

Auditions scheduled for bicentennial musical

Celebrate the American Bicentennial by living it as a member of the "1776" cast, Russ Hendrickson, director, suggests.

Auditions for the musical will be held Tuesday, April 6 and Thursday, April 8 at 7 p.m. in the Gilroy High School music building.

Twenty-three men of all ages and two women will be selected to perform in the Gilroy Community Theatre and Gavilan College production.

The play "1776" is set during the American revolutionary period of May 8 to July 4, 1776, when the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. The musical climaxes with the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Sandra Rapazzini will be choreographer for the musical. She is known to the community for her role of Sally in "Cabaret" and for her work as choreographer and costume designer for "Anything Goes."

Technical aspects of the production will be supervised by Reg Keddle.

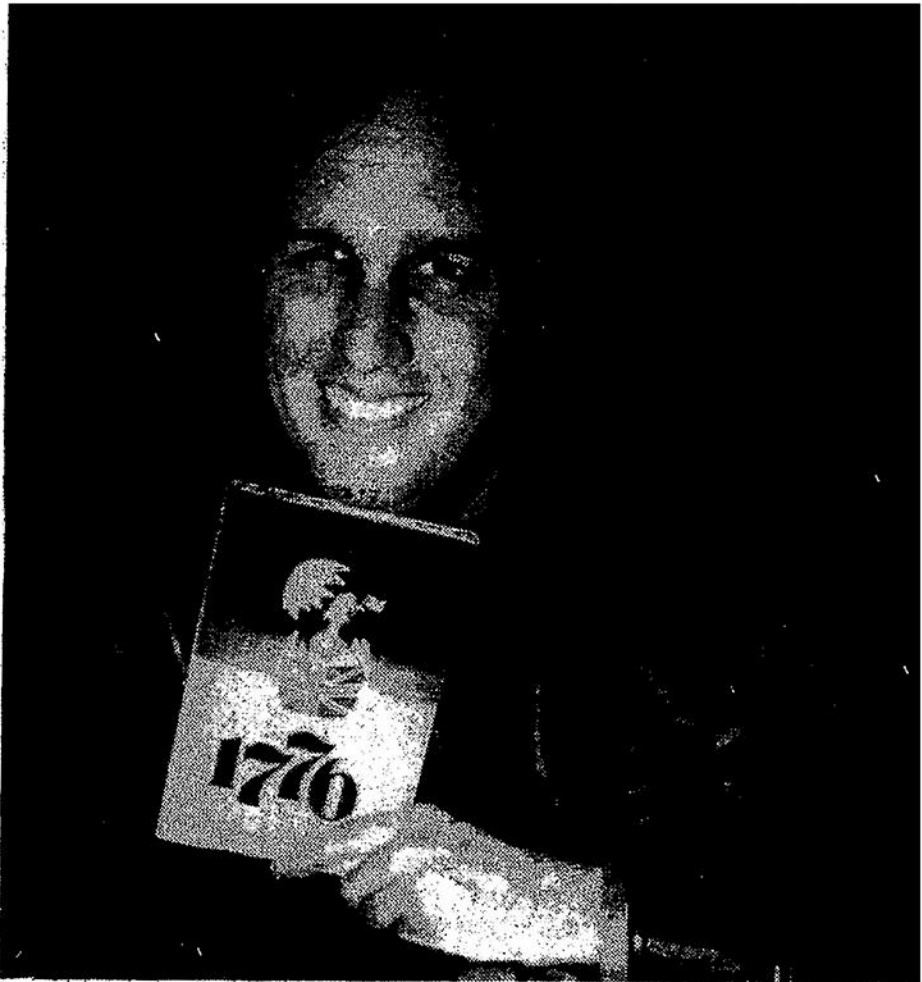
Hendrickson calls the musical "one of the greatest American plays." His family has seen the movie version of the musical. "It's the only time I've seen my children become even remotely interested in history. History becomes really meaningful when we see it live," he said.

