

# Guns blaze at roaring gulch

Snipe Vermin is planning a rifle-roarin', hog-squealin', rip-snortin' ride into Fort St John.

Under the direction of Bob Bennetts, the Fort St John Workshop Players will present a melodramatic western play, "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch, sometime in March.

Right now, Snipe and a cast of corrupt characters (and some good guys) are planning and plotting, casting and rehearsing for next month's presentation.

Workshop Player's cast of: Barre Eyre, Betty Hewlett, Allen Robbins, Jerry Cowles, Karin Marquardt, Margaret Fox, Carla Legge, Jerry Driscoll and Candis Mawer will introduce you to the transient visitors of Roaring Gulch, a peaceful little town of the west that was transformed, dramatically, into a scene of disastrous crime.

Meet the nasty, greedy Widow Black (Margaret Fox), who unlawfully holds the deed to the only hotel in town from her stepson, Barney, (Jerry Cowles).

Yet, she and the vile, Snipe Vermin, (Barre Eyre), are no match for the 'purdy lady

sheriff", Wille Lovelace, (Betty Hewlett) and the courageous Pinkerton detective, Harry Heartstone, (also Barre Eyre).

Confusion evolves when Harry, sent to capture the bank robber Snipe, and Snipe Vermin, himself, are unknowingly long-lost twin brothers!

A colorful supporting cast spices up the "good wins over the evil" theme of the play, adding humor and variety. Snipe's hayseed sidekick, Bill Filbert (Allen Robbins) twangs his way through each episode while an over-the-hill actress, Martha Muldoon (Candis Mawer) provides interludes of dramatic reaction.

Colonel Crabtree, (Jerry Driscoll) and his female company, Flora (Karin Marquardt) and Dora (Carla Legge) a group of travelling entertainers, blunder into the action at the hotel, only to be held at gun point by the wicked widow black!

Everyone is there for a "shoot-em-out" finale at the Roaring Gulch hotel. When the dust settles . . . well, find out for yourself!

The Fort St John Workshop Players will be announcing a time, date and place for the March presentation of "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch" so you all be there . . . ya' hear!



Mawer

"IF YOU DON'T shutup I'm gonna ram this here rifle-gun right down your throat!" That's what the vile, bank robbin' Snipe Bermin (Barre Eyre) tells his guitar twanging accomplice, Bill Filbert

(Allen Robbins) during the Workshop Players rehearsal of "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch." The play will be publically performed sometime in March.

KA HIGHWAY NEWS  
FEBRUARY 19, 1975

FEB 1975

Fort St. John Workshop Players present Melodrama Western comedy  
**BLAZING GUNS AT ROARING GULCH**

North Peace Senior  
Secondary Gym  
Adults \$1.50  
Children 50c  
MAR 19 1975

March 21 — 2 p.m.  
March 22 —  
2 p.m. & 8 p.m.



# The curtain rises at 'Roaring Gulch'

The Fort St John Workshop Players have set the dates for their Western melodrama, "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch."

The curtain will go up at 8 pm, Friday and Saturday, March 21 and 22, at the North Peace Secondary Gymnasium.

"Because this play would be enjoyed by children," according to director Bob Bennetts, a 2 pm Saturday matinee, March 22 has been scheduled.

The matinee, encouraging children to attend the play in the afternoon, is a new concept adopted by the Workshop Players.

The play has been slightly revised to suit a younger audience. A few mildly coarse words have been dropped.

Preluding "Blazing Guns at

Roaring Gulch", two recitals of Robert Service poems will be

heard. Cory Graf will provide the voice in "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" and "The Cremation of Sam McGee", by Bob Bennetts will be accompanied by dramatic interludes.

Admission is still \$1.50 for adults and 50 cents for children and students.

## Guns blaze with laughter

By Tim Wees

The Fort St John Workshop players certainly received audience participation with their rendition of 'Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch.' The audience was invited to boo the bad guys and cheer on the good guys to their heart's content. The effect was to create a spontaneity between audience and actors that kept everyone

captivated through the evening.

The only slip up came when the audience couldn't decide whether to cheer Snipe Vermin or not. He was such a lovable villain and was really only caught in the evil clutches of that horrid old woman, Widow Black.

The honors for the evening must, without a doubt go to Barre Eyre for his dual role of the bad guy, Snipe Vermin. and

the good guy, Harry Heartstone. Barre was the cornerstone of the group squeezing the melodrama out to its last drop of hilarious entertainment.

Next to mention must be Widow Black. A wee bit more larceny in her sole might not have hurt Margaret Fox's interpretation of Widow Black, but she certainly had the audience booing her black soul.

Sherrif Willie Lovelace, Bette Hewlett, was a sweetheart. She had just the right dosage of innocence to make the audience cheer when she finally rode off into the sunset with our hero, Harry Heartstone.

