



ROGERS CITY COMMUNITY THEATRE

Fall 2011

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Spotlight

Arsenic and Old Lace Opens October 28

Find us on the web:
<http://rcctheatre.org>



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RCCT closes out the 2011 season with Joseph Kesselring's classic comedy, *Arsenic and Old Lace*. The show opens on October 28 at the Rogers City Theatre and runs through November 6. Show times are Friday and Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 adults, \$9 seniors, and \$6 students. They are available in advance at the box office, the Rogers City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Presque Isle Advance. Save money by purchasing a six-pack adult ticket package for only \$50. It's like buying five tickets and getting the sixth one free! Call 989-734-3861 or 989-734-7368 for more information.

Our story takes place in an old Victorian home in Brooklyn, NY, and revolves around sisters Abby (Elaine Heidemann) and Martha Brewster (Charlotte Heidemann), who are as charming as they are homicidal. They believe they are acting selflessly through heartfelt charity by helping lonely men with neither kith nor kin move on to the next life.

Abby and Martha have three nephews. Teddy (Bob Starnes) lives with them and believes he is Teddy Roosevelt. He helps his aunts in their endeavors by digging "locks" for the Panama Canal. Mortimer (Wesley Eagleson) is a dramatic critic for a New York newspaper. He loves his

aunts dearly and will do almost anything to keep them from getting into trouble with the law. Jonathan (Mike Marx) is just as homicidal as his aunts, but is not nearly as altruistic or nice about his "work." On the evening Mortimer discovers his aunts' extra-curricular activities, Jonathan returns to the family fold with a face like Boris Karloff's and his personal plastic surgeon, Doctor Herman Einstein (Karl W. Heidemann).

Mortimer's love interest is Elaine Harper (Riconda Lamb), who lives in the parsonage on the other side of the cemetery with her widowed father, Rev. Dr. Harper (Lawrence Anderson).

Brooklyn would not be complete without its judicial precincts and police who walk a beat. Officer O'Hara (Robert McMaster) has been on the force for 12 years, gathering background for a play he's writing. Officers Brophy (Kelly Crull) and Klein (Melissa Pomranke) also walk the local beat. They know the Brewster sisters well and like them very much. Lieutenant Rooney (David Crull) is their supervisor. He's definitely in charge of the situation, or is he?

Rounding out the cast are Dave Miller as Mr. Gibbs, a prospective boarder at the Brewster house, and Lawrence Anderson as Mr. Witherspoon, Superintendent of Happy Dale Sanitarium, the future home of some of our

Brewsters.

The playwright Joseph Kesselring started out teaching music and performing in plays during his college days at Bethel College in Kansas. During this time he started writing and producing his own plays, ultimately writing twelve during his career. None was as successful and resilient as *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

We invite you to join us for some murderously funny mayhem wrapped up in a comedic farce, and served with a glass of elderberry wine on the side as we follow our cast of characters from a late September afternoon through the following morning. It is as funny and popular today as it was when it was first presented. The following is from a review of the original play, printed in *The New York Times* on January 11, 1941: "... has a light style... is swift, dry, satirical, and exciting... The lines are bright. The story is mad and unhackneyed... always on the verge of the macabre... does not have to stoop to clutching hands, pistol shots or lethal screams..."

—Donna Klein, Director



ARSENIC & OLD LACE

SHOW DATES & TIMES

Evening Performances:

Fri. Oct. 28 & Nov. 4

Sat. Oct. 29 & Nov. 5

7:30 pm (doors open at 7:00)

Matinee Performances:

Sun. Oct. 30 & Nov. 6

2:00 pm (doors open at 1:30)

Director's Corner Donna Klein

Arsenic and Old Lace has always been one of my favorite plays. As director, I feel very lucky to have the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful project. We have a stellar cast. Each member brings his/her best to the table, as is usual with an RCCT production, and that includes the dead bodies!

We have a fantastic team both on stage and off working on this presentation. Karl W. Heidemann is the technical director. He designed a mar-

velous set and is also in charge of set construction, leading a crew that includes Bob Starnes, Lawrence Anderson, Riconda Lamb and Ruth Slone.

Karen Maher is serving as assistant director and stage manager. She has been invaluable asset to this production. Mike Marx is the producer. He and Andrea Shadbolt are also designing the lighting we will use. Mary Hazlett is our set dresser and prop master.

Mary is also designing and constructing our costumes, along with Val Schalk. Many people from the community have allowed us to borrow furniture and props for our set and actors. We are deeply grateful for their contribution to our show.

Now all we need is an enthusiastic audience. Come on out October 28 – November 6 to experience the RCCT version of *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

We'll see you in the dark!



Rogers City Community Theatre Announces 2012 Season

The 2012 season of shows at the Rogers City Community theatre kicks off in January with *Christmas Belles*, a holiday season special, made available when you have the time to enjoy it — after the holidays! Written by Nicholas Hope, author of *The Dixie Swim Club* and *Dearly Beloved*, this rollicking comedy set in Fayo Texas, proves once again that whatever can go wrong with a holiday program will go wrong. But it's sure to give your long cold January a special ring.

Our spring show irreverently realigns Gilbert & Sullivan's famous operetta, HMS Pinafore, to suit the Rogers City stage. *RCT Pinafore* is a ship you'll surely want to board, because you know many of the "sailors" personally. Local liberties taken with the show's signature songs are only lawful because their original authors are dead and gone, and the music has passed into the public domain.