Written by Peter Stone, "1776" has music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. "Edwards was a high school history teacher who thought history as it's taught is an abomination," Hendrickson said.

Hendrickson himself is a teacher. He instructs English, drama, and German at Gilroy High School and is the Mentally Gifted Minors program district coordinator.

He has a personal interest in directing the play. His wife is the granddaughter of the late Carl "Pop" Boling, one of the persons who saved old city hall from being razed for downtown parking lot space.

One of the main goals of the Bicentennial Committee, of which he is a member, is to restore the historic city landmark. All proceeds from "1776" will be donated to old city hall restoration, he said.



DIRECTOR - Russ Hendrickson will direct "1776," a musical which brings to life an important period in America's history. Auditions will be held early next month.

Bicentennial musical slated

The bicentennial hit musical "1776," under the joint sponsorship of Gilroy Community Theatre (GCT) and Gavilan College, has now gone into rehearsal, with all but two roles cast in the production scheduled for performances July 1, 2 and 3 in the Gavilan College Theatre.

Russ Hendrickson, production director, said the two roles still available require men with "fairly good singing voices."

"The one of Roger Sherman is a minor character with no lines, but a relatively good voice, and it's the ideal role for someone who doesn't have a lot of time to spend at rehearsal," Hendrickson said.

The other opening is that of John Dickens, a major character, according to Hendrickson, "with a large dra-

matic part, lots of lines and one solo with a chorus."

The major roles in the play have been assigned to Jim Maya (John Adams), Charles Krahenbuhl (Ben Franklin), Beau Bryson (Thomas Jefferson), Marty Pyle (Abigail Adams), and Sandra Rapazzini (Martha Jefferson) who will be doubling as choreographer for the production.

Technical staffing includes Norma Fellows (pianist), Jose Ostinaon (musical director), and Reg Keddle in the dual positions of producer and stage manager.

Anyone interested in the open roles may contact Hendrickson (842-9912) immediately for an audition.

The production is slated as Gilroy's part in the 200th birthday celebration for the nation, with proceeds from ticket sales going toward restoration of the old Gilroy city hall on Monterey Street.

Men sought for play

Russ Hendrickson seeks between 10 and 15 men to audition for roles in "1776," a musical he will direct in honor of the American bicentennial.

A third audition session will be held Thursday, April 22 at 7:30 p.m. in the Gilroy High School music room.

Men between the ages of 25 and 35 who are six feet tall or over and who are interested in promoting the bicentennial, are encouraged to try out for the role of Thomas Jefferson.



PLAY TRASHED?—A disappointed Russ Hendrickson tossed a half-completed poster announcing the musical "1776" in a trash can to emphasize the threatening fate of the local production. Unless 10 more men are cast, the show cannot go on, he warned recently. As a last ditch effort, a fourth auditioning session will be held Saturday, May 1 at 10 a.m. in the Gilroy High School cafeteria. Asked why they don't try out for the Broadway hit, a lot of persons who would make a unique contribution to "1776" simply shrug their shoulders, Hendrickson said in dismay. Any men interested in portraying some of the nation's founding fathers during the Second Continental Congress and its climax, of the the signing of the Declaration of Independence, are encouraged by Hendrickson to audition for "1776."

DOUBLE LIFE—Charles Krahenbuhl who will portray Ben Franklin in the Gilroy Community Theatre musical "1776", leads a double life, teaching kindergarteners at Las Animas School and counselling in the community, then switching to the elder statesman's character by night. Above he is shown in his role at school. By night he joins 25 local actors rehearsing for the bicentennial musical slated July 1, 2 and 3 at the Gavilan College Theatre. A Community effort effort to raise funds for restoration of the old city hall while observing the nation's birthday, "1776" is directed by Russ Hendrickson of Gilroy with music being handled by Joe Ostinson of Hollister.

