

ACT Hosts WODL Minifest

22 July 2006

Aylmer Community Theatre hosted the 2006 WODL Minifest on Friday night and Saturday, July 21 and 22. A huge effort was made by the large and enthusiastic ACT Minifest committee to ensure that the event was a success, and by all indications it was. The 80 people attending enjoyed a great weekend of theatre, food and fun.

Four area theatre groups participated: Elgin Theatre Guild, Elmira Theatre Company, London Community Players and Theatre Kent.

They performed the play "Autumn Blooming" by Fred Jacob. The WODL description of the play was: "Set in a victorian sitting room overlooking a garden, and the action takes place in 1924, which will present an interesting costuming challenge for the participating groups. The cast is four women, various ages, and two men - an older woman, her grasping and selfish daughter, her equally avaricious sons, a lively young maid, and a very eccentric neighbour. Lots of room for interpretation."

The workshop leader was the always-entertaining Brian Van Norman. After each performance, he discussed the show and then spoke at length on a particular aspect of theatre, using that show for inspiration.

Food was an important part of the weekend, of course. Friday night's Taco Bar was fun and flavourful. Saturday's Box Lunch had something for everyone to enjoy and the Banquet on Saturday night was a big hit. The Banquet theme was a 1920's speakeasy known as "The Prinking Pansy" from a line in the play. People were encouraged to dress in costumes of the day and there were many wild outfits on display. After dinner, awards were presented by Brian Van Norman and then, instead of dancing, there was a Karaoke Night, ably hosted by ACT's Dwayne Gagne. This proved very popular and continued into the wee hours with the diehard singers demanding "one more before we go".

The heady mix of theatre, learning, good food, fun, meeting old friends and making new ones made this one of the most successful Minifests of recent times. For the hosts, it was a busy but extremely satisfying experience, and one we will remember always.