

# Getting down to acting basics with big city expert

MAY 20, 1977

The Fort St John Workshop Players have been quite busy the last four weeks attending workshops with Guy Robinson from Vancouver. Mr Robinson was sponsored by the British Columbia Drama Association after the Dionysus Theatre Company of Dawson Creek and the Fort St John requested a resource person to direct workshops on directing and acting.

Mr Robinson was billeted in Dawson Creek and is spending most of his time there directing Bertolt Brecht's play "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" with the members of the Dionysus Theatre Company.

On the last three Saturdays he has travelled up here to hold acting workshops with the local group and other interested members of the community. These sessions have run from ten in the morning until 3:30 in the afternoon and have covered a wide range of skills and training an actor needs,

including breath control, voice control to give volume and tone to the words spoken and body control so that an actor can do the physical actions required of him whilst portraying any character.

On Monday evenings Mr Robinson held sessions on directing and went through the directing of a play, from the initial movements of the actors on stage, to the final, detailed work of deciding exactly how a line will be spoken or an actor move.

He also spoke about the need for the director to be able to connect and supervise the various areas of a production such as the lighting, costuming, stage setting, properties etc. He gave the group assignments of initial blocking to work out as homework and then at the next session he asked for the scene to be acted and directed using the prepared ideas.

It was very interesting because there were many different points of view on

interpreting moods and speeches. It was very quickly realized that to benefit from both his Saturday and Monday sessions a strong sense of voluntary discipline had to be developed, and by the end of his visits the group felt closer knit, as well as having learned a good amount about the nitty-gritty of acting and directing. On the Mondays that Mr Robinson was up in Fort St John he also visited several of the schools and worked both with students and teachers, hopefully stimulating them with ideas on how to initiate and encourage work with drama in their classes.

Mr Robinson will be in Dawson Creek for the next two weeks. His visit there ends with the production on May 26th, 27th and 28th of the "Caucasian Chalk Circle" at Unchagah Hall. Anyone wishing to buy tickets locally

# Good value from Players

MAY 24, 1977

A delighted crowd went home from the Village Square after savouring the latest idea from the Workshop Players, Dinner Theatre. The prime rib had been excellent and three one act plays had been presented and well received.

Peter Jackson, a spokesman for the group, said that this experiment might well mark the start of a series of such entertainments, but that these particular three plays would only be presented that evening and this evening.

Tickets for both performances were sold out prior to the weekend.

As usual comedy works best, and the most successful of the three in terms of audience reaction was definitely, the last offering, 'A cup of tea', in which Bob Bennetts played an outraged husband who gets hold of sonnets written to his wife by philandering poet Mike Bush. The manner in which Bush's stage wife (Mary Telford) handles the situation had an undercurrent of mirth rippling through the building for the play's twenty minutes duration.

philosophy of the play seemed phoney and the ending was unfortunately, predictable. Once again, though, audience reaction was good.

It is much to be hoped that the Workshop Players persist in their intention to hold more of these events and that they will be able to keep them going for more than two days, as the excellent quality of their work (and the very prompt service of the Village Square) will be a source of satisfaction to many more people than those who were able to buy tickets for these two performances.

A rather harder play to bring off was the 'Make Up Artist', in which Paula Ryan plays a makeup girl who ages a brash young actor (Randy Poulis) into an aged and philosophical old gentleman. The two handled the difficult task of convincing the audience that this was really happening in a very competent manner. We especially liked the imitation of geriatric manoeuvring carried out by Poulis and the very plausible mellowing of the artist to her subject as he became less abrasive.

The first play offered, 'The Invisible Worm', struck us as a bit pseud. The acting and directing was fine, but the