Plans unveiled for July 4th celebration

Plans are evolving for Independence Weekend Spectacular, the name the City of Gilroy and its Bicentennial Committee have given this year's community Fourth of July observance. Festivities will be held Saturday, July 3 and Sunday, July 4.

Booth reservations still are being accepted. They may be set up the afternoons of July 3 in downtown Gilroy and July 4 at Las Animas Park. A \$10 or 10 percent profits donation from booths for old City Hall restoration is payable at the parks and recreation department, 253 W. Seventh St. For further information about booths, call Butch Hart, committee secretary, at 847-1778 or 842-8778.

July 3 morning events include a tennis tournament at Las Animas Park, a pancake breakfast at Fifth and Monterey Streets, and a children's parade in downtown Gilroy. Prizes and awards will be given to children in each age division of the special youth parade commemorating the nation's 200th birthday.

Afternoon activities will feature entertainment and booths in the downtown area, and a late afternoon auction at Fifth and Monterey Streets.

Scheduled during the evening Saturday evening are the "1776" production at the Gavilan College Theatre, a barbecue at Fifth and Monterey Streets, a Tea Dance in the Memorial Building, and a dance in Wheeler Auditorium.

Golfers will arise with the birds for an early Fourth of July tournament at Gilroy Golf Course. Opening ceremonies will be held that afternoon at Las Animas Park, with entertainment, food booths, displays and an art show to continue through the afternoon at the park.

Also slated for the Fourth of July are an afternoon Little League exhibit and a band concert. Evening entertainment at Las Animas Park will feature a tug-of-war and a fireworks display.

2-Dispatch (Gilroy, Calif.) Friday, June 11, 1976



Big weekend celebration planned

Gilroy residents won't have far to go to enjoy a number of bicentennial activities during the independence weekend spectacular culminating with fireworks display at Christmas Hill Park on Sunday, July 4.

Activities throughout the community are planned for the Saturday and Sunday when the nation celebrates its 200th birthday.

Downtown Gilroy will be chock-full of food and drink booths for those hungry or thirsty with other forms of entertainment planned for Saturday, July 3. The Downtown Merchants Association, in cooperation with the Gilroy Bicentennial Committee is presenting a sidewalk sale from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The sale will also be running on July 1 and 2.

Billed as "A Day to Remember in Old Gilroy," the Monterey Street activities get under way at 10 a.m. Those on hand for the special events will be able to view an hour-long children's parade starting at 11 a.m. at Eighth Street.

To accommodate the large number of pedestrians expected to take part in the day-long affair, Monterey Street between Sixth and Lewis Streets will be closed to traffic from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

In addition, Monterey between Eighth and Third Streets will be open only to those on foot from 10:30 to noon for the children's parade. Children in the parade will be gathering at 10 a.m. at the Southern Pacific Depot.

The parade route turns west at Third Street taking the participants down Egleberry Street to the Bank of America parking lot where the procession will disband.

Entertainment throughout the day along Monterey Street includes belly dancing and gymnastics exhibitions, a presentation by a children's orchestra and a karate demonstration.

At noon on Saturday, children in the parade along with others throughout the community will be able to eat their fill of watermelon during a feed planned near the intersection of Monterey and Fifth Streets.

Downtown merchants and bicentennial committee have again banded together to offer an auction from 5-8 p.m. at Monterey and Fifth Streets. Proceeds will go toward matching a state grant for restoration of old city hall.

The auction is taking place in conjunction with the LDS Church and bicentennial committee sponsored

barbecue chicken dinner from 4-8 p.m. Tickets for the dinner are available at City Hall, Northern California Savings, the main fire station at Ninth and Chestnut and Monterey Savings.

Gilroy Community Theatre members will present the musical "1776" from 7:30-10 p.m. at the Gavilan College Theatre on July 1, 2, and 3.

To top off the evening's activities, a tea dance, again with proceeds going to the restoration fund, will be held from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Veterans Building, Sixth and Egleberry Streets.

A tennis tournament at Las Animas Park from 8-10 a.m. starts off Saturday's activities.

