



BETWEEN THE LINES

THE MEMBERS OF 4TH LINE THEATRE NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023

Managing Artistic Director's Message

WHAT A WONDERFUL SUMMER we had!!! If you were able to join us, thank you so much for coming! We are slowly getting our audience numbers back closer to the 2019 range. There's still a ways to go, but we are headed in the right direction!! Thank you to everyone who came back and supported Canadian theatre.

We again produced two exciting plays: one world premiere and one beloved classic. We opened the 2023 summer season with D'Arcy Jenish's *The Tilco Strike* and people absolutely adored D'Arcy's take on this piece of Peterborough labour history. Recently, I ran into some folks at Costco who came to see it three times!!! Then in August we brought back Robert Winslow's iconic play *The Cavan Blazers*. We had audiences riveted with this tale of conflict between people in a small region. As I write this today, the play seems so very prescient. I am proud of the creative work we presented this summer to audiences. I think there was something for everyone.

It was glorious to welcome audiences to the Winslow Farm, to experience original Canadian stories under the sun on warm Ontario nights AND to try out our new chairs. We loved the comfort and safety they provided. A HUGE thanks to the hundreds of people who helped us purchase the chairs, by buying naming rights.

We welcomed 35 volunteer actors to the artistic team this year, many of them members of our Young Company. Year after year, I love watching young performers grow and blossom as both artists and humans during their time at 4th Line.

Now I look forward to 2024, our 32nd season. I am thrilled to announce two world premiere plays which have been developed through our new play development program. In July, we plan to present the world premiere of Alison Lawrence's play *Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes* based on Bonnie Sitter and Shirleyan English's book of the same name. The play explores the little known story of teenage

girls, who left their homes across Ontario to go work on farms during WWII. These girls were desperately needed to replace the male farm workers who were fighting overseas. These 'Farmerettes' contributed to feeding the troops and indeed the whole country. Many Farmerettes are still alive, in their 90s, and there is much excitement about this production. An interesting fact: Bonnie and Shirleyan's book was sent to me by donors several years ago. A big thanks to them!

Then in August, I am excited to present the world premiere production of Beverley Cooper's *Jim Watts: Girl Reporter* about the experience of Canadians fighting in the Spanish Civil War. Set in the 1930s, the play focuses on Jean 'Jim' Watts, the only woman to be a member of the Mackenzie-Papineau regiment fighting fascism in Spain. The play travels from upscale Toronto to Madrid and back to Peterborough. And Peterborough's own union organizer Jim Higgins features



prominently in the show. The production will feature a cast of over 40 actors, battle scenes, explosions, and take audiences into life in Spain, on the precipice of WWII.

Both of these plays focus on young people who are willing to do just about anything to do their part. These young people were desperate to try and make a difference in a world gone mad. They were all true heroes!

This theatre is here because of all the people who give of themselves to make it happen. I hope I say it enough - we are deeply grateful to each and every one of you. See you soon!

- Kim Blackwell

GIVE THE GIFT OF SUMMER!



Photo by Wayne Eardley - Brookside Studio

Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: The Ontario Farmerettes*

*based on the book by Shirleyan English & Bonnie Sitter

Written by Alison Lawrence, Directed by Autumn Smith

July 1 - 20

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, SHARE THE 4TH LINE THEATRE EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR LOVED ONES!

Purchase a 2024 summer season **gift certificate** or **ticket** before **December 23rd, 2023** and save \$2 per ticket (applies to single tickets/single ticket gift certificates for regular performance nights only)!

Save even more with a 2024 Season Subscription (\$12 savings overall)

when you purchase gift certificates or tickets for both summer season shows at the same time.

NEW THIS YEAR: Purchase tickets for specific performance dates

when the box office opens for MEMBERS ONLY between October 30th and November 2nd.

