

Troy Players do smashing job

By GAY ZIEGER

Cowboys, Indians and wild West shows are not indigenous to these parts, but they are as familiar as the back of the hand.

That is because Irving Berlin has given them eternally widespread attention in his hit, "Annie Get Your Gun," which has been enchanting audiences for more than 30 years. So it was with the Troy Players' production which opened at Larson Middle School last weekend.

The title role was played lovingly and with deftness by Cathy Courtney. She was pure cut. A bit hesitant at the outset, she warmed up to the part and soon exuded a kind of good feeling that pervaded the audience.

From the moment she admonished her brother with, "Watcha snifflin' fer?"

Dontcha got a sleeve?" it was clear that the evening was hers. Her voice was pleasant and generally forceful, conveying emotion winningly. She was tough when toughness was called for, but was "as soft and as pink as a nursery" when she realized that, indeed, she couldn't get her man with a gun.

THAT MAN WAS worth getting. Rick Shoemaker made him tall and grand looking. He strutted and swaggered and showed his stuff. It was almost easy to forgive him for wanting a purring mate who undoubtedly would make no greater demands on him than that he scratch her behind the ear on occasion or make a gift of a ball of yarn for batting about.

He was stereotypical male and played the part with ease. Shoemaker's

voice had an operatic quality reminiscent of Keel-MacTae-Hait styles. He could be faulted only for seeming to wear a bit, but this seemed true generally, as the first act had greater impact than the second.

In a supporting role, Bob Olesinski gave continuity to the plot, serving as a buffer between the two main characters. He was a grand smart-mouthed, cigar-chomping huckster. His asides had a Groucho quality.

His counterpart, Bev Lloyd, was brash and slightly boisterous. Her belting out of songs seemed appropriate to the character.

Buffalo Bill was played with dignity and grandeur by Charles Ray. He looked like a man to hold in awe.

pecially his handling of a scene in which he tried to recall the intricacies of the scalping procedure, was admirable.

Mention must be made also of Bruce Leising, whose clear intonations gave the Indian ceremonial such force.

In all, it was a graceful production, filled with much merit. Dave Hubbard, director, is to be congratulated. The actors were backed up most laudably by a 20-piece orchestra formed and directed by Chuck Marks and Kathleen Pulliam, respectively. Many of its members are from the Oak Park Symphony.

The audience lingered afterwards to applaud the musicians and embrace the performers.

Performances of "Annie Get Your Gun" continue tonight through Saturday.



Embraceable

Diana Canova and Steve Landesberg, co-stars of "Hold Me!" at the Birmingham Theatre, embrace and mean it. "We met on Hollywood Squares." Isn't that ludicrous?" she said. The loving couple offstage share both tender and tough moments onstage, heading a cast of five in Jules Feiffer's comic sketches, vignettes and blackouts. "Hold Me!" continues through Saturday.

Russia shown on film

"Russia," a country of provocative interest, will be the featured film at The Community House in Birmingham tomorrow and Saturday.

Certain time is 8 p.m. both evenings for the in-depth film study, part of The Community House Travel Film Series. Photographer Dick Reddy, who is noted for unusual aspects in background research, will be on hand to narrate his film.

Beginning with a brief history of the revolution and a visit to the Winter Palace, home of the Czars, Leningrad unfolds to show a city of parks and lakes, museums converted from former cathedral, children at play, and the great Castle of Peter the First, with 129 fountains and colorful gardens.

Various winter scenes depict the Russian version of Santa Claus and the Christmas tree during the holiday season. Viewers will see interesting scenes of outdoor camping, popular with the Russian people as well as with visitors from other countries. Photographer Reddy has spent six camping/filming expeditions in the Soviet Union.

ARMCHAIR TRAVELERS will witness life in the countryside, which has changed little over the years. Scenes of women washing clothes in streams and lakes blend with ones of villagers planting and harvesting crops in the old manner.

In Moscow, The Kremlin is viewed from the Stone Bridge, lines of people stretch around the Kremlin Walls, and the changing of the guard at the Tomb of Lenin is interesting to watch.

The new 6,000-room Hotel Russia proudly shows its famous new restaurant, after which film viewers will take a trip through Gurn's famous department store for some comparison shopping.

St. Basil's Cathedral, saved from destruction by an architect's intervention, is a must for sightseeing as is a boat trip through Moscow.

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