Jerry Cowles as Barney Black, the widow's stepson, lost some lines at one point though he certainly did an excellent job of coverup. Barney didn't quite seem to feel the part of the wronged step son.

Martha Muldoon and Col Crabtree and their long lost love affair was an endearing aside to the main plot. Both Candis Mawer and Jerry Driscoll carried off their roles with aplomb. Karin Marquardt and Carla Legge did as excellent a job in their roles as did Barre Eyre as Snipe. They were the twittering fluttering down south flower girls to a tee. Alan Robbins as Bill Filbert made a very good backwoods boy in the big city of Roaring Gulch.

Filbert did well to exercise such a close turn around from Snipe's sidekick to a good guy.

Alexander's Ragtime Band opened the show and set the mood for the play. Sandy Cameron and group certainly did their part to contribute to a wonderful affair. By the way Sandy is a pro on the clarinet. More of that in the future we hope.



"WHAD'YA MEAN, two dollars a day . . . in advance!" Snipe Vermin menacingly questions the humble desk clerk of the Roaring Gulch Hotel while his hayseed side kick looks dumb-

founded at the event. During a dress rehearsal, the Fort St John Workshop Players practiced for the coming show down of Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch" this Friday and Saturday.

MAR 19, 1975

SDAAY, DECEMBER 31, 1975

FSJ WORKSHOP PLAYERS came up with a hit in the melodrama "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch" last winter and succeeded with a

children's play "The Emperor's New Clothes" which was presented this fall.



# Amid boos and cheers

Those of us who were around to listen to the radio in the early fifties will no doubt remember Danny Kay singing about "The Emperor's New Clothes." Being something of a brat in those days, I put it about in my grade two class that the emperor wasn't stupid at all. He was just a deviationist with exhibitionist tendencies.

Connoisseurs of nostalgia will soon have a chance to decide for themselves. The Fort St John Workshop Players are now preparing the play for presentation. It is their children's play for 1975. Since 1971, when they put on Cinderella the Workshop Players children's play has become something of an institution around Fort St John. It bears a marked resemblance to old fashioned pantomime, a sort of Frantic Follies for the pre-teens. And it draws crowds that would make a big city cinema green with envy.

Bob Bennetts, vice-principal of Alwin Holland School and president of the group, explained their success. "We encourage a lot of audience participation. If you're the villain, you'll get booed, possibly punched, but if you're the goody, they mob you."

Either way it seems a dangerous kind of sport.

Bob explained that one of the things that made for audience participation was that they participated in the round. That is, the audience surrounds the players, who perform their act in the centre of the gymnasium or whatever. This establishes a closer rapport between audience and actor. This is further reinforced at the end



**THE WORKSHOP PLAYERS** most recent production, the melodramatic "Blazing Guns at Roaring Gulch" presented a challenge to the actors and produced varied response during three March, 1975 performances. Here, the

of the shows by the players throwing candies out to the kids.

At the last children's play, the Workshop Players had to give four performances to accommodate the thousand or

so children who wanted to see it. It is not hard to see why the group considers this to be it's best money maker, even at a mere 50c a head.

The Workshop Players go back a long way in Fort St John but were inactive for many years. They were resurrected in 1967 when a group under the presidency of Dorothy Stutter started to put on plays again. Their final production was "White Sheep of the Family," a British (Continued page three)

## A Look at Workshop Players

**THE MAGIC OF** "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp" settled down around the children as members of the Fort St John Workshop Players brought their talented touch close into their audience during their November 1974 production. The evil magician (Dave Peeke-Vout) is shown buying the magic lamp from an unwilling princess, (Jeanne Eyre) while the upturned faces of children watch in fascination.







"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK" was an interesting childrens' play, produced by the Workshop Players in November of 1973. Part of the cast pictured are Jack in the background, played by Jim Hughson, the chicken by Terry

### Amid boos and cheers . . .

(Continued from page two)

Comedy. Since then the group has gained momentum. Members come and go and the present strength is about 20.

Occupation wise they are a diverse crew. Bennetts is a teacher and so is the lighting man, Tony Atkins. They also have an accountant, a secretary, a physiotherapist store manager, oilman, a smattering of house wives and Candis Mawer, a reporter on the "News".

The children's play is just

## Amid boos and cheers . . .

(Continued from page three)

Their first festival production was Krapp's Last Tape which won the group a best actor award at Dawson Creek. They had another success in 1971 with Act II of 'The Importance of Being Earnest', a somewhat less esoteric piece of theatre than the previous production.

1973 was their best year. They put on Thornton Wilders 'The Skin Of Our Teeth', and received awards for their costumes, best actress and best supporting actress.

These festivals are organized by the British Columbia Drama Association, which for administrative convenience, divides the

province into zones.

Regrettably there are no other active groups in the Peace River zone, which renders the festival idea a bit pointless through lack of competition.

That being so, the players have not done a festival play during the last two years. They can if they wish have an adjudicator visit them, though to provide a sounding board for their efforts.

