

The mirror in the case of the actor  
is the audience.

Newsletter of the Heritage Hunt Little Theater



# Play Time

June 2006

## From the President



School is over, but I feel like HHLT has begun a new semester — WIR is behind us; RTW has reconvened; plans for our summer social are underway; soon we will learn what play M.J. has selected; and shortly many of us will be lining up to audition for our November production. To quote The Beatles, one of my all time favorite groups, "Oh bla di .... oh bla da, life goes on....."

And so does the saga of our tax status. Our April Newsletter included a recommendation from Treva Whyte. Our May Newsletter included documentation from a conversation Joe DeBell had with an IRS agent. At our June meeting, we will take a vote on which direction to take.

I hope to see you at 7:00PM, in the craft room, on Thursday, June 22.

*Helen Esposito*

## HH Little Theater Fall Production

by M.J. Brickach, Director

Pending approval by the Executive Board, I am pleased to announce that the Fall production, scheduled for November 14th—17th, is *The Hound of the Clackervilles* by Craig Sodaro. This is a large cast comedy-spoof-mystery (remember *Hound of the Baskervilles*?) requiring 19 females and 10 males. It has good comic lines for everyone, a single interior set, interesting characters, no lengthy dialogues, and the added attraction of Sherlock Holmes and his able assistant, Dr.



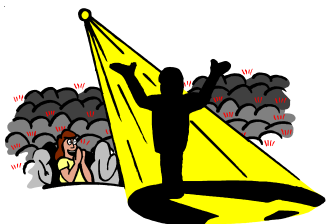
Watson. One of the female leads, Daisy, will have to sing a solo, a simple one, with piano accompaniment. Some of the "younger" singles will have to attend a Sadie Hawkins Dance and do a few square dance steps or fox-trot steps around the stage. One character will play the "HOUND," dressed in a dog costume with ultra violet paint played under black lights. Some characters appear only in the first or second scenes and others appear only near the end.

Auditions are scheduled for Sunday, August 20th (10 AM—2 PM) continuing on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (August 22, 23, and 24) in the evening. Scripts will be available early so that everyone can read

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## The 2006 Senior Theatre Festival

by Sandy Mills

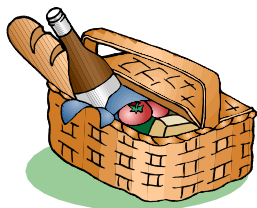
This year's festival will be held in St Louis, MO, on October 4-7. Daily activities center around participatory workshops and evenings are filled with performances resulting from the work accomplished in the workshops. Topics for workshops have been suggested but not yet set in stone, since the organizers are expecting some of those who attend to lead these workshops, present papers on senior theater, or bring their groups to perform. I am interested in going to see what other groups around the country/world are doing. If you are interested in seeing the brochure, contact me at 5175. The festival itself is only \$125 for the 3 main days. Rooms are \$89. The biggest expense will be airfare. An adventure/opportunity awaits!

## WIR Leftovers

by Bets Knepley

Elena Portoles reports that there were 795 attendees over the four nights.

Rick Sullivan reports that a DVD of WIR can be purchased for \$13. Please pay for it at our June meeting.



## Our Annual Potluck Picnic

Mark July 9th on your calendar. That's the date of our third potluck picnic. This year it will be held at

Nanette and Mel Ross' lovely home at 6771 Derby Run Way. Drinks and paper products will be provided. Please bring one of your favorite dishes to share.

Your spouse is welcome to attend. Be there at 3PM to join in the fun.

## The Workshop Update

by Bets Knepley

Since we do so much more than read plays at our Readers Theater Workshops, I have decided to change the name to The Workshop. Our next meeting will be on Saturday, July 15th at 10AM in the Craft Room. Thereafter, our meetings will be held only once a month on the first Saturday.

M.J. Brickach will lead the reading of the fall production play, *The Hound of the Clackervilles*, at our July meeting. So come and join in the fun reading a new play.

For more info, contact Bets at 1360.

## Life as a Princess

by Sandy Mills



Sounds like a dream, princess for 3 months. The reality was anything but royal. This princess was a haughty, rude,

"spoiled brat," as her maid described her. While my husband thought I was typecast, I found it difficult to maintain her arrogance. So she never (well, hardly ever) went home with me. I tried to get into character when I arrived at rehearsal, hoping that my fellow actors would forgive my rudeness. It took almost 2 ½ months to get her character down. I kept forgetting and saying thank you when my maid handed me the pen I always seemed to need. The princess did NOT say please or thank you. As the princess, I kept forgetting that she was not a gracious host. She did not look at people but expected them to do her bidding at the snap of her fingers. She was fun to play, especially the wordplay with the Senator, and the swordplay with the peasant. The princess may have been bored with her life, but I felt lonely within her character. She didn't have any friends. Would I do it again? In a heartbeat!

