

TIMES

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Call 652-2034



Deb Scott plays Sally Haines, the down-to-earth friend of Judd.



Scottie Templeton (played by Barry Maynard) will do anything — including dropping his pants — to get a laugh out of his ex-wife Maggie (played by Carla Schmidt).

Tribute will take the stage

Photos by Frank McTighe

Windmill Theatre Players' production of "Tribute" debuts April 16-18 at the Highbury Memorial Centre.

The High River theatre group has selected the story of Scottie Templeton, a comedian who never managed to win over his son Judd as easily as his audiences. Directed by Shannon Simington, "Tribute" explores the father and son relationship against a backdrop of other personal turmoil in Scottie's life.

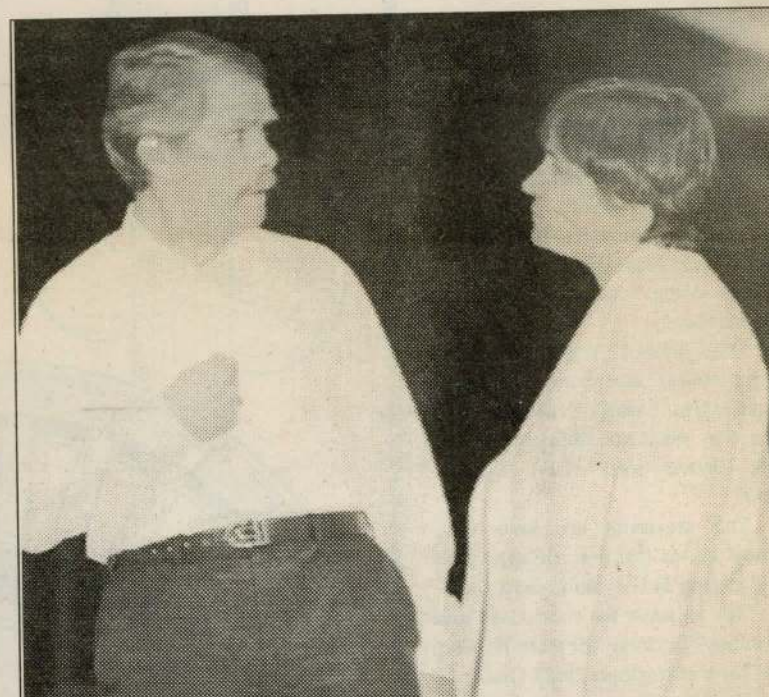
Dinner theatre performances April 16-18 begin at 6 p.m., with the curtain call at 8 p.m. Regular theatre performances are April 24-25 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at Pickersgill's Clothing at 652-2252.



Lou Daniels (played by Bill Regnier at right) tries to convince Judd (played by Neil Demers) to give his father a second chance.



Scottie hugs his long-time friend Hilary (played by Nancy Barbour).



Dr. Gladys Petrelli (played by Helen Rogers) tries to impart the seriousness of his illness to a disbelieving Scottie.

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photo by Frank McTighe

Scottie Templeton (played by Barry Maynard) reassures Dr. Gladys Petrelli (played by Helen Rogers) in a scene from Tribute.

Windmill Theatre's Tribute study of human relationships

maureen **McMANUS**
TIMES CONTRIBUTOR

High River's Windmill Theatre Players are now offering their spring production, "Tribute" by Bernard Slade. The tribute in question pays homage to Slade's main character, Scottie Templeton, a has-been comedian played by Barry Maynard in his first leading role with Windmill.

Maynard describes Tribute as a "dark" play, but adds that it is filled with tinges of "sadness, anger and happiness." Such a play is not easy to project to a mainly rural audience who may have expected something more light-hearted. Essentially, it is a story of human relationships, filled with pathos for Scottie, a fading, middle-aged man who is still struggling to be a lovable, robust young comic. Director Shannon Simington is to be commended for staging this play in the Foothills of Alberta. It brings home the complexities of New York city life, and Lawrence Ouwendyk's set construction for the New York townhouse is excellent.

Tribute's comic touches come in the form of Scottie's punchlines and comic antics, peppering his inter-personal relationships. The program describes Scottie as being a "comedian/producer who is a mixture of Noel Coward, the Marx Brothers and Peter Pan." The charm of Coward and the immaturity of Peter Pan are evident in Maynard's portrayal of Scottie. Maynard is to be congratulated for his acting ability and sensitivity applied to a complex role.