Not that one should suggest for a moment that the groups local performances have been anything but well received. Blazing Guns went over really well last April and so did 'Girl in the Freudian Slip' the year before.

By agreement with the

School Board, the Workshop has wired the auditoriums of the city's schools to take their apparatus. This has a dual purpose. It means that not only can they perform easily in any of the city schools, but that any other group which needs lighting and sound equipment can arrange to use groups.

The group has frequently lent support in this manner. They have done make-up at some of the skating shows and assisted school productions with both make-up and equipment. At the Arts Fair on New Totem Days, they have given half hour performances as part of the entertainment.

It is a very involved group in many ways and one which is active on many fronts. They are still anxious to recruit new members, though the cast for

the children's play is fixed. Persons who go to see the show in November will have the double pleasure of a good night out and supporting an organization that does a lot for the community.

Cowles, the cow a team effort of Bette Hewlett and Liz Betts, the mother by Marlea Haugen and the sad clown by Betty Fulton.

for adjudicators at a festival and through this type of they also get good feedback. He will make useful suggestions, debate aspects of their performance with them (continued on page 15)



5 YRS AGO, NOV. 24, 1975

**EMPEROR DELIGHTS!**  
The Workshop Players once again brought special delight to the hearts of many youngsters last weekend with the presentation of the Emperor's New Clothes, their sixth annual children's play at Central Elementary School. Nearly 1,000 children and adults attended the four performances held last Friday and Saturday. Zan and Zar as played by Mary Telford and Bette Hewlett were the two good fairies who came to save the royal weavers from their dreaded foe, Wicked Han, the emperor's chief courtier, played by Peter Togni. Zan and Zar's performance was superb, dominating the stage throughout the play. Han was convincingly sinister in portrayal of the villain's role. Dave Peeke-Vout as the empress was pretty, petite and persuasive in her support role and seemed to feel her way through the part easily. Likewise, the other actors were well-versed in the emotion and complexity of their parts and performed them extremely well as a result.



# Emperor delights with his changes of garb

The Workshop Players once again brought special delight to the hearts of many youngsters last weekend with the presentation of *The Emperor's New Clothes*, their sixth annual children's play at Central Elementary School.

Nearly 1,000 children and adults attended the four performances held last Friday and Saturday.

Their performance of the play was a lively and credible staging of the old Hans Christian Anderson fable in which good was seen to triumph over evil. And as one might expect there was a unique twist to the theme which gave the story its special charm. Good triumphed but at the expense of making mockery of his imperial majesty, the emperor. His failure to realize that he was the victim of a ridiculous hoax made the experience that much more hilarious. The audience was rolling with laughter in the final scene at the sight of the emperor full of pomp and ceremony dressed in nothing more than his royal underwear. A fine set of new clothes indeed!

The circumstance which had gone before, of course, explained this comic conclusion. Zan and Zar as played by Mary Telford and Bette Hewlett were the two good fairies or were they crusading clowns who came to save the royal weavers from their dreaded foe, Wicked Han, the emperor's chief courtier, played by Peter Togni. Zan and Zar's performance was superb, dominating the stage throughout the play. In the story they were the heroes for they succeeded in getting Han banished from the emperor's court through a somewhat far-fetched trick and restoring the royal weavers to the emperor's favour. Playing up to his extreme vanity they were able to persuade the emperor that the cloth they had spun from royal



**HIS MAJESTY**, (David Peeke-Vout) the emperor seems none too pleased with the likes of his lowly weavers who kneel in humble forgiveness during an early scene of the Emperor's

New Clothes playing last weekend at the Central Elementary School. However, Zan, the good fairy makes an offer it seems he can't refuse.

## Children's play has large cast

Nov 19, 1975

The Fort St John Workshop Players have their annual children's play on Friday and Saturday this weekend. It will be shown at the Central Elementary School.

They are staging 'The Emperor's New Clothes', an old favorite with children. The play tells of the efforts of two cunning weavers to rid their country of 'The Wicked Han' (played by Pete Togni)

The weavers played by Bette Hewlett and Mary Telford, try to do this by tricking the vain emperor (Dave Peekvout) into buying non-existent clothes, but to tell more of the plot would not be fair.

The play, directed by Bob Bennetts, has a large cast of 22 players.



...jewels was very splendid and real despite its invisible nature. Its beauty was beyond the human eye. Han, who was convincingly sinister in portrayal of the villain's role ironically came to grief because of his truthfulness in denouncing the fairies' clothes as a hoax. The emperor, angered by Han's disbelief banished him to the dungeon and this led subsequently to admissions of all Han's other wickednesses and the royal weavers return to his majesty's favor.

Dave Peeke-Vout as the



EMPEROR DAVE Peeke-Vout is seen ordering the weavers from his kingdom in a preview scene from the play "The Emperor's New Clothes" which will be seen at the Central School Auditorium on Friday and Saturday of this week.

