

Message from Laurie Harley, President, Shaw Guild



You'll find a number of interesting write-ups in this issue of the Guild Newsletter.

Tim Jennings' note on **"Valuing Inclusion"** is a must read (see below). While his message was sent initially to Shaw Staff, it applies equally to all of us. As Shaw Ambassadors and often the first people patrons meet, we carry a special responsibility to ensure our words and actions reflect the spirit of teamwork and inclusion.

The highlights of the recent MVP (My Volunteer Page) Survey are also reported in this issue. **A special thank you** to those who responded, not just for answering the questions but also for providing comments and suggestions for improvement. **Your feedback will help us develop ways**

to make your MVP experience even better next season.

Let me end this message by sharing a personal story. At the Opening Celebration of *Man and Superman* in August, I sat beside a delightful couple from the United States. They told me they were huge theatre supporters and used to come regularly to the Shaw before relocating to Chicago. This was their first time back in many years. When they learned I was involved with the Guild, **they told me the big difference between their earlier Shaw experiences and this time was the VOLUNTEERS!** They remarked on how welcoming you are to patrons, not just there to answer questions but actively reaching out and engaging visitors. **You truly are Ambassadors for The Shaw Festival!**

Your comments and questions are welcomed (president@shawguild.ca).

Valuing Inclusion

"We deeply value the camaraderie and team mindset that is necessary to create the best possible art and the environment needed to make The Shaw a wonderful place to do our work. Beyond the very clear requirements on all workplaces under government legislation, we as an organization deeply value the range and diversity of skills, experiences and perspectives each individual brings to The Shaw.

We want to remind everyone – and by everyone we mean employees, contractors, board members, volunteers, etc. – that your actions and words can have lasting and often emotionally powerful impact on your colleagues.

If those matters intersect with and involve your colleagues, you must be prepared to be held accountable for your conduct here at our workplace (and beyond).

Err, please, on the side of being kind and respectful. All my best to you all, Tim."

SPECIAL NOTICE: The annual Boxhill Doherty silent auction fundraiser will be held on Thursday, September 26 from 11 am – 3:30 pm and it is open to all staff, Guild members and audience members attending shows that day. It will be set up in the tent behind the Members Terrace.

REMINDER: The early bird gets the tickets! Renew your Guild Membership Now!

Renew your 2020 Guild membership by November 5 to be eligible for a draw to win two tickets for the Opening Celebration of the new Shaw Christmas production, Holiday Inn, Saturday, November 23, at 7:00 pm.

To enter the contest, each Guild member should log into MVP, sign up for **Membership Renewal** (under the **Other** category) and follow the payment instructions. You can also email Susan MacDonald at membership@shawguild.ca.

The contest closes on Members' Day on November 5. Payment must be received by that day. The winner will be notified by Friday, November 8.

How's that for a Christmas special?

Cricket!

Monday, August 26, turned out to be a perfect day for a Cricket Match! 16 Guild members hopped in cars and headed for Stratford to watch the annual "big match" between the Shaw and Stratford Companies.

The day was perfect in many ways.

For cricket fans, **our team scored an amazing 189 runs to Stratford's 81 to bring the coveted trophy home to Shaw!** We celebrated the team's MVP – **Tim Carroll (TC)** – who batted for 54 runs; recognized **Ryan deSouza** as the best batter with 71 runs and **Drew Plummer** as Rookie of the Year.

For Guild members, we enjoyed a **delicious lunch organized by Stratford's Friends of the Festival** and a **fascinating tour of backstage** at the Festival Theatre.

Next year, it will be Shaw's turn to host Stratford's volunteers and to cheer on our team to another victory! Hope to see you there.



Photos courtesy of Guild Member Terry Babij.