A non-sectarian service at the Bill Economu Amphitheatre in Christmas Hill Park will launch activities on Sunday at 10 a.m.; and golfers will gather at Gilroy Golf Course between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m. to participate in a tournament with part of the proceeds going toward the old city hall.

Opening ceremonies will be at 2 p.m. at the park where some 30 booths will feature food and drink ranging from hot dogs and linguisa to facos, watermelon and pastries.

Gilroy Little League teams will put on an exhibit game at the park starting at 1 p.m.; and big band music in a concert featuring Chuck Travis and John Coppola with John Markham will ring through the park from 3:30-5:30 p.m. The band appears through the courtesy of Music Performance Trust Fund of the American Federation of Musicians, and San Jose Musicians Local 153.

All during the afternoon there will be an art show and "art in action" featuring demonstrations of water coloring, ceramics and drawing. Senior citizens will demonstrate quilting; and the Cinco de Mayo committee will have a display of Aztec artifacts.

From 6 p.m. until dark a local band of musicians will entertain crowds as they wait for the 30-minute aerial fireworks show which starts at dark, and will be based at the high school site across the creek from the park. It is co-sponsored by the City of Gilroy and Gilroy Auto Dealers Association.

Residents with questions about any of the bicentennial activities are invited to call the parks and recreation office at 842-0221 or 847-1777.



DECLARATION—Costumed "1776" actors continue in their roles at Digger Dan's during lunch time. From left are Bob Winter as John Dickenson, Frank Pattie as Edward Rutledge and Charles Krahenbuhl as Ben Franklin.



WOMEN'S PLACE—For Abigail Adams one contribution was to keep their home running while husband John attended the convention. Another was to contribute ideas. As portrayed by Marty Pyle, Morgan Hill, Abigail strikes a spirited pose.

GCT production

'1776' *being staged*

Two hundred years ago the weather in Philadelphia was hot while our forefathers struggled writing the Declaration of Independence. And it's hot in Gilroy as rehearsals are under way for a play portraying that time.

The play is "1776" and the Gilroy Community Theatre will present it on the eve of the Bicentennial, July 1, 2 and 3 in the Gavilan College Theatre at 8 p.m.

Taking a break for lunch, but costumed in the heavy, elaborate clothes of 200 years ago, three Gilroy actors slipped easily into the voices and attitudes of the characters they represent.

"I wish King George could feel as bad as my big toe does," said a gout-ridden Ben Franklin, portrayed by actor Charles Krahenbuhl. Franklin, although declaring that he was representative "from the world," was officially from Pennsylvania. "Unfortunately," was the attitude of the other Pennsylvania delegate, John Dickenson, who is portrayed by Bob Winter.

Much of the disagreement among these three delegates centered on the continuation of slavery in the new nation. Edward Rutledge of South Carolina, as represented by Frank Pattie, supports slavery. When Dickenson joins in this support, Franklin is opposed to both, but aware of the need to compromise.

The play attempts to bring "them" alive for now, and if conversation with the actors is any indication, it succeeds.

Scenes from '1776'



Script portrays characters as they really were

BY DONNA AVINA

Russ Hendrickson, an instructor at Gilroy High School, is directing the musical "1776" for Gilroy Community Theatre (GCT), in cooperation with Gavilan College and the Gilroy Bicentennial Committee, to be presented July 1, 2 and 3 as a salute to our nation's 200th birthday.

Unlike history books which tend to treat history and its characters as sanctified idols, the script for "1776" brings out the true human nature of people like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, Hendrickson said.

He was first exposed to the story by way of the movie version. Hendrickson said he took his children to see the movie and even at their young ages, his daughters left the show enthralled with men like John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

He feels that as children we were taught to revere as gods the men who founded our country. Their human frailties and traits have been abrogated by the dry "facts, nothing but the facts" treatment of elementary social study texts, and perpetuated by high school and freshman college history courses.

