

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Time Is Ripe: Director

The Strike at Putney Church Celebrates LMM's birthday

Kimberley Johnston
A&E Editor



What better way to celebrate an Island icon's birthday than to put on a show in her honour?

ACT (A Community Theatre) will be commemorating the birthday of Lucy Maud Montgomery (author of the famed Anne of Green Gables novels) by producing a play based on her short story, *The Strike At Putney Church*.

The director of the show, Paul Whelan, said the time was right to expose PEI audiences to the loveable characters of *Putney* once more.

"ACT wanted to remount the play, I think, partly because the L.M. Montgomery Institute is leading toward the big 100 anniversary of the printing of Anne and November 30 is also Montgomery's birthday. Also, I feel, they thought the time was ripe to do it."

Whelan took part in the TheatrePEI and Charlottetown Festival Productions of the show; originally playing the part of the minister, Daniel Sinclair, who is forced to mediate between the quarrelling congregation; the elders (who forbid a woman foreign missionary to speak in the church) and the women, who have withdrawn their services until the elders change their minds on the matter.

Ron Irving, UPEI's former theatre director, played easy-going shopkeeper Jacob Warren in the original production; the part is now being played by former UPEI professor Ivan Dowling. The role of

Daniel Sinclair is currently being played by recent UPEI Education graduate, and 4 Skits Sake co-founder, Adam Gauthier.

Although it was a long time ago, Whelan looks back at his *Putney* days as a positive experience for him. He found the time cast members spent with playwright Eliza Jane Wilson the most memorable.

"It was 17 years ago and really I don't remember a lot about the production, however looking at the cast list it contains a lot of wonderful actors who went on to professional theatre —



what I do remember is that Eliza Jane, the playwright, was at all the rehearsals and did some rewrites and was there for consultation. That was a really great experience."

He is sure this will turn out to be a good experience as well. After flexing his theatrical muscle with many one-act shows and musicals in the past, Whelan wanted to try directing a big production with a mostly adult cast. His past ACT achievements involve taking part in *Lend Me A Tenor*, and acting as assistant stage manager in *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

One of the major differences this year is that the play will take place in the newly renovated Arts Guild, which is a much smaller area the actors had to work with before. Whelan says he will make good use of the area provided, adding the confined spacing may yield a more intimate connection between the audience and the cast members.

"The Arts Guild is much smaller and more intimate so I am trying to do the show almost 'theatre-in-the-round'

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Dinner For a Play?

Theatre Studies Program Offering Night of Monologues for Food Bank Donations

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You bring dinner, they'll take care of the entertainment.

The Theatre 244 class is presenting *Two Minutes for a Toonie: An Evening of Monologues* which will double as a food bank fundraiser and final exam venue.

Theatre studies coordinator Greg Doran says there's logic in getting his Introduction to Theatre class to perform monologues in front of a live audience for the final exam.

"The reason we're doing this is because theatre is an art form," said Doran. "Without an audience they won't have that experience of being in front of one... It's for the students to understand the dynamic of being in front of an audience. Stepping out in front of an audience is definitely part of being an actor. Otherwise, (the course) is much more theoretical. This makes it much more concrete."

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