

Annisquam is alive with 'Sound of Music'

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What's this?

Gloucester — The Annisquam Village Players are honoring one of their own with this summer's production of the "Sound of Music," which was written in Annisquam by Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay, with music by Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Rodgers.

The musical will run six nights, Tuesday, Aug. 5 through Sunday, Aug. 10, at the Annisquam Village Hall. Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. Aug. 5-7, and 8 p.m. for Aug. 8-10.

The Players are performing the musical as a tribute to Anna Murch, Crouse's widow, who lives in Annisquam. It is the second time the "The Sound of Music" will be performed in Annisquam; the first was in 1992, with standing-room-only and a line out the door.

"A large part of it was written in the kitchen table at their house here in Annisquam," said Terry Sands, co-director of the production. "I've talked to Anna and her daughter, Lindsay (Crouse), many times. Lindsay tells me she remembers when she was a little girl ... Hammerstein visiting her dad and them working on the show."

Sands said the Players are performing the show as a tribute to Murch, for all she has done for the theater group and the Annisquam community over the years.

"(Murch) has been a great friend both to the Village Players and to the church, and to the village, so we decided to do that this year," said Mary Curtis, co-director. "That's going to be quite a nice thing I think."

Sands and Curtis agree that the screenplay and the Academy Award-winning movie have differences. The movie introduced new songs that were not in the screenplay, and the endings are not the same.

"It has a couple of new songs in it, the movie, that the stage version doesn't have and the movie dropped some of the songs from the stage version," said Sands.

"I personally like the stage ending better," Curtis said.

The cast is largely Gloucester-based, with many people from Annisquam, and some from other parts of Cape Ann and the North Shore. Their ages range from 5 to 80, and their backgrounds differ greatly. There are CEOs of companies, doctors, lawyers, teachers and students.

"It's wonderful to bring all this diverse group together," said Sands.

There are about 60 people who take the stage during the play, and another 40 or 50 who do the behind-the-scenes work.

The directors recommend purchasing tickets ahead of time, as it is likely to be a popular show.

"The movie is probably the most popular movie of all time," said Sands. "Everybody grew up knowing 'Sound of Music' and singing the music and loving it."

Tickets are \$25 for reserved seating and \$15 general admission. General admission tickets are available at The Annisquam Exchange, The Bookstore at 61 Main St., Gloucester, and Lula's Pantry in Rockport. For information, visit www.annisquamvillageplayers.org.

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