

Secrets of a Soccer Mom: a fun production that lacked an audience



Josh Oatman: Director

The players were excellent. The set was fantastic. The concession goodies delicious and... the audience stayed away in droves.

It was our first attempt at an early

summer production and, hopefully, the problem was the week-end itself. Since our complimentary ticket holders all chose to attend on the



Michelle White

Friday evening, indications are that – yes, nobody wants to go to the theatre on a June weekend.

Sad because we went to a lot of trouble to make Grace Tipling Hall look like a soccer field – even to the extent of getting Shelburne Public

Works to lend us bleachers.

All we can do is learn from the experience. Never again move our season up the way we did. It doesn't work. Fall, Winter, Spring in future – let's leave the summer to authentic soccer and other such activities in, while congratulating everyone involved in *Secrets of a Soccer Mom* on a stellar production!



Daphne Rodaway



Jean Jardine Miller

Come fishing - audition for *The Great Kooshog Lake Hollis McCauley Fishing Derby*

We're bringing summer to late February with Norm Foster's wonderful cottage country comedy about fishing and more...

Auditions will take place on November 11th at Grace Tipling Hall at 7:00 pm. Call backs, if necessary, will be held same place, same time the next evening.

A pompous investment banker's car breaks down and he gets stuck in the sleepy town of Kooshog Lake during its annual Fishing Derby – an event to which people come from miles around to catch a fish that has been eluding capture for over twenty years. While the locals would really would like to send the unwelcome visitor on his way, a fuel pump needs to be ordered in so he is invited to take part in the fishing derby. Not exactly his thing, you think... but this is a Norm Foster comedy so he learns a whole lot more than just how to fish.

Two men and three women will be cast:

Sienna Grey - middle-aged store owner
James Bell - pompous, stranded investment banker, any age
Rhonda Borkowski - over-sexed local, 30s - 40s
Kirk Douglas - wise, old (i.e senior) local
Melanie Morningside - vulnerable young local, 20s

Rehearsals will run Sundays and Thursdays (some Wednesdays, if necessary) November 19th to February 11th, plus tech week.

Performances are 8:00 p.m. February 19th, 20th, 26th & 27th and 2:00 p.m. February 21st.

Register – so that we have some idea on how many to expect – by emailing info@tiplingstagecompany.com.

The Trouble with Trent has everything a good comedy needs today!

Far from having trouble with Trent, the cast of our Fall 2015 production is having a really fun time with the Fred Carmichael comedy.

Yes, Denis Stephenson is back directing after limiting himself for the past five years to acting (and taking off to warmer climes for most of the winter!) Debbie Tait is producing again – also after taking a bit of a hiatus from doing so in recent years. We have several of our veteran actors among the eight member cast as well as one newbie and a blast from the past.

All that being said, we now need everybody who reads this to get out there and tell everybody they know that this hilarious comedy will be presented at Grace

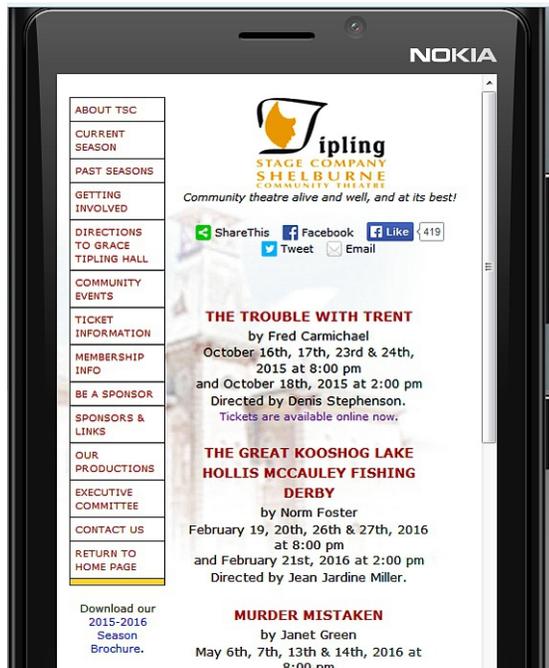
Tipling Hall October 16th to 24th and that nobody – absolutely nobody – can afford to miss it.