Call the box office at: **705-932-4445** or **1-800-814-0055**. Or visit us online at: www.4thlinetheatre.on.ca



Emma Meinhart, *Bombers: Reaping the Whirlwind*, 2017,
Photo by Rebekah Littlejohn

Jim Watts: Girl Reporter

Written by Beverley Cooper,

Directed by Kim Blackwell

July 30 - August 24

2023 Season Feedback

"Every 4th Line Theatre production is adept at conjuring a sense of *community*, and that is doubtless one of the secrets of its ongoing success."

- John Arkelian, ArtsForum.com



The Tilco Strike, 2023. Photography by Wayne Eardley, Brookside Studio

Nexicom Presents *The Tilco Strike*

"A highlight of my summer was seeing 4th Line Theatre's exuberant play *The Tilco Strike*, which entertains as it teaches, after a scintillating talk by Professor Joan Sangster of Trent University, whose specialty is labour history, reminded me how much Canada owes to unions."

- Rosemary Ganley, *The Peterborough Examiner*



The Cavan Blazers, 2023. Photography by Wayne Eardley, Brookside Studio

"The 2023 remount [of *The Cavan Blazers*] is handled with the utmost care not to hide the truth. No one emerges victorious as fault lies on both sides, and everyone involved dearly pays the cost. This production can lead to meaningful discussions about tolerance's true meaning and understanding. 4th Line Artistic Director Kim Blackwell directs the production with a sure hand. The 50-actor cast energizes Robert Winslow's intense script of brewing troubles between the Catholics and the Protestants."

- Joe Szekeres, *OurTheatreVoice.com*

Become a Volunteer! 4th Line Theatre is where Art and Community meet



"I feel supported at 4th Line Theatre. From the first day of rehearsals, there is a sense of community."

I recently had the pleasure of working alongside a beautiful cast and crew and I was

reminded, not only that people like this exist, but of the person I could be when in such a

vibrant space as 4th Line, a place that feels like a second home.

There is something healing about being part of a project and a space where everyone is there for the same reasons. We're here to collaborate, inspire and to honour the stories of others. Storytelling through theatre offers this sense of collective effervescence as we all come together to engage in a common purpose. It's harmonious and incredibly hard but rewarding work.

I stepped away from theatre for a while, only to realize I needed it in my life. 4th Line was there for me this summer when I needed it most, and I am honoured to be part of a community made up of the most hardworking and supportive people. 4th Line has granted me the opportunity to share space with others whom I respect deeply, people whom I love and have felt loved by. We work hard to share and honour stories through our work.

As humans, I believe we are meant to tell stories. It's how we navigate life, and connect with one another. 4th Line gives us the chance to do this."

~ Mikayla Bronté Stoodley

AREAS FOR WHICH volunteers are needed include acting, backstage, front of house, concessions, bingo, regional ambassadors and administrative support.

- At Delta Bingo in Peterborough. (This position is only open to volunteers 18 years of age and over).
- For those with creative talents we require back stage costume and set building.
- Regional ambassadors promote 4th Line Theatre in their local towns and areas distributing posters and other promotional materials.
- Administrative support is needed year round in our office, including reception duties and assisting with campaigns.

Please contact our Box Office for details.

If you are interested in learning new skills, applying existing ones or getting more involved with 4th Line Theatre activities, please call Sarah, our Box Office Manager, at 705-932-4448.

Finally, we would like to thank all our volunteers whose dedication and commitment helped make our 2023 Season a great success.

CONTACT US

4thlinetheatre.on.ca

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ADMINISTRATIVE & BOX OFFICE CENTRE

9 Tupper Street, Millbrook

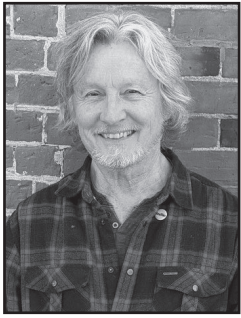
P.O. Box 403, Millbrook, ON L0A 1G0

Phone 705-932-4445 or 1-800-814-0055

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4th Line Theatre is a charitable not-for-profit!
Charitable Registration # 13762 2866 RR0001



Thoughts on Millbrook High

ON OCTOBER 14TH 4TH LINE held a community reminiscence. The topic was Millbrook High School as it existed from its

opening in 1960 to its (controversial) closing in 1992. The reminiscence kicked off my research into the school's history and stories. Thanks to all who attended. I hope a play eventually emerges.

