



PHOTO/LYN JONES

The award-winning Kerry Harman will play the title role in the play Shirley Valentine.

## COMING UP: Stouffville residents part of theatre company Shirley Valentine making a visit

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It may be called Markham Little Theatre and productions are staged south of Nineteenth Avenue, but there is a lot of Whitchurch-Stouffville in the theatre company.

So it should come as no surprise that Markham Little Theatre will be reviving its award-winning production Shirley Valentine at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park later this month.

"We're hoping this is going to be something that recurs as a regular thing," said producer and Stouffville resident Kate O'Hearn.

Other Stouffville residents involved in the production include Ron and Margaret Brownsberger, Terry and Michele Brown, Peggy Wyatt and Priscilla Marr.

"We'd really love to have a foothold in Stouffville," Ms O'Hearn said.

For Markham Little Theatre, staging a production in Stouffville is not only about widening its audience, but also saving money.

"Smaller shows with a smaller intimate area was to our advantage," Ms O'Hearn said. "The cost for us to be in Stouffville is significantly lower than in Markham theatre."

Markham Little Theatre's Stouffville stint will last seven shows. The group typically only does four performances.

"For us, it's a lot of work and we only have four days and a lot of actors are turned off by that," Ms O'Hearn said.

The theatre company embarked on bringing a production to Stouffville early last year.

"While Nineteen on the Park is in Stouffville, I think it serves York Region," said Steven Foster, cultural facility and programming co-ordi-

nator for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Although the Markham group's foray into Stouffville may be seen as inviting the competition to dinner, Mr. Foster thinks otherwise.

"I'm always keenly aware of local groups and I never want to bring in anything that will compete with them," he said.

Shirley Valentine is a one-woman play by Willy Russell. Wondering how her life became so boring, Shirley Valentine, a middle-aged Liverpool housewife, finds herself talking to the wall while preparing her husband's chips and eggs.

When her best friend wins a trip for two to Greece, she packs up her bags and goes on a two-week vacation, where she begins to see the world and herself in a different light.

Kerry Harman originated the role of Shirley Valentine for Markham Little Theatre in 2000 and won a best actress award from ACT-CO. The play also won best production.

"She's just fantastic in it," Ms O'Hearn said. "(Ms Harman) said this lady has become a part of her life.

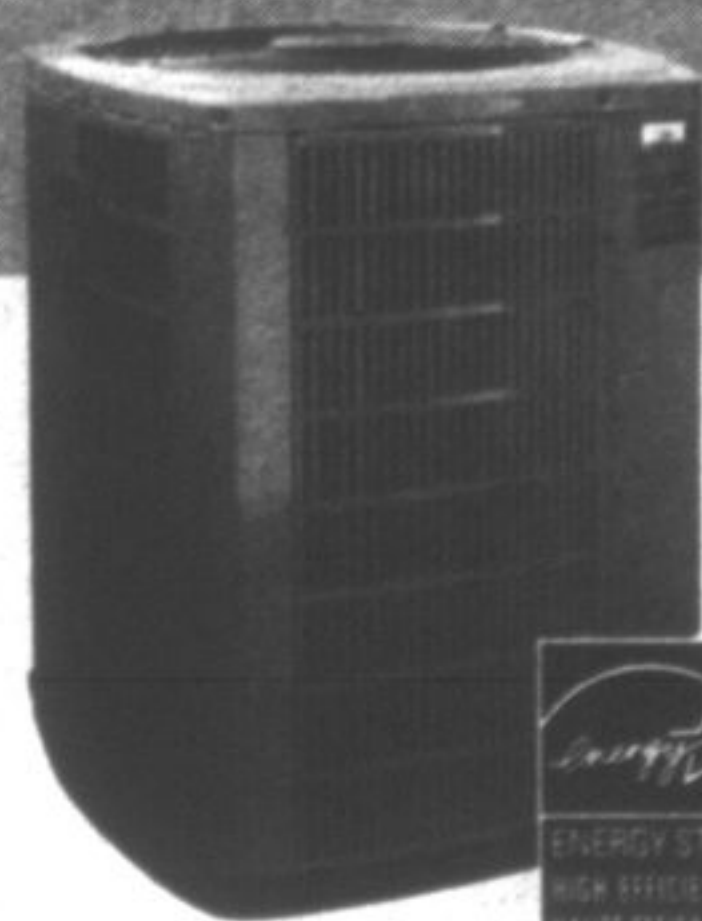
"She left at the opportunity to do it again."

