



BOX 94

NEWSLETTER OF SAULT THEATRE WORKSHOP

Sault Theatre Workshop

Community Theatre Since 1948
PO Box 94 Sault Ste Marie On P6A 5L2

Our Young Company is

Stage1



Studio Theatre 121 Pittsburgh Ave. Sault Ste Marie On P6C 5A9

www.saulttheatre.com

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THEATRE ONTARIO



Volume 72
Issue #2
September/Oct.

The Marquee
The sign is up and repositioned ready to advertise our next play!



The Show Must Go On!

Having our own Studio Theatre makes it easier in some ways but challenging.

As a not-for-profit community theatre our resources are limited. We have a lot of talented actors, directors and artists chomping at the bit to present to an audience but it has to be done safely and fit the health officials and government guidelines.

Well, we rode out the isolation and did our best to keep everyone safe. Around mid March, after reading a lot of scripts Harry picked a good Norm Foster script with a cast of five and sent out scripts to potential cast members. The response was almost instant and very enthusiastic.

Harry cast **Ned Durango Comes To Big Oak** and started play-readings on Zoom, a virtual meeting room with the five cast and the director. We carried on with weekly readings and discussions until Algoma Public Health and the city of Sault Ste Marie announced meetings of 10 people were allowed. A quick survey was held.

It was unanimous that we could meet in person to continue readings. With hand sanitizer at the door and chairs set out six feet apart we started readings in person. What a difference in the dynamics! The next step had us become a social bubble.

The announced Stage 3 development allowed gatherings of up to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors. We looked very closely at the rules and regulations as they apply to arts presenters put out by the Ontario Government and looked at the calendar.

It appeared we were close to when we could safely have an audience so we moved ahead to rehearsals with blocking and set. The director and cast felt that we could have a delightful comedy ready for the end of September or early October.

The decision on dates was in the hands of STW's Board of Directors. They had many things to consider, including protective equipment, cleaning procedures, Ontario regulations, concession use and seating arrangements. Perhaps a longer run of the production is needed

Sault Theatre Workshop proudly presents

Ned Durango Comes To Big Oak

by Norm Foster

Directed by Harry Houston

An aging television cowboy star comes to the aid of an economically troubled small town in this funny, sometimes moving play

October 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25

8 PM Curtain - except Sunday 2PM Matinee

STW's Studio Theatre
121 Pittsburgh Ave

Box Office Call Sandra
(705) 946-4081
Reserve seating only
Social distancing
Limited seating

With: Matt Connors, Tim Bass, George Houston, Amanda Benoit and Taylor Emlaw

Bring your mask

Adults	\$ 27
Seniors	\$ 25
Students	\$ 15

and possibly a price adjustment to accommodate smaller audiences. First and foremost, of course, is safety of our cast, crew and audience.

We learn as we go and we are watching carefully, all the re-openings to discover the best plan. The school opening in September seems to have worked out, so a late October date was chosen.

New Box Office Procedure In Place

Aside from the fact that the Station Mall CTC Box Office is closed up, we quickly realized that we had to orchestrate our ticket sales differently. First, we have to establish a contact sheet for every performance. That means no tickets at the door. All seats must be reserved in advance.

A set of screening questions will be used to ensure the audience safety comes first. Social bubbles of up to 10 are allowed to seat together but all bubbles and individuals must be 6 feet apart. This means our floor plan will differ each

night depending on bookings. Masks will be required at entry and may be removed at your table with your social bubble. However a trip to the washroom or the concession will require your mask.

The maximum patrons allowed for indoor events is 50 but our intimate theatre will seat less when we work out the distancing. This may require a longer run and we are prepared to extend dates if needed. Sault Ste Marie is considered a low risk area and further restrictions in some Ontario "hot spots" are not likely to affect us.

Sault Theatre Workshop is in a better position for flexible planning than the other theatre companies since we own our own building. However, that also means we have the expense of maintenance and upkeep that other groups don't have. We've gone some time without income. Getting back on the boards helps to insure our future. Performers need to perform and while we have a rich selection of movies and presentations on TV screens it is not a real replacement for live entertainment. The excitement and dynamics of in person performance is irreplaceable. Doing it safely is our challenge.

BOX OFFICE GRATITUDE!

Our last newsletter carried "A Message to our Patrons from Sault Theatre Workshop" stating that due to government and health rules we were suspending the balance of season 71. We then provided options for patrons and season ticket holders who had unused tickets.

We welcomed you to donate the balance from your season ticket to The Sault Theatre Workshop for a charitable tax receipt. This donation will go a long way in supporting our aim to bring exceptional theatre to our patrons. Alternatively, we are able to credit your account for the remaining amount of the season ticket. This credit can be used toward next season.

And finally, if these options aren't able to work for you, we are able to issue a refund for \$20 for each season ticket you purchased.

