



# THE PLAYER

VOLUME CVIV, No. 4

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

FEBRUARY 2020

## *Finishing a Decade in Players' Style*

*By Player Allan D. Dick*

'Twas well before Christmas and all through the week, every show was rehearsing, and hoping to peak. Then Folic night what to our wondering eyes should appear? But three gallant one-acts to accompany our beer (Mea culpas to Clement Moore). The evening of this 639<sup>th</sup> Frolic began with the usual welcome – not by our illustrious president (who was out of town). Rather, by the Vice President of Administration, **Mickey Champion**, who flawlessly delivered the usual messages and then introduced **Bob Lee** to lead us in the singing of *The Players Song*, which he did with great enthusiasm (It was his first time doing so).

Then it was off to the first of the evening's three shows, ***Cheech & Chong's Christmas***, a comic skit built around the classic Cheech and Chong Christmas standard (?), *Santa Claus and His Old Lady*, adapted and created by a **Nick Stojkovski**, **Tom Ball**, **Sean Fisher**, **Tom Starynychak**, the latter two also identified as the show's directors. **Nick Stojkovski** portrayed Cheech Marin, with **Tom Ball** playing Tommy Chong in the present. The show attempted to implement some of Players new-technology with the full-size movie/video screen. But with jack-of-all-trades Nick on stage (and not in the light/sound booth), there were a few tech snags, showing a clip of the actual Cheech and Chong movie. But, it's Players and it seemed appropriate for the show.

Once past that, the laughs were easy – and intended. After setting the scene, and the cannabis-based humor, we flashed back to a more youthful setting, where **Kiernan Babcock** appeared as a younger Cheech, and **Spencer Channel** as young Chong. **Matt Ochab** then got into the act as Santa, with the scene returning to the present for the *Santa and His Old Lady* routine, which Nick and Tom had pretty well down pat. A fun way to begin the evening.

Next up was a bit of something old, something new. "Old" in that ***Sherlock Holmes and a Case of Revenge*** was (by this writer's recollection and account) the third Sherlock show directed by **Bob O'Leary** (who also admirably produced this evening's Frolic) in recent years, involving the same core group of actors. "New", because not only was it a different Sherlock play, director Bob took some liberties with the script, writing in a few new roles to keep the gang together.

That gang consisted of **John O'Hara** as Holmes, **Gordon Price** as Dr. Watson, **Jim Callahan** as Professor Moriarty, **Ron Miotke** as Yusef, **Bill Volz** as Elizabeth, and **Tim Flintoff**, showing off his comedy chops in an expanded Mrs. Hudson role (Sherlock's housekeeper). A pre-curtain scene was cleverly added to introduce and justify the ghostly additions to the cast. The director later confided that it was the single malt scotch that made them invisible (I admit I did not pick up on that).

*Continued on page 3.*

### **Mark Your Calendar**

Be sure to mark your calendar for these important upcoming dates:

Feb. 1, 5:30 pm..... Pre-Frolic Dinner  
 Feb. 1, 8:30 pm..... December Frolic  
 Feb. 3, 5:30 pm..... Traffic Hour  
 Mar. 13, 8:00 pm ..... Balduck Mtn. Ramblers  
 Mar. 14, 8:00 pm ..... Balduck Mtn. Ramblers  
 Mar. 28, 6:30, 8:45 pm..... Cabaret 313

### **Players Caricature Book**

In the wake of our successful exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum, The Players has published a book named appropriately, **PLAYERS ART & MEMOIRS**. It has most of The Players' caricatures from over the years, chapters on the history of the club, as well as a nice recap of the museum exhibit. Included are many memoirs of current and past members. We uncovered several letters of founding and early members that are as informative as they are hilarious. This remarkable book is available in hardcover at a **low low price of \$65**. It continues to be on sale at Frolics with an initial limited run. Interest in the book will allow us to reprint more on demand.

