

Do Re Me

By LOUI TAYLOR
Herald staff writer

The gymnasium at Holy Cross School was crowded and hot Friday evening when the choir of St. John's United Church presented an evening of music entitled "Do Re Me", but thanks to the excellence of the cast, the audience was able to ignore the heat and concentrate on the delightful tunes from "The Sound of Music".

This is an encore performance of "Do Re Me", and the proceeds from the two performances Thursday and Friday will be divided between the St. John's building fund and the Holy Cross Parents' Association for the purchase of "creative playground" equipment for the school.

The program began with two selections each from the junior and teen choirs. The junior choir performed "How Come" from the musical "Tom Sawyer" and a more difficult two-part piece entitled "The Dream Seller".

The concentration of the members of the choir was obvious as they followed the direction of Dale Wood, director of the choirs. Mr. Wood also accompanied the choirs on piano, and provided the music for the play as well.

The teen choir, made up of elegant looking young ladies in long red skirts and beige blouses, performed two selections which were a little more familiar to the young members of the audience. The first song "Weekend in New England" was recently recorded by pop performer Barry Manilow.

The second selection, "Bridge Over Troubled Water" was written by Paul Simon, and recorded by the singing duo, Simon and Garfunkel, about ten years ago.

The choir received an appreciative and well-deserved round of applause for their singing, which led the way nicely into the main part of the program.

Since the Sound of Music was one of the top money-making movies of all times, most of the audience was familiar with the plot. A young nun Maria, played by Thais Brown, is a postulant at Nonnberg Abbey in Austria. She meets the children for the first time. Dave Shrubsole was suitably dashing and arrogant as Captain von Trapp and softened convincingly under Maria's influence.

Brenda McNeil had a difficult task to perform, following in the shoes of Peggy Wood, who originally portrayed the Mother Abbess in the movie version of The Sound of Music, but she rose nobly to the task, particularly with the beautiful, but challenging "Climb Every Mountain". There were a few sniffs audible in the general vicinity of this reviewer when the song was concluded.

Touching moments such as that one notwithstanding, the overall mood of the play was joyous, and moodily conveyed it any better than the children. The duet between Liesl her young boyfriend, and Bill played by Hal Porter, "Sixteen going on seventeen" received one of the loudest rounds of applause of the evening.

The most popular song by far, however, was the title song of the program, "Do Re Me". The audience clapped along as the song was performed, and continued to clap as the lights dimmed for the set crew to change the backdrop. Between each scene, Mr. Wood continued to play the piano, usually continuing the music from the last line of the scene and then sliding into another tune from the score. It made a real difference in keeping the audience patient while set changes were made.

The only complaint possible in an otherwise completely enjoyable performance would have to be the frequent set changes and abrupt transitions between scenes, which would seem to be necessary according to the demands of the play.

The state crew and Mr. Wood worked well together in keeping the period of time between scenes short and occupied.

All in all, the choir, production crew and Mr. Wood are to be congratulated on a fine effort and an enjoyable evening.



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