"This play conveys human quality of history. It ever could," he continued, "the very human quality of history. It makes the audience realize that much of what has happened in our history was because of human nature" and not because our founding fathers were messengers from God, ordained to do great things.

"This story in all its accuracy, will conflict with some teachings many adults have grown up with," he said, pointing out that kindly, witty Ben Franklin was in reality a dirty old man, who even at the age of 82 was still chasing women and visiting houses of ill repute.

"John Adams is another shocker, because he was not the ideal man he's often portrayed, but rather a headstrong stubborn, impetuous zealot," Hendrickson said.

It is Hendrickson's belief that much of what we admire in these early statesmen was brought about by the pressures of their times.

"Great times make great men, not vice versa," he maintains.

Certainly the play is not so accurate that a few changes haven't been made, according to Hendrickson, since reality's seldom artistic, orderly or dramatically satisfying.

Some things have been altered, surmised, added, deleted and rearranged, but always within the framework of historical reality.

Hendrickson points to the facts that "1776" is the story of the debate leading up to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. But the Declaration was not actually debated and approved until after the July 2 vote for independence, and was not signed on July 4, but over a period of months. At the end of the play each congressman signs the Declaration.

In another rearrangement, for the sake of stage settings, Abigail Adams comes to visit her husband instead of John Adams making the trip to his home to see her.

Five communications are received from General Washington in battle during the course of the debates, but these messages were constructed from dozens of his actual dispatches. Therefore the five dispatches were actually written by Washington since actual quotations, paraphrases and first hand reports are used.



No sanctified idols

In order to preserve clarity and prevent overcrowding the stage, the authors of "1776" cut down the number of Congressmen to 20, with six other characters, including Martha Jefferson, Abigail Adams, two messengers, and two congressional clerks.

"Yes, the play is true and yes, it really did happen this way," Hendrickson concluded, "That's why I wanted to do this production so badly. It's a great play for children and adults alike since it's a living history lesson to see John Adams, John Hancock, and all the others as real people."

Set to music and dance, "1776" has both comedy and drama and on one occasion violence as a fight breaks out between two opposing congressmen. Joe Ostinson, Hollister High School music instructor, is directing the music, with Sandra Rapazzini supervising the dance routines.

Tickets are now on sale for the three performance run of GCT's production of "1776" to be presented in the Gavilan College Theatre at 8 p.m.

GCT has agreed to donate its profit from "1776" ticket sales to the restoration fund for the old Gilroy city hall.

DRESS REHEARSAL — Participants in the musical "1776" being staged at Gavilan College Theatre Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, are becoming used to rehearsing in costume as the show is polished for 8 p.m. curtain time. At top left, Ken Cooper, Charles Krahenbuhl and Tony Andrade, portraying Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin and Robert Livingston, play pass the buck while singing "But Mr. Adams" as each tries to avoid having to write the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson was last in line. Bottom left: In one of the final dramatic moments of the play John Dickinson, a Tory played by Bob Winters, attempts to sway James Wilson of Pennsylvania, at right, played by Roger Anderson, to cast his deciding vote against separation of the colonies from England. At left Benjamin Franklin, dozes in a chair, his gouty leg propped up on a stool. At right Thomas Jefferson, played by Beau Bryson, and Sandy Rapazzini, his wife, are reunited in Philadelphia. The incident, only poetic license taken by the playwright, did not happen, but in the play it was staged as an effort by John Adams to cheer Jefferson and get him to work on the Declaration. Adams is played by James Maya, reight

On stage at Gavilan Theatre

'1776' highlights weekend activities

By JO ANNE SHOWALTER

The outcome of the play "1776" was decided 200 years ago, and everybody knows what happened. Yet, how it happened, despite obstacles, provides dramatic suspense until the very end. Produced by the Gilroy Community Theatre, the play opened Thursday and continues Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. at the Gavilan College Theatre.

