

Quinte Ballet School showcases students

By Michele Weisz

The Quinte Ballet School is going to offer the community a chance to see classical ballet in Belleville.

The artistic director and professional students of the school have already begun work on the upcoming Quinte Ballet School's spring showcase. The showcase will be held on June 6 at Centennial Secondary School.

The school's artistic director, Catherine Taylor, said that the showcase will probably include excerpts from the classical ballet Giselle.

But the showcase is "something that evolves. It's a process," she said. "I take a 12-week period to work on it, respecting the fact that they're young people and also respecting the fact that they have academic studies."

The Quinte Ballet School puts on two shows at the end of each academic year. One show highlights the recreation division – youngsters who learn dance for the pure enjoyment of it. That show is called assembler.

The other is the spring showcase. It serves to highlight the talents of the ballet students in the professional program who study dance on a daily basis at the school and who have professional dance aspirations.

The professional program students go to classes in the morning and study all forms of dance throughout the day, six days a week, as well as in summer. Currently, there are 23 professional students in the program, some are from as far away as Japan. Each of these students will perform in the spring showcase.

"The really nice part of the spring showcase is that the kids from out of town whose parents haven't seen them dance for a year or who haven't seen them since Christmas get a chance to fly in, so it's a warm audience," said Jocelyn Perry, registrar and student support and services clerk at the school.

Every year, the professional students perform in two shows. They dance parts of the Nutcracker during the holiday season, and then there is the spring showcase.

"We would certainly hope that the public would come. It's beautiful. People who came to our Christmas Nutcracker excerpts were so impressed with the level of the dancing and professionalism, the costumes and the lighting," said Taylor.

The showcase is made up of two parts. One half of the show will be an excerpt or shortened version of a classical ballet and the other half includes the other disciplines taught at the school, including hip hop, modern, jazz and contemporary. "We will probably have some hidden gems. Myself and another teacher will put together some sort of a finale. A fun, upbeat, uplifting way to end the show," said Taylor.

Among the family and friends who



Photo by Michele Weisz

Quinte Ballet school's senior class students Ayako Fukuyama, William Steers and fellow classmates rehearse in the dance studio earlier this week. The students in the senior class have already begun rehearsing for the school's upcoming spring showcase which is held annually in June at Centennial Secondary School.

come to see the showcase, special guests from within the community are often among attendees.

"We often invite special guests from the community. Through culture, we like to expand into the community and let people in Belleville know that they have this wonderful ballet school here and it's really worth coming to see," said Taylor.

Dress rehearsals for the showcase will not begin until a week before but the students and their teachers are already hard at work in the studio. Taylor said she is impressed with what these young students are able to accomplish.

"These are kids really trying to accomplish something marvelous. Just to see youth creating so much value and such

a positive thing can only be an uplifting event," said Taylor.

The Quinte Ballet School was founded 40 years ago by former dancer Brian Scott (founding artistic director) and his brother David (founding artistic advisor), both of whom danced with the National Ballet of Canada. It has been at its current location for approximately 10 years.

"I think it's one of the only ways the people of Belleville get exposed to classical ballet. We're a hockey town, right?" said Perry.

To experience a real classical ballet, or other forms of dance, tickets for the spring showcase can be purchased through the Quinte Ballet School www.quinteballetschool.com.

Dancer sees profession in her future

Quinte West teen to audition this spring for National Dance Team

By Lindsay Leveque

Talia Gauthier, 14, of Quinte West is auditioning this spring for the 2015 Canadian National Dance Team.

She danced alongside the team last year in the World Dance Championship.

In April, Gauthier auditioned for the dance team in Toronto and was surprised when she made the team.

"We didn't expect me to get in," Gauthier says, in regard to her and her mother, Jackie Gauthier. After being

accepted, Gauthier was going to Toronto for practices as well as dancing at Inside Out Dance Academy, where she dances regularly.

Gauthier first started dancing because her parents Jackie and Jim Gauthier put her and her sisters in dance classes. Gauthier stuck with dancing although her sisters did not. Now she sees herself continuing dance as a future career.

"I'd like to dance professionally someday," she says.

In September, Gauthier and her mother Jackie travelled to Prague, Czech Republic, so Gauthier could compete. She travelled again in December to Mikolajki, Poland to perform again with the Canadian National Dance Team.

The total expense for the two trips was about \$10,000, says Jackie.