That's Empress Heidi Roeters at his side and the weaver is Imelda D'Attilio. The production is the first of the season for the Fort St. John Workshop Players.

Nov 19, 1975

"SURELY IT IS quite clear that my new garments are the most splendid sight you did ever lay your eyes on." Oblivious to the fact that he is parading himself before the city in little more than his 'royal' underwear, the emperor displays the full magnificence of his invisible robes during the final scene of The Emperor's New Clothes staged last weekend in Central Elementary School.



FORT ST. JOHN WORKSHOP PLAYERS PRESENTS

# THE NEW CLOTHES

Nov 19, 1975

22 1:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.

Central Au.

Children 50¢  
Adults \$1.00  
Family \$3.00



# Special

## Workshop Players plan productions

SEPT 15, 1976

Two plays for November have materialized out of a meeting of the Workshop Players held yesterday evening. Rumpelstiltskin, a children's favorite, will appear for the kids at the end of November, while the adults can look forward to a presentation of Philadelphia, Here I Come, at the beginning of November.

Casting for the plays will be held in North Peace Senior Secondary on September 21. The group is also looking for anyone who would like to be property manager, prompter, stage manager, and set builder.

"We need new faces", says

Mary Telford a member of the Players. "Anyone who might like to have some fun at trying their skills, whether they've had any experience or not, is more than welcome to come."

At the meeting yesterday, a new executive was elected for the coming year. Bob Bennetts was re-elected Chairman, Al Robbins replaced Bette Hewlett who has been on the executive for several years as secretary. Dave Peeke-Vout became treasurer and Mel Telford became publicity chairman. Cory Graff and Jill Farmington are the reps on the Community Center Committee.

LONG-RANGE DEC 13, 1976  
THE FSJ WORKSHOP

Players will be holding their first meeting of the new year at North Peace Senior Secondary library on January 3 at 8:00 pm. There will be reading and casting for "Deadwood Dick", the melo-drama production for March. They not only need actors and actresses but also stage crew, properties people, set construction, costumes and advertising. They would like to see some new faces as well as the old regulars.

IN JANUARY  
MONDAY, JANUARY 3 will be the first meeting of 1977 for the Fort St John Workshop Players at North Peace Senior Secondary library beginning at 8 pm. They will be reading and casting "Deadwood Dick", a melodrama production for March. They not only need actors and actresses but also stage crew, properties people, set construction, costumes and advertising. They encourage new as well as old faces to come.

DEC 17, 1976

DEC 17, 1976

### COMING EVENTS

MONDAY, JAN. 3 — The first meeting of the new year of the Fort St. John Workshop Players, at NPSSS Library at 8:00 pm. We shall be reading and casting "Deadwood Dick," our melo-drama production for March. We not only need actors and actresses but also stage crew, properties people, set construction, costumes and advertising. We would like to see new faces as well as our old regulars.

THE FIRST Montney Drama Society gave a premier performance of "Aunt Lizzie Lives it Up" to a packed house. The show will run as long as there is public demand. FEB 25, 1976





AS THE PRODUCTION of Amahl and the Night Visitors enters its last week of rehearsal before the December 11 and 12 performances the four dancers Debbie Kindrat, Holly Morrison, Frank Spears and Cale Westergaard run through their sequence

for the first time with the whole cast at North Peace Senior Secondary. Evelyn Zoerb has done the choreography for the dancers. Friday night the two out of town singers, Amahl and the mother arrive to begin rehearsal.

DEC 2, 1976



KEVIN TURNER and Dianne Meakin arrived from Kamloops over the weekend to join the rehearsals of Amahl and the Night Visitor as rehearsing moves into its last week before the December 11 and 12 performances. DEC 6, 1976

SATURDAY, DEC 11 1976

AM AHL AND THE Night Visitors will be performed at 8 pm in the North Peace Senior Secondary by a cast of local singers. The opera will be performed again at 2:30 on Sunday afternoon, December 12 for children at \$1 each and in the evening at 8 pm. Tickets for adults are \$5 and \$3.50 for students and senior citizens. Amahl is a story about a crippled boy who is visited by the three kings on their way to the Christ child. During their visit Amahl is miraculously cured and joins the kings on their journey to give thanks.

SATURDAY, DEC. 11 1976

AM AHL AND THE Night Visitors will be presented at 8 pm in the North Peace Gymnasium. The opera will be performed on Sunday, December 11 at 2 pm and again at 8 pm. The cast is comprised almost completely of local singers. Amahl is a Christmas story about a crippled boy who is visited by three kings and eventually joins them on their journey to visit the Christ child.





