

Outdoor Drama Opens Thursday At KM Park

Staging an outdoor drama is a complicated matter, particularly when the plot is historical and authenticity in costuming and props is essential in creating the correct atmosphere.

Dr. Charles Hannum, head of Limestone College's theatre department and director for "Then Conquer We Must" (the outdoor drama opening July 2 at Kings Mountain National Park), knows firsthand one of the potential problems with the production. He directed the play last year during its first season at the Bi-centennial celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain.

"Last year, for the sake of authenticity, we used the historical rifles for our battle scenes," he recalls. "But, there are many hitches with that weapon which are detrimental to the show and we have opted to use the more reliable cap and ball rifle this year."

As an example, in last year's production the leading lady (Virginia Salter played again this year by Suzanne Amos-Grabus) was to be shot in the final scene during a flurry of gun fire. On one occasion three muskets supposedly fired at her. Only one went off. "For safety's sake, we decided to block out an alternative scene where the soldiers would virtually club her to death in the event none of the muskets fired!" he says. "It was not a satisfactory ending and we never had to use it, but we felt we needed to be prepared."

Bob Boggan, weapons expert for the play, explains that the major drawback to the flintlock musket is its unreliability in an outdoor setting. "The one thing



OUTDOOR DRAMA OPENS THURSDAY. "Then Conquer We Must", the historical outdoor drama, opens this Thursday, July 2nd, in the Amphitheatre of KM National Military Park. From left, John Brock of Shelby, Joe Ann Walker McDaniel of Kings Mountain, Suzanne Amos-Grabus of Kings Mountain, and Judge Sam Mendenhall of Rock Hill, S.C. are seen in a scene from the drama.

that we can not control in an outdoor production is the weather. The climate has a direct bearing on the use of black powder. It is highly absorbent and does attract moisture. With a certain degree of moisture, black powder just does not ignite.

Flintlock muskets have a flash pan directly under the flint which holds the gunpowder. It is

sparked by the flint when it hits the plate and this triggers the blast. With the cap and ball rifle, the cap is treated and is not susceptible to moisture as is the powder in the flash pan. The effect is the same. There is a small noise when the cap itself explodes and a larger explosion when the gunpowder inside the barrel ignites.

The reliability of the ball and

cap rifle outweighs the historical authenticity of the flintlock musket as far as Hannum and Boggan are concerned. "Often-times, the firing of a weapon is a cue for an actor on stage," Hannum says. "If the rifle doesn't fire, the cue is lost and this puts an added strain on the actors who must ad lib almost indefinitely until the situation can correct itself."

Sometimes the powder in the flash pan is dropped during staged hand to hand combat. The actor goes to fire the gun and it does not respond because the powder has fallen out of the pan.

Even with the reliability factor, the cap and ball rifle is technically tricky to operate. At any given time, there are no more than seven rifles on stage, yet the production calls for 25 rifles. Boggan says that because you don't do any reloading on stage, there have to be enough weapons available for reloading backstage while the battle is waged. "Actors must bring a spent weapon off stage and pick up a fresh weapon simultaneously. From the time the actor hands the rifle to us until it is recycled back to the stage takes about one minute.

Once the weapon is backstage, the crew must be sure that it actually did fire during the battle. This is done by putting a ramrod down the barrel. If the rod hits the end of the barrel and makes a "pinging" sound then the load was spent. Pre-measured black powder is poured down the barrel and clamped. The barrel is stuffed with a little wadding and a fresh cap is put on the nipple of the rifle. The gun is then ready for use.

The ultimate danger in using the rifles is an accidental firing. There is no projectile in the barrel, but even the wadding can hurt someone at a short distance and burns are likely from the ignition of the gunpowder. "We really have to discipline the actors in the handling of the guns,"

Boggan explains. "They must keep a safe distance from them and must treat them with respect because they are dangerous weapons."

The blast from the ball and cap rifle is comparable to a modern shotgun. There is a definite kick for the person firing the weapon, most of which are 50 calibre. The guns use from 90-120 grains of black powder with a minimum of wadding, which is a considerable load even without the ball.

Dr. Hannum hopes that the use of the cap and ball rifle instead of the flintlock muskets will not be a disappointment to outdoor theatre buffs and historical purists who look for authenticity in similar productions. "The decision of weapon use was strictly a pragmatic one," he says. Even though some of the exact authenticity may be sacrificed, we will still have the exciting effect created by the weapons of the period, and we can count on the cap and ball guns to do the job."

