

**The Theatre of
Western Springs
Presents**



This program is partially
sponsored by a grant from the
Illinois Arts Council

Book of Days

By Lanford Wilson

Directed by Jack Phillips

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Ruth Hoch

.....Janel Elise Palm

Walt Bates

.....Dennis Hudson

Ginger Reed

..... Theresa Puskar-Marbach*

Len Hoch

..... Rich Kropp

Boyd Middleton

.....Rick Kabialis

Martha Hoch

..... Terry Kozlowski

Sharon Bates

..... Mary Pavia

James Bates

.....Rob Nardini

Louann Bates

.....Julie Knoch

Earl Hill

..... Tom Viskocil

Rev Bobby Groves

..... Joseph S. Jovanovich*

Sheriff Conroy Groves

.....Bill FitzGerald

*new to our stage



Setting

A recent Summer in Dublin, Missouri,
county seat of Chosen County.

There will be one fifteen minute
intermission.

Acknowledgments

Produced with special permission
from Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

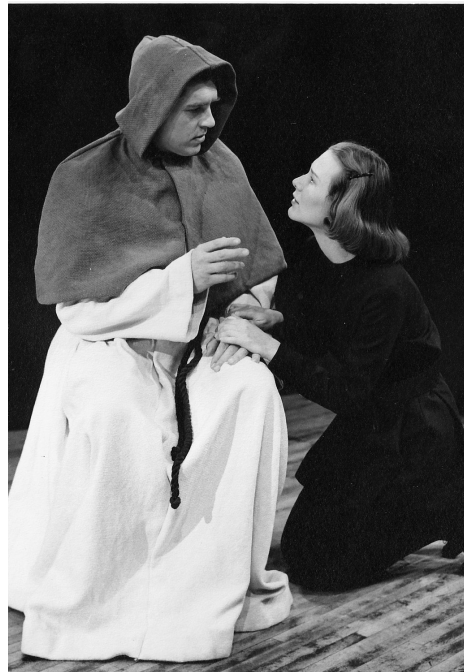
Special thanks to:

The Fruit Store, Western Springs and
Hinsdale, for providing apple cider at
cost with free delivery.

Beautiful Music for sound equipment.

Sherry Meserole of Nicolas Jacobs
Salon, Woodridge, for wig styling.

The photographs illustrating this
program are from The Theatre of
Western Springs' archives.



Joan of Lorraine
TWS, March, 1953

Director's Corner

By Jack Phillips

Lanford Wilson has written a play that's hard to categorize. It's part who-done-it. There is a mystery to be solved, and the driving force of some of the characters is to figure out what happened. Some of the other characters are busy trying to hide it. It's part storytelling. A group of people have come together to tell us what happened. They have chosen several important days and act out the past so that we can know the whole story. In telling us they speak directly to us and set the scene as actors do in *Our Town*. The play is also a comment on small town relationships where everyone knows everyone else's business and when something happens, people hear about it all over town. Wilson writes dialogue the way people really talk. When some people use language that others find objectionable, that objection is mentioned. This is a very theatrical play. For that reason we have chosen a space that is not realistic. The set is more a sculpture than scenery. It stands in for many different places around the town. It is a fascinating play to work on. We're glad you're here to participate with us in the results of that work.

Dramaturg's Diary

By Jon Mills

Community Theater, Cheese and Murder

When it was announced that Lanford Wilson's *Book of Days* was going to be offered this season by the Theatre of Western Springs, I was intrigued. You see, it is set in a small, quiet, wide awake, prosperous midwestern

town that has a community theater. As a thirty-year plus active member at TWS, my first reaction was "that sounds familiar."

In Wilson's 1999 creation, we are taken to a fictional Dublin, Missouri, which has a coffee shop, a high school, a town square, five churches and the community theater where they are about to mount a production of Shaw's *St. Joan*. When a local cheese plant owner is involved in a fatal hunting accident, the play's principal actress is driven to find out if it was murder. The mood shifts from light to increasing darkness. The style feels like a page from *Our Town*, with the whole cast acting as stage manager-narrators presenting Dublin as a town bathed in springtime awaking and in the nostalgic pleasures associated with small town life.

As a genre, *Book of Days* might be classified as a mystery. To be more specific, in keeping with Wilson's concerns, it is a socio-political mystery that ultimately weaves together the loose threads of various relationships. Ever wonder what really is going on behind the scenes of a Normal Rockwell painting? Well, this piece is filled with everyday people, maybe some you know, that towns like Dublin seem to always have. Wilson has molded such interesting characters that you find yourself being drawn into their world and secrets. *Book of Days* gathers up religion and truth, and creates a fascinating play that has facile plots, twists, and turns. The story manages to combine Wilson's signature, character-based whimsy with a typically strong narrative and politically charged underpinnings.

