



BETWEEN THE LINES

THE MEMBERS OF 4TH LINE THEATRE NEWSLETTER

FALL 2024

Managing Artistic Director's Message

WHAT A TRULY SPECIAL SEASON 2024 WAS!!! If you were able to join us, thank you so much for coming! We are continuing to rebuild our audiences and there is still a ways to go, but we are headed in the right direction!! Thank you to everyone who came out this summer and supported Canadian theatre. And we did not lose even one show to rain!

We again produced two world premieres. We opened the 2024 summer season with Alison Lawrence's *Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes* based on Bonnie Sitter and Shirleyan English's book. We hosted many former Farmerettes and their families to celebrate the stories of these amazing young women! What a joy to finally bring Alison, Bonnie and Shirleyan's beautiful words and memories to the stage. In August, we premiered Beverley Cooper's *Jim Watts: Girl Reporter*. The stunning cast of 30 performers transfixed audiences with this epic tale of ideology, war and social change. As I write this letter, *Jim Watts* seems particularly prescient. I am proud of the plays we produced this summer and the people who brought them to life. And we even had a revolving stage! What a feat of engineering and construction.

It was glorious to welcome audiences to the Winslow Farm, to experience original Canadian stories under the sun on warm Ontario nights. Gathering together in shared experiences reminded me how important our community is to our physical and mental health and well-being.

We involved 20 volunteer actors as part of the artistic team this year, many of them members of our Young Company through our Emerging VOICES program. Year after year, I love watching community performers blossom as both artists and humans during their time at 4th Line.

And now, as the weather turns a bit colder, I turn my attention to 2025 and our 33rd summer season. I am proud to announce two world premiere plays which have been developed through our

new play development program. In July, we will present the world premiere of Robert Winslow and Ian McLachlan's *The Housekeeper*. It is 1955 and a mysterious woman arrives in Millbrook. Eleanor Gwyn is looking for a job, and becoming the housekeeper for widower Walter White might be the perfect fit. Eleanor is hoping to put down roots, find a place to call home and make a fresh start in her life. But is Millbrook ready for Eleanor and her progressive world views? Founder Robert Winslow will be directing this play.

Then in August, I am excited to direct the world premiere of Megan Murphy's *Wild Irish Geese*. Murphy's play is highly anticipated and sure to be an instant hit. The production will be a part of the 200th commemoration of the arrival of the first of the Peter Robinson Irish settlers in 1825. Descendants of these original Irish settlers are being invited to return to the region in the summer of 2025 to pay homage to their forebears. 4th Line is proud to be part of these important anniversary events. Oh, and Megan will be starring in the production as well!

This season's plays will focus on people who are in search of new lands, towns and homes. They are people with a desperate desire to find a place to call their own. Whether a person or people come from



across an ocean or the province, many are escaping persecution and abuse in search of safe and secure lives for themselves and their families. We know this settler history can be complex and we are sensitive to this challenge.

But up first, I am thrilled to be directing the latest iteration of Megan Murphy and Kate Suhr's beloved *The Verandah Society*. This holiday version, entitled *Up to Snow Good*, will run from December 11-15, 2024 at the Peterborough Theatre Guild. The show will be filled with Megan's funny and thoughtful stories, and Kate's ethereal music. Justin Hiscox will musical direct! And there will be many surprise guests. What an event it will be!

The theatre is a precious place where transformative experiences are shared between artists and audiences. This relationship is at the heart of everything we do. I hope you can join us soon!

- Kim Blackwell

COMING THIS CHRISTMAS | 4TH LINE THEATRE PRESENTS



The Verandah Society:
*** * * * ***
Up to Snow Good
*** * * * ***

Created and Performed by Megan Murphy & Kate Suhr
Directed by Kim Blackwell



Cozy up with Kate Suhr and Meg Murphy and enjoy festive stories and songs that will be sure to get you in the holiday spirit. Enjoy that magical feeling when people gather in a theatre to share and be entertained. Bring your family and friends and join us on The Verandah this holiday season.