Produced by Limestone College, "Then Conquer We Must" is the Tom McIntyre adaptation of Robert Osborne's play recreating the events leading up to the Battle of Kings Mountain. It is scheduled to run every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening from July 2 through August 8 at 8:30 p.m. in the amphitheatre of the Kings Mountain National Park. Tickets are available at the box office at \$4.50 for orchestra seats and \$3.50 for bleacher seats.

Pastor Assumes Duties

Rev. Kenneth R. Looney, who grew up in the Grover-Kings Mountain area and was a member of Kings Mountain Church of God, assumed pastorate duties of Kings Mountain Church of God on Parker Street last week.

Mr. Looney returns to Kings Mountain from Winston Salem where he had served for nine years as pastor of Winston Salem Church of God. He had previously served pastorates in Chocowinity, Jamestown, Franklinton, Raleigh, Reidsville and Hayesville.

A 1950 graduate of Grover High School, he graduated from Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. George C. Looney, now of Kannapolis. Mr. Looney is a former Grover policeman and Cleveland County deputy sheriff.



REV. KENNETH LOONEY

Mrs. Looney is the former Phyllis Constance Bumgardner of Baltimore, Md. They are parents of four sons, David, a ris-

ing senior at Kings Mountain Senior High School, Thomas Michael, a music director for a Greenville, S.C. church, Kenneth, Jr., a music director for a Sylacauga, Ala. church, and Phillip Looney, who is employed by N. C. Respiratory Corporation in Winston Salem. Mrs. Looney has served as a substitute school teacher.

Rev. Mr. Looney has served on several boards for the North Carolina Church of God, has served on the youth committee for four years, Lee College Alumni for eight years and on the State Council, the church's highest governing body, for four years.

He succeeds Rev. Jerry Smith, who has assumed new duties as Orphanage Director of the Church of God's Children Home in Kannapolis.

Services at Kings Mountain Church of God are held on Sunday and Wednesday. Sunday School at 10 a.m. on Sundays is following by morning worship at 11 and evening worship at 7. Mid-week prayer service is at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays.

James Stoll's Rites Held Here Sunday

Funeral services for James Meldeau Stoll, Jr., 54, of 1015 Sherwood Lane, were conducted Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. from Kings Mountain Baptist Church of which he was a member and deacon.

Rev. James Wilder and Rev. Miller Freeman officiated at the rites, and interment was in Mountain Rest Cemetery.

Mr. Stoll died Wednesday at 5 p.m. in the Kings Mountain Hospital after several month's illness.

He was a native of Lancaster, S.C., son of the late James M. and Genelle Wilson Stoll. He was a former teacher at Kings Mountain Senior High School and former Gaston County purchasing agent. At his death he was a teacher at Chase High School in Rutherford County.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Daphne (Billie) Lamb Stoll; four sons, Jimmy and Doug Stoll, both of the home, and Ken Stoll and Roger Stoll, both of Ocala, Fla., one daughter,



JAMES M. STOLL, JR.

Melissa Stoll, of the home; one brother, Carl Stoll of Newberry, S.C.; two sisters, Mrs. William H. Hunter of Greensboro and Mrs. Harry Hallman of Fort Mill, S.C., and three grandchildren.

Masters Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.



WHEW!—So you think it's been hot? On a day last week Home Savings & Loan weather barometer registered a whopping 106 degrees on W. King St.

Photo by Lib Stewart

Mrs. Wright Is Elected



MARTHA H. WRIGHT

Mrs. Martha Herndon Wright, Director of the Child Nutrition Program for the Kings Mountain District Schools since 1972, has been elected state president of the N. C. School Food Service Association for the coming year.

Mrs. Wright, wife of Charles Wright, was installed at the recent state convention in Charlotte.

Mrs. Wright holds a B. S. in Home Economics from East Carolina University and completed graduate work in Foods and Nutrition and Business Management at UNC-G, 1973-74, and in the Continuing Education Program and UNC-C management skills for women in 1979. She was a classroom

teacher in Wayne County Schools in 1970-72.

Mrs. Wright is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Herndon of Grover. The Wrights are parents of two children, Chuck, a first grader at Grover School, and Jason, age three.

Mrs. Wright is active in Grover's First Baptist Church, is a member of the Vocational Advisory Council for the Kings Mountain District Schools and a member of the Health Advisory Committee for Cleveland County Head Start.

She has served a number of of-

fices in the Food Service Association. She was district director for District 11 in 1976-78, served as nominations chairman in 1978-79, and served on the teaching staff for courses at UNC-G and Western Carolina University as a part of Project "Operation Improvement: Child Nutrition Programs" 1974. She taught numerous food service training courses at Cleveland County Technical Institute and Gaston College. She is a member of the American Food Service Association, the North Carolina Food Service Association, the Cleveland County Food Service Association and the North Carolina Association of School Administrators.