Noses Off Exhibit at Royal George Gallery Space

"Be glad your nose is on your face,

*not pasted on some other place,
for if it were where it is not,
you might dislike your nose a lot."*

From "Be Glad Your Nose Is on Your Face" by Jack Prelutsky

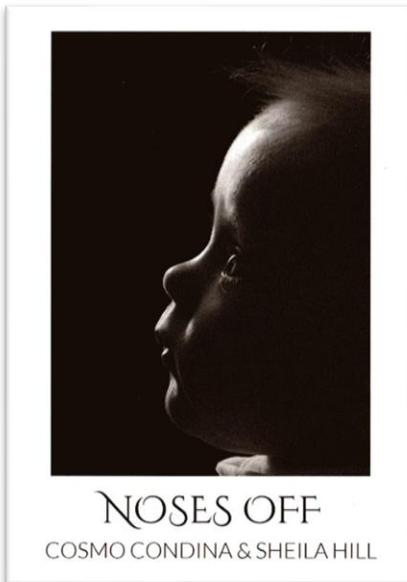
Did you know without your nose, you wouldn't be able to taste food nearly as well?

That's one of the nuggets of information you'll discover in an exhibit in the Gallery space behind the Royal George Theatre. There is no charge to see the display. It's there for you to **view when you attend a *Continue the Conversation* offered in the Gallery after performances at the Royal George Theatre.**

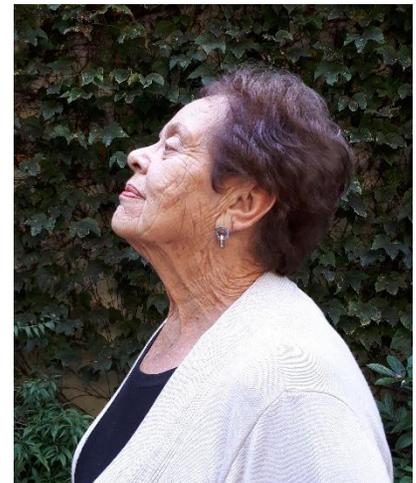
Guild member, **Sheila Hill**, is the driving force behind the exhibit along with well-known Niagara-on-the-Lake photographer **Cosmo Condina**. Combine Sheila's passion for research with her extensive knowledge of theatre and the result is a journey into theatrical noses, animal and bird noses, and a wall of black and white photographs of NOTL noses. (See if you can identify the Shaw Company noses!!)

This isn't the first exhibit Sheila has funded and organized. Last year, *Oh What A Lovely War*, **inspired her to research the heroic roles pigeons played during World WWI**. Also, over a quarter of a million pigeons were used in WWII.

To quote Sheila, "The Gallery is a fabulous space and I am looking forward to working with Leonard Conolly on the **2020 Exhibit "Six Decades of Passion"**.



Sheila Hill



Horse and His Boy Workshops From the Volunteer Perspective



In the 2019 Shaw Booklet, patrons planning to attend **The Horse and His Boy** were invited “to complete an unforgettable experience, a pre-show workshop lets your family make the magic that happens on stage.”

Over 3500 children and adults accepted that invitation! They joined an actor from the play for a 40-minute pre-show workshop and discovered ways they could help create the show. The workshops, organized by **Suzanne Merriam** and **Megan Gilchrist of the Shaw Education Department**, had another key component – Guild Volunteers. **Collectively they**

donated over 1600 hours to ensure children and adults had a fun experience. Volunteers shared in that fun. Here is what several had to say about their own experience:

“It was my pleasure to work for and with Suzanne and Megan on the workshops. It was truly magical to watch the children swept away with excitement, absorbing what the actors were telling them.” Lynne Heaman

“After the workshop it was delightful to see the play where the children (often their parents AND grandparents) became so fully connected and freely participated.” Eileen Hanna

“Being part of the Horse and His Boy workshops has been my favourite activity as a Shaw Guild volunteer this year.” Margret Walker

The Education Department, on behalf of the Shaw Festival, extends a sincere thank you to all who volunteered their time and talents to make this workshop a success – we couldn’t have done it without you! **Thanks to all the volunteers who were involved!**

They are:

Susan MacDonald, Marlene Walther, Lynne Heaman, Barb Babij, Glenna Collins, Maureen Dalgleish, Eileen Hanna, Margret Walker, Francine Williams, Patti Bossert, Linda Mooney, Ann Gnoinski, Alice Rance, Carolyn Kindness, Elizabeth Skronski, and Lorraine Horton.