### **Cabaret 313**

Carole J. Bufford returns to **Cabaret 313** with a brand-new show exploring the monumental change in the musical landscape from 1965-75. With music made famous by Cher, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Simon & Garfunkel, Dusty Springfield, Otis Redding, Linda Ronstadt and more, *Come Together: When the 60s Met the 70s* explores the ever-changing music industry in one of the most exciting, controversial and impactful eras in musical history.

- 1st Performance: Doors open at 6 p.m., show at 6:30 p.m.
- 2nd Performance: Doors open at 8:15 p.m., show at 8:45 p.m.

Tickets are \$125 for Preferred Admission, \$60 for General Admission, and \$25 for 40 & Younger and can be purchased at [cabaret313.org](http://cabaret313.org).

### **Roof and Air Conditioning Replacement**

Our **Beautiful Lady** requires some tender loving care. Many of you are aware that our 30-year-old roof and air conditioning system have been causing problems recently, most visibly manifested by roof leaks over the Founder's Room. The Board of Governors believes we will have to tackle this project in the next year and a half.

Thanks to the generosity of many members, the Endowment Committee has been able to replace the stage rigging and the building's boiler. Right now, we have just under \$80,000 set aside for the roof and air conditioning project. Preliminary estimates are that this project will cost \$150,000.

If you have not yet made a pledge to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Fund, we could use your help. Your contribution will help us keep our **Beautiful Lady** in good repair as she approaches her 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Endowment Committee meetings are open to anyone. If you would like to come, the next meeting is at Bill Champion's home at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

If you need a pledge form or have questions, contact Players **Bill Robinson** (248-341-5053, [WRobinson@ATATitle.com](mailto:WRobinson@ATATitle.com)) or **John Daly** (734-223-2850 or [JohnLDaly@comcast.net](mailto:JohnLDaly@comcast.net)).

### **Balduck Mountain Ramblers**

The Balduck Mountain Ramblers will return to the Historic Players Playhouse on Friday, March 13th at 8:00 pm for the annual St. Patrick's concert and fundraiser. The concert sold out the last two years, so to accommodate demand a second show has been added on Saturday, March 14th!

Admission is just \$35, which includes refreshments and a light snack. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Players Endowment Fund. Contact the Office soon to make reservations.

*Finishing a Decade in Players' Style, continued from page 1.*

But, the “gang” cruised through another Sherlockian deduction (with Watson’s help) to solve yet another mystery – this one focused on revenge. It was clear that the cast enjoyed their roles (and maybe some of the single malt?) Another success for Bob O.

The playbill closed with another oldie, which director **Glenn Scoles** fondly recalls being a part of in 1988! ***The Scheme of the Driftless Shifter*** had Players written all over it. The show centered on the efforts of a bumbling cast and crew’s efforts to produce a classic melodrama. But, from the premature opening of the act curtain, to misplaced sound cues, to wigs coming off, to goofy special effects to confusing exits and, of course, several missed or confused lines, this was pure Players’ fare! It made one wonder just how many rehearsals did this take to “perfect”?

The meager plot, involving the Poppington household, father Henry humorously portrayed by **Kiernan Babcock**, focused on the budding romance of daughter Petunia, executed to perfection by **Jared TenBrink**, with her seemingly penniless suitor, Victor Strongheart, **William Wu** returning to the Players stage. As you might expect, her father will have none of this. The play opens with the Poppingtons’ maid, Gladys, scurrying about setting the stage (so to speak) and periodically appearing in her efforts to assist, **Bob Lee** surely must have enjoyed that bumbling role. The other member of the household was daughter Marigold, **John Sobiesiak** (we’ll be seeing more of him), whose appearance remind me of Tim Flintoff’s Mrs. Hudson.

This being a melodrama, it calls for an occasional dramatic piano accompaniment. Enter **Alinuru Yasin** as the mock piano player. Stage manager **Mark Habel**, and stage hands **Dave Clark** and **Tom Starynychak**, made goofy cameos in attempts to correct scenes one way or another, as did director **Glenn Scoles**. Everyone got into the act, including the more-than-ever valuable Prompter, **Dennis Leroy**.

*Continued on page 7.*

## ***Keep it Clean Gents***

The Players does not have a full-time janitorial staff. We do, however, have regular visitors, including organizations that have paid good money to rent our facilities or are considering doing so.