# Players meet tonight

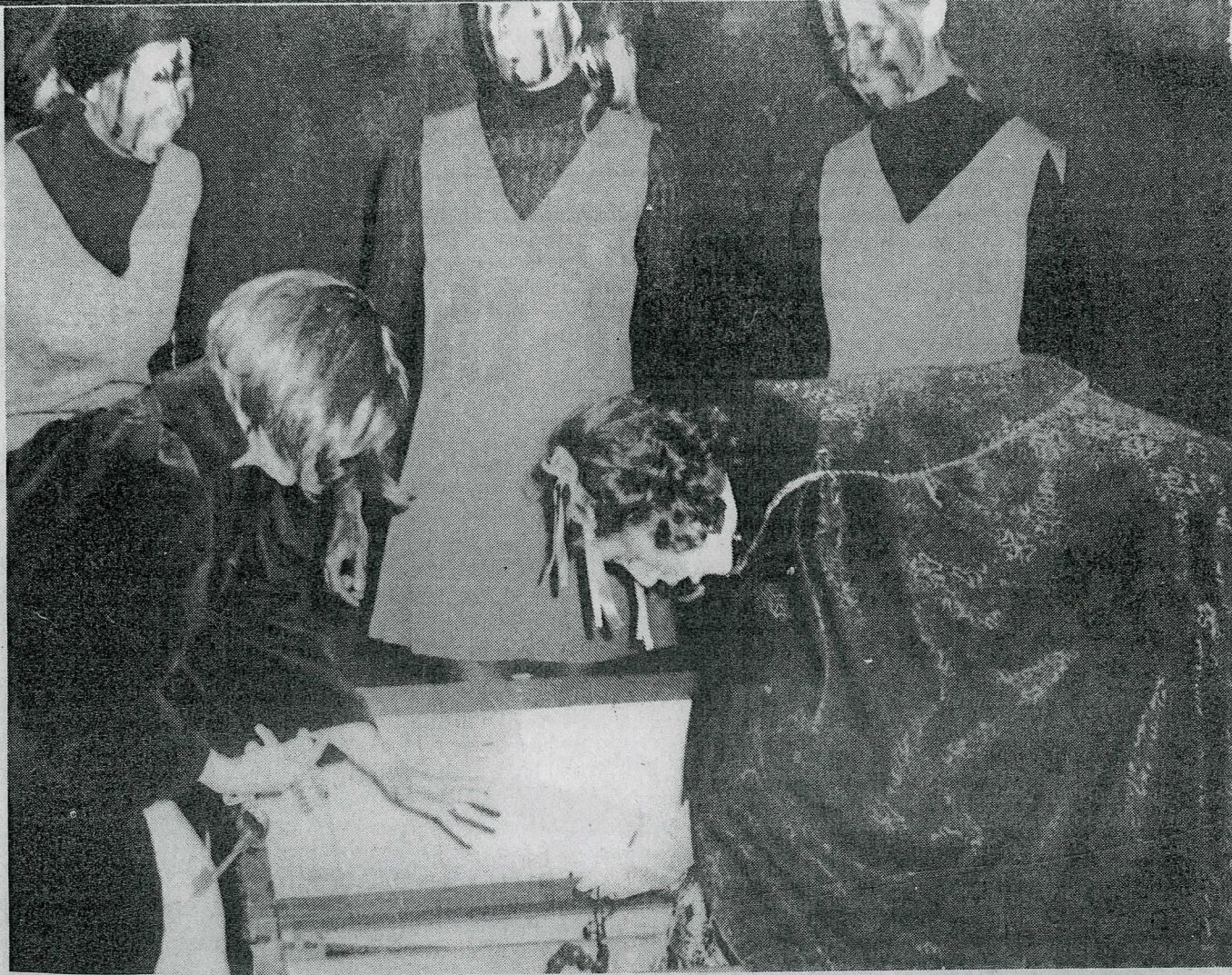
NOV 7, 1977

The Workshop Players meet to discuss their upcoming childrens' play, Beauty and the Beast, and their road trip to Fort Nelson tonight at 8 pm at the North Peace Secondary School library.

The play is scheduled for November 25 and 26 at Central Elementary School gym. The trip will be made December 2, 3 and 4 to put on the same play for their Concert Series '77.

After the business meeting, Brian Paisley is going to give the second in his series of workshops on acting and directing. No previous acting experience is necessary for people to participate and enjoy the workshops.

It is hoped that after Christmas, the Workshop Players will put on an evening of three one-act plays, so we are looking for new members and can almost guarantee you a part if you are interested.



THE WORKSHOP PLAYERS are to perform their children's Christmas Play in Fort Nelson as well as Fort St John. Last year they did so and found the production was very well received. It

will be staged this Friday and Saturday at Central Elementary School.

## Workshop players to take Beastly play to Fort Nelson

The Workshop Players have chosen an adaptation by Chris

Newton of the traditional fairy tale, Beauty and the Beast, as their Christmas play for this year.

