

'South Pacific' production romantic, rousing

By WALTER SPEARMAN
DTH Contributor

The two romances that turn *South Pacific* into "some enchanted evening" were so well presented at the Village Dinner Theater's return engagement of the popular Rogers and Hammerstein musical this month that the pleased audience roused from any possible after-dinner lethargy and burst into spontaneous applause time after time.

Emile de Becque, the mature Frenchman who has found peace on a South Pacific island and falls gloriously in love with a pretty young nurse from Little Rock (immortalized by Mary Martin), is a difficult role to make convincing; but Director Lyle Barton insured the success of *South Pacific* by bringing in the talented Mitchell Gregg, a handsome, white-haired veteran of numerous New York plays, a lead role in the soap opera, *The Edge of Night*, and a singer in various New York clubs. Gregg was a hit from his first entrance: suave, elegant, warm, lovable — and obviously in love. His strong, appealing voice was just right for such songs as "Some Enchanted Evening," "This is How It Feels," and "This Nearly Was Mine." And when he did an hilarious take-off on Nurse Nellie Forbush's "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out Of My Hair," he brought down the house.

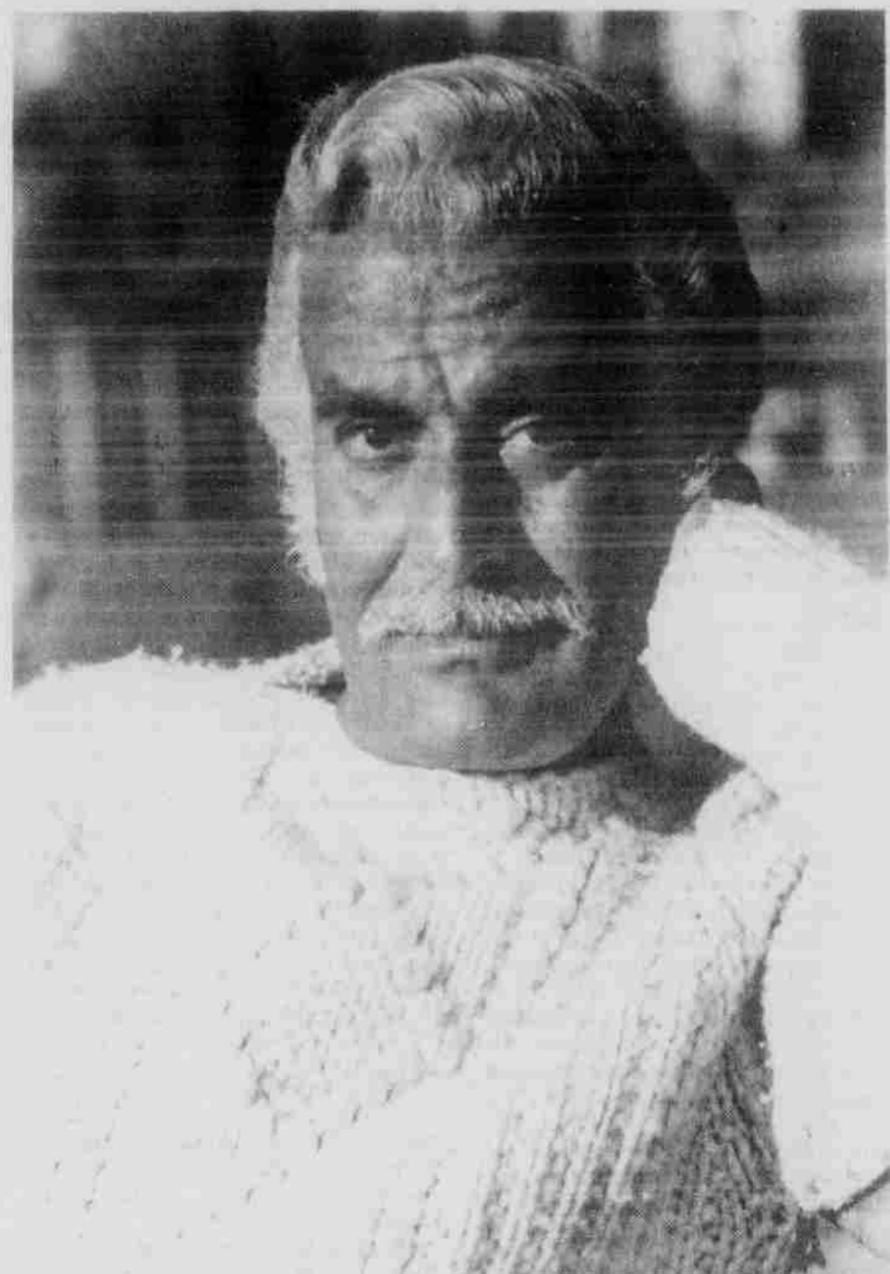
Mary Jane Hoffman, who appeared at the Village as Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, made an attractive romantic mate for de Becque but had some trouble in her scenes when she was not supported by the charismatic Mitchell Gregg. Her best moments came in her show-stopper "Honey Bun," when she was dressed in a sailor suit to entertain the troops.