December 11 - 15, 2024

Peterborough Theatre Guild, 364 Rogers St.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

1-800-814-0055 • 4thlinetheatre.on.ca

This production is made possible by The Government of Canada - Tourism Growth Program

Production Sponsored by:

McDougall

Field Day B&B



Verandah Society photos: Mary Zita Payne Photography

2024 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



(L to R): Bonnie Sitter (co-author of the book "Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes" & Roseamond Rice Fredrickson (a Farmerette/audience member)

Onion Skins & Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes

"The production is terrific... You will have a better appreciation of peaches, onions, farm labour, and the power of an embracing community after seeing this wonderful show."

- Lynn Slotkin, *The Slotkin Letter*



Cast members, *Jim Watts - Girl Reporter*, 2024. Photo by Wayne Eardley, Brookside Studio

Jim Watts: Girl Reporter

"A riveting play about Spain in the '30s, which has such a strong echo in today's political situation...once again, hearing and seeing stories told via a theatre experience, stories with relevance to our region and to our country, in a charming, modest, outdoor setting on a real farm near Millbrook, rings with authenticity and then encourages comparison and reflection."

- Rosemary Ganley, *The Peterborough Examiner*

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



Photo: Timmi Brady

"I have loved history and performing for as long as I can remember. I have been part of three productions with 4th Line Theatre (The Cavan Blazers in 2023, Wild Irish

Geese staged reading in 2024, and Jim Watts: Girl Reporter in 2024) and I would like to share why 4th Line Theatre is a special place to me.

Walking into a room (or tent!) of strangers is scary. I knew four people at my very first 4th Line rehearsal. To put it in perspective, that's four people out of a 50-person cast. But I quickly learned how welcoming this place is. I walked into the break area and was immediately met with smiles and offers to come sit and introduce myself. I knew from that point on, this place was great.

The last two years with 4th Line have helped me improve as a performer. It has taught me what it is like to be a working actor, how to be more responsible, focus, work hard and contribute to a team. The direction I have been given at rehearsals has helped me learn how to find my character and understand what they do as part of a story.

4th Line is one of my most favorite places to be and it has been one of the most welcoming places in my life. I am grateful for the opportunities they have given me and look forward to more to come. I hope someday when I am older and if 4th Line still exists, maybe I could play a grandpa or a dad in the show and make another kid feel just as welcomed as me."

~ Darragh O'Connell

AREAS FOR WHICH volunteers are needed include acting, backstage, front of house, 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 Emma, Artistic Administrator, at 705-932-4505.

Finally, we would like to thank all our volunteers whose dedication and commitment helped make our 2024 Season a great success.

CONTACT US

4thlinetheatre.on.ca

admin@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

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

FOLLOW US ON



4th Line Theatre is a charitable not-for-profit!
Charitable Registration # 13762 2866 RR001

Local Stories Galore!

Hi folks,

Just an update on projects I am currently working on for 4th Line Theatre. I am putting the finishing touches on one of next year's plays entitled *The Housekeeper*. Ian McLachlan and I have written the fourth instalment in our

Barnardo series. In *The Housekeeper*, former Barnardo boy Walter White hires a housekeeper from away to work for him on his farm just south of Millbrook, the same farm featured in our last Barnardo play entitled *Carmel*. *The Housekeeper* will open the 2025 summer season.

Meanwhile, I have been researching a couple of other locally-based plays for possible future production at 4th Line. Firstly, I am working on a play about my old high school, Millbrook High, which existed from 1961 until 1992. It has been great connecting with former staff and students ranging in age from the forties to the early nineties. I envision a play with lots of original songs from the period and a wide variety of scenes and characters. Also I have been researching a play about the Prince of Wales' royal tour through this area in 1860. Just 18, lively Prince Albert (later King Edward VII) had a whirlwind of a couple of days passing through Cobourg, Hiawatha First Nation, Peterborough, Millbrook and Port Hope.

