

When 'Harvey' Comes To Kings Mountain Little Theatre

Story & Photos

By Tom McIntyre

Lot'sa Fun Is In Store.....

It happened early one evening as Elwood P. Dowd was strolling down Fairfax. He heard a voice that said, "Good evening, Mr. Dowd."

"I'm afraid you have the advantage of me. You know my name, but I don't know yours."

"What name do you like?"
"Harvey. I've always been partial to the name Harvey," Elwood said.
"By a strange coincidence that happens to be my name," said the stranger.

Of course people passing by were a little disturbed at witnessing this meeting between Elwood and Harvey because Harvey is invisible. Not only invisible, but he isn't human. Harvey is a six foot one and one-half inch Pooka (or rabbit).

From that point on Elwood and Harvey are inseparable. Their favorite pastime is visiting the local bars, talking with and buying drinks for new friends they make.

Elwood's sister Veta and her daughter, Myrtle Mae, are becoming very upset with Elwood. They think he has flipped his lid and there's only one thing that can be done for such a person — commitment to an asylum for treatment.

Chumley's Rest is such a place and from there the rest of the characters in "Harvey" come on the scene to present a perfectly delightful evening of community theatre.

The new Kings Mountain Little Theatre production opens Fri., Mar. 4 at 8 p. m. for five performances under the direction of Joe Ann McDaniel.

"Harvey" is a multi-level story in which the mild mannered Elwood and his invisible friend go about, first upsetting all about them, and secondly, soothing them to a point that they can have faith in their own lifelong dreams.

And strangely enough, when it looks bleakest for Elwood, it is a friendly cab driver who provides the information for final action.

"I've been bringing guys like Mr. Dowd out here for years," E. J. Lofgren says. "On the way out they laugh and sing and once in awhile we'll stop and watch the sunset. Then they get a shot of that stuff here and they change. They get mean and grouchy. And they don't tip anymore."

But, will Veta be in time to stop the injection Elwood has willingly

submitted to in Dr. Sanderson's office?

That's for you to discover when you see the show.

"Harvey" will be presented at Park Grace Auditorium at 8 p. m. Friday and Saturday, March 4, 5 and 11, 12. And on a special matinee Sun., Mar. 6 at 3 p. m. The senior citizens have been invited to attend the matinee at \$1 per ticket and during the intermissions the Swinging Mountaineers Senior Citizens Band will perform.

The three-act comedy boasts a large cast with seven newcomers to the local community theater among the veterans.

Cathy Moretz, wife of city planner Al Moretz, and a teacher's aide in the local district schools, portrays the daughter, Myrtle Mae. Don Steinert, a teacher in the KM District Schools and a resident of Woodbridge, portrays Duane Wilson, the male nurse at Chumley's Rest who finds romance with Myrtle Mae despite getting off on a wrong foot with her mother, Veta. Nan Jean Grant portrays Veta.

Cliff and Lisa Whitfield, teachers in the KM and Shelby schools, respectively, portray Dr. Lynn Sanderson and Nurse Ruth Kelly. Their strained relationship becomes much easier after they encounter Elwood P. Dowd and Harvey.

Steve Sipe, employed at Wade Ford, handles his first role on the local stage as E. J. Lofgren, the cabbie. Steve has performed in the Shelby Community Theatre.

Jo Ann Newcomb, an employee of Mauney Hosliery, portrays Mrs. Ethel Chauvent, the distant Dowd relative, the one with the money, who comes for a visit and must be hustled about from room to room to keep Elwood from introducing her to Harvey.

Connie Putnam, who works as a secretary and "gal Friday" in the Kings Mountain Program For The Aging, portrays her first role on stage as Mrs. Chumley, wife of the head of Chumley's Rest. Connie has worked behind the scenes in other KMLT productions, but this is the first time she has appeared on stage.

Dr. Bob Baker, who last appeared in a local production in 1971, returns to portray Judge Omar Gaffney, the longtime Dowd family legal retainer. Dr. Baker is a practicing

dentist in Kings Mountain.

