

MUDDPRINTS

www.mississippimudds.ca

The official newsletter of the Mississippi Mudds - June 2020



Thinking of all of you - Stay safe.

From the Desk of the President - Jeff Lee

We have been in lock-down for 103 days now but there is light at the end of the tunnel. Recently Ontario has declared stage 2 of reopening the province so we've been able to get hair cuts and go out for dinner on a limited basis. It will probably be a month or more before phase 3 is declared however the terms of eased restrictions are vague. We stood in a wait and see mode on the Mudds season but recently it was decided that putting on a performance of Mamma Mia is not realistic for this calendar year. The latest postponement date for the performances is 364 days after the original show dates (Starting April 23) and that is still tentative. Tickets Please is processing refunds for those who request and holding tickets for the eventual performance for those willing to wait.

I am confident that we will be able to hold the Mudds AGM and board elections within the next month or two. As it stands now the current board will continue to serve and all current members will retain their voting status until after the meeting is held. Should circumstances not allow the AGM to happen before September we will look into on-line options for the meeting and the board election.

The board continues to monitor the situation and we're keeping our ears to the ground for smaller performance possibilities this year. As we have no revenue coming in we'll also be looking at fund raising initiatives in coming weeks to help pay the bills during the crisis.

Things continue to improve in Canada and we've all done a fantastic job of keeping the situation manageable. Perhaps some of our more creative members could write a play set within this situation, there is a lot of comedic and dramatic fodder from the past few months.

Stay safe everyone.

Mamma Mia!! Update - Joanne Samler, Producer

It is with heavy hearts we are announcing the "cancellation" of Mamma Mia! for 2020. The global situation is such we cannot predict when we can get together again to rehearse.

We are anticipating we will be able to revive the show in 2021. Our hope is to be the spring show for the Mudds, but this is not set in stone. It is only our hope.

Tickets can be refunded through Ticketsplease or left for the next performance, it is up to each customer.

Thanks to all the cast and crew who have continued to keep in contact via facebook. I believe it has helped each of us to get through all this. The Mamma Mia facebook page will continue to be updated, so cast and crew, keep an eye on it.

Stay safe.

From the Editor - Sandra Dunlop, Editor

Please - if you have a change in any of your information (address, telephone number and especially email address) please make sure that you get that information to Sandra Dunlop at 613-599-7221 or pcbear@rogers.com. This will make sure that you continue to receive the Mudds newsletter and any other pertinent information that is sent out.

Know that I welcome articles monthly, be it from members, former members and people involved in current productions. The deadline for the next edition of Muddprints is July 20. I would love to hear from you. It doesn't have to be long, just of interest to Mudds members and fans.

Mudds in Your Eye #2 May, 2020 (coordinated by **Stephanie Stephens**)



Here is another in a series which profiles members of the Mississippi Mudds, written especially for the readers of the Muddprints!

The spotlight is on the incredibly talented pianist, Ian Guenette. Every Monday, he's been live streaming music on Facebook, sometimes with special guests, and it's been making Mondays a bit more bearable! Especially during the self-isolation. Ian has been with the Mudds for two years now, and he's the current accompanist for *Mama Mia!* and other shows in pre-production. He's carving his way into Mudds folklore as an amazing 88'er! Special thanks goes out to Kenny and Bobby Martin for developing the interview questions!

How long have you been a member of the Mississippi Mudds?

I've been a member of the Mississippi Mudds for about two years now. I first joined when I was asked to accompany *The Mikado*, directed by Mark Piper, with musical direction by Tracy McMillan Ahern. I had always known about the Mudds, and was very thrilled to be asked to play for a production!

How did we find you? How many productions have you worked on?

I believe it was through the church where I am Organist, St. James Anglican in Carleton Place. After church one Sunday, Mark Piper (who sings bass in our choir) approached me and asked if I would like to be the accompanist for *The Mikado*. I have to be honest, I had never heard of *The Mikado* before, but at that point, being fresh out of university and living back at home, I was taking any gig I could get. So, I said yes, and the rest is history. Little did I know, it would turn out to be one of the most rewarding experiences I have had as a musician. So far, I have played for 2 productions with the Mudds, *The Mikado* and *We Will Rock You*.

Have you done shows with other theatre groups?

Yes, I have worked with Two Rivers Musical productions in Arnprior, Ontario, when I was still in high school. With them, I played for *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Suessical the Musical*. I played 2nd keyboard alongside Elizabeth Brumm, who played with the Mudds for *Guys and Dolls*. It sure is a

small world!

What are your favourite parts of playing for musical theatre?



I would have to say that my favorite part of playing for musical theatre is the camaraderie between the cast, crew, and musicians. It truly is magical when you get to put on a production with all these amazing people. It's hard to describe in words just how special being involved with musical theatre is - there really isn't anything like it. Musically, my favorite part is getting to work with all the talented vocalists that we have in the Mudds. I feel privileged to be able to accompany these talented singers. I've always said that making music with friends for friends is one of the greatest gifts.

