

Little Women stealing the South Simcoe stage

By Susan Stein

There is the book with Louisa Alcott's story Little Women, there was a play and movie on television.

Now there it is presented on the stage of South Simcoe Theatre in Cookstown. This time it is set to the music and lyrics of Canadian composer Jim Betts, with a book by Nancy Early. And let me tell you it is a masterpiece, superb from each and every angle, from the calibre, commitment of actors, stage crew, set, costume designer, lighting, musicians and the unmatched direction of Scott Hurst, the dedication of producer Margery Cruise and musical director Meaghan Hope. For those, not familiar with the story, a short synopsis: The play begins on Christmas Eve in the March home in

Concord, Massachusetts, in 1864 during the Civil War.

The head of the March family is serving the army as chaplain and his "Little Women" - Jo, Meg, Amy, Beth, try to carry on their lives without him. The mother Marmee arrives home to find the four March girls preparing to receive guests for their annual Christmas Eve celebration with food and drinks and the annual Josephine March melodrama. Just when the guests arrive, the often unpleasant Aunt March comes in, announcing that her Christmas present this year will be to adopt one of the March girls, to help with the financial burden of the March family.

It is right away made clear to her by Jo and mother Marmee that this charity is unwanted and the

party ends abruptly.

The March's are invited to the new year's party at their neighbours, the Laurences home. Jo finally get to meet Laurie (Theodore) Laurence, who after the death of his parents, comes home from Europe, needing the guidance of his grandfather.

But grandfather has different plans for this aspiring concert pianist; he wants him to join his firm. Both Laurie and Jo are dreamers and their fast friendship once more is the catalyst for Jo acting out in a rather non-conforming way. Again the family is in disgrace and Aunt March wants to teach them how to behave in Concord society.

During the fast moving scenes, the story unfolds with the four March girls singing, telling their dreams, their ambitions: To be wealthy, to have creative freedom, for status, for a career in writing. In the end, each member of the family achieves some facet of their potential and even Aunt March turns out to have the potential of a warm-hearted, understanding person.



Photo by Susan Stein

Actors from Little Women run through the play during a dress rehearsal last week. The play will run at the South Simcoe Theatre in Cookstown until Dec. 2. For more information, visit www.southsimcoetheatre.com.

It is the songs in Little Women that makes this Canadian musical so enchanting; songs, which transmit the sentiment and the mood of each scene to the audience. Songs, delivered with an elocution, with such wonderful voices, that one can only listen with awe and admiration.

Most of all the number "When Father comes Home" and the song "This Family"

strike a cord, reminding us of Canadian fathers, sons and brothers now serving with the armed forces in far away places.

Let me present to you the cast: Leanne Miller-Josephine - Jo March; Beth Allen - Marmee; Kristen Alary - Meg; Alexandra Potvin - Amy; Reva Timbers - Beth; Mary-Florence Bartley - Aunt March; Andrew

Nikkanen - Laurie; Alex Dvorak - Mr. Brooke; John Ritchie - Mr. Laurence; Natalie Khalil - Sally Gardner; Hayden Bristow - Messenger and the cast: Rose Craig, Valerie Dunne, Kathryn Gillespie, Megh Kavanagh, Hayden Bristow and Dave MacDonald.

Little Women plays until Dec. 2, each Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

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Remembrance Day service hailed successful, and other Legion news

By Ed Collins

Remembrance Day: What a wonderful day it was, the weather was perfect, the service was great, the attendance was the most ever, and the lunch was awesome. I would like to thank everyone who helped to make this the best remembrance service

Branch 547 has had for many years. Emmie Drodge's message was very inspiring, I am sure everyone was as touched by it as I was. Thanks Emmie. The Colour Party, the band, the veterans, the scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Beavers all made it a very special day. It was nice to have so many people laying wreaths for our fallen comrades.

The Poppy Campaign is over for another year. I would like to thank the poppy chairman Bill Hubbard for another very successful year. I also thank the members who stood out in the cold tagging, delivered silent boxes throughout the community, the businesses who allowed us to place the boxes in their stores, the people who graciously supported us, and the schools who invited our members to speak at their remembrance services. It is really nice to see that our community is supporting this, the Legion's main purpose, so fully.

Attention all veterans: We are still looking for veterans in the community who would like to be our guests at our annual dinner, in their honour. The dinner

will be on Dec. 2, starting at 3 p.m., by invitation only. So if you are a veteran, or know of one (doesn't have to be a member) let us know. This is free to all local veterans, and their spouses. We will be sending out invitations, and we will need addresses for non-members. Phone Joyce at 431-9231, or Maggie at 456-7293.

Dinner and dance: I have been hearing rumblings through the grape vine about another Friday night bash. I am only the president, so I am the last to know. I will be sure to let you all know when they, whoever they are, give me more information.

Saturday meat draws: Come on out Saturday afternoons and get in on the meat draw. Everyone is welcome. We have lots of good cuts of meat, and the tickets are only \$2 each. You can't win if you don't enter. Lots of fun, good friends, and comradeship. I think I already said that, but what the hey?

Darts: I am not sure what is going on with the darts. We have been holding them on Mondays at 7 p.m., but there has been talk about changing the day to Sunday afternoon, from 2 to 5 p.m.

Call, our sports officer, Donny Walmbolt, at 456-1176, or me at 456-7293 to find out what is happening. We want to keep up branch darts and need the support, so please call if you are interested.

Thursday euchre: Every Thursday afternoon, starting at 1 p.m., we have regular and bid euchre. Followed by snacks. Everyone is welcome.

Branch Hours: are 2 to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday. New members are especially welcome, so come on in and get your application form the next time you are in the neighborhood.

Hall rentals? Think of us the next time you are planning a party, our newly renovated hall is large enough for 70 people, or two rooms for over a 100.

The lounge is a perfect place to hold informal business meetings, birthday parties, Christmas parties and more, in a nice relaxed atmosphere. The rent is reasonable. A Smart Serve bartender, catering, and a DJ are available for your convenience. Phone 431-9231 or 456-2531 for more information.

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