



UPCOMING PLAY — Gilroy residents Phil Skiver and Rosalind Farotte rehearse a scene from *Charley's Aunt*, the Gilroy Community Theatre production opening Friday, Oct. 19, at Gilroy High School.

New GCT play slated

GILROY — Rehearsals are now under way for the Gilroy Community Theatre's production of "*Charley's Aunt*," which will open on Friday, Oct. 19, at the Gilroy High School Theatre, 750 W. 10th St.

Performances are scheduled for 8 p.m. opening night as well as Oct. 20, 26 and 27. Tickets are available at Plaza Drugs, Dick Bruhn's and the Music Tree in Gilroy as well as the Music Tree in Morgan Hill.

Directing this classic farce is Greg Guerin, a Gilroy High School teacher, who will also act in the play.

Other cast members include Bill Dunlap of Morgan Hill; Richard Burdick, San Martin; Phil Skiver, Chuck Myer, Rosalind Farotte and Martha Holder, Gilroy residents, and Darin Kerby, Penny Stevens and Cindi Stevens, all of Hollister.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary next spring, the Gilroy Community Theatre has announced productions of "*Two by Two*" for the spring dinner show and Noel Coward's "*Blithe Spirit*."

GILROY COMMUNITY THEATER presents

CHARLEY'S AUNT

a comedy by

BRANDON THOMAS

GILROY HIGH SCHOOL

THEATER

10th and Princevale
Streets
Gilroy, Ca

October 19, 20, 26, & 27
1979 8:00 p.m.

directed by
GREG GUERIN

tickets available at

Dick Bruhns

Plaza Drugs

Music Tree



ADMISSIONS

adults \$4.00

senior citizens &
students \$2.50

"Produced by Special Arrangement with Samuel French"

South County Life



OPENING NIGHT LAUGHTER — A laugh over that night's opening performance of the Gilroy Community Theatre's "Charley's Aunt" is shared by, from left, GCT

Charley's aunt himself, Phil Sklyer. The post-play reception was hosted Friday by the Theatre Angels Art League.



FIRST TIME ACTOR — Richard Burdick tells crew members Louise Smith, left, and Marty Pyle how he felt

earlier that evening on his first time out as an actor. He played Chaley Wykeham in the GCT production.

Curtain's up!

'Charley's Aunt' meets warm reception

By FRAN WHITEMAN
Dispatch staff

This season's first rain storm did little to dampen the spirits of cast, crew and supporters Friday night when the Gilroy Community Theatre opened with "Charley's Aunt."

Everyone seemed to take the weather in stride and gave a warm reception for the first night performance. "Charley's Aunt" will put in two more appearances, this Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. in the Gilroy High School Theatre.

While the first act got off to a slow start, the play got a shot in the arm when Phil Skiver donned his grey wig and black dress to masquerade as the play's namesake.

Once the laughter began to roll in at that point, the audience, which was about 50 percent children and teen-agers, got into the spirit of the farce.

This reviewer feels that the play's shortcomings lie almost exclusively with the material itself rather than individual performances. Set in 1892 in Oxford, England, "Charley's Aunt" has a lot of lines and words that make no sense to anyone under the age of 70 or not English-born.

In fact, the very premise of the play itself — the need for a female chaperone before two young women will stay in the same room with the two college-student leads — makes the play a relic.

When played with the spirit of a Marx Brothers chase, the Greg Guerin-directed cast gives a credible showing with a number of performers who manage to shine through the worn material.

In addition to the actors, the real stars of this production are the lovingly-crafted costumes worn by the female characters. Michael Pacciorini as costume designer headed an able volunteer crew who were adding final touches up until the last possible moment.

Darin Kerby and Richard Burdick starred as Jack Chesney and Charley Wykeham, respectively, who must connive to have a suitable replacement for the delayed aunt from Brazil, "where the nuts grow." A fine musician, this was a first time acting for Burdick, who is a Gilroy High senior. At first very stiff in the part, by Act II he warmed up to the proceedings.

