

MUDD PRINTS

www.mississippimudds.ca

The official newsletter of the Mississippi Mudds - June 2022

The Mississippi Mudds Mission Statement: *To provide a safe, accepting and inclusive environment for all people to explore and participate in theatrical endeavours while providing quality entertainment within our community.*

From the Desk of the President - **Sandra Dunlop**

Well this will be my last article, as I will be turning over the reigns on June 30 to the new Board, It has been an interesting year - some lows and some highs. Your 2021/2022 Board has worked very hard at keeping our financials in the black. We are very happy that the Mudds will be on stage in late November with the production ELF (please see article later in this issue). The 50th celebrations are ongoing and the Party at the Museum was a huge success. More events are planned during the summer (again, please see article later in this issue).

My sincere thanks to the 50th Anniversary Committee for all they have done and all they are doing. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the current Board for dealing with some tough issues and being of great support to each other.

I wish the incoming Board much success in the coming year.

ELF the Musical Update - **Stephanie Stephens**

"The Best Way to Spread Christmas Cheer, is Singing Loud for All to Hear." ~Buddy The Elf

This upcoming season is The Mississippi Mudd's golden anniversary season. What better way to celebrate than with a special family Christmas production featuring a cast of new and familiar faces. Elf the Musical is based on the movie, Elf. As soon as it hit theatres it became an instant Christmas classic. Every

year families spend the holidays watching Elf together, laughing at Buddy the Elf and his lovable, earnest ways, and every year they finish the movie enjoying its touching message, that all you have to do is believe.



Buddy the Elf makes an appearance at Saturday's auditions. Colleen Robillard came dressed in an elf onesie to have a good time with the casting team. By her side is her favourite elf, Gracie Gilbert.

You can believe in magic. In elves. In singing whenever and wherever you please. You can believe in family. Togetherness. Believe in all the little things that will make you happy. Buddy's message touches the people of New York and saves Christmas.

The Mississippi Mudds's production of 'Elf the Musical' will be a fabulous family event this upcoming Christmas season, spreading Christmas cheer and bringing everyone together to appreciate our interpretation of the Broadway musical version!

Elf the Musical held its auditions on Saturday, June 18th. It was a busy day at Carleton Place High School as choreography started right at 9am and auditions continued right until 4. Our mission? To cast the show with the perfect cast! And we believe we've found it with a spectacular cast of 35 very talented individuals!

Artistic director, Karen Lapointe, and musical director, Tracy Ahern, reteam after the enormously successful 'We Will Rock You' to bring 'Elf the Musical' to our stage. Lesley Guerts-Thomas joined us Saturday morning for the very first time to assist Karen Lapointe teach the choreography session right at the beginning of the day. Lesley is brand new to the Mudds as the choreographer for Elf the Musical. With a rich dance and theatre background, she is eager to work with the cast of this show and create some fabulous dance routines. Stephanie Stephens, Cheri Swackhammer Martin, and Laura Scott make up the dream team of producers.

The ensemble is particularly busy in this production. Currently we have allocated each cast member a primary role, but there are still many other speaking parts in the show that will be assigned as we move forward and cast members will have their portfolios expanded as more and more parts and lines get assigned to them!

We are very proud to present the cast of Elf the Musical:

Buddy: Andrew McDougall
Jovie: Kristin Dewe
Emily: Stephanie Scott
Walter: Daniel MacDonald
Michael: Max Karrandjas
Deb: Jaime Birrell
Manager: Asher Scott
Greenway: Xander Sonnenburg
Santa: Patrick Donnelly
Chadwick: Brady MacKay
Matthews: Bobby Martin
Mrs. Claus: Colleen Robillard
The Narwhal: Reese Sonnenburg

ELVES

Charlie: Liam Garner
Tiara: Maren MacDonald
Boy Elf: Holden Anderson
Santa's Elf #1: Mahaila Scott
Santa's Elf #2: Brooklyn Mallinson
Santa's Elf #3: Sydney McParlan
Santa's Elf #4: Ophelia Draper
Santa's Elf #5: Elizabeth (Zee) Shaw
Santa's Elf #6: Lily Bradley
Teenager #1: Petra Vanderspank
Teenager #2: Ivy MacKay

NEW YORKERS

Security Guard #1: Holly Johns
Security Guard #2: Emma Sharpe
Flyer Guy #1: Audrey Demery
Jogger with white beard: Liam Pallasch
Store Elf 1: Alexandra Levstek
Store Elf 2: Edison Thompson
Mother: Linsy Rotar
Policeman #1: Bronwyn Rusk
Policeman #2: Grace Gilbert
Salvation Army Lady: Nancy Keech

Mudds 50th Year Report - Judith Scott

Here is the report sent to us for our last Board meeting. I felt it was important for all of you to see what is happening in this celebratory year. **Sandra, Editor**

It turns out there is a lot to report for this month. I copied in Molly and Katie who deserve a huge amount of credit as always.

