

Despite The Aching Muscles Girls Enjoy Little Theater

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By MARY KINDLAND

"I love every aching muscle."

The quote from Carol Rhoades of Syracuse, sums up the feelings of a trio of girls from Keuka College who are initiating a work-study program at Little Theater of Jamestown.

The enthusiastic trio includes Carol, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Rhoades of Syracuse; Beth Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Johnson of Bellview Road, Bemus Point; and Barbara Strong, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn M. Strong of Yardley, Pa., formerly resided in Jamestown.

A hammer, paint brush and needle and thread, mark the tools of their field-work trade and they have the blisters, cuts, stains and callouses to prove it.

The project actually started last spring when Gil Brand, now fulltime director and set designer for LT, left his instructing post at Keuka College with a general "come on down to Jamestown's theater for your field work project."

Five-Week Project

In dutiful fashion, the three students, all of whom had previously worked for Brand in his theatrical efforts on campus, arrived here Nov. 17 for the five-week project.

The girls are basically jacks-of-all-trade behind the scenes for the comedy, "A Majority of One," which opens Friday evening at LT headquarters, 18 E. 2nd St. Specifically, Beth a senior English major, is prop

mistress; Carol, a junior art major, is art coordinator; and Bobbi, an undeclared sophomore, is in charge of costumes.

Their prime challenge was the construction of two revolving turn tables, each 18 feet in diameter and weighing an estimated 500 pounds apiece. The tables make possible an advance setup for four separate sets in the play, eliminating delay and confusion during the production.

Brand, who exhibits a fatherly pride in the accomplishment, said construction allows the tables to be broken down for use as separate platforms in future plays.

Broken fingernails and sore palms give mute testimony to the 180 casters required to operate the turn tables and the 720 screws required to hold the casters in place.

Brand readily admits he would not have been able to produce the upcoming comedy with the degree of professionalism it now has, without the help of the three Keuka College girls. "I'd have been lost without them," he stated.

An instructor in English and drama last year at Keuka, Brand is pleased the field work participation has been established here and is hopeful to enlarge on the project in the future. He will be sent evaluation forms from the college to note his opinions of benefits derived from the girl's work.

Busy Trio

Their work day generally

ranges from a minimum of eight hours, with the trio busy painting, sewing, running errands and in general serving in numerous capacities to assure total preparation for opening night.

The field project at the school, which operates on the tri-semester system, calls for each student to become involved in a community service project the first year; a cultural experience the second year and a vocational endeavor having an affiliation with the student's major, the third or fourth year.

The girls voice hearty approval of the field plan and point to LT as "working in the real theater you read about but never believe will really have a chance to join."

The theater affiliation here is a "first" for the three girls who express amazement at all the work involved in setting up a production. They agree the most difficult work goes undetected from the footlights and that a relatively simple task that shows up on stage, gets a round of applause.

Meaningful Job

Beth is of the opinion the girls' field program should be revamped to fall immediately before summer vacation in order to develop the volunteer project into a meaningful summer job.

"It seems like you just start getting results from your project when it's time to return to the campus," she stated.

Bobbi, a bubbly, bright-eyed former city resident, chose LT as her "cultural" experience, and gleefully notes she has been absorbing culture through her pores, along with some paint, slivers and dye.

The initial experience seems to be mutually beneficial at this point, exposing still another advantage to keeping theater alive in the community.