The two main areas of action; the cottage representing reality and the

castle, representing fantasy, are separated by a forest inhabited by spirit-like trees and voices. The forest accentuates and develops the close relationship that exists between real-life and make believe. The play offers great scope for sound and visual effects and the story is an all-time proven imagination holder. Performances are at Central Gym - Friday November 25 at 7:30, Saturday November 26 at 2, 4 and 7:30. Children \$1.00, Adults \$2 and Senior Citizens Free.

This year, at last, the Workshop Players will be travelling to Fort Nelson, to

the whole thing is a lot of fun.

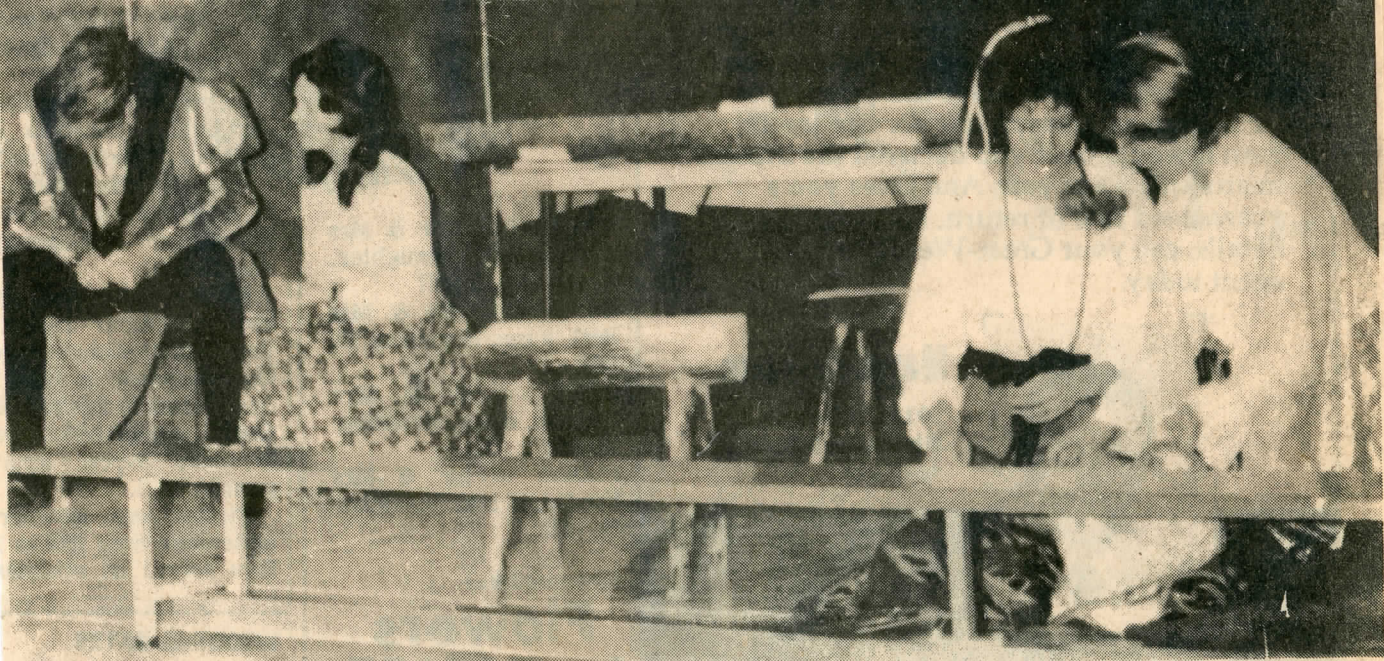
To expand the Fort Nelson show, the stage crew is going to put on a mime interpretation of "The Night Before Christmas," directed by Brian Paisley, who's with Northern Lights here in town.