The Museum gave us \$250 as a thank you for participating in the tea. Everyone (11 actors) had a great time participating at the party. They were so good and funny.

Ann Price and I set up a Mudds info display table at the St James tea on June 10th. Molly created a photo slide show that I ran on my Macbook. It worked well. We also loaned the church a lot of hats for a mini fashion show. They apparently plan to make a donation To Mudds as a thank you at some point.

Molly started Tiktok account and posted the first video. She is still waiting for Tracy to give her co-ordinates so she can share directly to Facebook and Instagram. Molly also created a QR code to allow people to indicate their

interest in volunteering. Katie will include this in a handout that focuses on telling a bit more about the Mudds.

Katie is planning a display table at the library. We hope to have it up by July 1st or soon after. Stephanie is working on a new graphic display comprised of Mudds posters. We hope to have this on an easel as back-drop for the Library display. Head Librarian Heidi is being very supportive and has allocated a sweet spot with a table in a corner near the window.

We have 2 dates at the Farmers Market. July 30th is "Christmas in July" day at the market so we are hoping to work with the ELF team to build a plan for that day.

Molly and Katie will have their Mudds in a Box ready to go by then. But we decided the July 2nd date at the market was too much of a push. I had sent an email to all those involved in the museum party asking for volunteers for July 2nd and Aug 6th. 4 people replied and told me they are too busy. Trish said she was good for Aug 6th. Others did not reply.

I talked to the market people and explained our situation. They are still happy to give us 2 dates. July 30th is Christmas in July day at the market so we are hoping to work with the ELF team. And we will keep the Aug 6th.

I have submitted an article to the Humm for their July issue. It is mostly about the 50th and the exhibit. Kris advised on what kind of photo would work so fingers crossed on that.

Ideas going forward:

Jennifer Irwin offered use of the museum garden for a Mudds only BBQ or picnic. This is likely an idea for the new board to run with. It would be a chance for everyone to socialise and also get a look at the exhibit in their own time. We can use the garden and their chairs and their little kitchen but would need to organise the food.

I would like to work on creating a book to capture the 50th exhibit. Molly has offered to work with me. She has all the information and story files and I will attempt to take photos of everything. It could be made available in digital form or as hard copy if people want to buy it. I was thinking a bit like the books people make online for their holiday photos. It just seemed such a waste to let the whole thing be dismantled in September and not to have recorded it somehow.

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.



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

This month the spotlight is on Molly Cooney. Molly is part of the team organizing our 50th anniversary celebrations this upcoming season! She has been hard at work creating displays and opportunities for the community to celebrate 50 wonderful years of the Mudds! A gem on the stage with an amazing stage presence and a beautiful voice, and a wealth of knowledge backstage, Molly has been a part of many casts and crews over the years. She even co-directed Little Mermaid Jr. a few years ago.

Follow Molly on TikTok as she posts exciting videos about our golden anniversary: [mississippimuddscp](https://www.tiktok.com/@mississippimuddscp)!

Interview by Ivy MacKay.

- 1. You are part of our 50th Anniversary Team, preparing exciting events to celebrate our Golden Anniversary. Is there anything extra special that you're excited about?**

I am excited that the MUDDS are getting back out into the wider Carleton Place community in order to celebrate this milestone! We were so lucky to have some small ways to connect over the pandemic thanks to initiatives such as zoom trivia, fundraisers, and other events that were possible around pandemic restrictions. Now, I think that it is really exciting that we can once again extend that connection outward and into our community.

- 2. What was your first play with the Mississippi Mudds? How old were you? What do you remember about this experience?**

My first play was Buggy Malone Jr. and I was 10 years old. I remember absolutely loving every second of the experience from the rehearsal process to the performances. I got to shoot a silly string gun, which I thought was extremely cool (and honestly, it was)!