What is the most difficult part of playing live music for a musical theatre production?

There are definitely a few challenging aspects to being a musical theatre accompanist. In particular, you have to be flexible with rhythm in the music, and you must be able to read ahead. For example, if you're playing for someone's solo, and they skip a bar or two, the accompanist has to find where the soloist is and continue on. I learned that lesson the hard way! Another challenging aspect is being able to go with the flow. During live performances, things can happen, and you must be ready to react, change plans, or come up with something new on the spot. Although challenging, having to navigate your way through some of these roadblocks is really good for your skills at the keyboard. Being flexible in any kind of music making is very important.

What has been the show with the most challenging music so far? Which show has had the best/most fun music to play? What was it about them?

So far, the most challenging show (music wise) was definitely *The Mikado*. Playing an orchestral reduction is no easy feat! That being said, the music was fun to play and it did lay pretty well under the fingers. I'm a sucker for good harmony, so this show was also one of my favorites in that regard. Lots of different textures and intricacies within the score. That being said, I did spend quite a bit of time at the piano learning 'note banging'. I was also very exposed in that show, as it was just me and my percussion colleague, Terry Kirkpatrick. That was nerve wracking.

Have you ever thought of auditioning and being on stage? If you could take a role from a show that has already been done, who would you be?

I definitely have thought of auditioning! Although the idea makes me very nervous! I can play in front of a bunch of people, but when it comes to acting or speaking in front of a crowd, I get very nervous! I think I would have to start out in a very small role. Maybe something to think about in the future!

As band leader, how do you keep things positive in the pit?

I think the best way to keep things positive in the pit is to make sure everyone is heard when they have a question or concern. Also, as I said above, being flexible, as well as being able to calmly problem solve are definitely assets one should have while playing in the pit! Of course, Tracy McMillan Ahern, musical director for the shows I've played for, really keeps things running smoothly in the pit. Her positive attitude really goes a long way in helping us all stay upbeat and positive.

Do you have pre-performance routines?

Normally, I like to relax, drink some water, and do some finger warmups on a desk or table before starting the performance. Another ritual that I sometimes follow is having a banana 5 minutes before a performance. It gives you a natural energy boost. One thing I have learned not to do before a performance is drink coffee. It makes my hands shaky. Once again, I learned that lesson the hard

way!

How do you calm your nerves before or during a performance?

I don't really have any rituals for this one. I think most of the time, I am just focusing on staying calm. Deep breathing helps with that. There is an old saying that musicians and others who perform on stage just get very comfortable being terrified. This is very true! That being said, after you've done it for a while, you do tend to become less nervous.

When did Music Monday streaming on Facebook begin? How did it begin? If someone hasn't started following it yet, how do they access it?

Music Monday began as an outreach project at St James Anglican Church. When the pandemic hit, myself and my colleagues at the church were brainstorming ideas on how to get music out to the congregation. We decided this would be the best way. Every Monday I play some music and bring in a guest when I can. I go live every Monday at 2 pm on St. James Facebook page. If you search 'St. James Anglican Carleton Place' on Facebook you will find past videos of Music Mondays.

How long have you been playing the piano? How long have you been giving private lessons?

I started playing piano when I was 7, taking lessons with Maureen Young. I switched to the organ when I was 13. I have been giving private lessons on and off now for about 5 years. I really enjoy teaching and working with students.

Other than the Mudds and at your church, where else can we see you perform?

I am also the accompanist for the Arnprior Community Choir, directed by Lisa Webber. We put on a Christmas show, as well as two spring shows. Unfortunately our spring show was cancelled due to Covid. Other than that, I hope I'll be gigging when restrictions are lifted and musicians can perform together again.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY wishes go to members past and present who are celebrating their birthdays between June 23 and July 22. We know this is not a time that we can go out and party with our friends, but we hope you find something awesome to do! :-)

Michael Alon	Jun-23
Kellie Brown	Jun-23
Emily Hogan	Jun-25
Michael Pichette	Jun-28
Rebecca Montsion	Jul-03
Aedan Ingram	Jul-05
Cristian Bowie	Jul-06
Annie Ahern	Jul-06
Randy Thibeault	Jul-07
Ashley Yantha	Jul-09
Laura Bennett-Ferland	Jul-09
Jim McNally	Jul-11
Amelia Moore-Crispin	Jul-12
Sam Bowers	Jul-13
Laura Hunter	Jul-13
Sheelagh Lam	Jul-17
Colm Cooney	Jul-18
Kate Bains	Jul-19

Watch this space for more birthday celebrations next month :-)

Karen Lapointe, Membership

The next issue of Muddprints will be published on July 22. The deadline for articles is July 20.

If you wish to be removed from the Muddprints mailing list please send an email to pcbear@rogers.com - please make sure you give me your full name in the email.

Mudds Calendar (2020)

ALL DATES ARE CURRENTLY ON HOLD