In June, be ready to spend an evening at Judge Judy's Peoples

Night Court. *Contempt of Court* is a hilarious comedy send-up of all those TV court shows, staged as dinner theater. With one performance only, be sure to get your ticket early.

Once again, the Rogers City Community Theatre will host a youth summer theatre program. The 2012 play will be selected this spring. Watch for an announcement in the Advance, and in the spring issue of *Spotlight*.

The grand finale of the 2012 season will be *Lend Me a Tenor*. First performed in London's West End in 1986, and brought to Broadway in 1989, the show received seven Tony award nominations. The fast-moving action includes a cavalcade of overblown egos, grand entrances and quick exits. Mistaken identities thicken the plot, secret lovers lurk behind every door, and innuendoes abound. If you are a fan of madcap, screwball comedy, you won't want to miss this show. Show dates are provided in the panel at right.

Rogers City Community Theatre 2012 Season

Christmas Belles (Comedy)
January 20, 21, 22; 27, 28 & 29

R.C.T. Pinafore (Musical Comedy, Rogers City Style)
April 20, 21, 22; 27, 28 & 29

Contempt of Court (Dinner Theatre) June 23

Summer Youth Theatre (TBA)
August 23, 24, 25 & 26

Lend Me A Tenor (Comedy)
October 26, 27, 28
November 2, 3 & 4





Community Characters: Charlotte and Elaine Heidemann

During high school, Elaine Heidemann recalls participating in two school plays; but her sister Charlotte was so terrified of speaking in public, she dropped out of Speech Class when she had to give (gasp!) a speech. All the more amazing that Charlotte was the first of the sisters to be on stage in Rogers City, when she played Miss Lynch, the High School English Teacher in *Grease*. But once Charlotte got past opening night, she was hooked.

Elaine joined her sister when they both sang in the chorus of *Music Man*. And what fan of Rogers City Theatre can ever forget their roles as the Gemini Twins in *Forum*, complete with orange wigs and bump and grind dance routines?

One of Elaine's favorite roles was Frau Schmidt in *Sound of Music*, because she

was able to successfully channel her German Grandmother. Charlotte has worked in several capacities, playing in the live stage orchestra for *Oklahoma* and *Chicago*, and painting sets for a number of productions.

Both sisters enjoy sharing the stage with other members of their extended family, including brother Karl, as well as niece Heather and numerous grand-nieces and nephews. But according to Charlotte, "everyone involved is like family to us, and that's why it's so much fun." For Elaine, who admits to being "a little bit hammy," an additional thrill is the audience reaction and feedback. Elaine also loves to see actors open up on stage and grow as people. "But you have to be careful," says Charlotte, "or you can end up like Karen Maher. She volunteered to be a dead body for *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and ended up as Assistant Director!"



Charlotte Heidemann (left) and Elaine Heidemann (right) reprise their sister act by playing the sisters Martha and Abby Brewster in fall production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* at our Community Theatre.

When asked what the toughest aspect of the theater has been, Elaine says that getting everyone to work in harmony takes time. Having a spectrum of age groups working on stage together is also a challenge, but Charlotte loved the comment made by high schooler Mike Idalski: "I didn't know old people could have so much fun!" That's what it's all about.

Buy Your Theatre Tickets with a Six Pack

Ticket and Sponsorship Order Form

Yes, I support live and local theatre in Rogers City, as ordered below :

Number:

- _____ Six Pack punch card; six admissions for \$50
- _____ General Admission to *Arsenic & Old Lace* @ \$10 each
- _____ Senior Admission to *Arsenic & Old Lace* @ \$9 each
- _____ Student Admission to *Arsenic & Old Lace* @ \$6 each
- _____ List me as a footlight sponsor @ \$25 for this show
- _____ List me as a spotlight sponsor @ \$50 for this show

Amount:

Sponsor name and/or ticket mailing address:

Total Amount Enclosed:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Make check payable to : Rogers City Community Theatre
 Mail completed form to: 257 North Third Street
 Rogers City, MI 49779



Theater tickets are also available for direct purchase at:

- ▶ Advance Office
- ▶ Rogers City Chamber
- ▶ Theatre Box Office

Note: Season tickets are good for any show performance date.



Yes, you can buy tickets to all our shows at the door, on a space available basis.

Rogers City Community Theatre

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ROGERS CITY COMMUNITY THEATRE

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Rogers City, MI 49779

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Movie & Show Hotline: (989) 734-3861
Web: <http://rcctheatre.org>
Join our group on Facebook!

Newsletter Editor:
Mary Ann Heidemann



See you at the show!

About Our Theatre

The Rogers Theatre was constructed in 1937 as a classic, single screen small town movie palace in the Art Deco style. After a fire in 1947, the theater was re-built and expanded. Serving as a downtown landmark for decades, the theatre was purchased in 2003 by Karl W. Heidemann. The new owner added a stage, theatrical lighting and utility improvements. In 2004, live productions began alternating with first run movies, in a revitalized auditorium. In the summer of 2009, exterior restoration brought back the black and orange tile work of the original theatre façade.

Once the stage was available, an informal group of local theatre fanatics emerged that now constitutes the Rogers City Community Theatre (RCCT). In 2006, a youth summer theatre program began as well. Community cast members have ranged in age from 6 to 94. New theater volunteers are always welcome, both on stage and behind the scenes. Come join the fun!

In 2009, the RCCT incorporated as a Michigan non-profit organization and received IRS approval for federal non-profit status. Contributions are appreciated, and are now tax deductible.