

Theatre guild goes Victorian

By Julia McKay

From pantaloons to petticoats and spats to top hats, the Belleville Theatre Guild's Victorian Fashion Show and High Tea was the place to be to see what was fashionable in the late 1800s.

The idea for the event began in November 2012, after the theatre received a donation of over 30 period costumes from Foxboro Fabrics worth about \$5,000. Created for the Belleville bicentennial, the costumes had been in storage until the donation.

"We wanted to show all the work put into the costumes. They were all hand-made by local people," said Meaghan Lattanzio, special events director for the BTG.

The fashion show was organized outside of the theatre's regular playbill.

"The goal is to show off the costumes, get people into the theatre who may not have been in the past and give some of our volunteers the opportunity to try something different," said Lattanzio.

Ranging from age three to over 80, the volunteers were tasked with a range of positions, such as models, servers, presenters, and behind the scenes crew.

The fashion show was a mix of beautiful costumes, 18th century attitudes and a bit of comic relief with a creative script describing the specific styles of the pieces.

As well, the Queen herself oversaw the event, in the form of volunteer Pat Gray.

Even some of the audience came dressed for the occasion. Seven-year-old Sarah Pickard came dressed in a full, dark green and gold ball gown with matching cloth tiara.

"I can't decide, I liked them all," said Pickard about which costume she liked the best.

With approximately 90 people in attendance and more than \$1,400 raised, the organizers were thrilled with the success of the show.

"I'm so pleased. It went really well and the audience really responded," said Linda Serres, co-organizer and costumer.

All funds raised will go back into the BTG to be used towards theatre initiatives and improvements.

Following the fashion show, the audience was invited to the lobby for high tea. This gave them a chance to get an up-close look at the outfits while being served tea, cookies, scones and an assortment of delightful treats. The crowded room was abuzz with positive feedback to the organizers and volunteers.

Along with the donated treats, theatre member Emily MacDonald provided a variety of teas.

"As a member of the theatre I wanted to contribute," said MacDonald. She also had tea samples and other items for sale.

"It's all in support of our local theatre. We are truly a community theatre," said Lattanzio.



Photo by Lacy Gillott

Heather Barker and Emma Pinchin walk the runway together during the Victorian Fashion Show held at the Belleville Theatre Guild.



Photo by Dawn Berger

Erin Randell is dressed up for a vintage fashion show at the theatre guild.



Photo by Julia McKay

Belleville Theatre Guild Victorian fashion show co-ordinator and costumer Linda Serres adjusts Bill Dauphinee's bow tie during the dress rehearsal.



Photo by Julia McKay

(Left) High tea is served after the Victorian Fashion Show at the Pinnacle Playhouse.



Photo by Lacy Gillott

(Right) Nancy Garrod and Cyndi Cronder dress Erica Holgate to demonstrate how women in the 1800s got dressed.



Photo by Julia McKay

Maija Thompson (left) checks over her period costume with assistance from costumer Daphne Crozier at the Victorian Fashion show rehearsal. The one-day event is a fundraiser for the Belleville Theatre Guild.