Sound of Music plays to capacity MSS crowd

by Mary Haskill

The Sound of Music was staged last week by the students of Midland Secondary School, Wednesday through Saturday. Each night the capacity audience rewarded their efforts with an enthusiastic and prolonged standing ovation. Director Chris Thomson can be proud of them and deserves a bit of applause himself.

Their success was even more commendable when you consider that almost everyone present had seen the well-loved Rogers and Hammerstein musical over and over. It took a top notch and finely paced performance to hold an audience as enthralled and involved as were the people last week.

The strong opening helped. After a minitravalogue using slides of Austria, its mountains and meadows, and a close-up of the central character Maria, the spotlight shifted to Maria, live, on stage, her hands filled with meadow flowers.

Then the auditorium hushed as the nuns and postulants of Nonnberg Abbey filed down the aisle in solemn candlelit procession, their unaccompanied voices lifted in praise. The reverent mood held as the curtain opened on the Abbey and the nuns entered for Vespers.

Then the Mother Abbess (Sarah Walker) and Sisters Berthe, Margaretta and Sophia (Susan Ferguson, Gillian Capps and Leslie Todd) have a heart to heart talk about Maria. Alas she was not where she should be. Again. Their concern is an introduction to the dedicated but exuberant young postulant around whom the real life story of the von Trapp family is centred.

To allow time to think about her vocation, Maria is sent to serve as governess to the motherless von Trapp children. The year is 1938,

just before the German oc- numbers in the show. cupation of Austria.

note fell there were sighs of with the Nazis. appreciation throughout the crowd.

and, at the same time, sug- her leave nobody cares. gest the strength that came like Vera Armstrong too.

Allan Langlois was well Austria.

beyond their years, these Bertram and Allan Ruttan. students had to put their Scott Williamson played spirit and energy and panied by his Nazi guard the people out front. They splendidly menacing in gold conveyed a feeling of family braid. The guard had little

The smaller roles were Sarah Walker and the equally effective, like the three senior nuns achieved quietly deferent way John a maturity of manner that Sallows and Katharina made one forget they were Kubetz played the servants teenagers decked out in Franz and Frau Schmidt. Or coifs and habits. The solo Bill Kelly who brought out Climb Every Mountain is a so clearly the conflict of challenge to any vocalist. 17-year-old Rolf Gruber Sarah Walker was equal to with his love for Liesl and the challenge. When the last his newfound importance

Jennifer McCallum was Elsa Schraeder, the Vera Armstrong was glamorous lady who had her completely charming in the cap set for Capt von Trapp. demanding role of Maria. It is not easy for a beautiful She was on stage most of girl like Jennifer to play an the time and called upon to unsympathetic character so be naive and scatterbrained well that when she takes

Tim Anderson played out in the time of crisis Max Detweiler, the devious when she led her family promoter who played all the over the mountains to safe- angles and, to his credit, ty. Julie Andrews is perhaps managed to do it to the the most famous of all who benefit of all concerned. have played Maria but after Tim had the mannerisms last week, a lot of people and gestures of his character down pat.

Other small but effective cast as Captain Georg von roles involved the guests of Trapp, the navy man a party at the von Trapp disciplined not to show emo- villa which served as a turntion. His stiff restrained ing point in the drama. If style throughout made it these guests seemed even more poignant when awkward and uncomforhe choked and couldn't go table, it was exactly what on singing Edelweiss in the script called for. In farewell to his beloved perfectly natural conversation their well delivered And then there were the lines pointed up the ominous von Trapp children - all threat that hung over the seven of them! Awkward, gathering and the country. I rambunctious and lovable, have seen other productions they were, in order, Liesl where this scene did not (Jenny Giles), Friederich work as well. Herr and Frau (Kevin Busch), Louisa (Paula Zeller were played by Dun-Meridis), Brigitta (Corry can Leroux and Onalea Nicholls), Marta (Kim Jackson, Baron and Brewster), Gretl (Jean Baroness Elderfield by Paul Tilson) and little Kurt (Kyle Bertram and Wendy Naylor). If the nuns were Webster, and another coucalled upon for maturity ple, unnamed, by Tricia

teen dignity aside and be Admiral Von Schreiber of kids again. They did it with the German Navy accommust've had as much fun as (Brad Cook). Schreiber was that strengthened their per- to do except to look officious formance. And their sing- and "Heil!" at appropriate ing? Some of the best times. Small and unsym-

pathetic roles but played to would escape or not. perfection.

as the priest at the wedding new postulant. She made of Maria and von Trapp the most of her second or was dignified. The wedding two on stage, showing by was lovely. The entire von walk and posture the Trapp family escorted hesitance of a young girl Maria down the aisle ac- taking such an important companied by the nuns from step in life. the Abbey. It was beautiful prised when we didn't stand up as the bride walked by.

had a nice camped-up bit as contest winners at the evening complete. music festival and provided to see if the von Trapps possible by the efforts of a

