

1960 drama festival notes:

a scrap book item

The Fort St. John Drama Festival is over for another year. The make-up is wiped off, the properties returned, the costumes put away. The number of entries was smaller than in previous years, but in many ways this was an encouraging festival, in spite of the absence of some of the well-known stars and directors. There was a noticeable improvement in quality of acting, particularly from our high school group. Except for the elementary school entries, every play was a comedy, but most of them comedies of a better quality than we used to consider satisfactory for our festival.

Our adjudicator was Mrs. Dorothy Goldrick, of the Community Programmes Branch of the B.C. Department of Education. Her warm understanding in adjudication enabled her to give help and encouragement to many. She never lost sight of the difficulties of production, the nervous actors, the inexperienced, and the fond parents in the background, and all her advice was of a most practical nature.

The first play on Thursday evening was performed by the North Peace High Senior Drama Club. It was a light little comedy, set in the time of Napoleon and Waterloo, when young ladies were, modest as violets and unmarried ladies were never referred to as old maids, and it represented the reaction of a number of these ladies to their introduction to that wicked dance—the waltz. Mrs. Goldrick said that the players had been successful in creating the mood and feeling of a past era. All the girls used their voices well, and their timing and gestures were good. Donella Chiulli as Miss Charlotte Brighte raised her voice too much at the beginning, possibly through nervousness, but had good light and shade.

MAR 10 1960

Lyddie Brokes (Arlene Chase) was very good and could be heard well. Laetitia (Orva German) carried through very well her representation of the idiotic feather-brained type, but should beware of distracting the audience by too much handkerchief play. Rosie (Donna Parsons) was particularly good in speaking as if she had just thought of those words instead of having learned them. Alicia (Sylvia Stuby) made particularly good use of her voice. Phoebe (Barbara Gladysz) needed to speak more slowly, but made a good entrance. Abigail (Lois Scheck) should have been seen a bit longer. Lady Bagshot (Carole Periman) had great vitality, but moved about too much. In fact, the chief mistake in the play was that there was too much movement and too many feet showing, in a period when women wore skirts to the floor, and hardly showed their feet.

The next play was performed by the United Church Young People's Society of Dawson Creek, and was in an entirely different idiom. It was the type of street play performed in Italy in the Middle Ages, and had to be done in a very stylish manner with precise mining and exaggerated gestures. Such street plays had stook characters, Harlequin and Colombine, which in their Italian versions are Colombina and Arlecchino. This play was called "The Many disguises of Arlecchino", and told of the courtship carried out by Arlecchino on behalf of his aged master, Pantalone. Mrs. Goldrick was particularly with this play, particularly with the mime Char-



WHEN MISTRESS ENCOUNTERS MAID—both wearing identical bonnets—the fat is in the fire! Although this photograph was taken in rehearsal, the Senior High School play "In Waltztime" find a husband for his daughter. Mrs. Goldrick was delighted with this performance, in which the humor was well understood by the actors, and the characterisation was generally good. The king (Emil Gagnon) was supposed to be very stupid, and perhaps could have made this more apparent. The chancellor (Allen Krantz) was exceptionally good for his mobile expression. The queen (Colleen Stewart) gave a true portrait of a plain jane with no nonsense about her. Princess Camilla (Karen Wetmore) had a clear lilting voice and looked delightful. Dulcibella (Susan Little) did her part excellently. Prince Simon (David Esau) gave his somewhat long explanations with clarity and decision. Carlo (John Grady) was somewhat obscured by the grouping in the final scene of the play. Altogether it was a delightful re-

was such a memorable effort reprint this picture. Left to right Perman, Arlene Chase, Sylvia Donella Chiulli, Barbara Glad German and Donna Parsons.

The mother (Margaret Merler) gave a good performance, and sounded very unpleasant, like the harsh stepmother she was supposed to be. Mina and Dort (Sharon Moffat and Gary Jeanotte) were both good characterisations, showing the self-confidence of those who knew themselves to be favored children. The grandmother (Vicki McNelly) had good movements, but was a little too matter of fact. She could have shown more plainly her sympathy with the orphan.

ADJUDICATOR
ENTERTAINERS

MAR 18 1960

To meet the adjudicators, Mr. Ifor Roberts, Mrs. Joy and Mr. Garry Robinson after the festival finale Wednesday May 4, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Sinclair entertained in their home. Mr. Roberts at Vancouver. Those invited were Mr. and Mrs. Mrs. C. C. Brooks, Dr. and Mrs. K. Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Bowers, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Foster, Mr. and Mrs. Ross MacLean, Mrs. Frances Gallichane, Mr. Norman Hill.

