

Arts

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Harvey hops into town

The Aldershot Players has turned to something a bit different from its earlier, farcical comedies with *Harvey*, its current production. The play mixes reality and fantasy with comedy and comment on social behavior as it once was.

The title character is an imaginary, 6-foot rabbit described as a pooka, a malevolent, mythical creature from Irish legend, said to haunt watery bogs and marshes.

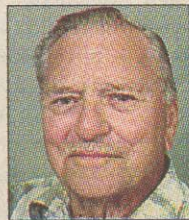
This pooka doesn't find water but does become the companion of Elwood P. Dowd, who prefers booze.

When Harvey's presence gets too much for Elwood's sister Veta, she plans to commit her brother to a sanitarium for the mentally disturbed, but things go awry and confusion reigns.

On opening night, the first act of this Aldershot Players production got off to a slow start and faltered a little but, after intermission, things came together very nicely.

Playing the man who sees a giant rabbit, Scott Broe brought the necessary restraint that captured the essence of Elwood's politeness, friendliness and innocence.

The characters of Veta and her daughter Myrtle Mae, because of their unsympathetic nature, are possibly the most



VIC HYDE

Show Notes

difficult roles in this show.

Director Rosalynde Woodcock had Bev Mattson play Veta, not just as a distraught and harassed individual but, for too much of the time, simply as a whiner. Karen Henderson as Myrtle Mae followed that lead, adding unnecessary volume and mannerisms.

Nicki Rodger was on target with her nurse portrayal as, for the most part, were Tom Rice, Doug Gowland and Sam Sidawi as sanitarium staff members. Kim Koren, Maria Kalvaitis, Susanne Tristani and Ralph Woodcock round out the cast.

In today's world, more than a half-century after playwright Mary Chase won a Pulitzer Prize for *Harvey*, parts of it may seem somewhat dated.

Happily, there's still much there to be enjoyed and you might well find it, as a member of the opening night audience was heard to comment, "a pretty good show."

Harvey continues as dinner theatre at West Plains United Church tomorrow through Saturday evenings and Oct. 27-28 (637-7629).

Castings completed

While audition results for Burlington Little Theatre's *The Sleeping Beauty* have

yet to be announced, casting has been completed by both BLT and Drury Lane Theatrical Productions for several other upcoming shows.

Drury Lane's production of *Oklahoma* that opens Nov. 3 has Darrin Suzuki, Michelle Burns, Sheila Paprica, Brian Vaughn, Phil Luizi, Sheila Alton and Greg Flis heading a cast of more than 20.

A Drury Lane Christmas pantomime, *Little Jack Horner*, has even more people involved while director Don Simpson has also put together a large cast for next year's *Olde Tyme Music Hall*.

For another new year's production, BLT's festival entry play, *Me And My Friend*, Tom Mackan has selected Dia Frid, Peter Churey, Graham Clements and Natasha Frid.

Barbershoppers

Burlington Roadshow, local chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, meets each Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. at Central Arena, 519 Drury Lane.

A special guest night is planned for Oct. 24 when male singers interested in barbershop singing are invited to attend.

• Previews of the world premiere of *On Albert Street* begin next Wednesday (Oct. 25) at Hamilton's duMaurier Centre.

This latest Theatre Aquarius show is the musical tale of three Italian immigrant families who struggle to make things work for them in the Niagara region during the mid-'30s.

This is not the first production with a local slant staged by Theatre Aquarius. As artistic director, Burlington's Max Reimer, puts it, "we are at our best with productions of our region's stories."

On Albert Street opens officially on Friday, Oct. 27 and runs until Nov. 11. (522-7529).