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# Private Lives should play to packed house

By John Sommer

"Private Lives", an "Intimate Comedy in Three Acts" by Noel Coward, was produced by the author for the first time at The Phoenix Theatre in London, England, on September 8, 1930. The original cast was a sterling one. Elyot Chase was played by Noel Coward himself, Amanda Prynne was played by Gertrude Lawrence, and Victor Prynne by Laurence Olivier. The same cast opened "Private Lives" in New York on January 27, 1931, with the addition of Jill Esmond as Sybil Chase. In London Sybil had been Adrienne Allen.

When "Private Lives" came out it was considered to be one of many fashionable plays produced every year for the delight of a big city audience. In the meantime, it has become the quintessential play of the '30's, in the way Wilde's play "The Importance of Being Earnest" became the quintessential play of the '90's, a generation before Noel Coward.

"Private Lives" is a comedy of

manners and a deserved indictment of a particular class of people. If you grew up in the 30's and see "Private Lives" now, you will be remembering smart people just like Elyot and Amanda, who, in order to preserve their privileges, threw in their lot with the likes of Mussolini and Hitler and Franco.

The First World War had turned them into cynical pleasure-seekers and they all talked like Elyot Chase: "Let's be superficial and pity the poor philosophers. Let's blow trumpets and squeakers, and enjoy the party as much as we can, like very small, quite idiotic school children. Let's savor the delight of the moment. Come and kiss me darling, before your body rots, and worms pop in and out of your eye sockets."

Are Elyot and Amanda likable? Not really. Theirs, and others like theirs, egotism destroyed Europe and millions of people. But, as depicted by Noel Coward, they are funny in a wickedly monstrous way. And they are historical types now, just as Lady Bracknell and Gwendolen and all the others from Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" have become historical



Former spouses Elyot (Eric Witvoet) and Amanda (Terri Reid) exchange barbed remarks on their former relationship during a scene in the Georgetown Little Theatre production of Private Lives currently playing at the John Elliott Theatre.

photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

types for us.

In view of all the above, it is eminently right that the Georgetown Little Theatre production of "Private Lives" at the John Elliott Theatre in Georgetown has been given the look of about 1929.

The two sets embody the spirit of the late '20's and so do the smart

fashions the men and women are wearing.

The director, Vesta Jorgensen, has done an absolutely splendid job with the actors. I was skeptical whether Eric Witvoet would be able to manage the enormously difficult role of Elyot Chase, a frivolous, troubled, and menacing man, but he did wonderfully well.

Terri Reid as Amanda Prynne looks and acts the part of a willful, Nordic beauty of her time (Unity Miford comes to mind, who went to Germany and sat at the Fuehrer's feet). Brian Banyard as Victor Prynne is the dense, unimaginative fellow he is supposed to be, and Carolyn Cooks is directed to play Sybil Chase as an aging flapper, forever agitated as if plugged into an electric socket. Ro Palumbo-Coates makes from the small part of the maid Louise a complex comic portrait that adds considerably to the bohemian confusion of the last act.

"Private Lives" is one of the best productions the Georgetown Little Theatre has ever done and I hope the next performances at the John Elliott Theatre Wednesday (tonight), Thursday, Friday and Saturday, will play to full houses.

## Halton Community Television Cable 4

### Weekly Programme Schedule

for the week of April 19th to April 23rd

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
5:30 TV Story Time	5:30 Religion	5:30 TV Story Time	5:30 Religion	5:30 Community Calendar
6:00 Halton's Health	6:00 Optimists TV Bingo	6:00 Community Calendar	6:00 Community Calendar	6:00 Sportszone
6:30 1993 Cheerleading Competitions	6:00 Halton Hills Council Meeting (Mon. April 19, 1993)	6:30 Money in the Bank	6:30 Change on Life	6:30 Halton Region Council (Apr.21/93)
7:30 Reform Party (live phone-in)		7:00 Halton Seniors' TV	7:00 Sportszone	
Electronic Town Hall Meeting		8:00 F.O.A.D.	7:30 Focus on Europe	
Lyn McLeod's Ontario		8:30 Theories - Vague Excuses	8:00 Germany Live	

Check Schedule daily  
on Cable 4

TBA = To Be Announced  
(recently recorded programming)

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1992



## ACTON CITIZEN OF THE YEAR JOHN TOEBES Sr.

### AWARDS DINNER

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 1993

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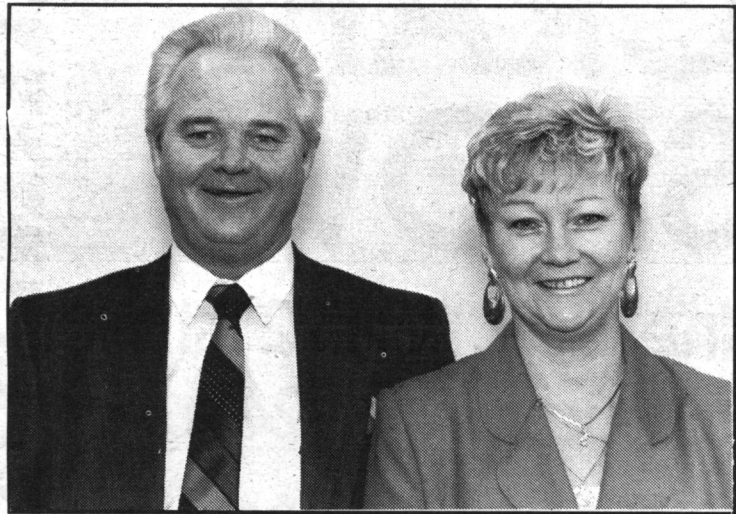
\$20<sup>00</sup> per person

Cocktails 6:30 p.m. Dinner 7:15 p.m.

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# GEORGETOWN & DISTRICT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The Nominating Committee is looking for individuals interested in serving in a leadership role as a volunteer on the Board of Trustees or on Board Committees. Any resident of Halton Hills who wishes information with respect to the duties and responsibilities of a Hospital Trustee should contact the following:

Chairman of the Nominating Committee  
c/o John Oliver, Executive Director  
Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital  
1 Princess Anne Drive  
Georgetown, Ontario L7G 2B8  
(416) 873-0111, extension 241



Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital is a 112 bed primary, acute and long term care facility. As a primary health care provider, the Hospital is committed to identifying health care needs for Halton Hills, and developing programs in co-operation with other health agencies.