1960
DRAFT

FESTIVAL MEET DRAWS ONLY SEVEN

SEPT 15, 1960

The first Festival Association meeting of the season was held at the North Peace Jr. High school last Tuesday September 14. Only seven citizens of the community were interested enough to attend this meeting. View of the lack of support on the part of the community, no dispensing with the Music festival altogether.

Perhaps interested persons in the district are not aware that the Association has no membership. You do not have to "belong" — the only requirement is your interest. The festival will have a second chance for survival. If you are interested at all, come to the next meeting on Tuesday, September 27, 1960 at the High School Room 1. The Music Festival simply cannot carry on with the present small support.

play it was all too quick. More study of timing was needed, putting in pauses to bring out the meaning of the words, changing pace, and putting more color into the voice. The Committee departed from its usual custom by having one play in the morning. This was to shorten the afternoon session, and fit in with school buses. The play was by the Ugly Duckling, performed by the North Peace High Junior Drama Class. This was a fantasy by A. A. Milne, in which the king is trying to

both children were very good in their mime and dance. The mother (Judith Giebelhaus) showed exceptionally good timing, and the father (Lyndon Ward) had good attack and good voice. The witch (Sharon Elias) could have had a more scary voice. The choir was well trained and sang beautifully. The production was extremely good, and it was a very finished performance.

On Friday afternoon there were two elementary plays and one junior high. The first was from North Pine, an action play entitled "Robin Hood to the Rescue." This was the first attempt of these children in a festival. Mrs. Goldrick said that the choice of play was excellent, and also the scenery, and the characterizations quite good. Walter (Lytle Lansing) looked suitably miserable, but spoiled his words by holding his hands up to his mouth, so that much of the comedy was missed. Colin (Ken Jeannotte) spoke very clearly, but sometimes too quickly. Friar Meek (Ken Almond) spoke very well, gave a particularly good characterization, and jumped right into his part, but was sometimes badly placed. Sir Stafford (Ron Moffat) showed good attack, and made himself into the aggressive kind of character he should have been. The keeper (Del Smith) should have been better placed when reading. Robin Hood (Bruce McNelly) did a good job, and took the stage well. The grouping was good except when Sir Stafford was brought to his knees, when the audience could not see everybody clearly.

The second play was a musical performed by the Robert Ogilvie School, Hansel and Gretel. This was a delightful version of the old story with excerpts from Humperdinck's famous music. Some of the children formed a choir standing by the piano, and sang songs which accompanied the action on the stage. Mrs. Goldrick was very pleased with everything about this play—the choice, the interpretation, the set. The treatment, she said, was interesting, and the words clear. The narrator (Daniel Wutrick) had a good clear voice. Hansel (Randy Woodruff) did very well and had a clear voice. Gretel (Rosemary Jensen) was very

aggregated. Pantalone (Dedic Vargenne) kept up his part very well, particularly the shaking hands and the distorted falsetto voice. Colombina (Vonnie Johnson) was charming, but could have been a bit lighter. Arlechino himself (Don Kazakoff) gave an outstanding performance, particularly his mime and dancing. Mrs. Goldrick particularly praised the backdrop, and said that the whole play was fun, and very well done.

The only original play of the festival was next on the program, "Sassenach", written by the chief architect of our festival, Vernice Melvor, and performed by the Fort St. John Players. This was a Peace River play, in which the immigrant Scotsman feuded with the immigrant eastern European, who was a better violinist than he was a farmer. But wouldn't you know that the one had a son and the other a daughter, but according to the old Scotsman never the two should meet. However it turned out in the end that the hard-headed farmer was as sentimental as the professor, and all was well. Mrs. Goldrick said that this was a very well-written play, entertaining, with a good plot. Mrs. MacBagges (Mary Garvin) showed good attack and business, and also had a good good voice. William MacBagges (Lloyd Amundsen) made his comedy a bit too broad. It was well done, but could have been more subtle. By being over-played, it tended to detract from the more serious note towards the end of the play. Robert (Bill Orne) had a nice voice and good business, but needed more projection. Sonia (Gail Melvor) needed to study timing in her speeches, and to show more conviction. The professor (Derrick Meyer) could have made more of his entrance. At the end of the

Thank you from the festival folks

March 1960

The Drama Committee of the Festival Association wish to thank everyone who helped with the work of running the three day festival.

Many thanks to the ticket and program sellers, to the doormen (what a thankless job!) and stage hands.

A special thank-you to Mrs. Vic Jackson for her assistance as secretary to Mrs. Goldrick, and to Mrs. G. Westover and helpers for conveying the lovely reception on Friday evening. Also thanks to Mr. Dennis Coppard, president of the Jaycees, for kindly conducting Mrs. Goldrick on a sightseeing tour on Sunday afternoon.

A special thank-you to the Alaska Highway News for the publicity so heartily given to festival work in this town.

Orva, Stuby, Carole that we