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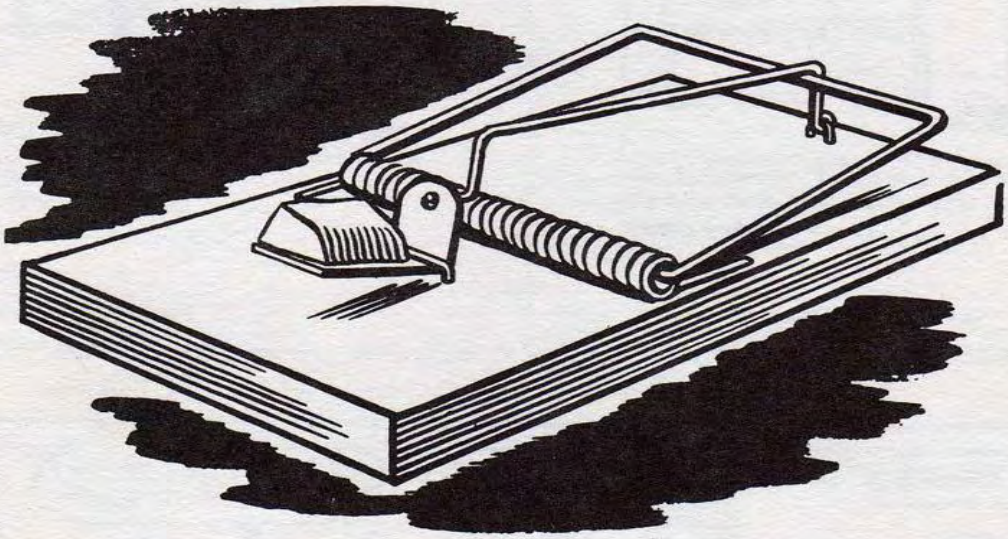

by

Agatha Christie

WATCH FOR OUR NEXT SHOW

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of

"OLIVER"

May 10, 11, 12, 13
1979

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"It includes the Houses of Parliament, the Law Courts, the British Museum and the Mousetrap." *Sunday Telegraph* cartoon

"She's seen the play seventeen times and still doesn't know who did it"

Punch cartoon

THE COMMUNITY PLAYERS OF SALISBURY, INC.
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PRESENTS

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S

"THE MOUSETRAP"

Directed by
PAUL PFEIFFER

Produced by
DAVE WILLIAMS

Set Design by
PAUL PFEIFFER

Costumes by
JEAN WOOTTEN

Light Design by
TIMOTHY P. MORGAN

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THE MOUSETRAP

It began in 1947. In its preparation for the celebration of Queen Mary's 80th birthday, the BBC offered her a radio program. Anything she chose would be hers. Opera? Shakespeare? "An Agatha Christie play", was the answer. And so it was done! Agatha Christie wrote a thirty minute radio drama entitled, THREE BLIND MICE. It met with great success, and the following year she published it as a short story under the same title. Later, it was to become a play - THE MOUSETRAP.

In October of 1952, THE MOUSETRAP opened in a theatre so small that survival was dependent upon its immediate success. Obviously, it survived. It has been playing ever since in a record run which has left THE MOUSETRAP a British institution. During its London run, 26 miles of shirts have been ironed, 160 tons of programs have been sold and 98 tons of ice cream have been consumed at intermissions. In London alone, more than 4 million people have seen it, many several times. Still, no one can account for its success. When Agatha Christie was once asked, "Is THE MOUSETRAP being kept on to beat more records?", she replied, not boastingly but in some bewilderment, "What records are there to beat?"

It is a fine family play, a great whodunit, it has comedy and suspense and is well constructed. But other plays have also met these standards and yet have not met with the success of THE MOUSETRAP. Is it the surprise ending? If so, then why would people go to see it over and over as many do? The surprise ending has become a tradition over the years. I am reminded of the story of the Scotsman stepping out of a cab in front of St. Martin's Theatre. He paid the cabbie, but left no tip. The fuming driver, turned to the Scot and shouted, "By the by Guv, so and so did it!"

Certainly a story revolving around a group of people stranded in an old house is not novel. Nor is a story about the effects of war. Indeed, even a combination of these two elements would not be unique. The atmosphere of mystery which pervades Monkswell Manor is, of course, tremendously entertaining. Of equal interest is its study of change as brought about by war; of people trying to adjust to a world restructured. Desperately, they seek to trust and be trusted. Distrust and fear frustratingly prevent the satisfaction of another basic human need - companionship.

Here, I think lies the success behind THE MOUSETRAP. Its action seems to repeatedly return to its theme of trust versus fear. The need for constancy - reliability seems even more desperate now than in 1948. Perhaps this is the reason for this play's success. For if, in this changing world there is one thing which remains unchanged, it is THE MOUSETRAP.

PAUL PFEIFFER
Director

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CAST

(In order of their appearance)

MOLLIE RALSTON ..... **KELLEY ROUSE**
GILES RALSTON ..... **TERRY LEUTNER**
CHRISTOPHER WREN ..... **JAMIE RUSSELL**
MRS. BOYLE ..... **BETTIE MESSICK**
MAJOR METCALF ..... **JIM SMITH**
MISS CASEWELL ..... **DEBBIE MORGAN**
MR. PARAVICINI ..... **TOM FLOYD GLOVIER**
DETECTIVE SERGEANT TROTTER ..... **TIMOTHY P. MORGAN**

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1 The Great Hall at Monkswell Manor. Late afternoon.

