

regional viewpoint

By Jim Irving

A critic, I keep telling those people impatiently slamming their fists into the palms of their hands, while shuffling back and forth in front of me, shouldn't be taken all that seriously. They are expressing their views alone, views formed from their own opinions, prejudices, observations, experiences and often enough, their mood of the moment.

So when you read their opinions later on, you must keep that in mind, having the courage of your own convictions in if you disagree, or are upset by them.

Well, that's what I tell others. But, if that's so, why do I feel so annoyed about the opinion of one Ron Hartman of Toronto, who last week tore a wide strip off the Curtain Club's production of *All in Good Time*?

Or at least, that's what I understand. I wasn't there to hear his adjudication.

Bit of hearsay

So there's a bit of hearsay in this column. But there was enough of it from enough sources that I thought there must be some truth in it. Especially, when none of it was flattering.

All the comments from Mr. Hartman gave All in Good Time a bad time. It was the wrong play at the wrong time, with the wrong people most of the time, and probably should have been saved for some other time.

He was particularly tough on the two, young principals, apparently criticizing them for their accents, or lack of same. Most people, however,

Even critics can differ with critics

seemed to find them just right, a necessary contrast to the harsh sounds about them.

Hartman aimed a few barbs at the director and set designer as well, disagreeing on various areas of staging and stage design. He didn't think the play a good choice for the Central Ontario Drama League Festival, either.

So be it.

Should be proud

As I wasn't able to attend the adjudication, I asked a club member to take some notes for me. She did, but apparently some powers felt that the less said about it, the better, and scrapped them.

That's too bad. I am quite convinced the play and the people in it, are capable of standing up to the critical judgment of any tribunal, and shouldn't let the opinion of one reviewer prevent them from savoring what should be a heady moment of triumph.

Especially when that reviewer, so I'm informed, wasn't even able to quite grasp the relationship between the father and his old friend, Billy. The father's long-dawning revelation of what had happened those many years ago, made for one of the most touching moments in the play; truly the beautiful theatre.

I've never been all that nuts about the Curtain Club's endless array of English plays, but this one transcended all boundaries. The theme was universal and I can't believe anyone couldn't be moved to tears and laughter by the production.

Not only English

When Tom Davey sent in his review for The

Liberal, I was delighted to see that he shared the same views as I. But I did ask him if he would mind changing one thing. That was at the end where he said the play was "an emotional experience for anyone from the north of England," where the play was set.

I asked that he eliminate "north of England." For once, I felt, this wasn't just an English play; it would be wrong to leave the impression it could only be enjoyed by those from over 'ome. He agreed.

When he quoted one man for his opinion, he said that he thought the second act was "great, very funny. But the first act was too close to home. All those parents with their damn hang-ups." And he's a westerner.

Confused opinion

So this whole thing is just to say to the cast and crew of All in Good Time, don't let what seems to be the rather confused opinion of one man get you down. There were too many others who saw it who thought it was great in every respect.

You've got a winner — if you work with the same kind of steam that you did on opening night — and that's the kind of attitude you should carry with you to the Festival.

As I said before, it was only one man's opinion; in this case, Ron Hartman. It could have been worse. It could have been Ron Hartman, Ron Hartman.



sharon's sunshine

By Sharon Brain

I spent many summers at Camp Ahshunyong on the shores of Lake Simcoe.

Night after night, I would kneel, matches in hand, before a hundred hungry campers armed with sharp sticks and marshmallows, and stare at the fire I had built.

"Fires burning, Fires burning, Draw nearer, draw nearer," they would sing as the match was struck. I would think about those sticks and wonder what they might do with them if the fire decided not to light.

So I learned how to build a fire that goes. But no one ever believes me. Nothing seems to bring out the "Here, let me do that, Little Lady" in a man as quickly as watching a woman get ready to light a fire.

They don't mind hearing her down in the basement splitting wood, or carrying logs up three flights of stairs. But the delicate art of constructing a blaze seems to require that many touch.

So they tell me.

Wood fire perfume

I don't really know why we're all so sold on fireplaces these days. I guess the hum of the oil furnace just couldn't replace the smell of the wood fire. Or maybe we just want something to watch that is more exciting than TV.

But if that were all, we could buy goldfish.

Women's liberation of bonfire lighters

I suspect the real reason has to do with a dream of a group of friendly people gathered around the hearth on a snowy night, safe from the blizzard that rages outside.

But believe me, it's only a dream. Nothing can ruin a party faster than a roaring fire.

For one thing, the moment you build your fire, the party will divide into two factions. There will be the "Get the kindling going, then feed in the logs one at a time" school of thought.

They will come into serious conflict with the "Pile on all the wood that you have in the house and let's really get a good blaze going" group.

