

The CALLBOARD

September 2010

www.TLTinfo.org

Editor: Connie Clark

WELCOME TO MITFORD

by Robert Inman

Adapted from the Mitford novels by Jan Karon

Mitford, NC – the small mountain town at the center of Jan Karon's bestselling novels – is coming to life on the Workshop stage **September 23-26 and September 30-October 3** in playwright Robert Inman's heartwarming adaptation.

There's Father Tim Kavanagh, the much-loved bachelor rector of Lord's Chapel church in this close-knit mountain community. Around him, long-time friends and parishioners—church secretary Emma, housekeeper Puny, local mayor Esther, a gaggle of eccentric regulars at the Main Street Grill, elderly heiress Miss Sadie Baxter, and jokester Uncle Billy and his dotty wife, Miss Rose, who likes to direct traffic wearing a military trench coat and rubber boots.

Father Tim is absorbed with the life of this town and the pastoring of his lively congregation. But things change radically when Father Tim takes in teenager Dooley Barlow, the unruly orphaned grandson of the church gardener, and again when he falls in love with and weds his new next-door neighbor, Cynthia Coppersmith, who writes and illustrates award-winning children's books.

Life goes on in Mitford with the ups and downs we all see around us every day: laughter shared among friends; joggers passing on the road; injuries, depression, and recovery; young people growing up and heading off to college; job changes; the passing of those dear to us; hopeful futures ahead . . . in other words — life.

Welcome to Mitford marks the directorial debut of theatre veteran Millicent Hunnicutt for a TLT main season production, following her directing and choreographing the wonderfully popular TLT/Tryon Youth Center summer production of *School House Rock Live, Jr.* with a youth cast in 2002. (See page 2 bio.)



The company of *Welcome to Mitford* in rehearsal.

Playwright Robert Inman will be attending the Opening Night performance of *Mitford*. He will also present a program that same afternoon, Sept. 23, at the Lanier Library beginning at 2 p.m.

And the cast? Mike Johnson (Father Tim), Carol Cox (Cynthia), Rebecca Davis (Emma), Mary Meyers (Miss Sadie), Charlie Hunnicutt (Uncle Billy), Cathy Millwood (Miss Rose), Alex Harrelson (Young Dooley), Tucker Lawson (Older Dooley), Chris Farrell (Puny), Pat Komorous (Esther), John Hugill (Bishop Cullen); Peggy Hunnicutt, Greg Wright, and Merwin Tirrell (the gang at the Grill); and Bruce Bartlett, Rody Dayvault, Mimi Alexander, Henry Bright, Ingrid Tart-Remington, Julian Besnard, Alexa Hughes, Kate Riedy, Maggie Riedy, and Jamie Riedy.

The box office opens at the Workshop, 516 S. Trade Street, September 9th, and will then be open Monday-Saturday 10-1; telephone reservations may be left at any time: 828-859-2466.

Join our email list! Get up to date news on auditions, calls for volunteers, production updates, ticket info, etc. Just email tryonlittletheater@gmail.com with "JOIN" in the subject line, and your name in the body of the message.

We are in the Dark!! Do you have electrical expertise? We need our outdoor sign out by the street lit. There was electricity to the sign at one time, and we need someone to take a look and light it up again. Call 828-859-2466 and leave a message if you can help us out on this. Many thanks.

Meet the Director . . .

Millicent Hunnicutt (who originated the role of "Puny" in the premiere production of *Mitford* at the Blowing Rock Stage Company in September 2007) is thrilled to be directing *Welcome to Mitford* for TLT, being able to give back to the community that has given so much to her. Millicent got her start on the Tryon stage as a little princess in *The King & I* with Christine and Stephen Fitch. She then went on to play one of her favorite roles, Little Red Ridinghood, in Stephen Sondheim's stunning *Into the Woods*, directed by Elvin Clark. Amazingly, she turned just 14 years old the day after completing the run of this consummately demanding musical. Clearly bitten by the "theatre bug," she performed with the Foothill Savoyards in their Gilbert & Sullivan productions, and joined the Community Chorus under the direction of Jan Impey. Other Tryon productions include *Camelot*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Music Man*, and many scholarship benefit productions.



Millicent was TLT's Sue Hipps Scholarship recipient in 2000, sending her to Lees McRae College to further her education. There she double majored in Musical Theatre and Dance, graduating in 2004. She has since worked professionally as an actress across the Southeast. Theatres include Blowing Rock Stage Company, Showpalace Dinner Theatre, Broadway Palm, Greenbrier Valley Theatre, Wolfhart Haus Dinner Theatre, Lees McRae Summer Theatre, and our own Flat Rock Playhouse.

Millicent directed and choreographed the TLT/Tryon Youth Center production of *School House Rock Live, Jr.* in 2002, and over the years she has found a new love: teaching children's theatre and dance. An advocate for the arts in the public school system, Millicent spent her 2010 summer at Camp Ton-a-Wandah directing girls ages 6-15 in a play she wrote, and working as head program staff of the Arts Department.

Millicent is excited about her *Mitford* cast and can't wait to share this show about the Jan Karon stories we all love.



A TLT Flashback . . . *The Call Board & Huston* by Connie Clark

Huston Brown. To all who had the pleasure of knowing this charming man, the mere mention of his name will bring smiles. As for the rest of you poor souls, read on!

Huston was the editor of the Call Board for over 20 years, diligently phoning people like me to supply him with articles on this or that coming show complete with story line and cast list, doings of the Board of Directors, plans for special events, celebrations of crews building sets and crews working miracles backstage, costume impossibilities somehow created for a show So we'd turn in our copy, and Huston would take it and shape it as needed to fit the next issue. He also wrote many pieces himself on the myriad doings at TLT.