## Back to School — Again

by Helen Esposito



In the fall of 2005, I enrolled in an Acting II class at NOVA in Manassas. The class combined acting and theater workshop courses, and the “final exam” was a production on campus, open to the

public. This was my first stage experience outside of HHLT.

Even though each acting student would be given a part, we did have to audition. We were given a copy of the play in advance, and the professor encouraged all to read the entire play before auditions. The audition was a cold reading, open audition of selections from the play. However, we did not know which part or parts the professor/director would have us read. We were called to the front of the room in random pairs and asked to read specific scenes of the play. I was fine with this until I had to follow one particular actress in a particular scene. There was a scene between a mental hospital patient and a psychiatrist. A girl who first read the patient’s role was a young, energetic actress who played the role bouncing all over the stage and performing all sorts of gyrations. When I was next called to perform this scene with another student, I breathed an audible sigh of relief when I was asked to read the part of the psychiatrist not the patient.

We had three directors for this one production of “Dracula” – the professor and two students. Even though I was aware that different directors have different styles, it was interesting to observe how these three different styles blended and resulted in a cohesive production. Three distinct styles did force the actors to be more flexible. Until you had enough time to figure out the different directors’ styles, you didn’t know what was going to be expected of you as an actor, and how much freedom you would have in the interpretation of a scene and your role in particular.

We did not have any stage manager for this production which called for many scene

and prop changes. During the first of three dress rehearsals actors were asked to volunteer to take responsibility for scenery changes, and actors were responsible for their specific props. I noticed that I was the only actor with a pencil in hand, taking notes on what I volunteered to do. Only yours truly and the two student directors, who also acted, were of a legal drinking age. So I wondered if these “youngsters” memories were so good that no one was bothering to write anything down. Well, a couple of the young actors were quite embarrassed during the first production when they had to use “imaginary” props on stage.

The stage at NOVA is smaller than ours at HH. There wasn’t any room for actors behind flats. Directly off stage right was a fairly large storage room which was used to store the props. We actors sat out in the hallway on the opposite side of this room from the stage so we couldn’t hear the actors on stage. No stage manager, and no one in particular assigned to stay close to the door of the room and listen for cues? To this day, I’m still not clear on how each actor managed to stay alert and knew when to go on stage and/or change scenery.

I thoroughly enjoyed this NOVA experience. The professor at Manassas is outstanding. It was fun to work with young people. And a big, belated thanks to those of you who came to the performance.

## Board of Directors

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**Helen Esposito**

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**Sandy Mills**

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**Jim Campbell**

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**Joyce Mancini**

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**Rick Sullivan**

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**Nanette Ross**

## Dates to Remember

### General Meetings

Fourth Thursday at 7 PM in the Craft Room  
Next Meeting is Thursday, June 22nd

### The Theater Workshop

Next session—July 15th at 10AM--Craft Rm  
Note Date CHANGE  
Fall Production Play will be read

### July Potluck Picnic

July 9th—3PM  
at Nanette & Mel Ross' Home

### Audition Dates

August 20, 22, 23 and 24

### Fall Production Dates

November 14, 15, 16 and 17

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the play in advance and decide what role(s) would be desired. I am really looking forward to directing this play, working with all of you, and helping each of you to be the best that you can be. There is much room for creativity with this script; the author's words are merely the starting point. So please plan to come to auditions and bring a friend or potential new member with you. Rehearsals begin on Thursday, August 31, at 7 PM. And the following members have volunteered their time and talents, for which I am eternally grateful: Play Selection Committee—Sandy Mills; Stage Manager—Denny Cumber; Publicity—Bets Knepley; Set Design—Alan Mager; and Tickets—Elena Portales.

I'll be expecting you!!!! Break a leg!!!

## WIR DVD Update

by Rick Sullivan

When *In Rome* was videotaped from two cameras mounted about twelve feet high and positioned on either side of the ballroom door that was used for the grand entrance. The sound was fed into a mixing board directly from the stage mikes and two floor mikes.

The sound and video was then fed directly downstairs to a control room where a "director" could record from either camera and remotely zoom and pan the stage. This director was in direct communication with the soundman upstairs in the ballroom and could provide feedback on the sound levels.

The play was recorded on VHS tape. The LSTV crew thought they could transfer it to a DVD format, as one of the crew had some equipment he thought might work. As it turns out the play would not fit on one DVD without a great reduction in quality so it is on two disks. John edited the tape and was able to balance some lighting and filter out some background hum from the refrigerator. He also put in rolling credits and pictures of the play program. The LSTV crew was very excited and proud of the quality of the DVD and are planning to buy more professional editing equipment and offer this service to other functions in the ballroom.

You can buy the WIR DVD for \$13 at the June meeting.

## Your Little Theater Experiences

by Bets Knepley, Editor



Have you enjoyed reading about our members' little theater experiences? Do you have an experience that you'd like to share? You probably do, because whenever I ask a member to write about a certain topic, they are very willing. So search your memory...and share one of your funny or unusual experiences.