in Depression-era California who are trying to scrape together enough money to buy a house of their own. But when Lennie stirs up trouble on the job, George must choose between protecting his friend or staying the course towards his version of the American dream.



Dirty Rotten Scoundrels

(Musical)

Book by Jeffrey Lane; Music and Lyrics by David Yazbek

Based on the film *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* written by Dale Launer, Stanley Shapiro, and Paul Henning

Auditions: January 18-20, 2015

Preview: March 12, 2015

Performances: March 13-15, 19-22, and 26-29, 2015

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels has been described as stylish, sexy, irreverent, and "Broadway musical comedy heaven." Based on the popular 1988 film, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* centers on two con men living on the French Riviera. Lawrence Jameson makes his lavish living by talking rich ladies out of their money. Freddy Benson more humbly swindles women by winking their compassion with fabricated stories about his grandmother's failing health. After meeting on a train, they attempt to work together only to find that this small

Continued on page 4 . . .

... *Anne Frank* preview continued from page 1.

originally suppressed. This Broadway revival starred Natalie Portman as Anne. (Interestingly, a dramatic version of Levin's attempt to get his adaptation produced, *Compulsion*, with Mandy Patinkin as Levin and a marionette as Anne, was presented at New York's Public Theater in 2011.)

Kesselman's revision is the version Community Players will present, beginning with a Pay-What-You-Can Preview Performance on Thursday, January 16, followed by regular performances January 17-19 and 23-26. Director **Opal Virtue** and Producer **Sherry Bradshaw** have gathered the following cast: **Veronika Bettis** as Anne Frank, **Paul Vellella** as Otto Frank, **Penny Wilson** as Edith Frank, **Rebekah Easling** as Margot Frank, **Amanda Fisher** as Miep Gies, **Tim Zaitzeff** as Peter Van Daan, **Tom Smith** as Mr. Kraler, **Tricia Stiller** as Mrs. Van Daan, **Alan Wilson** as Mr. Van Daan, **Nathan Bottorff** as Mr. Dussel, and **Jake Rathman, Tyler Stark, and Charles Maaks** as Germans.

The staff includes Assistant Director **Austin Travis**, Stage Managers Austin Travis and **Hannah Kerns**, Scenic Designer **Bruce Parrish**, Lighting Designer **Dan Virtue**, Sound Engineer **Rich Plotkin**, Costume Designer Alan Wilson, Co-Costume Designer **Ashley Moffitt**, Property Mistresses **Carol Plotkin** and **Dorothy Mundy**, House Managers **Christie Vellella** and **Jean Lieder**, Box Office Manager Sherry Bradshaw, Master Builder Charles Maaks, and Set Crew **Chris Terven, Dava Bennett, Alan Wilson, Austin Travis, and Opal Virtue.**

Historian's Corner

You may have noticed that Vice-President Alan Wilson has recently been offering to take interested theatre members and guests to Chicago to see professionally produced theatre. Alan's revival of this opportunity for members and other interested parties to go on theatre trips has roots that go back to the 1970s. Past president Dean Litt used to sponsor such trips. There were trips to see Chicago theatre and New York theatre, and there was one opportunity during the 1970-1971 season that offered our patrons a chance to see theatre in Europe.

The group left Chicago for London, then on to Paris, and finally to Rome. In London, the travelers received two evenings of theatre and visits to three private clubs. In Paris, there were reserved seats at the Opera Comique and three nights to enjoy the Paris night life. Then on to Rome for four nights of clubbing and going to the discotheque. All that was needed was \$100.00 down per person with the remaining \$399.00 due by January 23, 1971.

... 2014-2015 Season Preview continued from page 3.

French town isn't big enough for the two of them. They agree on a settlement: the first one to extract \$50,000 from a young female target, heiress Christine Colgate, wins and the other must leave town. A hilarious battle of cons ensues that will keep audiences laughing, humming and guessing to the end!

Laughter on the 23rd Floor (Play)

A Comedy by Neil Simon

Auditions: March 23 and 24, 2015

Preview: May 7, 2015

Performances: May 8-10 and 14-17, 2015

Laughter on the 23rd Floor opened on Broadway at the Richard Rodgers Theatre on November 22, 1993 and closed on August 27, 1994 after 320 performances and 24 previews. Inspired by Simon's early career experience as a junior writer (along with his brother Danny) for *Your Show of Shows*, the play focuses on Sid Caesar-like Max Prince, the star of a weekly comedy-variety show circa 1953, and his staff, including Simon's alter-ego Lucas Brickman, who maintains a running commentary on the writing, fighting, and wacky antics which take place in the writers' room. Max has an ongoing battle with NBC executives, who fear his humor is too sophisticated for Middle America.

Annie (Musical)

Book by Thomas Meehan; Music by Charles Strouse;
Lyrics by Martin Charnin
Based on *Little Orphan Annie* by permission of The Media Tribune Services, Inc.

Auditions: May 18-20, 2015

Preview: July 9, 2015

Performances: July 10-12, 16-19, and 23-26, 2015

The original Broadway production opened in 1977 and ran for nearly six years, setting a record for the Alvin Theatre (now the Neil Simon Theatre) and won the Tony Award for Best Musical. With equal measures of pluck and positivity, little orphan Annie is determined to find her parents, who abandoned her years ago on the doorstep of a New York City orphanage run by the cruel, embittered Miss Hannigan. With the help of the other girls in the orphanage, Annie escapes to the wondrous and magical world of NYC. In adventure after fun-filled adventure, Annie foils Miss Hannigan's evil machinations and befriends President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. She finds a new home and family in billionaire Oliver Warbucks, his personal secretary Grace Farrell, and a lovable mutt named Sandy.