John Adams as portrayed by Jim Maya is a pivotal figure in the play. The other members' attitude toward him as "obnoxious" is shown in the opening number, "For Godsakes John, Sit Down." For Adams, gaining independence for the nation is often a matter of giving up personal ambitions.

At Benjamin Franklin's urging, the resolution is introduced not by Adams but by a Virginia delegate, Richard Henry Lee, played in the required flamboyant manner by Bill Spendlove. As Lee dances around singing "Here a Lee, There a Lee, Everywhere a Lee," Adams is barely able to restrain himself.

Later Adams encourages Thomas Jefferson (Beau Bryson) to write the Declaration of Independence because, as Adams sings, "If I do it, they'll run their quill pens through it." And in the play Adams also supplies additional encouragement to Jefferson in a non-historical incident of bringing Martha Jefferson to Philadelphia. Martha is portrayed by Sandy Rappazzini, who looks beautifully at home in the elegant costume and hairdo of the period and who delights Jefferson as well as the audience with her song.

The Jeffersons' happiness only serves to increase the loneliness Adams suffers during the long separation from his wife, Abigail. Letters to each other are as close as they come to being together and their songs are from opposite sides of the state to demonstrate their distance apart. Abigail is characterized by Marty Pyle as having a sweet tolerance of John's faults but not a blindness to them. Mrs. Pyle's voice is one of the pleasures of the play as she and Adams sing about their separation.

Benjamin Franklin is another star of the Congress and the play. Portrayed by Charles Krahenbuhl as aging but spry, Franklin uses a light touch to move the opposing sides together. The self-described "sage" has quite a task to accomplish. The vote must be unanimous and six delegations are firmly for independence while six are just as firmly against. The New York

representatives, with no instructions from their legislature, must continually abstain.

The manipulation and compromises necessary to change the vote, and the human flaws and strengths visible in the process from the substance of the play.

Two of the main characters opposed to independence are John Dickenson from Pennsylvania, played by Bob Winer, and Edward Rutledge from South Carolina, played by Frank Pattie. Dickenson is one of three members in the Pennsylvania delegation and he and Franklin vie for the crucial vote of their third member, Judge James Wilson, portrayed by Roger Anderson. Wilson finally decides how to vote for his own reason that he's not like the other delegates there because he doesn't want

Rutledge asks a price for his vote and the control he has over North Carolina's vote. Jefferson must remove the passage from the Declaration which would do away with slavery. Despite Adams objection, "If we give in on this issue, posterity will never forgive us," Franklin again calls for compromise, saying "It's a luxury we can't afford. Rutledge's song, 'Mollassas to Rum to Slaves,' has pointed out that money is made from the slave trade in the north as well as the south.

Throughout the seemingly endless debate, dispatches from George Washington indicate how badly the military is faring. The messenger who brings these reports is only a boy, and his expression indicates that the delegates could be spending their time better on the battlefield. Portrayed by Lee Krahenbuhl, the soldier boy sings a moving song about two of his friends who have been killed in battle.

Pessimism about the whole project is also expressed by the congressional custodian, Andrew McNair, played by Frank Ginelli, who sees it all and sees no progress. To him their main action is asking him to open the windows because it's hot or to close them because of the flies.

But they do accomplish their project of "playing midwives to an egg," and the closing scene is memorable, with the faces and signatures so familiar to us all, now not just remote historical figures but real persons whose agony and triumph we've shared for an evening.

Gilroy Community Theatre
Presents

Hit-Bicentennial Stage Production

1776



July 1, 2, 3
**GAVILAN
COLLEGE
THEATRE**
8 P.M.