**THE STAGE OVERFLOWS** with shepherds, shepherdesses and dancers appearing before the kings in humble respect with their gifts during one scene in the opera Amahl and the Night Visitors. Seen in the photo are (1-r) Ann White, Brenda Cranston, Helen Woolley (hidden), Audrey Lomax, Sharon Fedun, Lucy

Lundstrom, Rita Onofrechuk, Judy Buller, Ed Stobbe, Jack Temple, Donna Fines, Cress Lundstrom, Keith Dixon and June Ainsworth. Cory Graff, Caroline Woodward Brian Shrum and Mel Telford were missing from the photo. Holly Morrison is the dance in the foreground.

# AM AHL - Music with a Message

In the face of what at times seemed like insurmountable odds it is indeed a pleasant surprise to see that the Community Concert Committee's 'Amahl and the Night Visitors' is ready for performance this weekend.

When the idea to stage a local production was put forward last fall, few on the concert committee could appreciate what a tremendous amount of effort it would take.

responsibilities grew to encompass every aspect of producing the opera. Her first task was to find people to fill the cast and to assist with the directing and general management of the production.

To solve what she expected would be a difficult casting problem and to give the production a touch of professionalism Mrs Survis decided right at the beginning to hire the services of Dianne Meakin

came Amahl solving a second problem.

Amahl is being played by Kevin Turner also of Kamloops. He is currently one of Dianne's students and has played the part before in a production in Kamloops.

Mrs Survis then began the search locally for singers to fill the remaining parts. Primarily she relied on word of mouth recommendations though some people did respond to

with strong voices to be the three kings. Men, however, were hard enough to find

and those that did come forward certainly didn't have operatic voices. Mariana Survis was not only well qualified as a pianist but had considerable experience in musical productions. The musical director. There was, however, one person willing to serve as the musical director. There was, however, one person willing to serve as the musical director. There was, however, one person willing to serve as the musical director. There was, however, one person willing to serve as the musical director.

But there were three who could sing in tune and were

(Continued on page 3)

her radio and newspaper appeals for volunteers to come and try out. She was particularly anxious to find three men respond to...

Dianne Meakin...

of Kamloops to play the part of Amahl's mother. Dianne is well known in BC as a performer and voice teacher. With Dianne

For one thing on opera had never been done before. Nobody really knew whether there were 25 men and women in the community who would be willing to sing in one. There was, however, one person willing to serve as the musical director. Mariana Survis was not only well qualified as a pianist but had considerable experience in musical productions. Almost immediately her





FURIOUS WITH AMAHL'S habit for telling lies his mother (Dianne Meakin) declares she will go to the door herself to see whose knocking. And to her surprise there are indeed three kings. Kevin Turner of Kamloops plays the part of Amahl.



"HOW DO I know?" bellows deaf King Kaspar as played by Richard de Candole when asked by Amahl whether his parrot talks. Kaspar is not only a bit deaf but also a bit wacky as will quickly be seen during Amahl and the Night Visitor to be performed this weekend at the North Peace Gym.



# Music with. . . .

(Continued from page two)

willing. In fact, all three seemed almost naturally suited for the parts.

John Bergh had just the right regal bearing for the part of Melchior. The deaf and slightly absent-minded manner of Kaspar was a role that Richard de Candole could pick-up readily. His light tenor voice and jovial nature were perfect.

For Geoffrey Ainsworth as Balthazar it was a matter of fitting somewhere in between the two. On at least two occasions he speaks somewhat paternally to Kaspar and thus is closer to Melchior reflecting his maturity and kingliness.

Workshop player actor Peter Togni was recommended to play the part of the Page. His youthful appearance would balance that of his three masters well.

The task of finding singers to form a chorus of 20 or more shepherds and shepherdesses proved to be the most difficult in the end.

There were lots of women but men could not be found. By mid-October when the rehearsal schedule began Mrs Survis had located just enough. Twelve women were coming out to practice and on a good night there were six or seven men.

Throughout October, Mrs Survis concentrated on teaching the cast the music. Because of its oriental character the parts were not easy to learn. Clashing harmonies of fourths and fifths put many of the cast off-key. They were used to the simple harmonies of church music and pop songs.

Learning the notes however wasn't the only problem. Most of the cast simply didn't know how to sing. The kings in particular were straining their voices to the limit to reach their

notes. She began to wonder how long their voices would last.

Almost in desperation she phoned voice teacher Marilyn Wuis in Victoria to ask for some advice. Marilyn agreed to come up for a weekend to conduct public workshops and to give individual coaching to those in need.

As short as her visit was by the end everyone had learnt some simple breathing and voice

projection techniques. The difference in sound was like

night and day. Mariana now  
(Continued on page 4)



WITH ALL THE DIGNITY of eastern royalty the three kings make their grand entrance into the home of the poor widow and her crippled son Amahl. Page Peter

Togni scurries around holding their trains as they cross the rough wooden floor.



# Music with. . .

(Continued from page 3)

had a choir that was beginning to sound professional. Her original dream was becoming a distinct possibility.

Rehearsals in November became less frequent. It was during this month that Sue Popesku agreed to assist with stage direction. The actors now began working their stage roles.