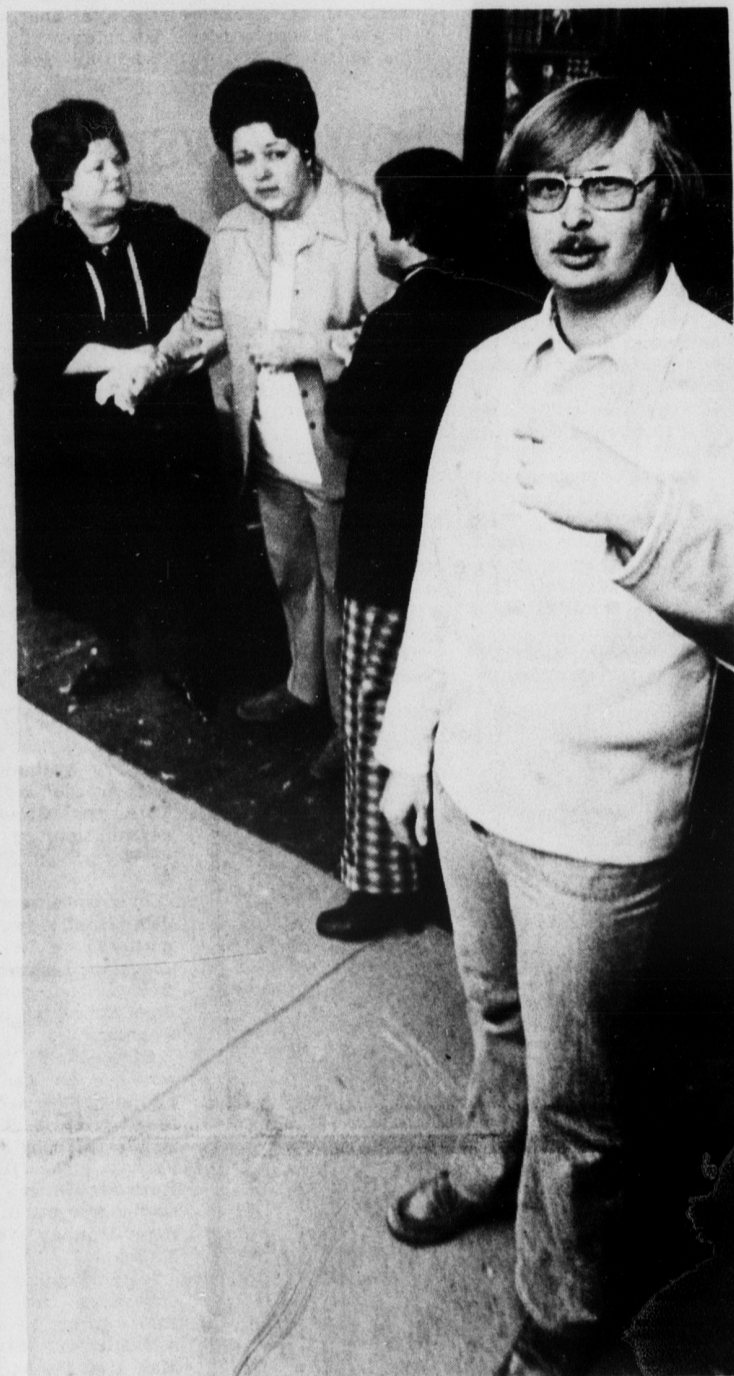
Gerald Lovelace, a trucking company official in Charlotte, portrays Dr. Chumley, another of Harvey's conquests. His fondest dream is to spend two weeks in Akron, Ohio, to recapture a long past experience.

Jim Champion, an employe of Kings Mountain Mica, Inc. and veteran of many KMLT productions, portrays Elwood Dowd, the society drop-out who spreads happiness like Typhoid Mary spread the Plague. Tickets are \$2 for adults and \$1.50 for students.



HELLO, NURSE KELLY...

Cliff & Lisa Whitfield portray Dr. Sanderson & Nurse Ruth Kelly.



HARVEY, MEET AUNT.....

Veta (Nan Jean Grant) & Myrtle Mae (Cathy Moretz) keep Aunt Ethel (Jo Ann Newcomb) away from Elwood (Jim Champion) & 'Harvey'.



THE CHUMLEYS.....

Gerald Lovelace & Connie Putnam portray Dr. & Mrs. Chumley.



HOW TALL DID YOU SAY?.....

Lovelace is aghast at Champion's description of the invisible Pooka known as Harvey after Champion is admitted for treatment at Chumley's Rest.