While Ms Harman will be portraying a character she is familiar with, Ms O'Hearn's role as producer is brand new to her.

"I wanted to get into the world of producing, so why not?" she said. "It was just another challenge and you don't get many chances like this."

Shirley Valentine runs from May 27 to 29 and June 2 to 5 at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park. Showtime is 8 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and available at the Nineteen on the Park box office, by calling 905-640-2322 or going to [www.townofws.com/Nineteen.asp](http://www.townofws.com/Nineteen.asp)

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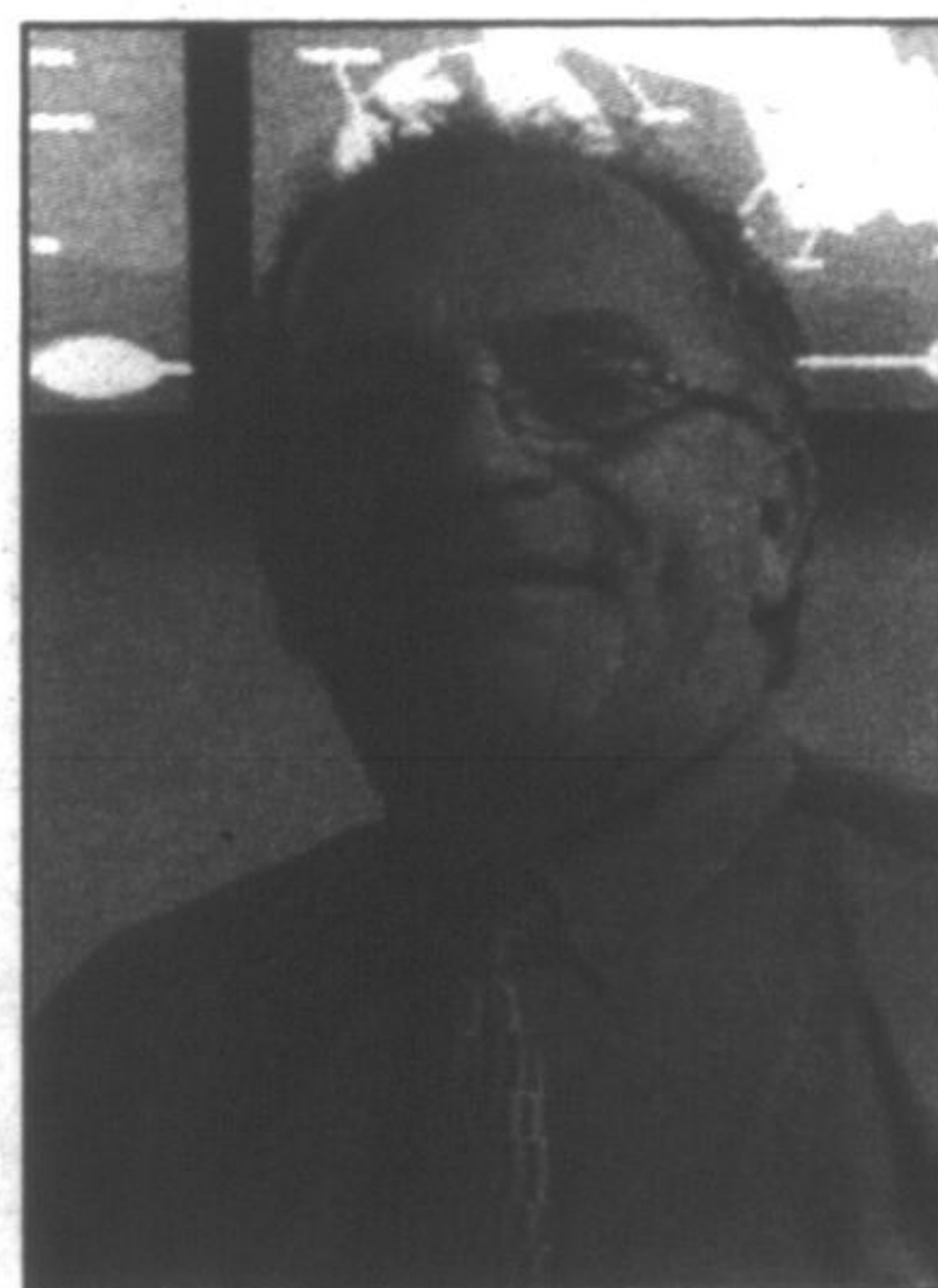
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