

GABRIOLA PLAYERS

2004-2014



Spring 2015 newsletter

Artistic director's message

Thank you, Gabriola, for another sold out production! Lovingly directed by Ginny Lowes and perfectly performed by the cast, there was a great deal of joy to be had at Jenny's house.

Don't take my word for it – read the audience review on the next page. (The only complaint I heard was from Antony Holland who, whilst thoroughly enjoying the play, bemoaned the fact that the brothels of his wartime youth bore no resemblance to *Jenny's House of Joy*.)

I don't know how many community theatre groups can boast four world premieres in one season, but I'm guessing the answer is not many.

In December we had the world premiere of [Will Shakespeare The Panto](#) by Robin Bailes. Coming up next month we will be staging the world premieres of three one-act plays – all written by Gabriolans.

The three plays offer audiences everything from the downright slapstick to the positively surreal. And as for what happened when Henry met Polly, well, you'll just have to come to the show to find out. (More information on page 4.)

Once again I'd like to thank our season sponsor **Robert's Place** and all the other island businesses who've [supported](#) our season. (Woodfire once again got into the spirit by offering a special promotional [cocktail menu](#) for *Jenny's House of Joy*, including Strumpets and Piñata Whackers.) When you patronise these businesses, please let them know that you appreciate their support of community theatre on Gabriola.

Finally, if you (or anyone you know) is starting (or has already started) a postsecondary course in any aspect of theatre studies, you might want to know about the **Don Whitton Memorial Bursary** awarded annually by Gabriola Players. (See page 5 for more details.)

Miranda Holmes



The lovely ladies of *Jenny's House of Joy*. Left to right: Nancy Jenner, Jean Wyenberg, Donna Deacon, Madeleine Ani and Aleksandra Brzozowski.

Our audience speaks

Dear Gabriola Players,

What a terrific play I saw yesterday: *Jenny's House of Joy*! From start to finish a sheer delight – funny, sassy and poignant . Costumes were spot on curvalicious, colourful and smart.

Donna Deacon as Frances was a perfect cynical, hard-bitten, been-there-done-that, but under that toughness a big, big heart.

Aleksandra Brozowski's young and beautiful Anita, the ingénue of the bawdy house, was played perfectly. She wanted a different life and you were routing for her all the way.

Madeleine Ani's Natalie was so straight and tall, perfectly coifed , beautifully coutured and in control, thrust into survivor mode and carving out her niche.

As for Jenny, no one could have possibly played that part to such perfection as Jean Wyenberg did. Businesswoman, you bet. Cared for "her " girls, you bet. Just the right amount of sarcasm and always in control. Wonderfully portrayed.

Nancy Jenner as Clara, the older woman so devastated by betrayal by her spouse. Pushed to the brink when she saw no other way. Perfectly characterized by Nancy.

Kudos to director Ginny Lowes who knew just how to bring each actor's performance to its titillating peak and take the audience right along, so we all thought we were in Baxter Springs at *Jenny's House Of Joy*.

Just a fantastic performance. Thank you all for such a fun afternoon with Gabriola Players.

The very best to all and more great shows to come!

Liz Ciocea



A big thank you once again to Gabriola Bill (Pope) for providing us with performance and behind the scenes photos. To see more of Bill's images from *Jenny's House of Joy*, click [here](#).

A very special One-Act Play Festival

Last year, as we were planning our 10th anniversary season, we decided to seek out plays written by Gabriolans for our annual One-Act Play Festival. A number of plays were submitted and assessed by volunteer readers. Three have been selected for performance next month.

EYES OF A BLUE DOG

By Mark Smith

LEMON YELLOW LACES

By Dennis Johnston

THAT'S NICE

By Anne M. Holmes

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Eyes of a Blue Dog by Mark Smith is an adaptation of a short story written in 1950 by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Why this story? According to Mark: "I found it in a collection of his stories in the mid-80s, and it has stayed with me as a favourite since then. I think I like it so much because it leaves so many questions swirling in my mind." (Permission to adapt the story was given "with my blessing" by translator Gregory Rabassa.)

Lemon Yellow Laces by Dennis Johnston is another adaptation, this one of a short story by his wife Sharon McInnes. The story is about Henry, a retired businessman, who is uncomfortable about his girlfriend Clare's work with the homeless. When he meets Polly, whose "home" is a park bench, his well-ordered life begins to unravel.

According to Dennis, "When I first read this story a few years ago, I immediately thought: 'Wow, this would make a great play.' The Gabriola Players call for plays by Gabriolans finally got me writing it. Now I'm directing it and looking forward to sharing it with our audiences."

Set in the lunchroom of a publishing house, **That's Nice** is an original play by Anne M. Holmes – the fiction-writing name of our own Miranda Holmes. (Little did she suspect when penning her novel *Rum Do* that one day, like her female protagonist, she would end up writing a play.)

"A couple of summers ago, Donna Deacon and I tried unsuccessfully to find a play we liked and could appear in together," Miranda says. "Eventually I found myself saying: 'Or I could just write one.' Once the germ of an idea came to me, the play – and its oddball characters – almost wrote itself. I'm thrilled that *That's Nice* was selected to be one of the Gabriola Playwrights plays to be premiered at this spring's one-act play festival."

Performances will be staged at the Rollo Centre on **Friday, May 22 at 7pm, Saturday, May 23 at 2pm and 7pm, and Sunday, May 24 at 2pm**. Tickets will be available soon at North Road Sports or on-line at gabriolaplayers.ca. Please be advised that the plays include **strong language** and **mature themes**.

Don Whitton Memorial Bursary



Gabriola Players is currently accepting applications for the **Don Whitton Memorial Bursary**.

Don was a member of Gabriola Players from its inception. He was involved in numerous productions before he passed away in 2010, and was also the guiding spirit behind our improvisation workshops.

In his memory, Gabriola Players offers an annual bursary of \$500 to a Gabriolan who is registering or has registered to study some aspect of **Theatre Arts** at a British Columbia university, college or recognized training centre.

The focus of study can be acting, directing, stage management or any related technical skill, such as lighting, sound or set design. Applicants must be a minimum of ten years old. There is no upper age limit. The Bursary may or may not be awarded in any given year, depending on whether or not there are applicants who meet the qualifying criteria.

Applications must be received by 1 September 2015. If there is a successful candidate, his or her name will be announced at the Gabriola Players AGM in late September and the bursary will be awarded by Sue Whitton. For information about the supporting documents required and to download an application, please click [here](#).

Thanks to the generous donations of friends and members of the Whitton family the 2015 Bursary will be doubled to \$1000.

Coming in June

With the success of last July's alfresco staged reading of [On Golden Pond](#), a new season feature was born. What else could we possibly stage outdoors in June?

[Readers Theatre](#) production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Auditions: Tuesday, June 2

**Performances: Friday and Saturday, June 26 and 27 at 6pm.
Sunday, June 28 at 2pm.**

Venue to be confirmed.

Suitable for all ages.

