

ORANGE PLAYERS HISTORY CORNER

“Have you ever wondered, how it all began?” (A lyric from OP original musical, *Oh, My Stars!*) The Orange Players began in June of 1974, right in Mary L Tracy School, when the first organizational meeting was held. A number of town residents had been involved in an original PTA musical production at Peck Place School and also in the Sesquicentennial Spectacular and this had sparked interest in an Orange Community Theater. Dr. Mark Kolligian approached then First Selectman, Ralph Capecelatro with a plea for seed money. The town advanced \$3000.00 to finance our first show, *The Pajama Game*. (We paid it back from the proceeds of that show).

Jerry Honig (for whom our Amity Scholarship is named.) was Director, Sandy Litt was Producer. Among the principals were Bob Drobish, Elaine Ewchuk, Alan Gordon, Bob Kelly, Dick Knight, and Pat Miller. Some of the highlights of the production process included the dress rehearsal, which ran from 2 pm to 2am –we did the *I’m Not in All in Love* number countless times, starting at midnight—those wagons just wouldn’t go where they were supposed to go! We also have to remember Marian Drobish’s fall from the stage during a chorus rehearsal, resulting in her broken arm and Marian’s subsequent permanent installation next to our sometimes wool gathering pianist on the bench to cue him for entrances he might well have missed.

The Director called a break so that the cast could watch Nixon’s resignation speech on a TV in one of the classrooms. The production was well received by the community, interested in supporting the new group—and they even overlooked an eight minute long scene change . (We had to move a refrigerator off and on!) It was the beginning—we were off and running!