Few had ever acted before. Initially there was great reluctance to get right into the parts for fear of making a fool of themselves. But gradually it came.

Janet Moody came up with some brilliant designs for the costumes of the three kings. And she helped the shepherds and shepherdesses find materials for their costumes.

What she didn't scrounge from the Workshop Players wardrobe she bought from the Thrift shop or found in people's dress-up boxes. And then she put it all together.

The Workshop Players provided much more than a few odds and ends for costumes. Despite heavy demands from their own productions this month Mel Telford, Bob Bennetts and Tony Atkins still had the time to provide the lighting and built the sets. Art teacher Donna Gardiner gathered together several helpers to complete the decorating of the backdrop.

By the end of November the four dancers which Evelyn Zoerb had been training joined rehearsal and began fitting their dance routine into the production.

But because the two principals were still not part of the rehearsals the production never achieved much continuity or polish. For those who had spent nearly two months rehearsing there was kind of an unspoken fear that perhaps the principals would need that long and that the show would never be ready for performance by December 11.

one week.

The instrumental accompaniment of piano, violin, flute and timpani brought the production to its highest point. Gian Carlo Menottis' musical creation began to shine through in all its brilliance. The instrumental solos are enough to turn the most insensitive to tears.

At times the problems did seem insurmountable but now after three months of preparation Amahl and the Night Visitors is ready for performance.

Few would argue that the effort was all in vain particularly since the show promises to be first rate.

But by the end of third rehearsal last weekend with Amahl and the mother everyone realized that their fears were unwarranted. What had taken most of the cast two months could indeed be learnt by them in



she tries to steal it but is caught by the Page. She soon repents asking for their forgiveness.

AS THE THREE KINGS (l-r) Richard deCandole, John Bergh and Geoff Ainsworth sleep Amahl's mother looks with covetous eyes at their gold and is so tempted





QUEEN ABRUPTA, as played by Bette Hewlett, foreground right, is not so sure she believes that the miller's beautiful daughter Jenny (Margie Wagenaar) foreground left can spin gold from straw as her father claims and is worthy of becoming wife of her son Prince Karl (Warren Chapman) extreme left. Much

enraged Princess Snively (Margaret Fox) protests that she has been passed over by the Prince because of false promises. Miller Morgan (Everett Beauline) right listens on. The scene is from the Workshop Player's production Rumpelstiltskin to be performed this weekend at Central Elementary.

# Rumpelstiltskin ready to roll

Once again the Workshop Players will be presenting

princes and commoners. the boastings of her father, But what makes this royal the miller (Everett

troubled. In the tradition of a good

fairy tale all ends well and well to dramatic

Rumpelstiltskin is one of those stories that lend itself well to dramatic

FROM TERRY COWLES

And Rumpelstiltskin, foiled by their cleverness, departs in a rage.



something they seem to do best and enjoy most. This weekend the delightful children's play Rumpelstiltskin will be performed by a cast of seven in the gym at Central School.

Director Mary Telford, a long time member of the theatre group explains that children's plays are popular with club members because the roles are fun and they can throw themselves into their parts with a feeling of confidence and enthusiasm. Serious plays require much more skill and acting ability in order to make the performance credible and at the same time entertaining.

Rumpelstiltskin is a fairy tale that took place somewhere in the world of fantasy.

And in this world there are queens, princesses,

kingdom unusual is the presence of a funny little gnome with a magical though sinister nature, Rumpelstiltskin (Terry Cowles).

He can be the bearer of great joy or great sorrow. He can cause happiness or grief.

For Jenny (Margie Wagenaar) who finds herself at his mercy in order to save her life and her newly found royal status Rumpelstiltskin is a mixed blessing.

Because of her beauty and

Beaulne) she is chosen by Prince Karl (Warren Chapman) to be his wife in preference to Princess Snively (Margaret Fox).

But to satisfy Queen Abrupta (Bette Hewlett) Jenny would have to spin gold from fields of straw as Miller Morgan had boasted. Then she would consent to the union.

When Rumpelstiltskin appears to rescue Jenny from her misery and spins the gold she is overjoyed. But when she hears his demands in return she is

## Rumpelstiltskin . . .

(Continued from page 4)

Tony Atkins also deserves special mention for his contribution of lighting. Mel Telford, Dave Peeke-Vout, Gavin Holmes, Pat Peeke-Vout and Dave Ross have been the back-stage workers building the sets, redecorating the flats (back-drop), finding the props and designing costumes.

For the first time ever the Workshop Players will be taking their play to Fort Nelson for two performances all courtesy of the Fort Nelson Arts Council and several village businessmen. They will be travelling there the

weekend following the Fort St John performances.

The schedule of performances in Fort St John is as follows: There will be one show Friday, November 26 at 7:30 pm. On Saturday, November 27, there will be performances at 2 pm, 3:30 pm and at 7:30 pm.