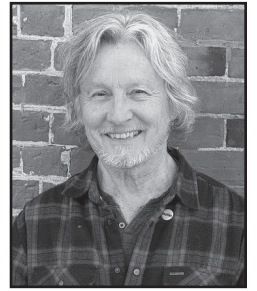
I'm subtitled the play *A Royal Fantasy* in

the spirit of a fairy tale as the Prince becomes lost in the woods south of Millbrook after carefully avoiding the Orangemen of Millbrook led by the Cavan Blazers.

I am also looking forward to a January reading of a play, which I researched and developed during the pandemic. This play entitled *Courage*, follows the Jewish prisoners in Treblinka Death Camp in Poland during World War II as they plan and carry out an uprising against their Nazi captors.

And Ian McLachlan and I have begun work on our final Barnardo series play, tentatively entitled *The End*, which follows former Barnardo boys Billy and Walter into the world of long-term care. I am dedicating this final play to my dear friend and father-in-law Chester Froncz who passed away this past July in Extencicare, Cobourg.

- Robert Winslow



Save the Date!

FALL

- **October 28 – November 1, 2024:** Box Office Opens for 2025 Gift Certificate and Ticket Sales to MEMBERS ONLY
- **November 4, 2024:** Box office opens for 2025 Gift Certificate and Ticket sales to public

WINTER

- **December 11-15, 2024:** *The Verandah Society: Up to Snow Good* created by Kate Suhr & Megan Murphy
- **December 24, 2024:** Office closure for Christmas holiday
- **January 6, 2025:** Box office opens after Christmas holiday closure
- **January 2025—Date TBD:** Breaking Ground: *The World of Pearl Hart* by Maja Ardal
- **January 26, 2025:** Community Volunteer Auditions for 2025 Season

SPRING

- **April 2025—Dates TBD:** Artist Talks – *Kim Blackwell in Conversation With...*
- **June 18, 2025:** Annual General Meeting

SUMMER

- **July 1-19, 2025:** *The Housekeeper* written by Ian McLachlan & Robert Winslow
- **July 3, 2025:** *The Housekeeper* Opening Night Party
- **July & August 2025:** Local Music Showcase Wednesdays at the Farm
- **July & August 2025:** Artist Talks & Festival Fridays at the Farm
- **July 26, 2025:** Members' Invited Dress Rehearsal
- **July 29—August 30, 2025:** *Wild Irish Geese* written by Megan Murphy
- **July 31, 2025:** *Wild Irish Geese* Opening Night Party

Updates available at
4thlinetheatre.on.ca

GIVE THE GIFT OF SUMMER!



Kait Dueck & Robert Winslow, *Crow Hill: The Telephone Play*, 2018.
Photo by Wayne Eardley, Brookside Studio.



Featuring Megan Murphy. Photo by Wayne Eardley, Brookside Studio.

The Housekeeper

Written by Ian McLachlan & Robert Winslow,
Directed by Robert Winslow

July 1 - 19

Wild Irish Geese

Written by Megan Murphy,
Directed by Kim Blackwell

July 29 - August 30

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

Purchase a 2025 summer season **gift certificate** or **ticket** before **December 24th, 2024** and save \$2 per ticket (applies to single tickets/single ticket gift certificates for regular performance nights only)!

Save even more with a 2025 Season Subscription (\$12 savings overall)

when you purchase gift certificates or tickets for both summer season shows.

Purchase tickets for specific performance dates when the box office opens for MEMBERS ONLY between October 28th and November 1st.

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

Kim Blackwell, *Managing Artistic Director*

kim@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Robert Winslow, *Founder*

robert@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Lindy Finlan, *General Manager*

lindy@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Timmi Brady,

Manager of Marketing & Development

timmi@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Sarah De Vouge, *Box Office Manager*

sarah@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Emma Hale, *Artistic Administrator*

emma@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

Annette Nadeau, *Bookkeeper*

annette@4thlinetheatre.on.ca

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* Based on the book by Shirleyn English & Bonnie Sitter

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