

# My childhood stage career was brief but humorous

Christmas is a time for friends and relations, community get-togethers and the annual school concert.

Christmas concerts are a bit like weddings for the families of the very young; they bring out the dewy-eyed, red-nosed sentimentalist in even the most case-hardened parent. The younger the children, the earlier their dotting relatives will arrive to stake out a ringside seat.

Alas, most children's enthusiasm for participating decreases in inverse proportion to their age, and by the time they reach Grade 6 or 7 the concert has been reduced to a battle of wills between obdurate children, resigned teachers, and parents whose well-meaning, but misguided, enthusiasm bears much responsibility for perpetuating this annual ordeal.

Looking back on my own brief career onstage, the memories that stand out are the unmitigated disasters. Like the year our elementary school's head prefect, a bossy and unpopular girl who was chosen to portray the Angel Gabriel, found herself mysteriously entangled in a curtain halfway through an excruciating rendition of 'The First Noel.'

While the stage crew denied all responsibility for this unfortunate fiasco the angelic chorus, of which I was a member, were overcome with hysterical laughter. When the curtain rose once more, we were still struggling to regain our perches on the school benches, while the Angel Gabriel glowered at us in a menacing and distinctly un-Christian manner.

It was however, recalled my mother later, one of the few occasions on which she had the opportunity to dress her only daughter in a pretty, feminine costume for a concert (it was okay to think like that in those days). As a student at an all-



**kate's corner**

**kate gilderdale**

girls school, I usually ended up in the chorus playing policemen, pirates and other roles reserved for the tone deaf.

For some reason, the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan were deemed the perfect vehicle for our questionable musical talents. This fact reverberated painfully in the ears of my father, a

diehard G & S fan who retained his enthusiasm for the music despite our murderous assaults on it.

If my theatrical career was undistinguished, my younger brother's was spectacularly unsuccessful, although it was the roles he played as much as his ineptitude which accounted for this. He was

among the tallest in his class, with enormous feet, so it was with some surprise that my mother learned he would play a nymph in one ill-fated production.

His only line, which he forgot in the excitement of his brief moment of glory, was "hide, hide." His fellow thespians hardly did better, crying "hark, the army comes," and pointing dramatically to

stage left, as the promised troops arrived on cue, but from the opposite side of the stage.

While the audience struggled to overcome its laughter, the cast rolled around in uncontrolled mirth. Ralph Richardson once said "the art of acting consists in keeping people from coughing." My brother and I missed our calling after all.

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**FORM 1**  
**PLANNING ACT, 1983**  
**NOTICE OF THE PASSING OF A ZONING BY-LAW BY THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE**

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville passed By-law 90-164 on the 27th day of November, 1990 under Section 34 of the Planning Act, 1983.

AND TAKE NOTICE that any person or agency may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board in respect of the by-law by filing with the Deputy Clerk of The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville not later than the 2ND day of JANUARY, 1991 a notice of appeal setting out the objection to the by-law and the reasons in support of the objection.

An explanation of the purpose and effect of the by-law, describing the lands to which the by-law applies, is below. As the By-law applies to all lands which are zoned Industrial Prestige (IP), Industrial Light (IL), Industrial General (IG) and Industrial Storage (IS), no key map is available. The complete by-law is available for inspection in my office during regular office hours.

DATED at the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville this 12th day of December, 1990.

Michele Skinner,  
Deputy Clerk of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville,  
19 Civic Avenue, Box 419,  
Stouffville, Ontario,  
L4A 7Z6

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**  
**BY-LAW NUMBER 90-164**

The Amendment applies to all lands which are zoned Industrial Prestige (IP), Industrial Light (IL), Industrial General (IG) and Industrial Storage (IS) in General Zoning By-law No. 87-34.

The Amendment changes the IP, IL, IG and IS Zone regulations by requiring a minimum gross floor area of 185 square metres (approximately 2000 square feet) for the main building on a lot.

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