The next club meeting of Workshop Players will be in the NPSSS Library, Monday December 5. At this meeting the Players will discuss a proposed evening of one act plays for some time in March to be performed in Stagg North. Anyone interested in taking part, either as an actor, actress, director, property person, stage crew or lighting

put the show on there, as part of their Concert Series 1977, on December 2. "It entails a lot of work," says director, Mary Telford, "from getting up at 5 am to set up the scenery and lights for a 3 pm performance; to taking everything down again and packing up the bus for the seven hour return trip. But we always get a lot of help from stage crew, and organisers in Fort Nelson and

whether with experience not, is urged to attend because the amount of interest displayed at this meeting will help decide our plans for the January meeting on the 9 and whether an evening of one act plays is a feasible proposition at this time. So, you are 16 and over and want to try your hand at something like this for a few weeks, come

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A POIGNANT MOMENT in 'Beauty and the Beast', this year's Workshop Players children's play, is the one where father tells his lovely daughter Beauty that she must go to the beast in the forest. Her sisters, meanwhile are obsessed with the baubles

that their father has brought them from a business trip and don't care about Beauty's fate at all. The play will be performed at Central Elementary School on Friday at 7.30pm, Saturday at 2.00pm, 4.30pm and 7.30pm.

NOV 21, 1977

SECTION ONE, P  
NOVEMBER 10, 1978

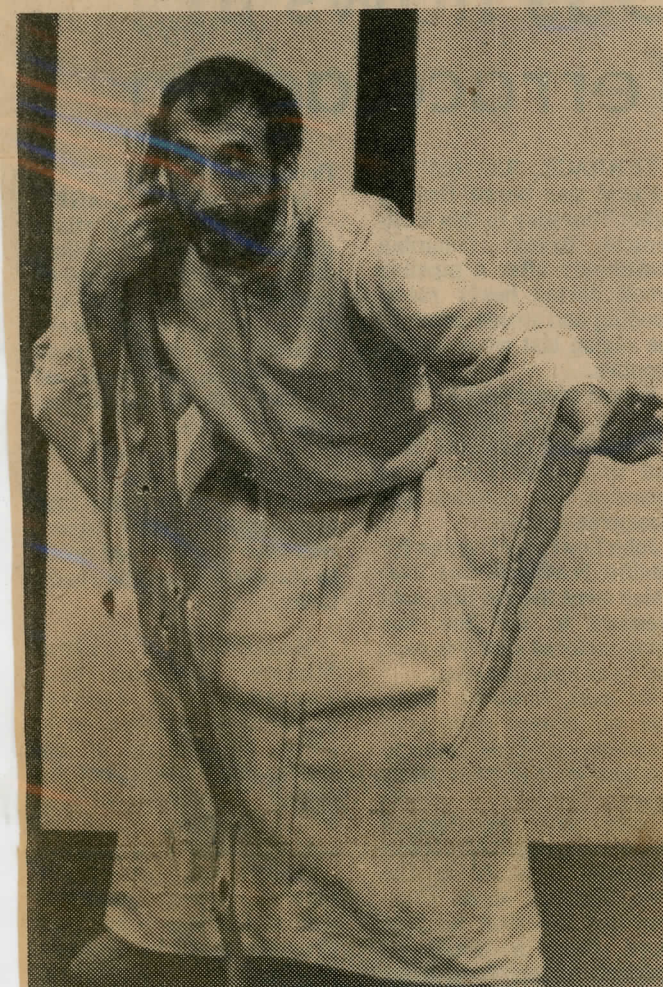
1978  
Who would MARRY a  
Princess-with a  
Tree Growing  
Out of Her  
Head?

CHILDREN ..... 75¢  
ADULTS ..... \$1.00



THIS WASN'T IN the script apparently, which is a pity. Horseplay aside, the Workshop Player's rehearsal last night in-

icates that everything is going well as the group puts the final touches to their play.



## Problem in magic for the Workshop Players

What would any lovely Princess do if she awoke on the morning of her 21st birthday to find herself under an evil spell - a tree is growing from the top of her head? Cry? Call the King? What would the King do? He'd call in his wisest advisors. But, can the advisors break the spell and get rid of the tree before every Prince in the kingdom arrives to ask for the Princess' hand in marriage?

Gimlet, the wizard from the Gold mountain, is summoned to help. The Princess and Gimlet's attempts to break this wicked curse of the tree are told in the Workshop Players annual Childrens Play, "Who would want to marry a Princess with a tree growing out of

her head?" NOV 14, 1978  
Appearing in this entertaining production are; Narrator- Mary Telford, King- Paul Ekering, Princess- Holly Leffingwell, First courtier- Debbie Rouble, Second courtier- Shirley Huffman, Chancellor- Bruce Chisholm, Prime Minister- Terry Cowles, Gimlet- Bob Bennetts, Wartsich- Cathi Laliberte, East wind- Linelle Soxman, West wind- Lauren Gourley, North wind- Corry Graff, South wind- Margie Wagenaar.

