

Entertainment



Pack of Lies, the Georgetown Little Theatre's latest murder mystery, opens Feb. 19 at the John Elliott Theatre. The seven member cast is directed by Neville Wornop. The play runs Feb. 19 and 20, and again from Feb. 24-27. In this scene the characters gather together to examine the photograph of a suspect. (Herald photo)

Packs of Lies about friendship betrayed

By MELANIE NIXON
Herald Special

Pack of Lies, Georgetown Little Theatre's latest offering, is a penetrating stab of the human psyche, slicing through a Pandora's Box of deception, guilt and betrayal. The silent question which hovers hauntingly throughout this fact-based thriller is: who is really betraying whom?

The story begins with a somewhat lighthearted illustration of the bond which exists between the Jacksons and their neighbors, the Krogers. In particular, Barbara Jackson and Helen Kroger share a unique friendship, and although very different in character, each loves and respects the other with unbridled acceptance.

Peter Kroger purports to be an antique book dealer, and Helen Kroger's social mission in life seems to be to personally a breath of fresh air for the more staid Barbara. Her young-at-heart attitude also projects her into a position of mediator between Barbara and her teenaged daughter, Julie.

Somewhat brazen, certainly zany, but with a generous display of affection and solicitude, Helen Kroger comes across as warm and likeable. Stepping into her shoes for the duration of the play is Joan Andrews, who has worked with Bramalea Little Theatre, Brampton Musical Society, Brampton Comedy Company, and has been a member of GLT for the past two years. Joan finds her role as Helen to be a "fun and also challenging" one, and explains that the character she plays is, in some ways, vastly different to herself.

Joan witnessed the television movie version of Hugh Whitmore's play last year, and considered it "a powerful drama". It is what drew her to participate in Pack of Lies, which will be presented Feb. 19, 20, 24, 25, 26 and 27.

A dietitian by occupation, Joan extends her knowledge creatively onto the stage; she knows just how much to feed you at any sitting, and how rich that portion should be, in order

to present a well-rounded, believable characterization. She has prepared herself by securing an image of Helen Kroger's personality in the confines of her imagination, and draws from that well for reactions and gestures peculiar to Helen.

Joan has also acted in Death of a Salesman (as Willie Loman's mistress), Boing Boing (as Janet), Ten Little Indians (as Emily), and Leanito of the Red Hot Lovers (as Jeanette). She says she loves the "high of performing", and this is evident in her lively portrayal of Helen Kroger.

Peter Kroger, Helen's slightly more reserved husband, is played by GLT newcomer, Michael Hall. Michael's previous experience is with the Mississauga Players, where he had the roles of Herbert in The Last Real Summer, Hubert in Night Must Fall, and also built sets for two of their productions.

Michael loves the thrill of acting, and the social life which the theatre affords him. Besides drama, Michael's passion in life is a particular cat (or so rumor has it). Much to his dismay, there were no parts available for a "Kitty" in this production.

Despite the fun Michael is having, participating in Pack of Lies, he presents a solid, steady portrayal of Peter Kroger. He backs up the more dominant character of Helen, his wife, with appealing strength of presence.

The Krogers, who claimed to be Canadian, were eventually convicted of crimes against the country of England. The shocking climax of this story, however, centres not on the validity of the verdict, nor on the ethics of their personal convictions, but rather on the aftermath of a betrayal of friendship. And this is the most engrossing aspect of the entire performance.

Make plans now to attend Pack of Lies. Call the box office at 877-3700 on Thursday, Feb. 11 between 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. and reserve your tickets. This is one show you'll surely regret missing!

Dance auditions

Auditions will be held Feb. 13 for a new dance company that is being formed in Georgetown, to be known as the Halton Dance Company.

The object of the company is to give young dancers performance experience, and also to provide entertainment for various community functions.

Any young dancers are invited to attend the auditions. For the Senior Section, dancers must have the Senior Grade, or equivalent, and Junior Section dancers must have Grade Three, or equivalent.

The auditions are being held at 142 Mill St., where a large new studio has been set up to become the company's permanent home. Auditions begin at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 13, and there is a fee of \$5. For more information, contact Yvonne Oldaker, at 877-1581.

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Grant wanted for Cedarvale arts cottage

Renovations to the Cedarvale Cottage will be among the applications for provincial grants the town will apply for this year.