Of course, all the foregoand exciting and I was sur- ing would be nothing without music. The songs of the Sound of Music have Karen Steffen, Wendy become a part of our Gostick and Sherry Olimer culture. Mrs. McCullough and her pit band made the

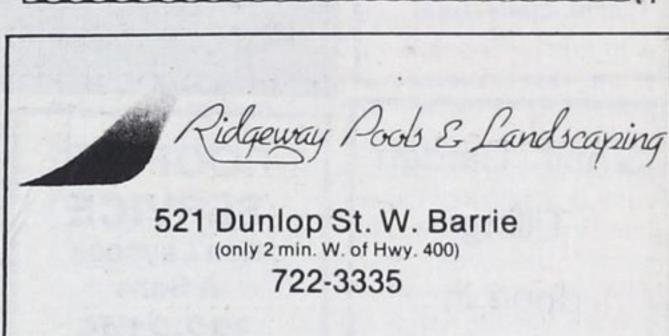
The Sound of Music needed relief as we waited presentation was made

great many people over will remember for years to The smallest role of all months of time. It was an come. So will those for-Darren Todd's small bit fell to Susan Leggett as a experience those involved tunate to be in the audience.





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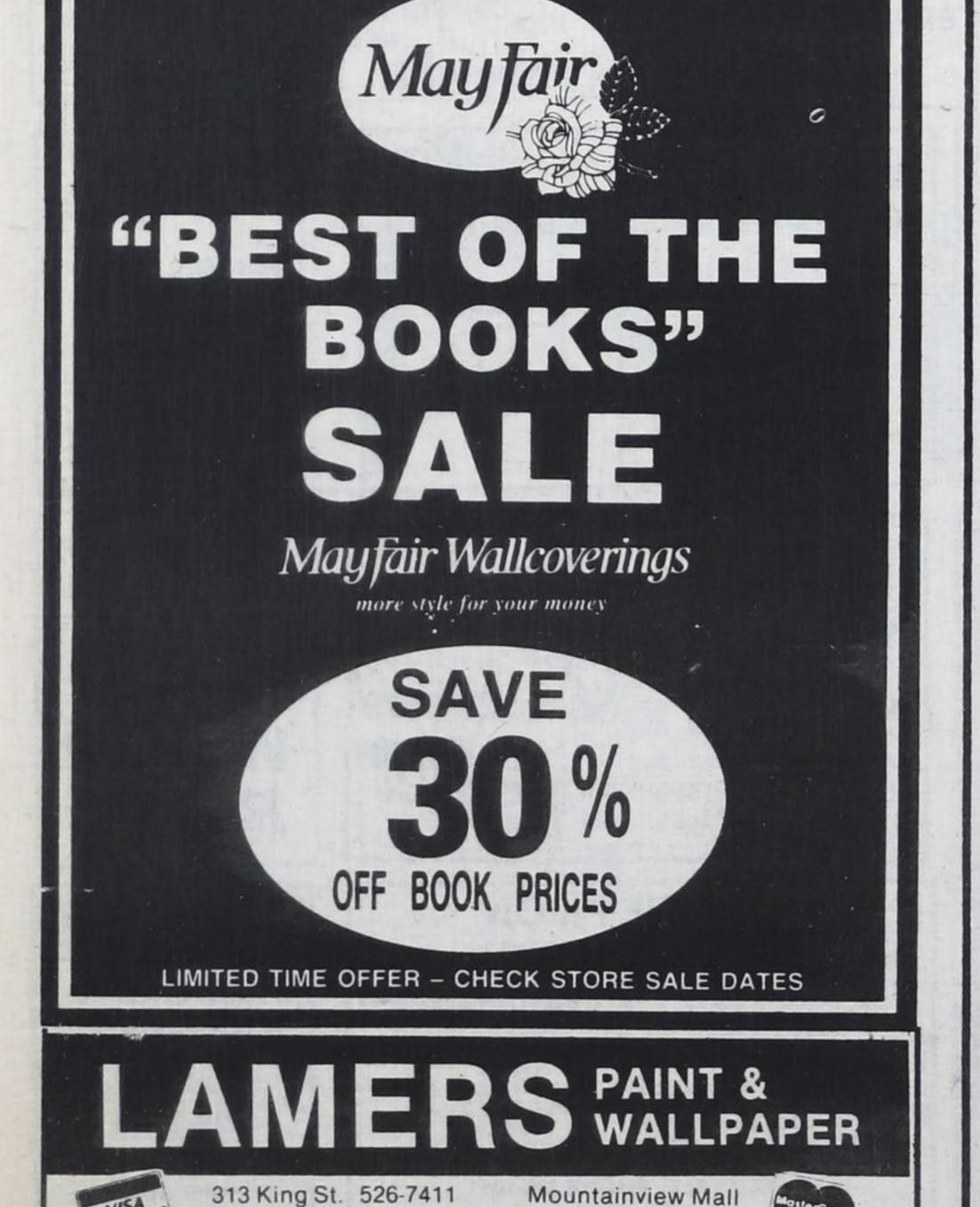
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