For the first time ever the Workshop Players will be taking their play to Fort Nelson for two performances all courtesy of the Fort Nelson Arts Council and several village businessmen. They will be travelling there the

RUMPELSTILTSKIN, a children's play will be performed by the Workshop Players Friday, November 26 at 7:30 and three times on Saturday, November 27 at 2, 3:30 and 7:30 pm in the Central School Gymnasium. Admission charge will be 75 cents for children, one dollar for adults and three dollars for a family.

NOV 25, 1976

Nov. 26 7:30 p.m.  
Nov. 27 2:00 p.m.  
3:30 p.m.  
7:30 p.m.

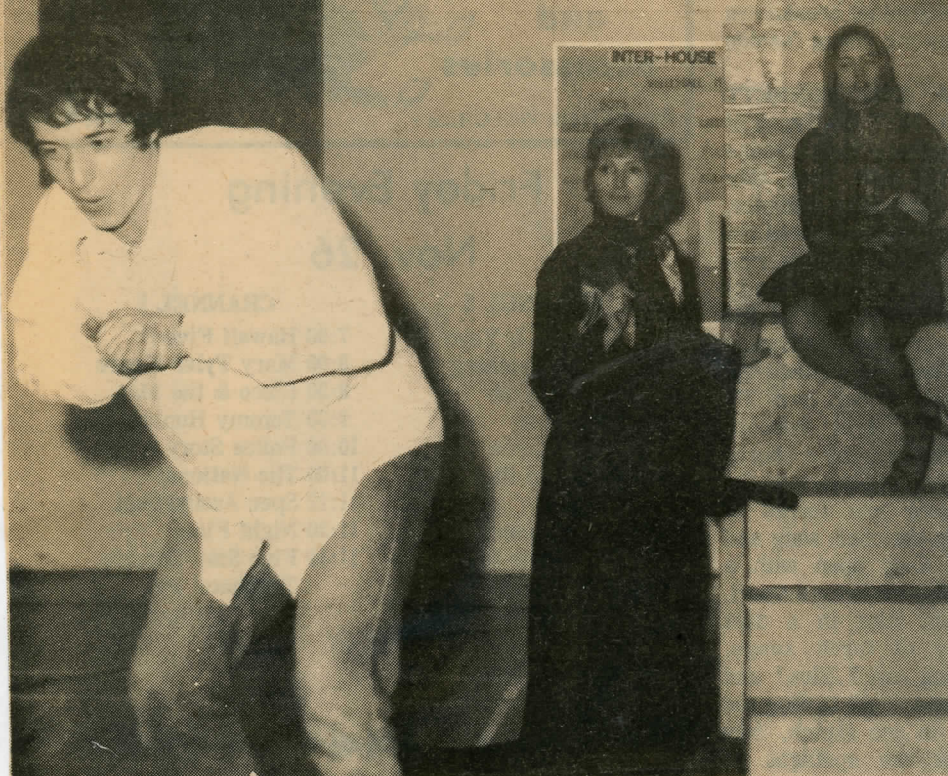
John Workshop Players Children's Play

# E RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Central Elementary Gym

Nov 24, 1976

75¢ Child  
\$1 Adult  
\$3 Family



HAH, HAH, HAAAAH cries Rumpelstiltskins (Terry Cowles) confident that they will not be able to guess his name and he will be able to take his prize. Dismayed by his threats Queen Abrupta, left, (Bette Hewlett) and Jenny (Margie Wagenaar) desparately try to solve the riddle of his name.



## Rumpelstiltskin

(Continued from page 3)

difficult. The cast of Rumpelstiltskin has done a good job of interpretation. They are all very credible and the kids are sure to be entertained.

Some of the cast have many years experience to draw from when learning their parts, for others this is their first try.

Terry Cowles, who plays Rumpelstiltskin, has been with the Workshop Players five years. Residents may remember him for his role as Aladdin in Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp.

Last year he played the part of the farmer in Oklahoma. He graduated from North Peace Senior Secondary last spring and is currently working in town.

Margie Wagenaar, Jenny, is new to the community and the theatre group this fall. She brings with her, however, many years of theatre and dance experience.

She has been involved in dance productions since the age of six and in recent years performed a variety of roles with Vancouver's Theatre in The Park, Theatre Richmond and Metro Theatre. Well-known musicals Carnival and Cabaret are but two shows she has been in.

Having taken dance lessons for many years Margie is also very familiar with all facets of choreography. She is currently a student teacher at Central Elementary.

Warren Chapman is Prince Karl in the play. For Warren this is a first time experience in a dramatic production. His voice and physical appearance make him a natural choice for the part of Karl. He has adapted well to this new challenge. He is employed as an articled lawyer with Walsh and Company and has been there for five months.

Jim O'Dea plays the part of Grump, the palace cook, footman, chamberlain and parlor maid. Jim's theatre experience goes back to his school days in his native Ireland.