Don't miss the performances November 24 and 25 at Central Elementary School. Show times are 7.30 p.m. Friday, 1.00, 3.30 and 7.30 p.m. Saturday. Admission is 75 cents for children and \$1.00 for adults.

F.S.J. WORKSHOP PLAYERS

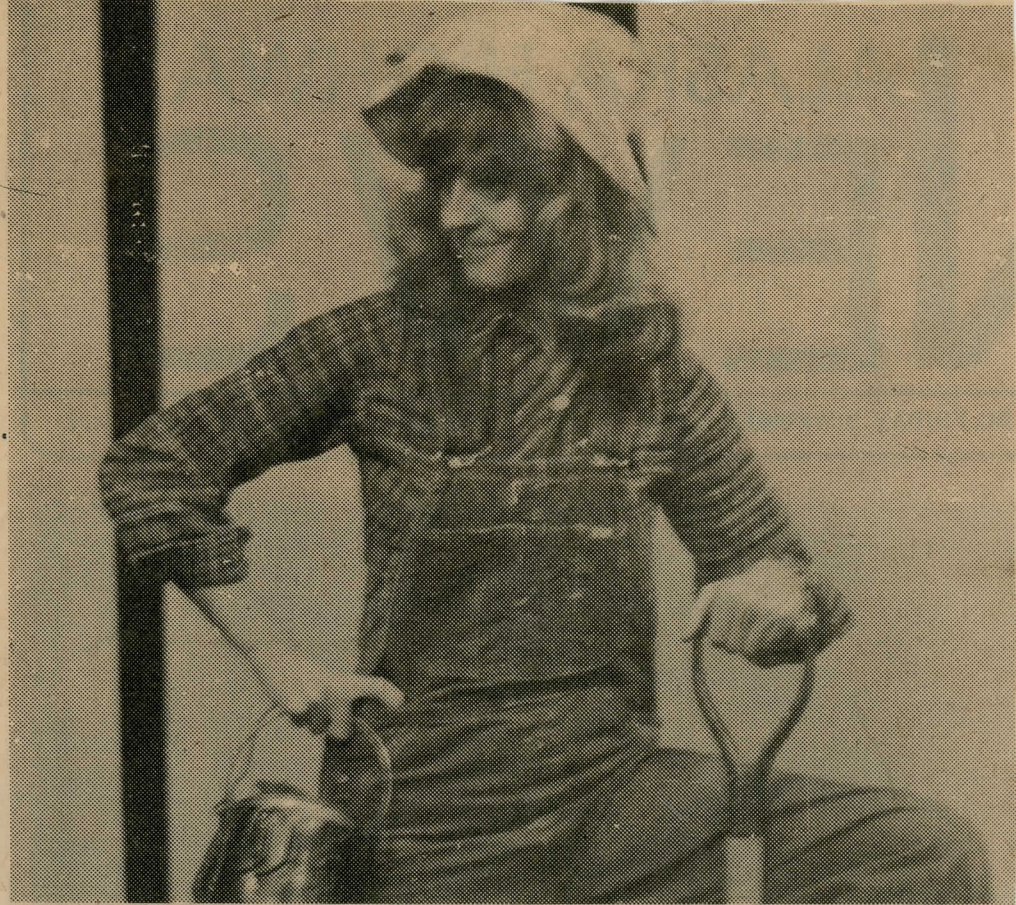
CENTRAL  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL

# WHO WOULD MARRY A PRINCESS

(with a tree growing out of her head?)

Nov. 24 — 7:30 p.m.

Nov 25



ANOTHER ONE OF the Workshop Players in a pose from the play, "Would you marry a Princess (with a tree growing out of her

head). The troupe is showing a lot of polish and will be giving a good performance.

## Steamin' demon from the Players

The Workshop Players will be holding their next meeting on Dec. 4 at 8 pm in the North Peace Senior Secondary School library.

At this meeting the group shall plan the March production of "Baron Demonicus," written and directed by Ivan Blake of

Fort St John.

Dates will also be set up for auditions and people interested in acting parts or in helping in any way should attend.

Contact numbers for the Workshop Players are Mel Telford - 785-2659 and Margaret Fox - 785-6422.