Scottie's 23 year-old son Jud, well-played with the appropriate moodiness by Neil Demers, comments that his father "charms his way through life like a court jester" and "cheapens everything he touches." Jud is constantly frustrated by his father's lack of responsibility and clown-like actions. However, like his father, Jud only develops casual relationships with women.

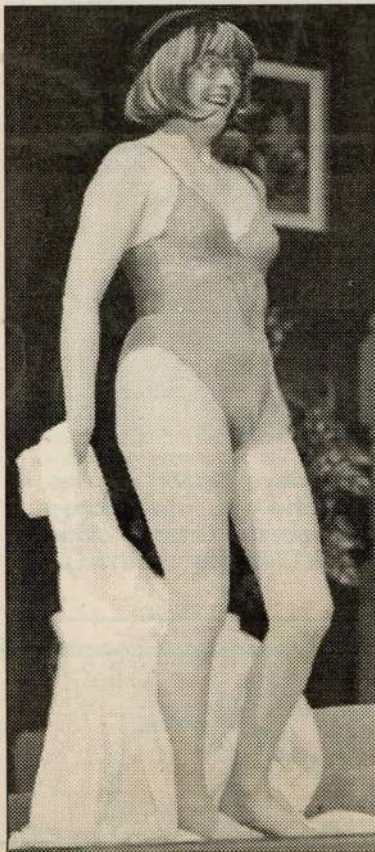


photo by Frank McTighe

Scottie Templeton's 'nurse' (played by Nancy Barbour) showcases a unique therapy.

The women in Scottie's life include Maggie Stratton, his first wife and Jud's mother. She understands both her men. Carla Schmidt brings compassion to her role as Maggie. Not only is she easy on the ear, but she is also the most stylishly-dressed character on stage, adding another touch of class to the production.

Dr. Gladys Petrelli, Scottie's doctor and concerned friend, is played by High River lawyer Helen Rogers, convincing as an authority figure in the comedian's ailing life. Sally Haines, Scottie's young, blonde friend who befriends Jud, is played by Debbie Scott. She brings charm and vivacity to her role.

It's easy to see why both

Scottie and Jud would be enchanted by her.

Nancy Barbour plays Hilary, Scottie's glamorous long-time friend, who "made ends meet by making ends meet" in her form of show business! Barbour shines in her minor but very visible role. She certainly gets the audience's attention each time she appears. In real life, Barbour's acting and teaching career has taken her throughout North America and Europe. Barbour is new to High River, and the Windmill Players are fortunate to have captured her attention; it is hoped she will bring her wealth of acting experience to many more Windmill productions.

The other man in Scottie's life — apart from his son — is Lou Daniels, an affable New Yorker who is Scottie's lifetime manager, promoter and friend. This role is played by Bill Regnier, whose commanding stage presence has won him three best actor awards in recent Alberta one-act play festivals. His character describes Scottie as a man "who likes to go through life playing to empty houses." It is unlikely that Regnier will ever play to empty houses.

As Windmill's properties assistant Christina Ersson pointed out while mixing with the audience on Tribute's opening night, "We all have other lives outside Windmill — we are all volunteers. Shannon put her soul into this production."

One wonders how all the players and back-stage volunteers found the time to pull this complex production together. But that's another story of human relationships.

Once you've had a chance to appreciate the tragicomedy of Tribute, make a note that Windmill's 50th major production will be the musical Meet Me in St. Louis, running at the Highwood Memorial Centre Nov. 19-22 and Nov. 26-28.

Regular theatre performances for Tribute are April 24 and 25 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available through Pickersgill's Clothing (652-2252).

Chautauqua hits town Saturday

By Dana Smith

Organizers for Chautauqua, the library fund-raiser, will have a better turnout than early ticket sales indicate.

The fund-raiser, which will include a play, music, an auction and desserts fit for a king will be held on Saturday, Nov. 7 at the Nanton Community Centre.

Chautauqua is the only major fund-raiser for the library to be held this year, and organizer Larry MacKillop hopes that despite low ticket sales to this point, that the library will still be able to reach its goal of raising about \$3,000.