Send us a note or email if we have not heard from you, as to your choice sandramhouston@gmail.com or give us a call at 705 946-4081.

On behalf of everyone at the Sault Theatre Workshop, Sandra Houston, our Box Office Chair wishes to thank the many patrons who chose the first option. You are clearly part of the "Community" in Community Theatre.

Sandra Houston, Box Office Chair

Sault Theatre Workshop

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Next Up? . . .

Sault Theatre Workshop will gain experience from our current production and we

remain flexible in planning. We have a project in mind for after Christmas for an original production. We are hoping things settle into a safe routine and we are ready to go back to full seasons of theatre. We will be bringing back the One Act Festival workshop soon because it is a valuable training tool. It helps us find new directors and bring professional training into our community. We strive for the best in theatre for our patrons.

STW/Pull-Chain Theatre Bursary

Our Bursary is still there and ready for next year.

The purpose of the bursary is to honour Pull-Chain Theatre's and Richard Howard's promotion of Community Theatre and the striving for theatre excellence, by helping students, young and old, participate in theatrical education.

Awarded annually to one qualified applicant, is an amount of up to \$1000.00.

Applications for the bursary must be submitted by May 1st of each year and the bursary will be awarded in June.

More information? call President Randi Houston Jones @ 705 943-6335 Or visit our website:

https://saulttheatre.com

Email rmraud@hotmail.ca



Come to A Fundraiser Drive In!
Saturday Sept 19/2020,
Parking lot of 121 Pittsburgh ave

Showing Vintage
Phantom of the Opera and
Cyrano de Bergerac!
Show starts at 8:30pm

Popcorn \$1.00,
Pop, Hot Dogs, Chocolate bars
\$2.00 each

The poster features a background of a parking lot filled with cars. In the foreground, there are two movie posters: one for 'The Phantom of the Opera' and another for 'Cyrano de Bergerac'.

Did You Come To Our Drive-in?

It's too soon for the newsletter to give you results of our Drive-in theatre fundraising venture, but the event was the idea of our fundraising chair, **Leah Frost**. Leah has also organized a book launching event with the release of **George Houston's** young adult novel "**The Deliverance of Maria**".

Fundraising is a real challenge amid Covid 19 restrictions and we salute Leah for her efforts. We also welcome letters, emails or phone chats about our events. Did you enjoy taking part? What works or doesn't work?

Your suggestions on other fundraising ideas are also welcome. It may be a while before we get



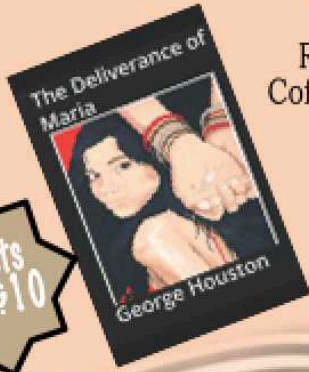
Sault Theatre Workshop presents

An evening with Author George Houston

Reading, Book Signing, Q & A
Coffee, Tea and light refreshments

Entertainment by Taylor Emlaw

Studio Theatre 121 Pittsburgh Ave.
Saturday September 26, 2020
7 PM to 9 PM



Tickets
Only \$10

Email Leah : diamyn@shaw.ca for tickets!
Limited seating

Richard Howard.

Norm Foster was once quoted: "**One of the curses of being a playwright is that you're never ever completely satisfied with your finished product. There is always that one line which you think you could improve. And when you improve that line, you find another. You must know when to stop.**"

Harry compared the **Ned Durango** script to his one from the earlier version and saw a lot of interesting changes. The play was first released in 1994 but a rewrite occurred in 2011. "I fell in love with the play all over again" said Harry. That's when the on-line

back to a regular season and self sustaining.

Ned Durango Comes To Sault Theatre Workshop

In **Norm Foster's** delightful comedy, an aging television cowboy star comes to the aid of an economically troubled small town. It's a funny, sometimes moving play that lives up to the Foster Charm. Having written more than 60 plays, Norm has been Canada's most produced playwright for more than 20 years, and for good reason.



Director **Harry Houston** has been a long-time fan of foster's plays, having acted in and/or directed ten of them. He first came across this play when he played the role of Tom Shaw in a Pull-Chain Theatre production back in the 1990s directed by



recruitment took place and casting was done.

The charming **Tim Bass** has taken on the role of Tom Shaw, owner of the Crossroads Cafe where the action takes place. Tim is a real veteran on our stage and always a treat to watch.



George Houston plays

Orson, Tom's employee who rarely burns the muffins, but provides us with a lot of humour. There is no finer character actor than George who has directed and acted for the Workshop for decades.



The super talented **Amanda Benoit**, another familiar name to our audiences has the role of Catherine Wilson, Mayor of Big Oak. She plays "hard to get" but she'll get you going!