## New children's play coming on

Fort St John Workshop Players gathered last night at the Northern Lights College Theatre to rehearse their upcoming play "Who would marry a Princess (with a tree growing out of her head).

This will be for their annual childrens play to be held at the Central

Elementary School on Nov, 24 and 25.

The play is based on a tale about a Princess who has been cursed with a tree growing from the top of her head. The plot concerns the trials and tribulations involved in trying to remove this curse.

## New season for Workshop Players

The Workshop Players will be holding their first meeting of the new season on Monday, September 11 at 7:30 pm in the NPSSS library. New officers will be voted in for the coming year and plays for the winter months will be discussed. The children's play scheduled for performance dates at the end of November in town, and the beginning of December in

Fort Nelson, will be read, and a casting date arranged.

The Workshop Players is an amateur dramatic group and new members are always welcome. No previous experience is necessary and if you are thinking of an activity or hobby for the winter months, our first meeting on the 11th will give you a good idea of the kinds of things we shall be doing.

STRAIGHTEN UP YOUR act, fella. Bob Bennetts goes into the Workshop Player's annual Childrens Play to be held at the Central Elementary School in a few days. Rehearsals are going well and the play should delight children of all ages.

# Workshop Players will meet

SEPT 7, 1979

The first meeting of the season gets under way for the Workshop Players Monday night, September 10 at the North Peace Senior secondary school library at 8 pm.

On the agenda is the election of new officers, choosing a children's play and discussing an evening of adult entertainment.

The group is hoping to hold a second dinner theatre some time before Christmas. Putting on several plays close together takes a lot of people, both as actors and behind the scene helpers, so if you are even just a little bit interested, come to the meeting Monday night and find out more about Workshop Players. They are a community club and everyone is welcome, whether they have theatre experience or not.

Their main purposes are to put on plays, learn a bit about theatre and have fun while doing it. The annual subscription fees are \$5 and help towards the running of the club and productions. If anyone who is thinking of attending has any scripts they would be willing to bring along to the meeting, new material is always interesting to see, says the group.

# Looking for actors

SEPT 13, 1979

The Workshop Players will hold auditions 7 pm Monday at Northern Lights College Campus South, 10623 100th Avenue, for their fall season program.

Parts in a children's play and a dinner theatre will be auditioned.

The children's play, Cinderella, is tentatively planned for Nov 30. Dinner theatre is tentatively set for Nov 6 to 8.

The players are looking for people to act, help with stage construction, costuming, stage crew for the days of the performances and the dress rehearsal, properties, ticket sales and advertising.

Persons with or without experience are welcome. Further information is

available from Mel or Mary Telford at 785-2659.



'WHAT ARE YOU doing to me?' asks Randy Poulis of make up artist Paula Ryan in one of the one act plays to be

presented next week at the Village Square. He finds out pretty soon as he puts on years in a few minutes.

## What is dinner theatre

Workshop players will present their first dinner theatre Wednesday and Thursday at the Village Square, with doors open at 7 pm.

Tables are reserved according to ticket number. Theatre-goers are encouraged to be seated by 7:30 when a prime-rib dinner will be served. Salad, parsley carrots, baked potato, garlic bread, dessert, coffee and choice of red or white wine will accompany the prime-rib entree.

The curtain will rise at 8:30 on the first of three 30-minute one act plays. Two intermissions will come between The Invisible Worm directed by Mel Telford, The Make-up Artist directed by Don McNeil and A Cup of Tea directed by Peter Jackson. The audience is invited to order coffee or drinks, limited to highballs only, before dinner and during intermission. A full bar service will be available following the last performance. The reserved ticket does not cover any drinks ordered from the bar.  
**OLD AS ROMANS**

Dining and being entertained at the same time is as old as entertainment itself. Roman emperors and medieval lords were well-accustomed to eating while pageants and dances were performed. Any

Shakespearean scholar can explain how unpolished Elizabethan actors were pelted with luncheon leftovers from the audience. In the 20th century, dinner theatres have many forms. Large centres offer noon performances enabling business people to enjoy the delights of dining and entertainment as a break in a busy day. Nightclubs provide food along with drinks. Exclusive restaurants combine buffets or complete table service during full-length plays. Today dinner theatre is a fine art.