For the championship, Gauthier performed jazz, modern and show dance but she also does ballet, lyrical, contemporary, tap, acrobatic, musical theatre and hip-hop.

Besides dancing with Team Canada, Talia also competes in four competitions with other dancers from Inside Out Dance Academy, which is owned by Crystal Clark.

"Inside Out Dance Academy is a great studio to learn and dance in," says Jackie. "Talia couldn't have accomplished what she did without the help of Crystal and everyone here at Inside Out Dance Academy."

Gauthier has been dancing since she was three-years-old and has been

dancing at Inside Out Dance Academy for the past four years.

"Everyone at the studio is very proud of Talia," says Clark. Many of the younger girls at the studio look up to Gauthier because of her accomplishments in dance.

"One of the girls did a speech about me for one of her school projects. It was sweet," says Gauthier.

Gauthier will be auditioning again this year but is not sure if she will be competing again this year, even if she does make the team. The trips are costly and last year, Gauthier's parents paid mostly out of pocket for the trips. Inside Out Dance Academy also donated money and held a vendor fair in October 2014. Other local businesses in Belleville and Trenton helped out

as well by sponsoring Gauthier, which the family is "very grateful for."

Inside Out Dance Academy teaches 175 students, 36 of which dance competitively like Gauthier, while the other 139 students dance recreationally.

The academy teaches all ages, from toddlers to adults. The four competitions Inside Out Dance Academy competes in every year are Move in Ottawa, Be Dance in Deerhurst, Starcatchers in Belleville and Shine in Kingston.

The academy was recently voted number one in the Belleville area by the Intelligencer's Reader's Choice Awards, and in the past, the studio has won the Quinte's Dancing with the Stars.

Glanmore offers chance to see how the Egyptians lived

Artifacts and treasures on loan from ROM and will be here until April

By Michele Weisz

Experience how the Egyptians lived 5,000 years ago, right here in Belleville.

The Glanmore National Historic Site is hosting a travelling exhibition called "Egypt, Gift of the Nile." The exhibit is on loan from the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and will be on display until April 12.

Artifacts and treasures from this ancient civilization are displayed on two different floors of Glanmore. Among the many things to see are a life-sized sarcophagus, tools and grooming products, jewellery and more. There is even an interactive display that allows visitors to write their names in hieroglyphics.

While viewing the Egypt display, Elizabeth Smith, a visitor to the museum, said, "they were quite an enterprising civilization."

Rona Rustige, curator of cultural

property for the city of Belleville, is instrumental in securing travelling exhibitions at Glanmore.

"We try to get in travelling exhibits generally once a year. And we have, for the last 25 years," she said.

Rustige would like to see more exhibits come to Belleville, but said that "they've become kind of scarce. They're not being produced as much as they were. These exhibits have to be produced by a museum specifically to travel. It's a big undertaking."

But when they do arrive in Belleville, Rustige said there is a noticeable boost in traffic to the museum.

"There is a definite increase in visitors," she said. She goes on to explain that "Egypt is second," only after dinosaurs, to exhibits which have been most popular at Glanmore.

"Outstanding," was how Smith described the exhibit.

"We're the only museum so it's essential to get the travelling exhibits like this one to bring in people that might not otherwise come. We attract different segments of the community," said Rustige.

Two years ago, the Glanmore National Historic Site celebrated its



Photo by Michele Weisz

Danielle McMahon of the Glanmore National Historic Site at one of the displays currently being housed at Belleville's museum. The display is one of many that make up a travelling exhibition of Egyptian artifacts.

fourth decade open to the public. It was originally the home of John Phillips (a prosperous Belleville banker) and his wife Harriett. It was built in 1883 and was deemed a national historic site in 1969.

In the past few years Glanmore has undergone numerous and ongoing transformations to ensure its authenticity and longevity. One recent change was to restore the original wall colour to one of the rooms on the main floor. The largest renovation was a complete restoration of the second bedroom of the house. Without original furnishings or photographs to go by, a year of careful research and planning went into completing the room.

Rustige said she believes that this attention to detail is important in a community like Belleville.

"We keep the history of the community," she said. When talking about the permanent collections housed at Glanmore, she went on to say "we collect Belleville history."

So go see what it was like to live in Egypt 5000 years ago while you still can. While you are there, see what it was like to live right here in Belleville 150 years ago.