South Pacific's second romantic duo is composed of young Lieutenant Joseph Cable (played engagingly by C. Edward George, Billy Bigelow of *Carousel* and Curley of *Oklahoma*) and the lovely young native girl, Liat, played with shy charm by Carrie Rubio, who has appeared in such movies as *Taxi Driver* and *The Next Man*. Their restrained love scenes in "Happy Talk" and "Younger Than Springtime" touched the sensibilities of the audience and gave the evening an added depth. Mr. George's rendition of "Carefully Taught" in which he emphasizes the social significance of the play, was particularly impressive.

Much of the welcome comedy in *South Pacific* comes from the bawdy maneuvers of Bloody Mary, played with wit and warm humor by Mary Feendy, and the bold shenanigans of Luther Billis, the enterprising sailor who sells grass skirts, rents boats, stows away on planes and in general proves diverting all the way as interpreted by the talented Alan Gould. When Gould dressed up in grass skirt, rouged cheeks and coconut-shell breasts for the Big Show of servicemen and nurses, he even manages to look all too much like the rest of the chorus girls, no show-stoppers themselves. Morton Banks and William Worster add gruff maturity in their roles of commanding officers.

And a warm word of praise must be added for Serena Ehardt of Raleigh, a winsome native girl and Emile De Becque's daughter. She and her brother sing "Dites-moi" effectively for Emile and his girl Nellie.

All in all, *South Pacific* sounds enchanting "across a crowded room," provides the basis for an evening of "happy talk" and makes the audience willing to sing "I'm in love with a wonderful show."



The role of Emile de Becque, the Frenchman who falls in love with a girl from Little Rock in *South Pacific*, is played by Mitchell Gregg in the Village Dinner Theatre's production of the classic Rogers and Hammerstein musical.

Legends surround Gimghoul's stone castle

Mystery and intrigue!

By PAUL TESKE
DTH Contributor

Students in jogging class have seen it, others may or may not have ever seen it. At the end of residential Gimghoul Road is a looped drive which reveals a medieval stone castle. Learning about this legend of Chapel Hill requires some historical searching and perspective, particularly due to its mysterious nature.

In 1889, a law student named Wray Martin founded the Order of Gimghouls at UNC. It seems that Martin was a dreamer in the Romantic tradition and he spent his spare time walking out to Piney Prospect and filling his mind with scenes of the chivalrous era of Arthurian knighthood.

The group originally had its lodge on the corner of Rosemary and Boundary streets in Chapel Hill. However, Martin had a conception of an ideal meeting place, called Hippol Castle, which he envisioned existing in the part of Battle Park that he called Glandon Forest.

In the early 1920's, the order was given a chance to purchase 94 acres in Battle Park for \$4,500. There were problems raising this sum so the property was divided up for residential building.

Plans were drawn up for the new structure in 1923. The building committee made the following suggestions: "fireproof; of rough stone; of unique design; medieval and mysterious looking; containing dance hall, bedrooms, kitchen, dressing rooms, club room, observation tower, terrace, and unusual and attractive 'mystic' features."