We must see our fortunes turn around with this first play of the 2015-2016 season. If you know of a family, a business, a group of any kind celebrating an event in October, suggest they purchase discounted group tickets and have their great night out with us! If not, just try to drum up interest at work, among your friends and associates. We always have little handouts advertising our productions that you can give to people pin up somewhere as a reminder. Just ask for some.

And, anybody wanting to help with front of house, please contact Debbie at debbie@debbietait.com.

New look for website

The Tipling Stage Company website has been updated to meet Google Mobile-Friendly standards.



This does not mean that it looks so good on all cell phones but horizontal scrolling is eliminated (Google doesn't like it!) The main point of the exercise is for our site to show as "mobile-friendly" in search results so that we get clicked rather than ignored, postponed and forgotten about by cell phone-users searching for live theatre information.

ACT-CO Festival and Gala

Aside from delivering the bad news about the hole in our reserves created by the low audience numbers of the last two seasons, this newsletter is also going out a little early in order to get some feedback on entering productions in the ACT-CO Festival.

The Festival is an opportunity for education and for publicity of community theatres. It is divided into three categories: comedies, dramas, and musicals with a single adjudicator who will see all of the productions in that category. The adjudicator is an experienced theatre professional and teacher who has a thorough dialogue with us on all of the areas of the production: the acting, the direction, the design and the technical elements. The adjudicator will provide praise, constructive criticism, and useful techniques to help us with future productions. The members of the production team can ask questions and engage the adjudicator's expertise.

At the end of the Festival, each adjudicator chooses nominees and recipients of ACT-CO's THEA awards which are announced and presented at the annual ACT-CO Gala in the Spring.

The serious stuff

As much as we want the Tipling Stage Company experience to be fun, there are times when we have to turn our attention to the numbers (as in the financial numbers). At least, we do when they get as bad as they have done during the last two seasons.

Due to not attracting the ticket sales that we need to offset our expenses during the last two seasons, we have used up a large amount of the reserves that were created primarily through upper level sponsorships of our first two or three seasons. It can be argued that some of this money should have been used at the time to effectively market the company. And it can be argued that during the last two years when the Town added light and sound rental fees to our theatre rental costs, ticket prices should have been increased. Also, that performances should not have been reduced to one weekend, that a three production season was too ambitious, too soon and – well, a hundred and one other things. But, nobody learns without making mistakes.

The biggest, however, is attitude.

"Putting on a show can be fueled by great, infectious enthusiasm, but creating an organization to sustain a series of shows and build a place in the community takes much more," says Julie Crawford, executive director of the American Association of Community Theatre.

This, in a nutshell, is our problem. There is a lack of interest in **building** a community theatre in Shelburne.

Please think about this, in the light of the fact that, if things go on this way, we cannot last beyond two or three more seasons and think about what **you** can do to make us top of mind for area theatre-goers.

Naturally there is a fee all for this and TSC normally leaves the decision on whether or not to enter a production to its director. In the present climate of losing money on every production, it is not really fair to expect a director to make the decision in the face of increases in royalty fees, theatre rental and even the cost of scripts, in addition to the dwindling revenues due to decreasing audiences. Therefore, it would be appreciated if everybody could please email:

info@tiplingstagecompany.com and let us know how important entry in the Festival is to them. That way, the directors of this year's productions will feel justified in making the decision one way or the other. Some pros and cons are:

We get a professional critique but is it helpful enough to merit the cost?

Winning awards attracts more actors to auditions but we must sell more tickets to cover the cost.

Praise from an adjudicator or an award makes all the effort feel worthwhile but doesn't just doing what you really love to do fulfil you anyway?

The deadline for entries is September 8th so immediate response would be appreciated.