Scene 2 The same. The following day after lunch.

ACT II

The same. Ten minutes later.

Time: February, 1948

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DIRECTOR

PAUL PFEIFFER, although directing his first production for the Players, is no stranger to theatrical production having directed several such as, ROMEO & JULIET, THE GLASS MENAGERIE, THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN IN THE MOON MARIGOLDS and A MEDIEVIL CHRISTMAS. While earning his B. A. Degree in Communication Arts and studying in the theatre department, Paul was seen by Salisbury audiences in many of their productions, including EXIT THE KING, THE IOIST, CHARLIE'S AUNT, GUYS & DOLLS, WAIT UNTIL DARK, CELEBRATION, STAR-SPANGLED GIRL and THE COUNTRY WIFE. Attending Salisbury State with a Maryland Drama Association scholarship, Paul was honored by receiving the Best Actors Award in 1971-72; 1973-74 and 1974-75 and was appointed to Who's Who Among Students in 1975. He will also be well remembered as Henry Higgins in the Players' hit musical production of MY FAIR LADY.

PRODUCER

DAVID WILLIAMS studied and performed at Hedgerow Theatre near Philadelphia upon graduating from Cheyney State College with a fine arts degree. He is producing for the Players' for the second time, having produced YOU KNOW I CAN'T HEAR YOU WHEN THE WATER'S RUNNING last season. Dave appeared on stage in the chorus of KISS ME, KATE and has worked in other technical capacities for the Players.

ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR

KATHY PFEIFFER studied theatre while attending Salisbury State College and became involved in all phases of theatrical production. She also studied at the Gateway Playhouse in Long Island. Some of her state appearances at SSC were THE COUNTRY WIFE, THE EFFECT OF GAMMA/RAYS ON MAN IN THE MOON MARIGOLDS and THE THREE CUCKOLDS.

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KELLEY ROUSE (Mollie Ralston) has appeared on stage with the Players as Bobby Michelle in LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS and was stage manager for their musical production of CABARET. A graduate of Eastern Michigan University with a degree in Dramatic Arts, Kelley has also studied with the Herbert Berghoff Studios. She may also be remembered by Salisbury audiences in Salisbury State College Theatre productions of THE COUNTRY WIFE, THE GOOD DOCTOR and OUR TOWN.

TERRY LEUTNER (Giles Ralston) is a T.V. director for WBOC-TV and has directed all phases of live and video-taped TV programs. Upon appearing in the Players' production of NIGHT WATCH several seasons ago, Terry has continued his acting interests and can be remembered for his gangster role in KISS ME, KATE for the Players. He has also appeared in FANTASTICKS and JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS for Masque Dinner Theatre.

JAMIE RUSSELL (Christopher Wren) is currently studying theatre at Salisbury State College and appeared in their production of MAME as the young Patrick and, in cooperation with the college music department, played Shem in NOAH'S FLOOD. He has appeared in Players' productions of SOUTH PACIFIC as Jerome and SOUND OF MUSIC as Kurt. Jamie was also seen locally in his high school productions of JUST OFF BROADWAY, THE YANKEE DOODLE, BATS IN THE BELFRY and CAROUSEL.

BETTIE MESSICK (Mrs. Boyle) is in her first major role for the Players, however, has been active in many past productions backstage. She was the producer for the successful workshop production of FINISHING TOUCHES and has been rehearsal manager and involved technically with others. Bettie appeared in the Players' chorus for BELLS ARE RINGING and in Eastern Shore Opera Society productions of LA TRAVIATA and FAUST.

JIM SMITH (Major Metcalf), currently president of the Players, has served on many past production staffs and has appeared on stage in the Player productions of ARIA DE CAPO, DESPERATE HOURS, ROAR LIKE A DOVE, DAMN YANKEES, MY FAIR LADY, NIGHT WATCH and BELLS ARE RINGING.

DEBBIE MORGAN (Miss Casewell), too, is a student at Salisbury State College majoring in communication arts education. Debbie, also has studied theatre at Salisbury State and appeared in several of their productions - DARK OF THE MOON, OUR TOWN, CHEAP THEATRICKS, AMERICA IN MUSIC and TWELFTH NIGHT. As a student, she is involved in many technical phases of theatre production.

TOM FLOYD GLOVIER (Mr. Paravicini) has been involved in Salisbury theatre for many years. A players member since 1974, Tom appeared in HELLO, DOLLY, MY FAIR LADY, and BELLS ARE RINGING; and played the leading role of Phil Benson in "The Contestant" in ADAPTATIONS for the production of TWO FOR A SHOW. He will also be remembered at Salisbury State in their productions of OUR TOWN, THE SANDBOX and SOMETHING I'LL TELL YOU TUESDAY and in Masque Dinner Theatre's THE FANTASTICKS.

TIMOTHY P. MORGAN (Detective Sergeant Trotter) is a producer at WBOC-TV and gained his theatrical experience at Salisbury State, while appearing on stage, and technically, in many of their productions - TALK, GODSPELL, LOVIEST AFTERNOON OF THE YEAR, PULLMAN CAR HIAWATHA, SOMETHING I'LL TELL YOU TUESDAY and HOT L BALTIMORE. Additional technical credits were gained in WAITING FOR GODOT, OUR TOWN and VIRGINIA WOLFE.

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