The title character of this play is the the dynamic **Matt Connors** as Ned Durango. It will be fun to see Matt back in cowboy clothes (he played Will, the hero in our production of "**Outlaw**" a few years back - another **Norm Foster** play).



Rounding out the five member cast and back on the workshop stage again is **Taylor Emlaw**. This amazing young lady who plays Kay Star, Orson's daughter and Tomato Queen has launched a real music career. When she belts out an original blues number you will be impressed.



It is rare in our history to have a set to rehearse on so early in the process. Since Covid 19 has



Sault Theatre Workshop Annual General Meeting

As most members will remember, our AGM was combined in the last few years with a Member Appreciation Supper and followed up with the ACTAwards (Annual Crazy Theatre Awards). Covid 19 has unfortunately made this impossible this year. To fulfill our mandate and do our corporate diligence we must hold our annual meeting but it will be simplified. Attendees will be required to register on a contact list, wear a mask and physical distancing will be ensured. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM and is expected to be brief. Memberships for Season 72 will be available. Please be assured that a Member Appreciation Dinner and ACTAwards will be part of our future plans just as soon as safely possible. Thank you for your patience. **Randi Houston Jones**
President Sault Theatre Workshop

What? Annual General Meeting
Where? Studio Theatre, 121 Pittsburgh Ave.
When? Monday October 26th 7:00PM

prevented other uses of our stage and seeing the amount of time prior to the allowed show dates, we had the luxury of rehearsing on an almost finished set. This of course is thanks to **Sandy Houston**, George's wife. She had the walls and doors up early. It's a treat to watch this lady work.

Val Wilson is our Costume Mistress and we couldn't ask for better. She had a handle on the Tomato costume right off the bat.

Mix in a little of **Don Kelly's** expertise with sound mixing and our talented techies on lights and sound board, Stage Manager **Aaron Bird** will co-ordinate a smooth production, assisted by ASM **Trevor Fisher**.

We are limited in the size of audience due to physical distancing requirements but if demand for tickets warrants, we are prepared to extend the run.

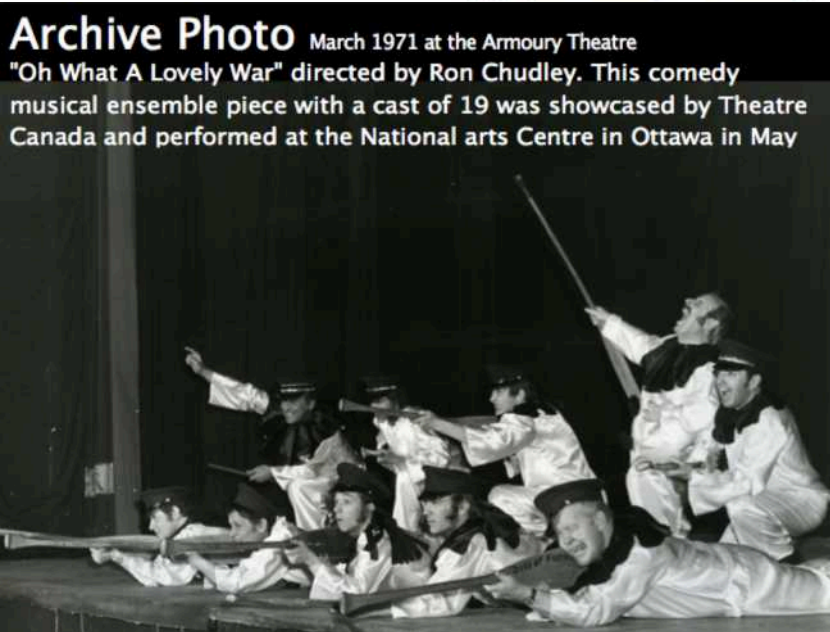
Call **Sandra Houston**, our Box Office champion at 705 946-4081 to book your seats, and she will sort out a seating plan for you and your group.



Reminders

Evening With George
September 25 & 26

Ned Durango comes to Big Oak
October 21, 22, 23, 24, 8PM
and 25th matinee -2PM
Call to book (705) 946-4081
Reserve seating only! Bring your Masks.



Archive Photo March 1971 at the Armoury Theatre
"Oh What A Lovely War" directed by Ron Chudley. This comedy musical ensemble piece with a cast of 19 was showcased by Theatre Canada and performed at the National arts Centre in Ottawa in May

Newsletter Now Only Email

To get on board send an email to hehouston@shaw.ca with Box 94 as the subject and give us your name and address so we can remove you from our snail mail list.

BOX 94 Volume 72
(Our 72nd season)
Editor Harry Houston
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Next Issue November 2020 - See you at the Theatre?

Visit our web site www.saulttheatre.com

Or Visit us on FACEBOOK

To ensure continued Newsletters be sure to keep your membership up to date. Contact Membership Chair **Wendylynn Levoskin (705) 450-6430**