If you are at the Playhouse for a rehearsal or for other reasons, please clean up after yourselves. That includes properly emptying ashtrays and wastebaskets and washing mugs or other dishes. If you don’t know how to operate the dishwasher, please don’t try. Instead, rinse your dirty dishes and leave them in the sink. Don’t just leave an inch of beer in a mug waiting for the rats to drink it.

Access to fire exits, *including the basement access to the area under the stage*, must be kept clear. Likewise, we are legally obligated to provide unimpeded access to the DTE meters in the basement. Please do not pile props or furniture there.

Please talk to V.P. of Production **Andrew Ballantine** or Stage Manager **Nick Stojkovski** before adding to our ever growing collection of props and furniture. This way, we can keep the basement and stage clean and safe.

Directors, actors and producers: You are responsible for returning props to the prop room, cleaning out the dressing rooms and makeup room, and returning furniture to its proper storage location.

### **THE PLAYER, VOLUME CVIV, NO. 4, FEBRUARY 2020**

**THE PLAYER** is published more or less monthly from October to May with an occasional summer issue. The views expressed herein are those of the respective authors and/or editor, whoever they may be in any given month, and not necessarily those of The Players. Comments may be made to, and back issues may be available from, the Office, (313) 259-3385, or send an inquiry to [Office@playersdetroit.org](mailto:Office@playersdetroit.org). **THE PLAYER** is available online at [www.playersdetroit.org](http://www.playersdetroit.org).

### ***Pre-Frolic Dinner***

The February Pre-Frolic Dinner will be held at *The Rattlesnake Club* at 300 River Place Dr., Detroit.

The festivities will begin with cocktails in the bar at about 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 or so. The price is only \$43, including tax and tip (Cocktails are extra, of course).

Please call or email the office to make your reservations now.

### ***Did You Ever Want To...***

- Prepare a Frolic Supper?
- Write a Frolic Review
- Lead us in The Players Song?
- Learn to be a Frolic Producer?

All of these and more are possible for any Player, regardless of how long you have been a member. Some things are easier than others, and being a Producer for a Frolic takes mentoring and tutoring. But like most things at The Players, it's not rocket surgery. And frankly, we need more new or younger trainees.

If this interests you, please email Player **Allan Dick**, who chairs the Producer Committee and is more than willing to share and instruct. Likewise, if you think you might have the chops for singing *The Players Song*, contact Allan. The Producer selects the singer each month.

How about writing a Frolic review? If you read THE PLAYER, (Shame on you if you don't. Players **Mickey** and **Bill Champion** put a lot of work into it each month!) you read the review of last month's frolic. This is a great opportunity to express your appreciation for the hard work that goes into each Frolic, and perhaps express your sense of humor a bit. If this interests you, again, contact Allan Dick.

And finally, if you would like to take a turn in the Players kitchen, DO NOT contact Allen Dick. He doesn't handle that. Instead, contact Player **Matthew Turnbull**, who chairs the Frolic Supper Committee, and lines up the chefs for each month's post-Frolic meal.

### ***Did You Know?***

Did you know that you can search for Frolics by name, actor, director or Frolic number on The Players website? You can also search through back issues of THE PLAYER by typing in a date range. For example, by searching for Frolics directed by Player **Bill Robinson**, one discovers that Player Robinson has been responsible for such artistic gems as *Thunderbird*, *Frontier Accountant*, *Wasting Away*, *The Footsteps of Doves*, and *The Rewrite* in just the past five years.

In sum, the accessible database contains enough trivia to make Player **Will Dawson** proud. "I'll take May contenders for \$1,000, Alex."

So, just how does one gain access to this treasure trove of trivia? First, go to: [www.playersdetroit.org](http://www.playersdetroit.org). Next, click the "Member Login" link at the top of the page. The username is "**players**" and the password is "**fr0llc**". (Note, the "o" is a zero and the "i" is an exclamation point). At the bottom of the members page, click on "search for a frolic."