His most memorable part

## Rumpelstiltskin . . .

(Continued from page two)

presentation. The characters have a certain hard-to-please, somewhat ill-natured queen is like. So predictability about them do they know what a fair maiden in distress should be which makes it possible for each actor to create his-her own stage personality. portrayed as. Interpreting the different parts is not

Everybody knows what a (Continued on page 4)



DESPERATE TO please Queen Abrupta and win the heart of Prince Karl Jenny (Margie Wagenaar) pleads

with Rumpelstiltskin to spin gold until there's no more straw.

have followed theatre in Fort St John since the Workshop Players came into being.

In Rumpelstiltskin Bette plays the part of Queen Abrupta, a name very much suited to her temperament. In the eight years she has been with the theatre group she has never missed a year when she wasn't involved in a play. And there were few years during her childhood in the Okanagan when she wasn't acting in one production or another.

She is now the librarian at North Peace Senior Secondary.

Everett Beaulne plays the part of Miller Morgan, the boastful father who gets his beautiful Jenny into all her difficulties.

workshops and studied stage plays as part of his course work.

Everett has been working for the last two years at Field's as the store manager.

The seventh member of the cast is Margaret Fox who plays the unenviable part of Princess Snively, the unattractive, over-weight princess who is passed over by Prince Karl in favor of Jenny, a mere commoner.

Margaret has been active with Workshop Players for several years either as an actress or support worker. She has often been involved in the set and costume design work.

Since the age of eight Margaret has performed in a variety of production and

her native Ontario. She is a housewife and works at the Keeginaw Nursery School.

The driving force behind Workshop's current production is Mary Telford. As Director she not only directs the play, managing all the rehearsals but she also co-ordinates all the other groups which are working behind the scenes prior to the performance.

She has been with Workshop Players for four years both as an actor and a director. While a teacher at Fort Nelson, prior to coming to Fort St John she was part of an impromptu theatre group which put on the play curse you Jack Dalton.

Players she has directed the play Girl in the Freudian

assisted by Bob Bennetts, a name long associated with the Workshop Players as one of the founding members.

(continued on page five)





MARY TELFORD, centre, interrupts rehearsal to give direction to the cast as they work out the actions for the children's play Rumpelstiltskin to be performed this

weekend, Friday and Saturday, Nov 26 and 27 at Central School.



WITH CRIES OF DEVELISH delight Rumpelstiltskin (left) takes pleasure in poor Jenny's misery as she tries to turn straw into gold. With his magic he agrees to help her but at a cost. Over 1,200 children were entertained by this and many other

scenes from the Workshop Players' production of Rumpelstiltskin performed at Central School Friday and Saturday.

Slip and was an actress in the Emperor's New Clothes. As director she has been

Everett has been involved with the Workshop Players Philadelphia Here I Come. Jim has been a resident of Fort St John just over a year and teaches grade 7 at Immaculata. Bette Hewlett is one name that will be quickly recognized by those who



NOV 29, 1976

# Children's play a tearful success

Though the wicked Rumpelstiltskin brought tears of fright to more than one pre-schooler the annual children's play performed on Friday and Saturday was unquestionably a smash success.

Over thirteen hundred youngsters and their parents attended the four performances of the Workshop Players' production of Rumpelstiltskin held at Central School.

Next weekend the theatre group is off to Fort Nelson by special invitation from the Arts Council in that community to do two performances of both Rumpelstiltskin and a second play, the Reluctant Dragon.

Those doing the back-stage work for Rumpelstiltskin are given their moment under the spot-lights when they perform an equally fantastic story about a reluctant dragon.

Rumpelstiltskin caught the imagination of the audience right from the opening line.

Some of the tiny ones burst into tears at the sight of the funny little gnome and his sinister laugh.

But when the story turned to the royal palace and all its splendour their tears quickly disappeared. The far-away world of Queen Abrupta, Prince Karl and the pretty miller's daughter Jenny was all too beautiful.

Though the kids initially were not eager to step into this world when the queen's hunch-back servant Grump beckoned them to help him clean house this soon changed. Especially when they discovered that tea-cakes was the reward for their services.

Then you could hardly hold those at the front, back.

They jeered Rumpelstiltskin each time he appeared to make more demands of poor Jenny. And they cheered for the others each time they outwitted the wicked little gnome.

And like all good fairy tales in the end Jenny was not only able to turn acres of straw into gold for the queen but she also solved the riddle of the magic little man's name with the help of Prince Karl.

The kids in the audience almost spoiled the punch line in their excitement to help Jenny and the Prince.

Furious that he had been cheated of the chance to have their first born child as his servant Rumpelstiltskin disappeared never to be seen again.

(Continued on page ten)

1976 - OVER 1300 children and parents attended the Workshop Players production of Rumpelstiltskin at Central School over two days.

## Workshop. . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

The Workshop Players deserve tremendous thanks for the little bit of joy and delight they brought to those children who saw the performances.

NOV 29, 1976