For those new to Millbrook or even for those not so new, the history of secondary school education in our area is kind of interesting. I recall my dad and my aunt talking about taking the train from Millbrook to Port Hope to attend high school. I once talked to an elderly lady who remembered my dad causing a great deal of chaos on the train – something involving chasing others with a broom. At some point the Old Millbrook School (where the library is now) became a high school. I think they called it a continuation

school. Many local residents attended that school. Not too long ago I spoke with the late Dave Brackenridge and he said he started one year in the Old School and finished it in the brand, spanking new Millbrook High School on County Road 10. This would have been 1960, the opening of the school I want to develop a play about.

I attended Millbrook High from 1965 to 1970. Pop culture at that period was incredible – the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan. I remember wearing Beatle boots, caps, jackets, sunglasses. If only I could remember what I learned! Millbrook High had a high degree of school spirit. We were the little school that could. We even had a football team, many extra-curricular clubs, and tons of dances and special events. Classes were relatively small and the general atmosphere was positive - most of the time. There were 8 of us in grade 13, I remember, and about 110 students in the whole school!

It was sad to lose the school I remember. By then I was long gone but I still clocked the loss. Millbrook students



Photo of students resting during a Walkathon fundraiser, featuring Robert Winslow, from Millbrook High School from 1969-1970 Yearbook.

moved on to Crestwood Secondary School in Peterborough. Ironically, there is talk now about getting a new high school in Millbrook. Our township is the fastest growing area in Peterborough County, especially with the large subdivisions north of the village. *La plus ça change....*

So, if you have any stories or material about Millbrook High, please contact 4th Line. I would love to talk to you, virtually or in person, about the school and the time that was.

- Robert Winslow

Congratulations to Box Office Manager Sarah De Vouge for 10 years at 4th Line Theatre!



Thank you for all of your wonderful work over these 10 years, Sarah!

Your amazing organizational skills, bright smile, dedication, stellar customer service, attention to detail and genuine kindness make you great at what you do—and have a huge impact on 4th Line's operations!

Happy work anniversary from your 4th Line family!

Save the Date!

FALL

- **October 30 – November 2, 2023:** Box Office opens for 2024 Gift Certificate AND Ticket Sales to MEMBERS ONLY
- **November 6, 2023:** Box Office opens for 2024 Gift Certificate and Tickets Sales to the public

WINTER

- **December 22, 2023:** Office closure for Christmas holiday
- **January 8, 2024:** Box office opens after Christmas holiday closure
- **January 28, 2024:** Community Volunteer Auditions for 2024 Season
- **February 4, 2024:** Breaking Ground: *Wild Irish Geese* by Megan Murphy

SPRING

- **April 21 & April 28, 2024:** Artist Talk: *Kim Blackwell in Conversation With...*
- **June 19, 2024:** Annual General Meeting

SUMMER

- **July 1-20, 2024:** *Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes** written by Alison Lawrence (*based on the book by Shirleyan English & Bonnie Sitter)
- **July 3, 2024:** *Onion Skins* Opening Night Party
- **July & August 2024:** Local Music Showcase Wednesdays at the Farm
- **July & August 2024:** Artist Talks & Festival Fridays at the Farm
- **July 27, 2024:** Members' Invited Dress Rehearsal
- **July 30 – August 24, 2024:** *Jim Watts: Girl Reporter* written by Beverley Cooper
- **August 1, 2024:** *Jim Watts* Opening Night Party

Updates available at 4thlinetheatre.on.ca

A round of applause! Sponsors and funding agencies play an important role in 4th Line Theatre's activities. We could not do what we do without their financial support.

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L to R - Front: Kim Blackwell, Emma Hale, Lindy Finlan;
Middle: Sarah De Vouge, Robert Winslow; Back: Timmi Brady, Annette Nadeau

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