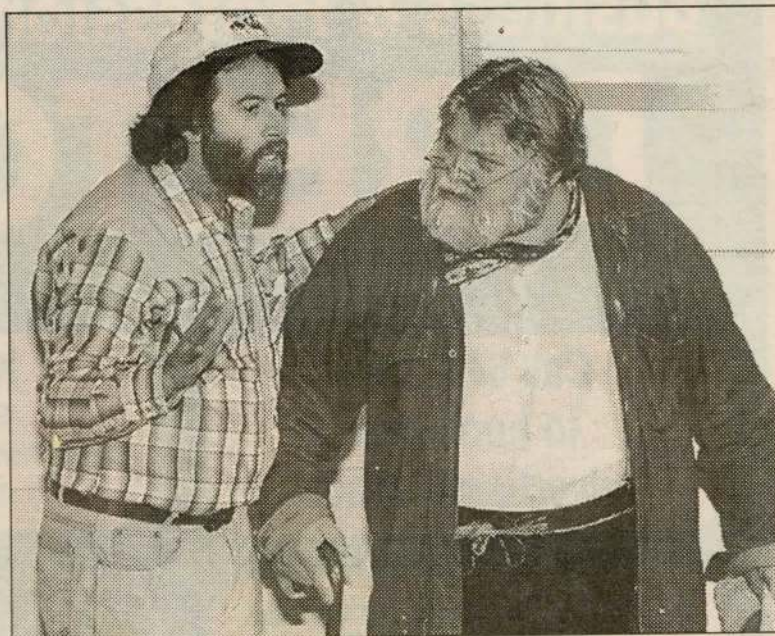
"The tickets don't seem to be selling very well right now — we're having a really hard time," said MacKillop. "This being our fifth annual production, we were hoping it would be bigger and better than ever."

Chautauqua will feature the play Chekhov's Trout, which was written by MacKillop, as well as music performed by Herb Johnson in his band Two Guys with Saxophones. Another of the highlights of the evening and will be an auction by Bernie Lalonde, and, of course, the desserts.

MacKillop said although most of the entertainment is local, all of the performers — who are performing for free — all have found ways to make sure their performances will be unique.

"There will be a lot of faces that people may have seen before, but the acts will be new," he said.

MacKillop said that because



Handy Chekov (George Stone) discusses the options of marrying Don MacPherson's (Bill Regnier) daughter in Chekov's Trout. Photo by Lorraine Hjalte.

this is the only fund-raiser of the year for the library, there will be extra pressure to get as many people out as they can. He is even staying optimistic about the low ticket sales to this point.

"Although the ticket sales aren't very good right now, there may still be a lot of last-minute support," he said. "A lot of the time that is the case for things like this, and we are really hoping that will be the case here."

Last year, the auction sold more than 170 tickets, and organizers for this year's event have made room for as many as 200 seats this year.

Now all they have to do is fill them.

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World of fun in Windmill's next play

Windmill Theatre Players are gearing up to present their 50th major production, the musical Meet Me In St. Louis.

Meet Me In St. Louis is a rare treasure in the musical theatre; it is the warm-hearted story of a happy family's life as they anticipate the wonders of the 1904 World's Fair.

The play includes seven of the best loved songs from the film and 10 other wonderful numbers written specially for the stage.

In the opening number — Meet Me In St. Louis — the audience is introduced to the Smith family octet: Tootie, the youngest girl; Agnes, her closest sister; Lon, the son ready for college; Mrs. Anna Smith, mother; Katie, the family's Irish maid; Grandpa Prophater; Rose, the eldest daughter; and Esther, the second oldest daughter. We learn of their excitement about the fair, of Esther's crush on the boy next door, and Mrs. Smith's advice to her daughter in You'll Hear a Bell.

Other familiar songs include Skip to My Lou; The Trolley Song, and Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.

The cast consists of the previously named characters as well as Mr. Alonso Smith, father; John Truitt, the boy next door; Warren Sheffield, Rose's boyfriend; plus several characters who appear in only one or two scenes and can also be a part of the ensemble (chorus).

Auditions will be held Sunday, Sept. 13 at the Highwood Memorial Centre. If you are unable to attend on this date, arrangements may be made to audition at an earlier time.

There are parts for two girls age eight to 13. Anyone interested in trying out for these parts will require an appointment. Please call Celia at 652-7913 to book a time. Also, please bring along a recent photo and a song to sing. There is no children's chorus for this play so only two girls in this age group will be cast.

Auditions for all other parts will take place starting approximately 3 p.m.

Auditions are open to anyone who is interested, so if you've always wanted to be on stage, come out and see what it's all about.

We are in need of someone who has some experience in choreography to help with the dance numbers. Celia would love to hear from you.