They will argue

Even though you will ignore them and build the fire in your own sensible way, they will continue to argue.

Then the thwarted woodsmen in the crowd will take the floor and tell interminable stories about the times they were trapped out in the pouring rain (or the drifting snow), without dry wood and with only one damp match.

Somehow, the tale goes on (and on), a delightful blaze was started with some old pine cones, a driver's licence, and an extra sock. These stories are told to make you feel inadequate because you burned up the entire Saturday Star to get your room to pour yourself a drink.

Don't be alarmed by the thumps and growls you hear. It is merely several of the guests

rolling around on the floor fighting for possession of the poker.

Fire's for poking

Everyone loves to poke a fire, especially one that is not in need of being poked.

The person who won the wrestling match will settle by the fire for the rest of the evening, jab away at the defenseless logs, and shake his head at the incompetence of the fire builder.

The rest of the guests will settle around the fire and stare silently into the flickering light. Lost in their own dreams, they forget they were invited to your house for their brilliant and witty conversation.

Instead, they mutter "Nice fire," and "Smells good", and "Pass the Popcorn."

Drowsy heat

As the fire gets more successful, the room gets hotter and the guests drowsier. When at last they shake themselves awake, it is only to head off to their fireless homes.

There's always one person who wants to stay and dream by your fireside until the flames die out. If it's a really good fire, that could take till dawn.

All in all, a fireplace is not a good means of entertainment. Unless the party consists of you, your cat and your own special fireside dreamer.



yesterdays by mary dawson

Settlers brought old familiar phrases

Where there's life there's hope — it makes my mouth water — silence gives content — flat as a pancake — wet as a dishrag — to work like a dog.

These are all familiar phrases in the English language of today's Canadians.

But they came to this part of the country through the German dialect of the pioneers from the State of Pennsylvania, according to Dr. Elmore Reaman in his History of Vaughan Township, a history published posthumously.

He believed a number of these sayings had been used in Europe before the pioneers came to America and a century and a half later to Canada.

Odd beliefs

Dr. Reaman also pointed out beliefs and superstitions existed among all four groups which made up the original population of Vaughan — Pennsylvania German, English, Scottish and Irish.

The Pennsylvania Germans had a touch

of the mystic in them, believing that pow-wow doctors could 'charm' certain diseases at a certain time of day or at full moon and before 11 a.m.

Moon slaughter

For them hogs should never be killed during the new moon or the meat would shrivel away when cooked in a pan.

They also had many 'good luck' charms, such as finding a four-leaved clover or a horseshoe.

It was bad luck to open an umbrella in a

house, spill salt, or start a journey on Friday.

The English believed in ghosts.

Scots charms

Most of the Scots were pretty hard-headed and down-to-earth people who did not indulge their fancies except to be inordinately proud of Robert Burns, according to Dr. Reaman.

However, it is very probable they very carefully observed the custom of 'first-footing' on Hogmany (New Year's Day).

The first incoming person to cross the threshold had to be a

dark male, bearing a piece of firewood, an apple (or other eatable) and a dram or two of whisky.

This was to ensure the year would bring good health and good fortune to the resident family with enough fuel, food and drink to keep everyone happy. Until such a visitor arrived the family was housebound.

Horseshoe luck The Scots also

believed in the luck of a horseshoe — if the open end faced you when you found it, however, the luck had all poured out.

If the closed end faced you, then your luck would be plentiful.


At the other extreme were the Irish, who loved to conjure up **banshees** and leprechauns, Reaman wrote.

Wakes were an integral part of their lives.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EVENING SESSION
LANDFILL AND RESOURCE RECOVERY SITES
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TOWN OF VAUGHAN

The Environmental Assessment Board is conducting public hearings regarding proposed waste disposal sites for landfilling and a resource recovery centre to be located in the Town of Vaughan. During the present daytime sessions the Board is receiving evidence from the two applicants and their evidence will be followed by evidence from other interested parties.

The Environmental Assessment Board will conduct an evening session of these public hearings to enable persons who cannot attend the daily sessions to present their views. Written and oral submissions may be made to the Board at that time.

This evening session of the public hearings will be held on Tuesday, March 8, 1977, at 8:00 o'clock, local time, in the Maple Presbyterian Church Hall, North Keele Street.

Interested persons should apprise themselves of the plans of the proposed waste disposal sites which are available for examination and inspection during normal business hours in the office of the Clerk of the Regional Municipality of York, 62 Bayview Avenue, Newmarket, Ontario, in the office of the Clerk of the Town of Vaughan, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Maple, Ontario, and in the office of the Secretary of the Environmental Assessment Board.

T.M. Murphy, Secretary, Environmental Assessment Board, 5th Floor, 1 St. Clair Ave. West, Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1K7. Phone: (416) 965-2531

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