

Surprise Ending Of 'Mousetrap' Thrills Playhouse Audience

"The Mousetrap" a mystery by Agatha Christie, the latest performance by the Parkway Playhouse, was well received by a rather small audience Friday night, but with a large group for the remaining three nights of its showing. The mystery, while not of the spine-tingling variety, keep the audience keenly interested and moved along fast and smoothly.

The action takes place in a country inn or boarding house, located in the vicinity of London, known as Monkswell Manor, which had recently been inherited by a newly married couple — Mollie and Giles Ralston (played by Amelia Penland and Sal Giacchi). As the story opens we find Mollie and Giles on the stage, very apprehensive as to the success of their venture and wondering whether or not their guests for the night would be able to get through because of a wild snowstorm which had been raging throughout the day. Giles was quite perturbed as to whether or not they would be able to collect since the guests were all strangers to them. Mollie suggests that their baggage be retained if they were unable to pay, and their ability to pay might be indicated by the weight of their luggage.

However, despite the storm the guests begin to put in their appearance. First, a "kook" and somewhat ludicrous architect named Christopher Wren, played by Bill Cwikowski; next a cranky and complaining lady jurist — Mrs. Boyle, played by Margaret Sharpe. The third guest to appear was a typically English, breezy, retired

Army officer Major Metcalf played by Lauren Woods. Fourth, came Miss Casewell, a hard, cynical "spinster", whose identity remained a secret until the end — played by Diana Lawrence. Then appears on the scene an unexpected guest in the person of Mr. Paravicini, an Italian, with all the gestures and broken English, played by Armando Cortardi, who claims that his car overturned in a snowbank, forcing him to seek shelter for the night.

The story evolves around a mysterious murder which has taken place in the neighborhood — one Mrs. Lyons matron of a "poor farm" or home for children being the victim. She seems to have been a very unsavory character who mistreated the children, even to the point of murdering a child in the past, the child being one of two brothers and a sister committed to the home by one of the guests — the querulous and complaining lady judge — Mrs. Boyle. As news of the murder continue to come over the radio, the police department call to say that they are sending a man to the Inn to do some investigating and give protection to the inn keeper and guests. This seems to throw a scare into everyone, with each accusing the other — the principal suspect being Christopher Wren, the timid young architect. In the midst of all this appears Detective Sergeant Trotter, played by Barry Dudley, scaring them out of their wits, and leaving the audience suspecting each character in turn, but never in the world the Sergeant himself. To make a

long story short, the Sergeant turns out to be the murderer. After questioning each one privately he comes to Mollie Ralston, who it develops was a teacher at the asylum where Trotter along with his brother and sister had been committed (the brother having died from mistreatment). Mollie, who is supposed to be the second victim, is rescued in the nick of time. The story is now out in the open — the hard-boiled Miss Casewell is Trotter's long lost sister, and there is a tearful reunion. It is presumed that Trotter is carted off to the "bokey" or "booby hatch" — the latter being the most likely place and the guests were able to relax and get out from under their terror.

Next to the cast: Amelia Penland (daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Max Penland of Burnsville and a music major at UNC-G) did a beautiful job as Mrs. Ralston; our only criticism being that it was hard to reconcile such a young girl teaching at the institution in question years prior to the time of the story. It seems to us that a middle-aged, or at least older looking person would have been more in character. Sal Giacchi as Mollie's husband was very convincing, although he, too, it seems to us should have been made up to look the part of an older person.

In our opinion, Bill Cwikowski as Christopher Wren, the very timid, effeminate boy, who had been forced into architecture by his ambitious mother, played the most convincing role. He acted so guilty one was forced to believe he was the murderer, although it was

hard to conceive such a timid soul playing the role of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

The lady judge, Mrs. Boyle, played by Margaret Sharpe, was so obnoxious that it was easy to conceive of her throwing children to the lions, and one was almost hoping she would get what was coming to her, and glad to see her scared out of her wits, perhaps for the first time in her life.

Parkway Playhouse's old timer, Lauren Woods, turned in his usual fine performance as Major Metcalf, and, at least from our point of view, was the only person not suspect.

Miss Casewell, the long lost sister, played by Diana Lawrence, as the "mystery woman" turned in an admirable job of the rather small part she played.

Mr. Paravicini, as the voluble Italian played by Armando Cortardi, was a joy to behold, with his extravagant Latin gestures and authentic Latin accent, along with his realistic laughter. From this writer's point of view, he was one of the prime suspects, but turned out to be the typical sunny, care-free Italian playboy.

Then comes the fine performance of Detective Sergeant Trotter played by

Barry Dudley, who had everyone completely fooled, but, as is usual in all mysteries turned out to be the villain.

It was a very fine performance throughout and deserving of a much larger audience than turned out for this play.

We would not close this review without a word of praise for Leslie Branham, Designer and Technical Director. Stephen Edelstein, Lighting Assistant, and James Kuntz, Scenery Assistant for an almost perfect setting.

Neither would we forget our old friend Gordon Bennett, who did such a superb job of directing the play. Welcome back to Burnsville, Gordon!

By: Miss Zoe Young

SYMPTOMS OF NEED

Heart attacks are almost unheard of among patients treated by a CARE-MEDICO hospital team in Santa Rosa de Copan, Honduras, probably due to the lack of animal protein in their diet and their physical labor. Malnutrition and intestinal parasites are the most common ills seen by the American doctors and nurses, whose work is supported by contributions to MEDICO, a service of CARE, New York 10016.

Garden Club Meets With Mrs. Bailey

The Burnsville Garden Club held its annual garden picnic at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Grady Bailey on last Friday evening. Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. W. A. Y. Sargent and Mrs. Dawson Briggs were hostesses and were assisted by Miss Hope Bailey.

The covered dish supper was served from a beautifully appointed table in the flower garden, surrounded by beds of roses, lilies, delphinium, snapdragons and many other seasonal flowers.

The food was, as always, bountiful, varied and delicious. It was enjoyed by the members and a number of guests including the husbands. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. D. R. Fouts, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Proffitt, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Proffitt, Dr. and Mrs. Paul Fall, Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson Briggs, Dr. and Mrs. W. A. Y. Sargent, Mrs. R. Y. Tilson, Mrs. E. R. Gillespie, Mrs. Troy Ray, Mrs. J. A. Watson, Miss Hope Bailey and Mr. and Mrs. Bailey.

Special guests of the club were Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Coletta and Mrs. W. F. Grassmuck.



A Great Green Vegetable

Do you give green vegetables the importance they deserve in family meals? Small Brussels sprouts, cooked until just tender, and seasoned with a piquant sauce, make a marvelous accompaniment to beef, pork, lamb or chicken.

DEVILED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 tsp. prepared mustard
- 1 tsp. Lea & Perrins Worcestershire
- 1 Tbsp. chili sauce or catsup
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Melt butter in small saucepan. Add remaining ingredients and stir until smooth. Pour over cooked and drained Brussels sprouts, or pass in a bowl. This recipe makes enough sauce for two pounds of sprouts.

POLLARD'S DRUG STORE

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