Lanford Wilson has been described as “a writer who illuminates the deepest dramas of American life with poetry and compassion.” He lived for a period in Chicago, where he began to explore playwriting before moving to New York City. His active career as a playwright started in the early 1960s in Greenwich Village, writing one-act plays. He is considered one of the founders of the Off-off Broadway theater movement.

Wilson’s style and approach have obviously evolved over the years, sometimes resulting in drastically different effects. Some of his plays are extremely radical and experimental in nature, while others clearly have a more mainstream, yet still creative, sensibility. He is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Talley’s Folly*, a New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award, and an Obie Award. Of the twenty-plus plays he has penned you may recognize *The Rimers of Eldritch*, *The HOT L BALTIMORE*,

The Mound Builder’s and Angels Fall. TWS, the oldest continuously producing live theater in metropolitan Chicago, has mounted several of his works during its 80 years.

In addition to writing plays, Wilson has written the text for several twentieth-century operas. Included are two collaborations with composer Lee Hoiby; *Summer and Smoke* and *This Is the Rill Speaking* based on his own play.

So, sit back and enjoy *Book of Days* with its densely populated, unpredictable world. And think about seeing another offering from the Theatre of Western Springs. We will keep doing our thing, hopefully for 80 more years, as long as you will continue to come and support us. Ours, too, is kind of a collective small-town mid-western community-theater relationship. And that is the kind we encourage and welcome.



The TWS Foundation was created to promote planned giving and endowment gifts to continue the legacy Mary Cattell started 80 years ago.

The following individuals have committed to include the TWS Foundation in their estate plans and are welcomed as members of the **MARY CATTELL SOCIETY**:

Vicki Blair, Carol Clarke, Patricia Giesler, Marjorie Heffernan, Michael Huth, Patricia Huth, Andrea Imes, Roland Imes, Kevin McGrath, Jack Phillips, Louis Schauer, Charron Traut, Richard Traut

The following individuals have made gifts to the **LEGACY ENDOWMENT** of the TWS Foundation during the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008:

Marilyn Darnell and Donald Strueber, Jennette Gottlieb, Kevin McGrath, John F. Podliska, Louis Schauer, Bunny Smith, Charron Traut, Richard Traut

For information about the TWS Foundation, pick up a brochure in the lobby or call the theatre office at 708-246-4043.

Production Credits

Director

Jack Phillips

Technical Director

Thad Hallstein

Stage Manager

Ed Barrow

Assistant Stage Manager

Rachel Payne

Costume Designers

Linda Bremer,
Debby Mills

Costume Crew

Andrea Imes,
Carolyn Redding,
Dorothy Tressler,
Sarah Vanikiotis

Dramaturg

Jon Mills

Hospitality Chair

Carol Clarke

Hospitality Crew

Bonnie Hilton,
Karen Holbert

Lighting Designers

Mary Ellen and Tom
Schutt

Lighting Crew

Tom Frohnapfel

Makeup Designer

Ginny Richardson

Makeup Crew

Nancy Belda,
Kathy Cawthon,

Mary Ellen Druyan,
Darla Goudeau, Arlene
Page, Rhonda Telfer

Properties Designers

Angelee Johns Favoino,
Karla Hudson

Properties Crew

Karen Holbert, Pat Huth,
Kathy Kuser, Rick
Snyder, Mary Van Nest

Sandwich Sunday Crew

Bonnie Hilton,
Liz Steele

Set Construction Chair

Grace Abrahamson

Set Construction Crew

Michael Barger, Cindy
Blaszak, Anne Cahill,
Anthony Dina, Mary
Ellen Druyan, Tim
Feeney, Jim Gary, Mike
Huth, Heinz Karplus,
Jon Mills, John Mueller,
Amanda Ragan, Paul
Roach, Mary Smith,
Rob Snyder

Set Designer

Art Kelly

Set Painting Chair

Bonnie Hilton

Set Painting Crew

Kathy Cawthon, Carol
Clarke, Roland Imes,
Amanda Ragan, Rob
Snyder, Rhonda Telfer

Sound Designers

Ed Barrow,
Bill Hammack

Sound Crew

Tom Frohnapfel, Jon
Mills, Jan Quinn, Fred
Sauers

Box Office Chair

Mary Ellen Schutt

Box Office Crew

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Proksa, Patti Roeder,
Mallory Whitlock,
Marilyn Wilson

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Bill Wilson

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Susan Cardamone,
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