It is designed for an evening of relaxation. Arrive early, order a leisurely before-dinner drink, have a delicious prime-rib dinner with wine and enjoy three one-act plays presented by the Workshop Players. Phone 785-3442 for tickets.

Reserved ticket  
only  
Phone 785-3442  
.12.50 per person

WORKSHOP  
**DINNER THEATRE, 24**  
1979

**3 ONE ACT PLAYS AND  
PRIME RIB DINNER WITH WINE  
AT THE VILLAGE SQUARE**



# Dinner theatre evening

The Workshop Players will present three one-act plays and prime rib dinner with wine at the Village Square on May 23 and 24. Only reserved tickets are available at \$12.50 per person. Phone 785-3442 or send the appropriate amount to 9315-96th Avenue, Fort St John. All tables are reserved by ticket number.

The one-act plays include *The Invisible Worm* directed by Mel Telford, *The Artist* directed by Don McNeil and *A Cup of Tea* directed by Peter Jackson. The directors are well-known for their performances in local dramatic productions; the most recent is *Baron Demonicus*.

A middle-aged career couple in *The Invisible Worm* argue about the reality of life. Leslie Joy, the wife, phones Lincoln Ford, the doctor, to examine her husband Ryck Miller after he refuses to get up one morning claiming everyone is slowly disappearing due to beauty aids and health devices designed to dehumanize real people. The one-act comedy has a surprise ending.

*The Artist*, played by Paula Ryan, is a painter who successfully moulds a young, deperate actor, played by Randy Poulis, into a "decrepit and decaying, but not ugly, old man." This one-act drama is a challenge in character development and concentration.

The strong cast in the highly amusing *A Cup of Tea* includes Bob Bennetts, an enraged husband bound on asserting his honor at gun point after having discovered sonnets written to Isabel Savill, his wife, by Mike Bush, a poet. Mary Telford, the poet's wife, is fully cognizant of her husband's prevision indiscretions and insists upon difusing the situation.

Dinner will be served

promptly at 7:30 pm. Curtain time is 8:30 pm. The number of tickets are limited. Phone 785-3442 now to reserve your ticket and avoid disappointment. Further information in May 17 Town and Country.

MAY 11, 1979



DIRECTORS ALL, Don McNeil, Mel Telford and Peter Jackson discuss arrangements for the performance of their one act plays tomorrow night at the Village Square. The

plays will also be performed on Thursday but tickets have all been sold now.

MAY 22, 1979

# Dinner and theatre - a good night out



A FIST FIGHT is in the making as Bob Bennetts, playing an outraged husband, frames up to Mike Bush, (who plays a philandering poet) in one of the one act plays to

be presented next week at the Village Square by the Workshop Players. Tickets are selling fast, so order now to avoid disappointment.

by Sue Popesku

Workshop Players has been in rehearsal for six weeks for three one-act plays to be performed at a dinner theatre May 23 and 24 at the Village Square.

The cast members and directors work full-time in

Fort St John and rehearse in their spare time. Most of the cast has previous acting experience.

Peter Jackson, director of A Cup of Tea, chose four actors who have had some experience in drama.

Bob Bennetts, who has

acting and directing experience locally and is involved with various cultural art groups, plays an irate husband determined to defend his honor at gun-point after discovering sonnets written to his wife.

Bennett's wife in the play

is Isabel Savill, who acted in Baron Demonicus and Stage North's Sorieux de Dieu. Savill attended drama classes at Guildford Park Community School and directed a play there.

Mike Bush, who has acted once before, plays the poet who incites the husband's fury. Bush has worked on lighting for a Shakespearean

play in public school in England but said he did not realize the work involved in acting.

Rounding out the cast is Mary Telford as Bush's wife, who is entirely aware of her poet husband's indiscretions and has every under control. Telford, past secretary of Workshop Players, has directed three local plays

since 1972 and has acted in another.

The second play, The Make-up Artist, comments on the lack of communication is today's society and is performed by two actors, one of who has no previous formal acting experience. Director Don McNeil selected Paula

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## Dinner theatre...

Continued from page 2

Ryan, who taught drama in high school in England but has not acted, as a beautiful young painter. Improvisational theatre led Ryan into script writing and she has taken some professional workshops.

Playing a brassy, self-confident actor is Randy Poulis, who ages 50 years during the play. Poulis acted at North Peace Secondary School, took creative writing at the University of Victoria and arranged the sound for a local play.

