



**THE BEAR GROWLS** in a rehearsal for Stage North's upcoming run of one-act comedies by Anton Checkhov. Smirnov (the bear), played by Fred Galloway (right) vents his ire at the old servant Looka, played by Joe D'Atillio in one of a trio of works by the master Russian playwright. Stage North will present *The Bear*, *The Proposal* and *A Jubilee* each Thursday, Friday and Saturday night for three weeks starting Feb 26.



## Stage North to Fort Nelson:

# The show goes on the road <sup>dup</sup>

From the diary of Pat Doonan

By Kathy MacDonald

Saturday, March 21, 1981  
4:00am

RING...Oh!...be quiet alarm clock...however...I must crawl from this comfort.

Sonia Lazarus and Fil Rainero, by this time, are already on their way with a van full of essentials; set pieces, costumes, props and lights. Everyone else is to meet at Carol William's (our Stage Manager) apartment for breakfast. And what a breakfast!! A platter of bacon, eggs of you wished...help yourself to the toast and freshly backed blueberry muffins, cinnamon buns and coffee, coffee, coffee...

Finally, we are all here and ready to go. Two vans. The trip up in our van consisted of a barrage of riddles, jokes and trivia questions. (I must try to get some sleep...this is comfortable, I guess... BUMP... THUD... End of the pavement...too bumpy to sleep now...)

What was that? I missed the question. Turn the heater up, it's freezing back here...please turn it down now, thanks...up again. We're going North and the temperature is dropping. The change in air pressure makes our ears plug.

Almost time for lunch, we had made some reservations at Mae's Kitchen the day before. One piece of toast (homemade, to inches thick, the size of a dinner plate and buttered on both sides) came my way...delicious and more coffee please. Question...Why did all the truckers leave when all 20 of us come in? On the way out, pictures of the group were taken in front of the van. Even Mae took pictures of our strange on-

tourage. After always having truckers and tourists, we were a bit of a change.

On the road again...more stories, napping (?) and DUST!

Leap frogging up the highway, we kept in sight of each other MOST of the time. Almost there and then it happened!...THUD...a large piece of rubber flew off the tire. Everyone piled out into the cold on the side of the road to investigate. The tire was changed even though we could have driven on it for awhile. We were hoping to make it to Fort Nelson soon to assist in setting up. One corner...then another...the refinery...the lumber mill...Thompkins Esso Truck stop...finally here we are in Fort Nelson. The Shannon Motel was kind enough to donate accommodations, seven rooms in all. Our rooms were spread out...I wonder if it was to keep us apart?

General information will have to be delivered

through the phone lines...Meeting in 15 minutes?? (Organization is essential). The technical crew set up while the others did some shopping and sleeping. Supper, at the Fort Nelson Motel (There's an elephant's head there four times larger than Marg C.'s desk)...and a quick exercise in voice projection. This hall at the recreation centre is much larger than the actors are used to.

Now it's time for the costumes and makeup (for the last time. Joe D'Attilio won't have to white shoe polish in his hair anymore...at least until he's cast as an old man again). THE BUTTERFLIES BEGIN.

Rick Berry from the high school is organizing his students. They're doing a short performance first. Rick was very helpful in organizing our tour from that end (accommodations, performance space, etc.)

Front of house is set up...costumes on...makeup

going on...130 people file in (the largest single audience our own actors have performed before)...Butterflies... Butterflies...

The students are very good in "The Red Carnation", an interesting comedy about a single girl meeting two Mr Smith's at the park, both wearing a red carnation, both having met the girl at a masquerade party in the same night...and now knowing what each other looks like.

They are finished. Well here we go. THIS is what this trip was about. On go the "audience warm up group" called "The Flying Cadenzas". They do a super job welcoming the audience and entertaining, even though one of their members was unable to come.

While behind the curtains, the sets are changing for our first show, 'The Proposal' with Heather Archer, Daniel Vecchio and Doug Xenis. I noticed a

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# The show goes on. . .

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few minor changes which add to the comedy.

Next 'The Bear'. Fred Galloway, is great playing against Betty-Ann Xenis. Joe D'Attilio as 'Looka' is very good and captures the audience. Everytime he enters, the audience chuckles at him.

Then "A Jubilee" with Dennis Szalai, Barb Zienkiewicz, Michael Puttonen, Sheila Sapers (one of our veteran actresses) and the Flying Cadenzas as the Shareholders (Terry Carroll, Susan Cooper and Joy Macalister).

BOW, tremendous response. SEcond curtain call. And that's that.

Now comes more work. The van carrying the sets, etc. must be loaded and ready for an early departure Sunday.

Costumes off...Makeup

off...Set struck and loaded in one hour. Now that's what we call organization. Carrol Williams, Donna Frazer and Gunter Von Ilberg are terrific volunteers.

Now, a chilly walk back to the motel at midnight. Some are ready to turn in for the night, others, still filled with the excitement generated from the enthusiastic audience, decided to walk over to the lounge for awhile. Morning comes early and we have a long way to go home.

After a late breakfast, we gather up our personal belongings, wait for Fred, (he's thanking all those at the motel who helped us with our first non-professional touring performance).

On the road again, on the road again...as the song goes. The personage in the vans seems almost the same as on our trip north.

Now it's poems...find one and read it from Micheal's book. A guessing game using BC place names made the mile fly by (what is a preposition and a girl's name? Atlin). Poems again. Here' some lines from a poem, you say the rest of it. Lunch time already? Let's stop at Pink Mountain (The ONLY place on a Sunday). Those people who had been munching on the homemade left-overs from Saturday morning weren't too hungary but that others certainly were! Back into the vans (that were beginning to look and feel like very small buses). Ten miles down the road, Micheal says, "I didn't get any gas!" Maybe we can make it to Wonowon. We did easily. But 2 miles past, THUD...there goes the tire again...THUD...without a

spare...(remember the same thing happened on the way up). We decided to stop, let the tire cool off and drive very slowly for as far as we could.

The thumping of the tire at this slow speed has a nice beat. Campfire songs...sow songs, more songs and finally as we make it past Charlie Lake the songs from our last production (Another Dam Show).

Working on this production has created a spirit of warmth, friendship and continued co-operation within ourselves and with our neighbors to the north.

Next time, Fred, let's tour in the summer....

**PAT DOONAN-PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT, NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE.**

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