For more information regarding auditions, of if you are interested in getting involved behind the scenes, please call Celia at 652-7913 or Marlene at 652-7605.

Windmill Players choose cast for Meet Me In St. Louis

The cast is chosen and rehearsals have begun for "Meet Me In St. Louis," Windmill Theatre Players' 50th major production.

The directors had a big challenge in choosing the cast with an overwhelming number of talented people auditioning for the 11 major roles. In the end they couldn't make a choice in one case and have set a precedent for future directors by casting two girls for one part.

The cast included people from communities around High River as well as from the town itself.

The main roles are being filled by the following: Ray Fox, High River; Trisha Butler, High River; Shae Christie, Nanton; Debbie Scott, Claresholm; Suzie Butler, Claresholm; Gordon Scott, Claresholm; Corry Brown, High River; Jordan Salamon, Nanton; and Andrew Graham, High River.

There are 30 other cast members who make up the chorus and/or have small speaking parts. The chorus plays a big part in a musical and it is great to have this group to support the main cast and take part in those wonderful production numbers that are always crowd pleasers.

"Meet Me in St. Louis" is a

warm-hearted family show with plenty of humor and lots of singing. Some songs that you might recognize are The Trolley Song, Skip to My Lou, Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas and, of course, the title song. The music is sure to put a smile on your face and have you humming as you leave the theatre.

There will be seven performances:

Dinner Theatre: Thursday, Nov. 19, Friday, Nov. 20 and Saturday, Nov. 21. Tickets are \$22.50 for the Thursday performance and \$25 for Friday and Saturday.

Dessert Theatre: Thursday, Nov. 26 at a cost of \$16. Tickets for these shows can be reserved by calling Marlene at 652-7605.

Sunday Matinee: Sunday, Nov. 22 at 2 p.m. at a cost of \$8 per person.

Regular Theatre: Friday, Nov. 27 and Saturday, Nov. 28 at 8 p.m. Tickets for these shows are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors.

These tickets will be available after Oct. 19 at Pickersgill Clothing.

Check your calendars and plan now to join us in November for "Meet Me in St. Louis."

REGIONAL, Oct. 5, 1998



Windmill Theatre Players Presents

MEET ME In St. Louis

Dinner Theatre • November 19, 20 & 21
Sunday Matinee • November 22. Dessert Theatre • November 26.
Regular Theatre • November 27 & 28

Dinner Theatre Tickets Call Marlene Sutor, 652-7605
Tickets available at Pickersgill's Clothing, 652-2252

Young actress is 'a director's delight' in Meet Me In St. Louis

With a star-studded cast, Windmill Theatre Players newcomer Suzie Butler already threatens to steal the spotlight with her rendition of Esther in Windmill's fall musical offering, "Meet Me In St. Louis."

Esther Smith is a lively high school girl who falls in love with "the boy next door." The fact that Esther hasn't met this boy doesn't seem to deter her at all.

Suzie explains: "Esther is kinda, almost boy-crazy for one certain guy." Of course, everything doesn't go smoothly, and "Esther has to put her own ideas into trying to get this guy to notice her. And sometimes she's definitely going against the norm of what young ladies are supposed to be like around the gentlemen of society."

Suzie admits that Esther's character is attractive to her. "She's not quite as elegant as her sister, but she's creative and very full of spunk."

Sixteen-year-old Suzie has been drawn to theatre since she was nine years old when she saw a stage production in Fort Macleod. After the play, the Butlers looked for a way to get Suzie involved, and "it's been a snowball effect ever since." Suzie was encouraged to audition for the Windmill production by her voice and piano instructor of two years, Michelle DeDominicis, who starred in Windmill's production of Oklahoma last fall.

Director Celia Penman said Suzie is, "A director's delight. Her stage presence, natural talent and absolute dedication to the project make her a joy to work with. Even from the very first read-through, Suzie seemed to have a natural feeling for the character of Esther."

The play in general, says Suzie, has "everything ... It's a love story, a family story, it's got humor and conflict and all the other emotions all rolled into one, and she delivers a sparkling performance."