The old lodge was sold and a former UNC Gimghoul, N.C. Curtis retained as the architect. Construction was begun with the Gimghouls doing much of the work themselves. Steel roof beams and concrete columns in the walls were used for support. French masons were hired to do the rough stone work. The total cost of the castle was about \$36,000 including furnishings. Included in these costs were leaded glass windows, handwrought fixtures, plaster ceilings, copper flashings, oak doors and hardwood floors. It

was ready for use in 1927.

The physical structure of the castle consists of two large towers, one of which reaches 50 feet high. There is a huge meeting hall which measures 55 by 35 feet and is 20 feet high. It contains a 10-foot diameter round table.

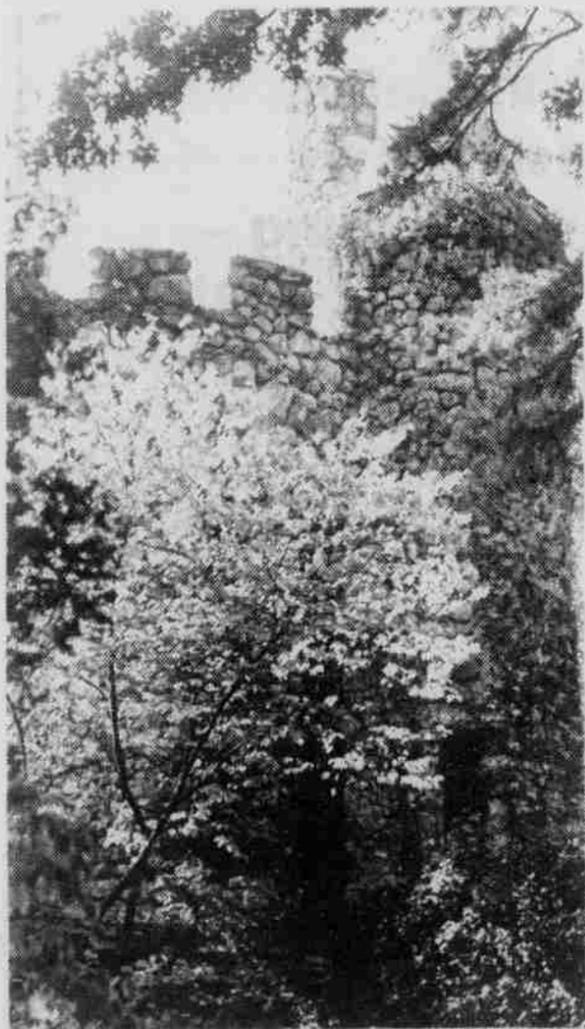
The daily inhabitants of Hippol Castle, which came to be commonly known as Gimghoul, have been families who are associated with the Order. They take care of the castle and pay a small rent for its use.

As private property, trespassing is not allowed on the Gimghoul land. However, there is a path by which lawful access can be made to a semi-circular seat which provides an excellent view of the country-side towards Durham. This was constructed at the same time as the castle. It was built using rocks that had been piled up by students, due to Dr. K. P. Battle's suggestion that everyone who visited there contribute. An inscription on the seat reads, "Erected by the Order of Gimghouls in Memory of Kemp Plummer Battle 1831-1919 Who Knew and Loved these Woods as no one Else".

Another legend associated with the castle is that of Peter Dromgoole. He was a UNC student who supposedly was killed in a duel over a woman, Miss Fannie, at the location of the castle in 1833. According to the story, he is buried under a rock which is in front of the castle's vestibule. The rust stains on Dromgoole rock are said to be from his blood. In addition, the legend states that Miss Fannie, afflicted with a broken heart, came out to this very spot and died, to be buried with Peter.

The Order of Gimghouls is still an exclusive, secret society at the University. Its members are revealed each year in the Yackety Yack. Previous members include J.C. Ehringhaus, William Rand Kenan, Frank Porter Graham and William Donald Carmichael.

Anyone can jog by the castle, on Gimghoul Road off Country Club Road, or go sit at Battle's seat and fantasize about past legends, as Wray Martin had done. Remember that the castle proper is private and obey the "No Trespassing" signs. Who knows, your roommate may be a Gimghoul.



Gimghoul Castle, one of Chapel Hill's more mysterious landmarks, is well-known in these parts for its secret society. Legends of foul play and ghosts are also popular. The first Gimghouls held their first meeting there in 1927.