Spotlight on Docents - They Make a Difference!

Do you ever think about the impact volunteers have on creating memorable experiences for Shaw patrons? We often hear positive comments, some directly from patrons and others passed along by Shaw Staff and Board Members. What we don’t often experience is mail sent directly to volunteers praising their contributions. Yet that’s exactly what happened for two Docents, **Arlene Carson** and **Brenda Weafer**, and puts them in our Volunteer Spotlight.



In May, Arlene and Brenda guided a small group of visitors on a backstage tour. **So far this year, the team of 32 Docents has conducted over 100 tours and interacted with close to 1600 patrons.** What made this tour stand out was not just the back stage experience but what

the guests did after the tour. They took the time to confirm their guides' names along with the Guild mailing address, and then **sent personal "thank you" notes to both of them.** That was special!

The best way to demonstrate the impact Arlene and Brenda had on their guests is to share with you excerpts from the patron's notes.

"You gave us an extraordinary behind the scenes tour. Your deep love for the fabulous Shaw Festival is palpable in every word you speak. You are so knowledgeable. More than ever we absolutely love Shaw. We knew the body but now we know the skeleton!

Thank you so very much for sharing your passion."



Arlene Carson (left)
Brenda Weafer (right)



If you know a remarkable Guild member who has gone above the call of duty, please contact a Guild Chair, Convener or Hosting Captain to submit their name and a few details about their special contributions and why they should be **Spotlighted.**

All nominations will be considered by the Chairs and exceptional volunteers will be showcased in the newsletter.

You can also send nominations by email to info@shawguild.ca.

Garden Musings



Photo of David Livett deadheading

"We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses" (Abraham Lincoln)

Early spring 2015 brought great disappointment to our passionate Guild Gardeners when it became evident that our signature rose garden was being wiped out by a soft fly larvae infestation! **In spite of remedial treatments, 45 rose bushes were lost.**

Our immediate goal was to replace the entire rose garden with disease resistant Lion's Fairytale Roses (by Kordes...the

famous German nursery dating back to 1887).

Thanks to the Guild's financial support, and the stellar efforts of our 'green thumbs', **the glorious rose gardens continue to enhance the theatre experience for our patrons, staff, and community.**



Paddy Parr, Shaw Theatre Gardens Chair

Getting to Know Joy Lambert: Around the Circle with GBS



I have just retired from working in the Shaw Box Office, **rounding out a circle that has taken 30 years, and allowing me the privilege of continuous learning.** Lo, those many years ago, I started as a volunteer usher. Our wages were donated to the Boy Scout lodge now the Kinsmen lodge, to pay heating bills for that drafty building.

The next turn of the circle brought uniforms, schedules and we were paid. After a short time ushering at all three venues, including the Court House, I learned the Box Office computer. Can anyone remember "Marathon 33", an ambitious play that attracted a good audience that dwindled during the play. This type was called a "risk" play.

Over the years, I occupied many different positions. Besides answering the phones, there was daily accounting to reconcile the sales, leading to becoming an administration assistant with ticket sales, mailing out the tickets with descriptive information for each play. I also handled special ticket ordering with many agencies to provide "reserved" tickets for guests of businesses such as Vintage Inns, Inn on the Twenty, the Charles Inn, Theater Vacations. Box Office started email ordering, a matter of printing out 2 sheets per order, filling out the order, contacting the patrons of problem orders and mailing the tickets out. **What a contrast to the ticket forms on patrons' mobile phones that need only to be "scanned" today.**

There have been 3 types of computer programs for single ticket retrieval to learn, each getting more details to be completed for patrons. **During one change over with the computer, tickets sales were done with pencil and a huge diagram of the Festival theater.** This was during a quieter time of the year.

