

# Dinner theater group struggles for success

By CORINNE ABATT  
A few years back dinner theater was practically unknown in this area. Dinner... what?  
Now, with the success of "Jaque Brei" at Mercy College, and the series of musicals at the Elmwood in Windsor, the concept is working its way into our leisure life.  
Club Theaters of Michigan was organized as a corporation last year to get in on the fun — and possible profits.

The theater debuted its second dinner musical at the Ramada Inn, 12 Mile and Telegraph, Southfield, last weekend.  
But, not without difficulty.  
PERFORMANCES of "Two By Two" will be given Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings for the coming three weeks. Tickets include a cocktail hour and buffet supper at 7 p.m. and the musical which gets underway at 8:30 p.m. At the dress rehearsal last week

the story of Noah, his skeptical family and the ark was not quite ship-shape.  
A series of miscues with the Ramada management, which apparently doesn't have the concept clearly in mind, were causing minor snafus. The room designated as a dressing room for the eager cast had been swept clean and rented out, and just before dress rehearsal, there was a panic finding costumes.  
The banquet room where the dinner theater is to be held had been booked during the day of the opening, allowing the theater people less than an hour to set up stage, lights, and rearrange for the opening night performance.  
As often as not, a rehearsal hall was unavailable, so the cast became quite adept at practicing in one of the actor's basements.

A fumbling 600-year-old man whom his sons regard as more than slightly senile, Noah reports a conversation with God to his family, becomes faithful and a stringbean-like tower of determination.  
AS NOAH'S sometimes shrewish and later loving wife, Juliana Boleyn is strong in both voice and character portrayal. Although her only voice lessons have been in speaking, she has a true, natural singing quality that considerably enhances the production.  
Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, are played by Paul Kerr, Scott McCue and Douglas Barns. Barns is another with vocal talents.  
Jeanette Senkowski, Kathy Bedow and Miss DeCoco take the roles of the daughter-in-laws.

IT'S A light, pleasant show that moves along at a good clip under the direction of Bonnie Mead and choreographer Dee Dee Johns of Birmingham.  
Mrs. Mead is head of the drama department at Northwestern High School, Detroit, and Mrs. Johns has been long affiliated with Birmingham's Village Players.  
Along with Pietero Di Giorgio, Jack Fisher and Olivia Taylor Grey, the director and choreographer are members of the theater's corporate board.

The group presented the "Fantastics" at the Warren Valley Country Club earlier this spring, and moved the production from there to the Shelby Hotel downtown.  
They hold open auditions and, all-comers, they say, are welcome to tryout for the new productions or just to be on casting lists.  
If the musical and the concept, catch on in Southfield, it could mean a patch of clear blue sky and smooth sailing ahead for the company.

## Carillonneur

Andre Wagemans, the city carillonneur of Tienen, Belgium, will be the guest performer of the Christ Church Cranbrook carillon at 4 p.m. Sunday.  
Wagemans has been director of the Royal Society of Harmony since 1965 and has received nine major carillon prizes. He also had made a series of records for the Belgium Broadcasting and Television.  
At Cranbrook, Wagemans' selections will include Mozart's "Turkish March," a tango by Albeniz and two Flemish songs by Peter Benoit.  
The public is invited to listen at no charge from the church lawn or their cars.  
Christ Church Cranbrook is located at Church and Lone Pine roads, Bloomfield Hills.



COSTUME costs turned out to be exorbitant for the corporation which has a bank account slightly in excess of \$2. Debbie DeCoco, who plays Leah in the show, got out her sewing machine and stitched together some Biblical looking robes.  
But when this valiant troupe gets on the low stage in the inn's banquet room and Joanne Schmidt of Birmingham seats herself at the piano, the lively Biblical tale really does go on.  
Energetic, lithe David Calhoun takes the Noah role which Danny Kaye made famous on Broadway.

## Pigeon race scheduled

The Fourth Annual International Celebrity Pigeon Race will kick-off the Farmington Founders Festival at 11:30 a.m. July 18, in the Danish Inn parking lot, 32305 Grand River.  
From the parking lot, police will escort participants to the 12 Mile and Farmington roads festival rodeo site where the race will begin at 12:30 p.m.  
At 1 p.m. participants will re-

turn to the Danish Inn to await the results of the race. Announcement of winners and presentation of trophies will be at 3 p.m.  
Sponsors of this year's race include The Danish Inn, Thompson-Brown, Sanderson Realty and Bob Saks Oldsmobile.  
Events for the Tenth Annual Founders Festival will run from July 18 to 28.

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