

'Angel Street' opens Feb. 22



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what is in the director's head come to life on stage." The end result of this is a color scheme in make-up, furniture, costumes, that sets the tempo of the play after consultations with committee persons in all these departments.

She works with Briggs in a paint-spattered corner stacked high with paint cans in an area behind the stage that was recently added to the barn.

Part of the original barn serves as a storage room for other items that will be seen by the audience, on the first level. There is barely walking space here what with the overflow of physical memories of past plays. Even the ceiling has furniture hanging from it.

Barbara Nixon, in charge of set dressing, called "Angel Street" a "lucky play." Lucky because the Players either had period furniture that could be used on stage, or furniture that could be converted. The Players own what Ms. Nixon called "standard pieces" of furniture, some spray painted as many as 20 times.

"You have to have a strong finger for this job," Ms. Nixon joked, while spraying a chair a rich dark Victorian brown.

As a part of her job, Ms. Nixon purchased a dresser at a house sale for \$35. With the addition of some Victorian-looking drawer handles, the oak veneer will be turned into a Victorian mahogany chest.

"SET DRESSING is the interior design of the stage, like decorating a room. The furniture, drapes, pieces that are stationary are set dressing," Ms. Nixon explained.

That all sounds cut and dried, but that overlaps with yet another committee known as props.

One of the props in "Angel Street" is a bell pull. It is used in the play as a room accessory but it is also used to tie up one of the actors. Consequently, Ms. Nixon took responsibility for choosing the bell pull, but only after deliberation with other committee persons.

Another borderline item was a coal scuttle, another was a hanging picture. Neither piece just sits there. Both are used by the actors within the play and crucial decisions had to be made as to who was responsible for what.

"The actors would be very, very nervous if they didn't trust their props crew," said Elaine Wilson, who heads that committee, explaining that when an actor reaches for something he has got to be sure that it is there.

The theater group calls the assorted props "business," because there is business associated with them.

SINCE MANY of the props have value, or are loaned to the Players, care has to be taken with them. Consequently each play has two sets of props. One set is called working props, the other is for the performances.

"They use something junky now, something they can put their hands on, something tangible to work with so that the actual props are protected, but they still get the feel of the prop," Ms. Wilson said. As she talks, she rummages in the props storage room for both sets of props. It's the same room used by the set dressing committee, filled with stacks of metal shelving stuffed with assorted cast-offs, collectibles and props from past plays.

Visiting this room is somewhat like going to Grandma's attic.

Ms. Nixon enjoys her work backstage. "There's a certain glory on-stage," she says. "But backstage is even more exciting."

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7. ICICLES
8. IGLOO
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