



Holding their arms in the "grand finale" of "Anne of Green Gables" at a recent dress rehearsal, these GDHS students are ready for the show's opening tomorrow night (Thursday). The

students' production of the Canadian theatrical and literary classic has required two months of hard work, but most agree it was well worth the effort.

(Herald photo)

Students ready Green Gables for gala three-night run

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

The story of the orphan girl who made Prince Edward Island famous and Lucy Maude Montgomery a household name in hundreds of countries throughout the world opens tomorrow night (Thursday) for a three-night run at Georgetown and District High School.

And parents will no doubt be impressed by the results of two months of energy and free time the school's amateur thespians have devoted to this Don Harron (Charlie Farquharson) production of Montgomery's "Anne of Green Gables", directed by the school's music director, Ralph Ursel.

Not counting the band, about 50 students are involved in

GDHS presents
'ANNE OF GREEN GABLES'
Thursday, Friday, Saturday
8 p.m. GDHS Cafetorium

tomorrow's premiere performance, the gala musical event of the school year. Actors and stage crew have been working since mid-September, gathering props and clothing and sewing together costumes to outfit the cast in turn-of-the-century garb.

The three theatre arts students who captured the lead roles in September's auditions - Brenda Archer (Anne), Becky Reid, (Marilla), and

Bill Marchant (Matthew) - agreed that, despite lengthy working hours, sacrificed social life and an obvious threat to marks, they wouldn't have missed this musical for the world. In fact, the crew and cast have worked so intensely together for the past two months that they have become kind of a surrogate family.

"The best part of the year is working on the play," Brenda

said in a Herald interview with members of the cast Friday. "The worst part is when the play is over."

Already an accomplished actress in her tenth grade, Brenda had performed with Nornie Studio, Georgetown Little Theatre (GLT) and a number of smaller church and school groups before sinking her teeth into the lead part as the precocious, sharp-as-a-tack Anne adopted by siblings Marilla and Matthew.

But Anne has her work cut out for her as she gradually overcomes Marilla's reluctance to exhibit any great deal of affection for her.

Becky Reid's rich background in the local theatre scene - she has acted since she was in kindergarten 13 years ago - indicates a promising career for her in drama once she graduates from high school next year.

WARM HEART
In this, her fifth musical, Becky conceded that while she plays a sharp-tongued shrew, deep down, Marilla hides a large, warm heart and a lot of emotion.

"Marilla is a proper God-fearing lady," Becky explained. "She's firm and takes no nonsense from anybody. But as the play goes on, she grows fonder of Anne while trying not to let her emotions show."

To fit into the character, she said, she had to "calm" her own personality down a bit and then do what all actresses and actors do: act as the character would act, think like the character would think.

Despite Matthew's age and failing health, coupled with the fact that he is not a romantic heavy in the musical, the character is full of spirit; look forward to a convincing performance from Bill.

Also with a long list of amateur acting credits to his name, including GLT's upcoming "Hans, The Witch and The Gobbin", Bill puts a lot of effort into this quiet lead. But he isn't fooled by Matthew, the introvert; he can still belt out a whale of a song.

The actors are also quick to give plenty of praise to their musical accompanists, the high school band, which they say has never played better. The band has had the onerous chore of wading through piles of sheet music, attending early morning practices for the play and then several late afternoon joint rehearsals as well.

The play runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at 8 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door at a general admission price of \$3, or \$2 for students and senior citizens and \$7 for a family package.



Much of the credit for the smooth operation of the Georgetown and District High School production of "Anne of Green Gables" which opens tomorrow (Thursday) goes to the backstage crew, part of which is pictured above. Front row (left to right) Joanne Keen, propmaster; Sharon Langdon, make-up; Karen Ivany, make-up; Bruce Hulme, assistant propmaster; and Patty Welsh, stage manager. Play producers Greg Cazaban and Barb Treviranus stand to the rear. (Herald photo)

Aussie brings play charm

Adding a distinctly international flavor to what is otherwise a wholly Canadian play, 18-year old Australian Rotary exchange student Jenny Inglis can really belt out a song in the GDHS production of "Anne of Green Gables".

In her role as Miss Stacey, the refreshingly different school marm who takes over from piker-faced Mr. Phillips after he marries one of his students, Jenny brings an impressive amount of musical talent from her native Nangan, New South Wales.

Back home, she participated in numerous interscholastic singing competitions and while attending Nangan High School, played in a light, country folk music ensemble. She has also led singing groups during church services in Nangan and is a talented guitar and piano player.

As an "ambassador for Australia" under the exchange program sponsored by Rotary International, Jenny has been in Georgetown since January, spending some of her free time

talking to school groups, scouting organizations, church socials and the University Women's club about her homeland.

But come January, the visit to Canada, which has taken her to Niagara Falls, Ottawa and the Haliburton Highlands, will come to an end as she boards a plane bound for Australia. Sometime early next year Jenny will start classes at Armidale University (Australia), studying child psychology to, hopefully, one day practice in a third world country.

the HERALD Entertainment

Arts Council column
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