I will always remember September 11, 2001, when people phoned to say they would not be able to attend. Our heart-felt sorrow went out to these patrons. Then the phone calls came in that their loved ones had just walked in the door, 4 or more days late, and we cheered with them.

One of the funniest shows occurred in the Fall, when **Jackie Maxwell** became the maid in **Private Lives.** Her turn with the butts and the ashtrays as she cleaned up delighted all the actors and the front of house staff. As the Docents tell the tour attendees, **only 10% of the show preparations is seen with the 90% preparation in all the other departments.**

So . . . usher, box office, administration assistant to ticket sales, Senior sales representative Group sales. Now Docent. That has been my Around the Circle with GBS so far.

Results from Recent Survey on MVP

There are now **324 Guild Members who are registered in MVP**, and from the responses from the survey sent out last month, **74% of responders are completely or somewhat satisfied with the tool.**



The **response rate for the survey was 26%**, which included a good cross section of Guild members, from new to long-time volunteers.

Of those responders, **82% use MVP to view and sign up for opportunities**, and **70% found the training effective. 25%**

learned to use MVP on their own.

Thanks to all who completed the survey and provided excellent comments and suggestions.

The Guild's Executive Committee is already working on plans to improve the processes currently used and will communicate these before the next Shaw season. Stay tuned!

For MVP related questions or problems, please contact Kim Mustill: mvp@shawguild.ca

Note: Specific questions about hosting or greeting should be directed to the respective Chairs.

Hosting Update: Winding Down the Season

On Friday **October 18, we will Host our final regular Season Show, *Cyrano de Bergerac***. The Shaw regular season will wind up on Sunday October 20. All the Shaw will then take short a break to gear up for the two Christmas productions, *A Christmas Carol* and *Holiday Inn*. Starting Wednesday **November 13, we open again to Host with *A Christmas Carol***.

That leaves us with one more Period for Hosting - in December. Sign-up for that period opens November 3.

All Hosts who did not get assigned for a Host Opportunity they selected, will remain on the Host Standby List for the show they requested. With numerous cancellations through each period you may yet be assigned!

Thanks for all you do to support the Shaw Festival!



Greg Fedoryn, Hosting Chair

Shaw and Conan-Doyle: An Interesting Anecdote

For several years in the latter part of the 19th century, George Bernard Shaw lived in the village of Hindhead in the county of Surrey, England. The house was called Blencathra House.

In around 1895, Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle decided to build a residence a short distance away from Shaw's. Conan-Doyle found Shaw to be insufferably pompous and bigoted so, when he was thinking of a name for his new house, he reckoned that it would be very presumptive of him to aspire to calling it by any name that was as grand as Shaw's.

So, he cheekily called it Undershaw!

Both houses are still standing but are now schools.

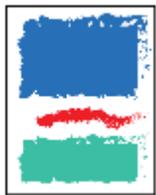
Contributed by Dr. Alan Blackburn, a Shaw Theatre patron who lives in Hindhead.

Arts & Culture Notices from Organizations in Niagara-on-the-Lake

Featuring relevant notices about arts and cultural events or items of interest sent to us by various organizations in town. The Guild is not responsible for the content, so please visit the respective organization's website for any additional information you require.



The annual **Theatrical Cemetery Tours at historic St. Andrew's Church, 323 Simcoe Street**. Participants will meet several spirits played by local volunteer actors. These characters help to tell the history of Niagara-on-the-Lake through their life experiences. **September 27th & 28th at 6 pm, 7 pm and 8 pm.** Tickets are \$12 and must be purchased in advance by contacting the Museum at 905-468-3912.



Niagara
Pumphouse
Arts Centre

Current Exhibit: Looking Back – Forging Forward: Trench Art & Ronald Boaks. Exhibit runs to September 29.

Upcoming Exhibit and Opening Reception: Exaltation Intangible Journeys of the Human Spirit by Nikola Wojewoda: Join us for the Opening Reception on Thursday, October 3, 7:00 pm. The exhibit runs from

October 1- November 1, 2019. niagarapumphouse.ca