### ***Our Dress Code***

Part of what makes The Players unique is our traditional dress code. From the inception of our organization, Players have been required to wear "black tie" (a tuxedo) at our Frolics and Invitationals. While guests are encouraged to do the same, a dark business suit is acceptable. Tuxedos can be purchased for surprisingly low prices – often less than the cost of a rental. Members are responsible for informing their guests of our policy (and for paying any guest fees.)

The Players also maintains a tuxedo bank of tuxedos that may be loaned to guests. Sizes are limited, so it would be best to plan ahead and see what is in the basement. If you have grown, shrunk or simply tired of your current tux, consider putting your tux in the bank.



### ***Be Our Guest!***

This year, the number of guests attending our frolics may have reached an all-time high (at least in recent history). Inviting a guest to attend a frolic is an important tool in our membership recruiting efforts. In fact Article VI of our By-laws provides that invitations are generally "limited to prospective members."

As Players, we are all responsible for ensuring that our membership base remains strong. It goes without saying that a strong membership base is essential to our financial health. It is also essential to our ability to put on our monthly frolics without having to rely on the same few Players every month. When you bring a guest, please follow up with an invitation to apply for membership. Applications are available in the lobby.

While joining our historic organization is not right for everyone, most guests are flattered by the invitation. Guests may not be aware of how reasonable our dues are. They may also not be aware that it is not necessary to appear on stage, with or without a dress.

Take a look at the banners that adorn the theater. They represent a cross section of the skills required to put on a show, including writing, music, art, financial acumen, and set design and construction. In other words, there is something for everyone (I'm not sure what happened to the bartending banner). For more information, talk with Membership chair **Chuck Steltenkamp** or any member of the Board of Governors.

#### ***Board of Governors***

President.....	Tim Cordes
VP Administration.....	Mickey Champion
VP Production.....	Andrew Ballantine
Secretary.....	Nick Skojkovski
Treasurer .....	Matt Maul
Governor.....	Sean Fisher
Governor.....	Stu Johnson
Governor.....	Matt Ochab
Governor.....	Tom Ball

### ***100 Years Ago at The Players***

The Players performed their January Frolic on January 17, 1920 at the Arts and Crafts Theatre in Detroit (Players seasons started in December back then and included a January Frolic). The evening featured a play written by and starring legendary player A.L. Weeks, and stage management by Loren Robinson.

## **January Frolic**

***Saturday, January 17th, 1920***

**ARTS AND CRAFTS PLAYHOUSE**

## **21 Players**

It would indeed be an incomplete monthly Frolic of the Players if Player James M. Couzens were absent. Mayoring a city like Detroit is some job—ye Players—and its some accomplishment to be able to make the Mayor forget his troubles and his triumphs for three or four hours once a month when he's with us at our Frolic.



### ***Important Numbers***

OFFICE:	313.259.3385
FAX:	313.259.0932
EMAIL:	<a href="mailto:office@playersdetroit.org">office@playersdetroit.org</a>
BOARD EMAIL:	<a href="mailto:bog@playersdetroit.org">bog@playersdetroit.org</a>

*Finishing a Decade in Players' Style, continued from page 3.*

But, now back to the plot. Petunia is kidnapped by Rex Holmes, **Todd Storrs**, who is tracked down (and Petunia recovered) by Victor Strongheart.

Victor has since become president of the local bank (rags to riches?), which now makes him quite acceptable to dad. As this all gets sorted out, more or less, we find that Rex Holmes (no relation to Sherlock) is a pseudonym adopted by Victor's long missing ex-con father. Who cares? Victor is now substantial and all's well that ends well (Hmm, not a bad title for a show). Glenn and cast obviously enjoyed themselves and didn't need to worry too much about lines. The special affects (repeated snow in the face) added to the frivolity – a fitting closer.