"Working with Windmill is so much fun," continues Suzie. "Everyone is so nice and so encouraging. And it's always really neat to see how everything falls together, how we work on things individually

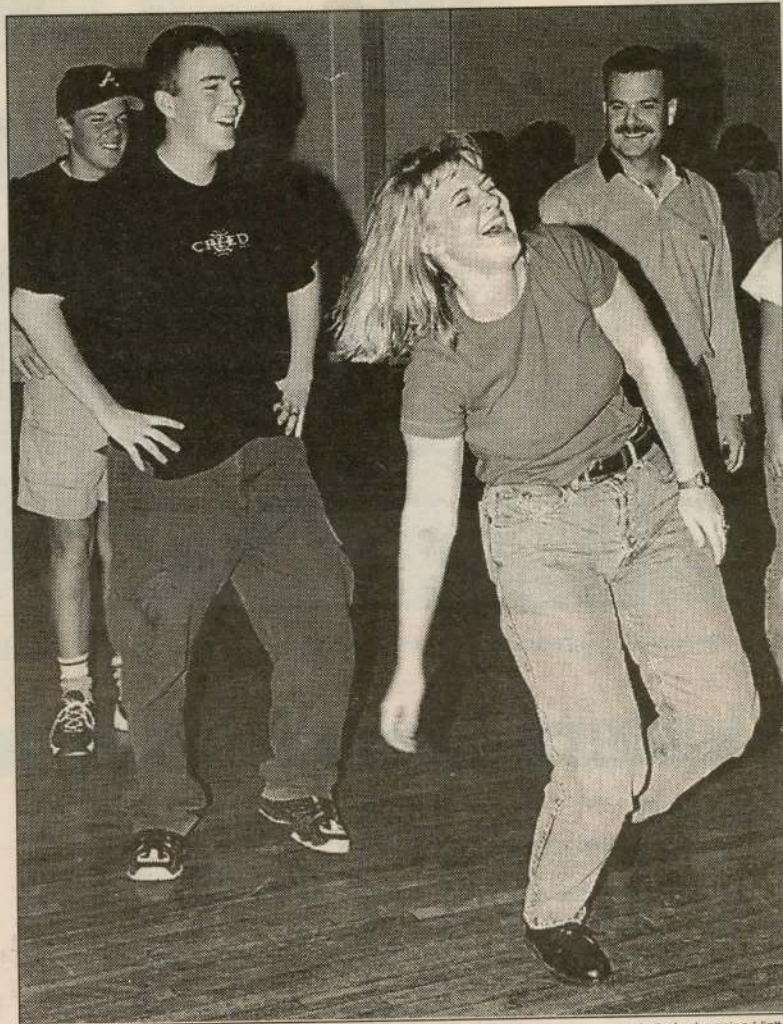


photo by Lorraine Hjalte

Debbie Scott (right) was having a few problems getting the steps right with partner Andrew Graham (left). By the end of rehearsal they looked like professionals.

“Everyone is so nice and so encouraging.”

Suzie Butler

then all of a sudden it's ready to put together and it's great.”

Windmill's production of Meet Me in St. Louis will be presented on the following dates: Dinner Theatre, Nov. 19, 20 and 21; Sunday Matinee, Nov. 22; Dessert Theatre, Nov. 26; Regular theatre, Nov. 27 and 28. For dinner theatre tickets call Marlene Suitor at 652-7605. All other tickets can be purchased at Pickersgill's Clothing, 652-2252.

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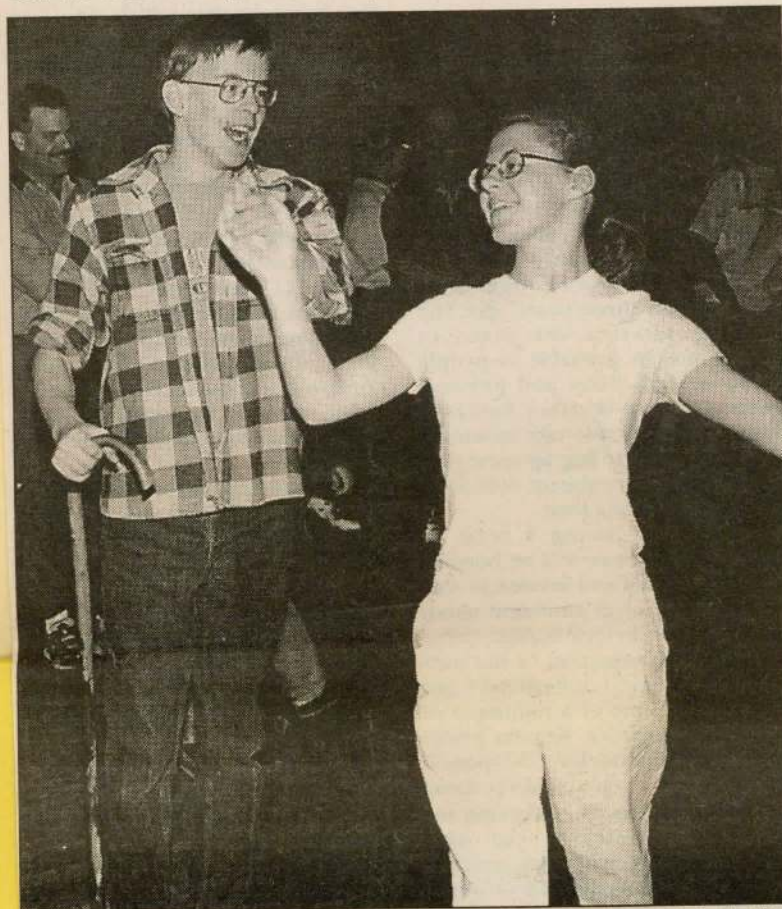