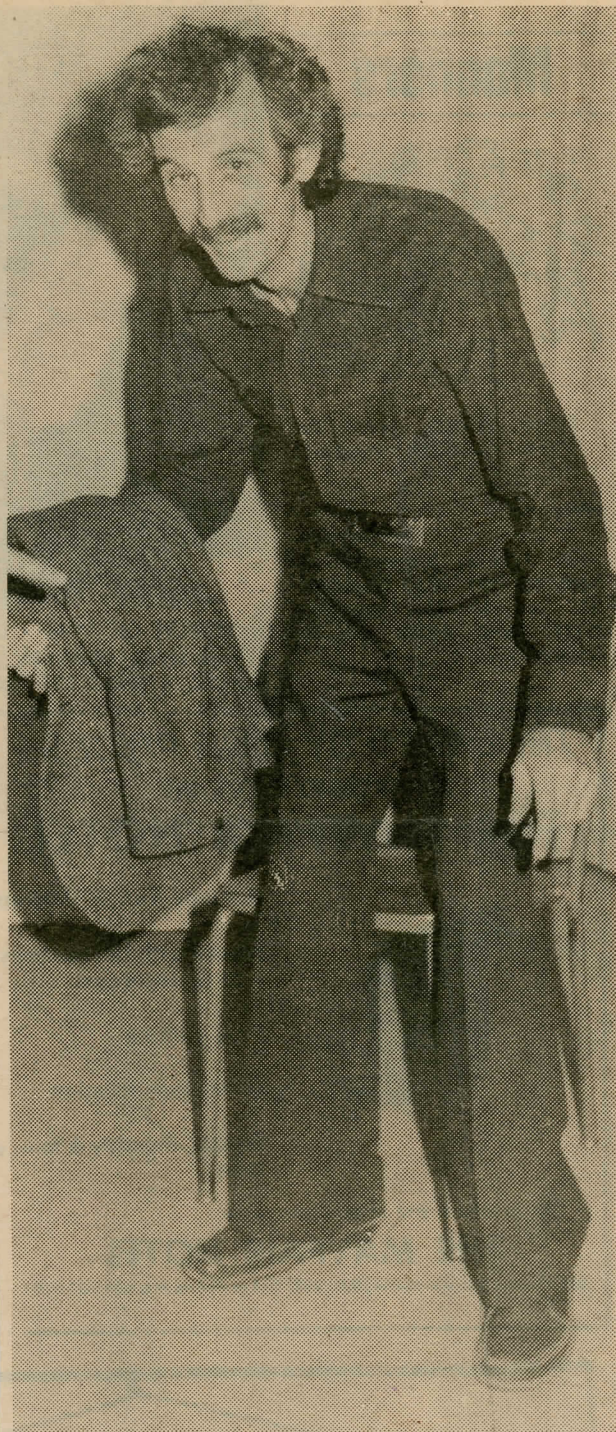
Three actors relatively new to the Fort St John theatre community were selected for the third play, *The Invisible Worm*. Director Mel Telford chose Ryck Miller as a husband who refused to get up one morning after stating he is slowly becoming invisible — a seemingly absurd idea

which is soon explained. Miller had a role in *Baron Demonicus*.

Leslie Joy plays his wife who, concerned about her husband's crazy talk, phones a doctor. Joy had a degree in English and drama from Queens and has worked with theatre groups in Kingston, 100 Mile House and Williams Lake.

Lincoln Ford, another who acted in *Baron Demonicus*, plays the doctor. He previously worked behind the scenes in Williams Lake, stage-managing and performing other production jobs.

The plays will be performed at 8:30 pm and a dinner of prime rib and wine will be served an hr before. Tickets at \$12.50 per person must be reserved by phoning 785-3442.



LINCOLN FORD PLAYS A doctor who attends a man who refuses to get up, the subject of one of the one act plays to be presented next week as part of the Workshop Players' Dinner Theatre. Watch for a surprise ending here.



A TOUCH OF POE - the pretty artist (Paula Ryan) paints all the life out of her subject, a brash and cocky young actor played by Randy Poulis. He ages fifty years in the course of the play.

A TOUCH OF POE - the pretty artist (Paula Ryan) paints all the life out of her subject, a brash and cocky young actor