Ah, but the evening was not quite over, beginning with Coney dogs a la **Turnbull (Matt and friends)**, followed by a truly off-beat afterglow – the beatnik version of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas (A Visit from St. Nicholas), presented by **Todd Storrs**, a cool yule dude, accompanied by **Andy Ballantine** on the bongos. While **Jim Turnbull's** Selkirk Christmas was missed, this was a clever, delightful replacement. Kudos to all who contributed, including the aforementioned producer, stage managers **Tom Starynychak** and **Dave Clark**, back-stagers **Ted Groustra**, **Andrew Ballantine** and **Nick Stojkovski**, boys in the booth (sound and light), **Eric Christian**, **Adam Geffen** and **Ted Groustra**, and last but not least, **Henry Nelson** for prepping the "house", stocking the sodas and water, etc. and all the things we take for granted. Happy 2020!



# FROLIC 640

February 1, 2020

8:30 p.m.

Produced by Player Timothy Flintoff

## THE ROOF TOP LESSONS

By Rich Orloff

Directed by Player Tom Conley

*Setting: Roof top terrace of a large building*

The Teacher ..... Player Glenn “Fuzz” Corey

The Jumper ..... Player Andrew Ballantine

The Good Samaritans ..... Players Chuck Steltenkamp & Steve Flum

The Bystanders ..... Players Mike Frank & Tom Conley

*The cast is composed of former Troy High School students and teachers.*

## The Save

By Dano Madden

Directed by Player Matt Turnbull

*Setting: Urban city little league diamond*

Courtney ..... Player Shane Henry

Julie ..... Player Richard Yeager-Stiver

Zender ..... Player Matt Turnbull

## THE PHILADELPHIA

By David Ives

Directed by Player Eric Christian

*Setting: New York diner*

Al ..... Luke Hodgeson\*

Mark ..... Perry Quarker\*

Waitress ..... Player Brian Bawol

*\*Indicates WSU Hilberry Theater Intern*

## AFTERGLOW

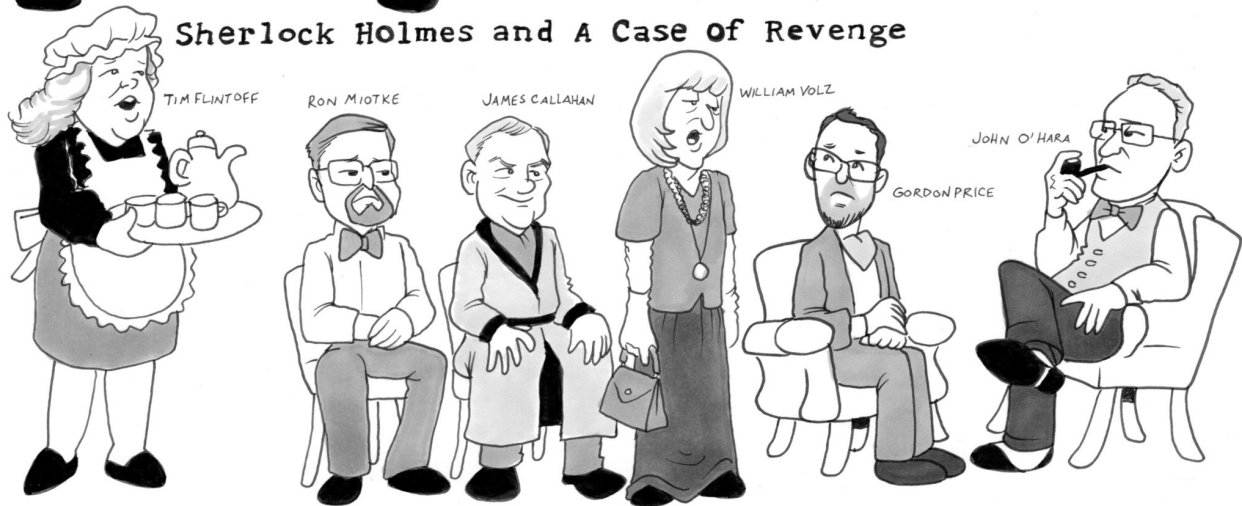
# FROLIC 639

DECEMBER 7, 2019



## Cheech and Chong's Christmas

### Sherlock Holmes and A Case of Revenge



### The Scheme of The Driftless Shifter

