

HISTORY CORNER

After 34 years, I am sure we all have treasured (and maybe some not so treasured!) memories of past OP experiences. Here are some more of mine.

Bob McKay made his OP debut in the children's play "The Last Clock". He played The Supreme Magistrate—wearing a hat with plumes from the Metropolitan Opera production of "Manon Lescaut" lent to us by Hilda Reggio of the Connecticut Experimental Theatre (Marian Drobish's mother). The impetus for trying out was his participation in an acting workshop run by the American Shakespeare Theatre for OP, where we had an exercise involving memory and birthplaces. I'll never forget that Bob was born in Tillicoultry, Scotland!

"Bye Bye Birdie", directed by Jack Thomas, was the first musical produced at Amity High School. The multi level 'telephone' set was a triumph as well as the shimmering silver curtain for the icehouse scene. Our Conrad Birdie, John Savino wore a hairpiece so he could toss his long locks while gyrating in his gold lame outfit, and the ladies swooned in the audience! "Birdie" was Brad Blake's first show with OP. He played Albert to Marian Drobish's Rosie.

Speaking of hair—the dress rehearsal taping of "Oh, My Stars!", a children's play written for the Bicentennial, shows actors in powdered wigs--- strands of which were madly escaping their bounds. Mark Kolligan and John Cassulo, along with Gary Scarpa and Joe Arena sported 'wild man' hairdos—more Neanderthal than Colonial. The situation was remedied for performance by whitehair nets and plenty of hairspray.

"Anything Goes" featured over forty actors dancing their hearts out on a multilevel ship set. Janet Arena directed—and everybody on stage took tap lessons with the choreographer and everyone tapped in performance! We still have the Angels costumes, or we did, until we had to move costumes to the room in the basement. They have been utilized over the years in many guises.

We'll continue to reminisce in the next OP newsletter. Anyone who has something to share—and I'm sure many of you do—please send to patmiller605@sbcglobal.net so it can be included in future issues.