The town is applying for partial funding for seven projects in 1988. Other projects include:

- structural repairs to the Georgetown Memorial Arena, expected to cost around \$10,000;
- structural repairs to Gordon Alcott Arena, costing about \$8,000;
- court resurfacing at Emmerson Park Tennis Courts at a price of \$4,500;
- repairs to the walls and floor of Fairy Lake Wading Pool for about \$3,000;
- roof replacement on Hornby Community Centre for \$3,400;
- condenser replacement on the Acton Arena costing \$22,000.

Structural repairs to the Cedarvale Cottage will cost about \$30,000.

All the projects are eligible for a third funding except the cottage which can receive up to 50 per cent.

Council had to endorse the applications for funding by Feb. 12, said Recreation Director Tom Shepard.

Even though council has endorsed the applications, that doesn't mean they have to come up with money, said Mr. Shepard.

The applications are only for funding, there is no obligation involved on the part of the town, he said.

Mr. Shepard wanted the application for the Cedarvale Cottage to be included because the Credit Valley Artisans have been operating for two years out of Park Public School and they're now on "borrowed time."

The Artisans were using the cottage until it fell badly in need of structural repairs two years ago.

Councillors Betty Fisher and Marilyn Serjeantson said they thought the town had definitely decided not to take part in renovations to the cottage.

The town had wanted to sell the cottage to the Halton Hills Arts Council for \$1 but the Arts Council has now folded.

If a private group takes over ownership of the building, building restrictions may be less strict and the cost of renovating might be cheaper.

But Mr. Shepard said council has "never eliminated itself from the project." He said council decided not to put money into the building during budget deliberations but the discussion went no further than that.

Asked by Coun. Serjeantson on the structural repairs necessary to make the cottage useable, Mr. Shepard said the \$30,000 would make all necessary structural repairs.

Coun. Serjeantson worried that good money may be put after had if the building is repaired and then needs more renovations the following year.

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AT THE MOVIES

Couch trip

By DIANNA NADEAU
Herald Special

The Couch Trip tackles an easy prey: psychiatry and psychiatrists. Not that this field doesn't deserve parody; however, it is such an obvious target that it's like shooting ducks in a mud puddle. The Couch Trip satirizes Beverly Hills therapists and call-in psychiatric radio shows - we already know that these people are nuts. The Couch Trip just confirms this premise.

Dan Aykroyd is John Burns Jr., an intrepid and imaginative inmate in a psychiatric hospital. He is the bane of Dr. Laurence Baird, a nasty and stupid hospital chief. This is in Illinois. Meanwhile, in Beverly Hills, prominent psychiatrist and radio personality George Maitland (Charles Grodin) is having a breakdown. Baird is chosen as a replacement because he is too mediocre to pose a threat to Maitland. However, it is Burns and not Baird who arrives in L.A.

It takes Burns a matter of hours to become the toast of the town, although his style is definitely bizarre. Maitland has gone to London with his horn-to-shop wife. When Maitland encounters the real Baird at a conference all hell breaks loose. Along the way Burns picks up Becker, a slightly loony misfit who figures out the charade by recognizing Burns' prison-issued pants.

This movie has a lot of funny moments but it is ultimately rather disappointing. The script is a little too loose, and it steps outside the

bounds of reality too often for the audience to swallow the story. I had no real difficulty accepting the Burns for Baird trade, but once in Hollywood things get pretty silly. Aykroyd is given free rein, an unfortunate move. The idea that a mental hospital inmate is funnier and smarter than the doctor attending him is not new and in this case it is carried to tedious extremes. This movie could have been better if the script had been edited and the direction tighter.

Dan Aykroyd is pretty good in this role, a far superior part to his disastrous Joe Friday in Dragnet. I think he is funny in The Couch Trip, but the Burns character is too sentimentalized to be really hilarious. He's the nutcase with a heart of gold, a tired and cliched character.

For me, the real reasons for watching the film were Walter Matthau and Charles Grodin. Matthau is the kleptomaniac blackmailer Becker. He could have been a great character if he'd had more screen time. He has the best line in the movie; standing in a radio studio with his hands full of doughnuts with straws in them he tells the others "If anyone wants a doughnut I've sucked all the jelly out of them." Who can resist a character like that?

Grodin is very good as the greedy and loopy Maitland. It is not his best movie; he was wonderful as the sycophantic secretary with murder and Dyan Cannon on his mind in Heaven Can Wait. His wife, a dim-witted and uncomprehending woman is played by Mary Gross. His partner is the beautiful Donna Dixon, Aykroyd's real wife.

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