Before Huston took over, the Call Board was kind of boring, pretty much just a fact sheet of TLT happenings with no personality whatsoever. Once he took over, *AHHH!* People couldn't wait to read the new issue cover to cover.

This is pre-computer, remember. So Huston wrote everything out by hand, and then his copy along with everything turned in to him by others was handed to his daughter, Marianne, who dutifully typed it all out for Huston to give a final once-over in proof-reading, and then the whole was taken to Arledge Printers . . . which had to retype everything again to set the type to print the eagerly awaited next Call Board.

I asked Marianne the other day if Huston would have used a computer to compose the Call Board had one been available to him in those days. Her reply: "Absolutely not! Daddy was old school. Handwritten — that was best. He worked hard on the Call Board out of love for TLT. Mind you, *I* would have loved a computer so I could have fixed typos instantly, and other people could have given me their copy already typed. Ah, well. I loved helping on the four Call Boards a year. It was another way to be part of TLT."

Huston had been known as The Voice of Dixie on the radio in earlier years. He had a robust singing voice, loved music, and was the first one to join in a community sing. He was also shanghaied a few times to appear onstage for TLT: in Lillian Hellman's *Another Part of the Forest* in March 1979, in *Holiday* December 1979 (directed by Marianne, so we know why he caved in on that one), as my Uncle Willie in *The Philadelphia Story* in December 1980, and in *A Streetcar Named Desire* in May 1982. In this last Huston played the doctor from the mental institution who arrives to take Blanche Dubois to be committed. Blanche doesn't know why the man is there — only that she sees an elegant gentleman with gracious manners who offers her his arm to escort her out of the house to a waiting car. An elegant, gracious gentleman? Who but Huston Brown?

MONKY BUSINESS

A Heavenly New Musical Comedy

Book by Todd Mueller & Hank Boland

Music & Lyrics by Gregg Opelka



It's **November 11-14 and 18-21**, and the TLT Workshop welcomes you to Radio Station WGOD to meet the Brothers: Abbot Costello, Brother Brooks, Brother Clarence, Brother Forte, and Brother Lee Love (think about it), and help save the monastery.

Remember *Nunsense* and the Little Sisters of Hoboken, trying to raise money so they can bury the four sisters still in the freezer who died eating tainted vichyssoise made by Sister Julia, Child of God? Well, now it's the boys' turn.

The brothers were given 30 days by the bank to raise \$250,000 to match the offer of a developer wanting to turn their monastery into a casino. Imagine: slot machines in the sanctuary, bar in the bell tower, pool hall in the wine cellar, poker in the rectory, and scantily clad Jezebels dancing where the brothers now lie in bed to sleep!! And that was 29 days ago. So there's a worldwide do-or-die fundraiser tonight on the radio . . . yet, there's sabotage afoot!

Directed by theatre professional Richard Sharkey, the cast is something else: Charlie Hunnicutt, Cory Graves, Lavin Cuddihee, Mark Monaghan, and Jack Carruth. All seasoned actors, terrific singers, and a little insane — hence, perfect for *Monky Business*. With Musical Direction by Pam McNeil (the immortal Sister Pam at the piano for TLT's *Nunsense* years ago).

The box office for *Monky Business* will open October 28th at the Workshop, and be manned Monday-Saturday 10-1; 828-859-2466. Put it down on your calendar to call early for tickets!

Meet the Director . . .

Richard Sharkey comes to us from Tampa, Florida, where he worked in professional theaters and taught theater at the University of Tampa. He was honored as Hillsborough County Artist of the Year in 1997 for 25 years of exceptional theatrical design.

He came to Tampa from Tokyo's Kanto Players to study theater at the University of South Florida. His first "real job" was resident designer at the Equity Showboat Dinner Theater, working with many of the old Names from Hollywood (Gig Young, Elke Sommer, Cesar Romero, Martha Ray) and many more.

Concurrently he help found The Alice People and the Playmakers, both avant-garde professional theaters. He worked at American Stage as resident designer for sets and lights, designing the lighting for their Shakespeare in the Park Series.

He toured with Bits & Pieces Puppet Theater in the late 80's, playing many schools in WNC. In the 90's he was resident designer for StageWorks in Tampa and also designed for the Gorilla Theater.

Richard also directed many shows with various theaters. He started teaching at the University of Tampa in the mid 90's and retired in 2004. Then he moved with his wife, Barbara, to Saluda.

The rest is yet to come . . .

TLT's Board of Directors 2010-2011:

President: Rebecca Davis rebe.moir@aol.com
(h) 828-863-1303 (c) 828-817-5159

VP: Harry Grymes hgrymes@mountain1st.com
(c) 828-817-1022 (w) 828-894-2556

Secretary: Jody McPherson jodymc@windstream.net
(h) 828-859-3031 (c) 864-978-1060

Treasurer: Carol Browning (h) 864-457-5099
carolbrowning@windstream.net (c) 864-580-1000

Lavin Cuddihee lcuddihee@windstream.net
(h) 828-859-7671 (c) 828-817-5302

Madelon Wallace madelonwwe@aol.com
(c) 864-316-3484

Henry Bright brtsnd@aol.com
(h) 828-749-3897 (c) 828-301-7223

Richard Sharkey richardsharky@msn.com
(h) 828-749-3810

Deborah Jean Fitzgerald gannon@windstream.net
(h) 828-894-3423

Cathy Millwood ccmillwood@windstream.net
(h) 864-457-5266