A real standout throughout the play in what could have been a throwaway part, Chuck Myer portrayed a very resourceful, overworked "gentleman's gentleman" to coin a phrase of that period.

Rosalind Farotte as Kitty Verdun and Martha Holder as Amy Spettigue ably played the young women on whom Jack and Charley have their hearts set.

Confusion starts turning to hysteria when Jack's

father, Colonel Sir Francis Chesney, makes his unannounced appearance, followed by an outraged Stephen Spettigue as Amy's uncle and Kitty's guardian. Bill Dunlap as Sir Francis and Director Guerin as Spettigue were both excellent in their roles (but will somebody please tone down Sir Francis' green eye shadow).

Acts II and III center around the two older men vying for the attentions of the fake Donna Lucia D'Alvadonez, supposedly a very wealthy widow.

We have to loudly applaud Skiver's antics through all three acts, a very physically-demanding role he pulled off with aplomb (assisted by a pair of ballet slippers as he came close to sliding off the stage twice). He has a marvelous stage presence for one so young (in fact, all but four actors were under 21).

Five minutes into the real Donna Lucia's appearance, we wished Penny Stevens had been on stage for the entire play. This young woman (we would never have believed her tender years had we not met her at the reception afterwards) has a true flair for the sensitive timing required in comedy. A third ingenue, Cindi Stevens as her ward, Ella Delahay, played the part especially well considering she was shadowed by Donna Lucia's actions.

In addition to the already-lauded costumes, the production crew managed to round up an impressive

collection of furniture period pieces to dress what would have otherwise been bland sets.

Producer Marie Perkins was assisted by Joyce Flanagan with Rusty McMillan as stage manager. McMillan and Guerin changed hats to provide the set design and properties were handled by Jannine Carrera and Louise Smith.

Tim Skiver, Torrie Berger and Jim Andrews headed the stage crew (the T-shirts labeled "stage crew" are a charming idea considering the lack of a curtain to close between acts) and working the lights were Jon Krahenbuhl and Chip Welch.

Sonja Walker did the makeup; pre-sale tickets were in the hands of Marge Probert; Kai S. Lai and Skiver did publicity, program and photography; house managers were Betsy Andrade and Walter von Tagen III, and the box office was handled by Probert and Lynette Williams.

Besides cast members, listed for costumes were Barbara Bottini, Georgette Ghielmetti, Marty Pyle, Donna Kraft, Louise Smith, MaryAnn Bruegmann and Williams.

Members of the set construction crew were Rosalie Andrews, Louise Smith, C.W. Smith, Ron Williams, Karen Uemura, Ed Perkins, Marie Perkins, Lynette Williams, McMillan, Guerin, Lai, Carrera, Bruegmann and cast and stage crew members.

CHARTER ANGEL — Gigi Greeno, right, a charter member of the Theatre Angels Art League and a hostess for Friday's reception, finds a quiet corner to talk with granddaughter, Gina D'Amello.



HAT TRICK — Stephen Spettigue, played by Greg Guerin, holds his hat out to Charley's aunt (Phil Skiver) daring "her" to knock it down again during a scene from the play's opening performance Friday. The play continues next Friday and Saturday at the Gilroy High Theatre.



NOT-SO-FRIENDLY PERSUASION — Jack Chesney (Darin Kerby) tries to persuade his father, Colonel Sir Francis Chesney (Bill Dunlap), to meet Charley's rich aunt in a scene from "Charley's Aunt." The Gilroy Community Theatre presentation opened last weekend at the Gilroy High Theatre.



AUTHENTIC AUNT — Penny Stevens, right, looks many years younger at Friday's Theatre Angels reception than in her role one hour before as Charley's aunt. Here, she

talks with, from right, co-stars Rosalind Farotte and Cindi Stevens and their friend, Teri Green.



PAST, FUTURE LEADERS — Al Bloom, left, GCT's first president, talks with President-elect Lynette Williams and Walter von Tagen III, one of two house managers for

"Charley's Aunt," at Friday's reception. Bloom will direct and act in the Morgan Hill Community Theatre production of "Plaza Suite" early next year.