photo by Lorraine Hjalte

Shae Christie spins Jessie Gaede during dance rehearsal.

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Lorraine HJALTE
REPORTER



From left: Jim Goodwin, Chelsea Masterman, Don Gaede, Janelle Richardson, Jeff Schaus and Emily Senger.

Meet Me in St. Louis — you'll be delighted you did

Photos by Lorraine Hjalte



Warren (Andrew Graham) tries to sweep Rose (Debbie Scott) off her feet.



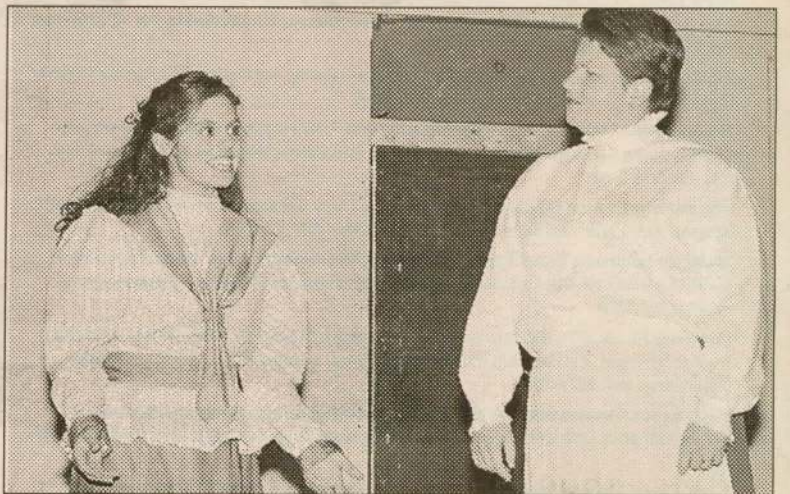
John (Jordan Salamon).

Windmill Theatre Players is hoping to sweep the audience off its feet with their latest production, *Meet Me in St. Louis*.

While eagerly awaiting the World Fair in St. Louis in 1912 the Smith family undergoes a crisis as Mr. Smith decides to move the family to New York, just as two of his daughters have fallen in love.

With stunning costumes, excellent acting and singing the play is sure to delight audiences.

Dates include: dinner theatre Nov. 19, 20 and 21; Sunday matinee, Nov. 22; dessert theatre, Nov. 26; regular theatre Nov. 27 and 28.



Esther (Suzie Butler) has an 'excellent idea' of which housekeeper Katie (Corrie Brown) isn't too sure.



Mr. Smith (Ray Fox) absolutely refuses to change the hour supper is to be served in spite of reasons listed by his wife Mrs. Smith (Trisha Butler).



Logan Campbell and Shannon Dorman.

TUESDAY
November 24
1998

94th Year, #47

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by Charles Clark*



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THIS WEEK

**Concert
will be a
classic**

Player Productions will build on the success of last summer's Classic Rock concert.

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**Backstage
at Windmill**

The action is just as fast-paced behind the scenes as it is on the stage during Meet Me In St. Louis.

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FINISHING TOUCHES



photo by Lorraine Hjalte

Andrew Graham and Laura Schaus get ready for act one on opening night, Nov. 19, for in Meet Me in St. Louis. Crews were busy putting the final finishing touches on the set while the sold-out audience enjoyed dinner. The play, which is Windmill Theatre Players 50th major production, is a resounding success. Tickets are still available for dessert and regular theatre on Nov. 26-28.