- 3. How many shows have you done with the Mudds? What were your favourites?**

If I counted correctly, I have performed in 14 MUDDS productions and have also worked on several makeup teams, a costume team, co-directed a show, and have worked on several set builds as well.

I loved every single one of these shows, but three stick out as my favourites. The Wizard of OZ Jr. holds a special place in my heart because I love that play and it was one of my first times having a lead in a show. Beauty and The Beast Jr. is another favourite for lots of reasons, but especially because it was my last MUDDS youth show before I graduated high school. The Little Mermaid Jr. was another special show for me because I had the opportunity to Co-direct with a wonderful cast and crew!

4. What kind of vocal training have you participated in? Any suggestions for people wanting to get better at singing on stage?

The first vocal training I ever was exposed to was through the MUDDS. I learned a lot from my musical directors in the MUDDS youth shows. The learning opportunities that occur within the MUDDS are so amazing and valuable. I think it is one of the things that is important about the MUDDS in general, but especially the youth branch.



I also took vocal lessons privately for about half a year when I was 13 and a musical theatre vocal course when I was in university.

For anyone wanting to get better at singing on stage I would suggest that they sing as much as they can! I've this amazing instrument you have in your body and use it regularly. Also, sing what makes you happy! Technical training was really helpful for me, but actively using my voice and singing because it makes me happy helped me work on my skill set and to feel more comfortable when I do sing on stage.

5. If the Mudds could do any show, which one would you like them to do?

I think that there are a lot of really interesting Canadian written plays out there that could be really cool to see the MUDDS do! The downside of these productions is that they don't always have the biggest cast sizes, but perhaps you could do two shorter plays at the same time or use a double cast. (I'm addicted to buying plays from Playwrights Canada Press, so this kind of script always comes to mind first!)

6. Do you have any tricks for getting rid of the butterflies before a show?

I am a huge fan of breathing exercises before a show. The classic "breathe in for 5, hold for 5, out for 5" is my go-to. It helps me feel a bit calmer with the added benefit of working on your breath control!

7. What was the funniest thing that ever happened to you onstage in the middle of a show?

During Cinderella in 2014 I had a very fast quick-change backstage when I was transformed for the Prince's ball. During one of the shows, I had just finished my transformation into my ballgown when my glass slipper fell off as I got in. Unfortunately, I wasn't supposed to lose my slipper until I was leaving the ball, so I grabbed it on my way off stage.

8. Did being in the Mudds Kids shows prepare you for directing one? What valuable experience did that give you to help you direct one?

I think it helped that I was familiar with this the Youth shows ran and many of the expectations for directors within these shows. But honestly, watching my mom, Kate Cooney, direct past MUDDS youth shows was the biggest help to me during that process.

My mom believed that these shows could work best if she approached them with a collaborative attitude and a “kids first” approach. It was important to me that I approached direction the same way. I always tried to make sure that the cast and crew knew that I trusted their judgement and abilities, because they had an amazing skill set! I am so glad I took on these attitudes because the cast and crew all took what I had imagined and make it a million times better than I ever could have hoped for!

9. How has being part of the Mudds helped you with other things you've done, like going to school or getting a job?

When people think of skills you can learn through theatre, I feel as though they often think about developing acting, singing, dancing, or other specific skills. While I did develop in these areas, I also developed my ability to communicate, collaborate, think creatively, commit myself, and so much more! I have applied these skills in every educational experience I've had and in the application process for every job I've ever applied to. The work I have done with the MUDDS has been on my resume in some capacity for most of my life so far because it truly is invaluable.

10. What do you hope for The Mudds's next 50 years?

I hope to see the MUDDS continue to provide opportunities in theatre and the arts to people of all ages, abilities, and skill levels! Accessibility (physical, mental, and financial) is very close to my heart, and I am excited to see the MUDDS continue to create a space that welcomes anyone and everyone! I hope to see our community continue to grow and change as we grow and change, just as it has since 1973.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY wishes go to members past and present who are celebrating their birthdays between June 23 and July 22.

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

I would also like to give a special mention to someone dear to a lot of people's hearts who would have been celebrating their birthday on June 30th:

Happy Birthday Kate Cooney, we miss you XX

Watch this space for more birthday celebrations next month :-) Karen Lapointe, Membership

Calendar - 2022/2023

Saturday, June 25 Annual General Meeting

In the next issue the ELF rehearsal schedule will be included.

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.