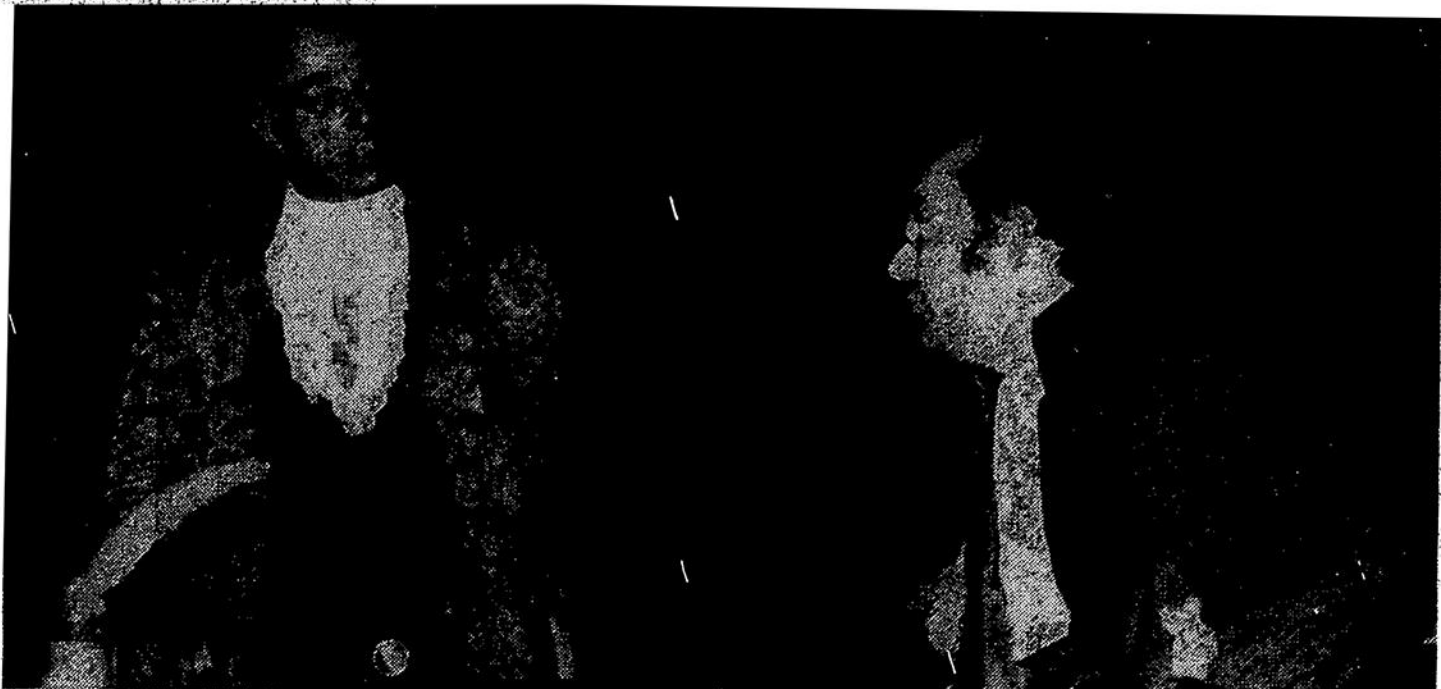
★
Admission
Adults \$3.00
Students \$2.00

Proceeds will go for restoration of
Old Gilroy City Hall



NEWS FROM NEW JERSEY - Reverend Witherspoon [Frost Harralson] arrives from New Jersey to tell Benjamin Franklin that his illegitimate son, the royal governor, has been taken prisoner by George Washington's troops and carried to Conneticut. After properly describing his son, Franklin [Charles Krahenbul] proclaims that Conneticut is a nice place for his son to be.

MAN WITH THE FIDDLE - Martha Jefferson [Sandy Rapazzini] dances with Benjamin Franklin [Charles Krahenbul] and explains that she fell in love with Tim because he is a farmer, a writer and an architect, but I can do one thing more. He plays the fiddle.



WE WILL KEEP OUR SLAVES - Edward Rutledge [Frank Pattie] demands that John Adams [James Maya] remove a clause decrying slavery from the Declaration of Indepen-

dence. Adams refuses until Franklin persuades him by explaining that the country must first begin, and the next generation can take care of these problems.