



THE COLDWATER ROTARY MINSTRELS
PRESENT

30 Years of SHOWTIME

TIBBITS OPERA HOUSE February 28, March 1, 2, 1985

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In Memory of Our Departed Friends
Who Meant So Much to Rotary and Our Community

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Reo Goodwin
William Grimes

Robert Nagle
Gordon Schlubatis

1985 Coldwater Rotary Minstrel Show

CO-CHAIRMEN	Dave Rubley, Rich Holben
DIRECTOR	Duane "Duke" Davidson
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Dan Magsig
ORGANIST - ACCOMPANIST	Waive Wardwell
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STAGE	Ed Geishert, John Pierson, Jim Lyon, Larry Iveson, Santford Jolley, Jim Endicott Terry Reen
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USHERING	Gil Patton
ATTENDANCE	Bill Tracy

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Coldwater Rotary Show History

The first Rotary Minstrel show was performed in 1937 at the Tibbits Theatre. The Rotary wives were part of the show and chorus along with other community acts. The show was directed by Maurice Payne, who was the AAA insurance man here for many years.

The modern shows began in 1956 when Payne decided to revive the Rotary Minstrel show. Wives were no longer a part of the show but various community acts outside Rotary participated. The show was held at the Roosevelt Auditorium which was then the Coldwater High School. Interestingly we should note that from the time that 1937 show was held until the 1956 show, the Tibbits had gone down hill to the extent that it was no longer used for this type of thing.

Maurice Payne directed the first two shows and was replaced by Ed Holtz, who was a partner at Kiess Jewelry for many years. Payne died about this time and the 1958 show was dedicated to him. The next five shows were directed by Holtz and were always Minstrel shows.

In 1958 the shows returned to the Tibbits theatre as restoration was taking place and along with the Coldwater Sweet Adelines, Rotary took a leading part in that restoration. Since that time a large share of the income from the Rotary shows have gone to the Tibbits.

Duane (Duke) Davidson, then general manager of the Coldwater Daily Reporter, directed the first non-minstrel show, called the Naughty-Naughty Nineties in 1964.

After the Nineties show a series of shows based on the twenties and forties were produced. John Visosky began directing shows at this time. John was high school band director and directed three Rotary shows before moving to Florida.

In 1969 the club decided that maybe a Rotary show was too much work and the club decided to sponsor a show at the Tibbits rather than produce one. We brought in Wayne King's orchestra for a one night stand.

In 1970 the club decided that selling tickets was not nearly as much fun as putting on the whole show so Duke was called upon to again direct a show. We decided to name the shows something without a theme so that we could use all types of songs at random.

John Dean, realtor and insurance company owner, directed his first show in 1972. John and Duke traded back and forth for several years as director.

Jerry Towns, Southern Michigan Bank president, was recruited in 1977. Dan Magsig, industrialist, came on board as a director in 1982.

It is interesting to note that the show directors, with the exception of Visosky, came from all walks of life other than those directly connected with music. All the performers are businessmen from Branch County. The show is entirely produced by members of the Rotary club, who, once a year devote many hours of rehearsal and construction time to the project.

There are so many people to be recognized for their contributions to the Rotary shows over the years it is impossible to include them all. Some mention should be made of those who labor back stage, or as ushers, and in the chorus. Many committees and chairmen put in many hours with only their names in the program for credit. In this regard, we should mention that Sanford Jolley has designed the back drops for the show for the past 25 years.

30 Year SHOW

1985 Coldwater Ray

FIRST HALF

Hello My Baby, Zip A Dee Do Da, Alabamy Bound	CHORUS
Rock-a-bye Your Baby	JEFF DEAN
Preacher and The Bear	CHARLES WOODWARD
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans, Swing Low, Swanee	CHORUS
In The Good Old Summer Time, Strolling Through The Park, It's a Grand Night for Singing	CHORUS
Jean	DICK HRUSKA
Lovely Bunch of Coconuts	DICK MOORE
Songs from Bob Nagle	*EIGHTSOME
Five Foot Two	BUZZ GALLIERS
Song from Exodus	CHORUS

INTERMISSION

*EIGHTSOME

John Dean, Chairman	Pat Albright
Gregg Dean	John Martinen
Jack Faulkner	Mark Maire
Dick Fitzgerald	John Ufkes

Years of TIME

erry Minstrel Show

SECOND HALF

Love Makes The World Go Round,
An Old Fashioned Love Song,
Let Me Be There CHORUS

I Only Have Eyes For You JERRY TOWNS

Wasn't That a Party DICK WHITE

Songs from Tom Normandin **EIGHTSOME

On The Street Where You Live JOHN DYGERT

The Rose CHORUS

Treat Me Nice,
Rock Around The Clock CHORUS

Daybreak DAN MAGSIG

Some Days Are Diamonds CHORUS

New York, New York JOHN MILNES

He Ain't Heavy,
You'll Never Walk Alone CHORUS

**EIGHTSOME

Hal Sexton, Chairman	Carroll Barnes
Bill Nettleman	Jim Koss
Howard Taylor	Dick Uhl
Bill Crotty	Larry Woodhams

History of The Minstrel Show

The minstrel show, a purely native form of entertainment, was America's unique contribution to the history of the theatre. In imitation of the singing and dancing of plantation slaves, white minstrels, their faces and hands blackened with burnt cork, built their performances on the songs, humor and pathos, superstitions and peculiarities of the Negro, until there emerged the Negro of the minstrel and the joke book tradition. This was more a burlesque than a faithful imitation, and the minstrel songs were conventional compositions by white men, rather than original Negro melodies.

Negro performers appeared in America as early as the 18th century, before 1830, blackface actors were prominent in the circus, theatre and concert halls, singing such favorites as "Coal Black Rose," "Zip Coon" and "Long Tailed Blue." But the "father of American Minstrelsy" was Thomas Dartmouth (Daddy) Rice, whose performance of song and dance number, "Jim Crow," in the early theatres of the Ohio Valley, led scores of other actors to imitate his burlesque of the carefree, dancing singing Negro, in museums and menageries, in the theatre and in the sawdust ring of the circus. Rice wrote many "Ethiopian Operas" which were the precursors of the minstrel show.

The first minstrel show was presented in New York in 1843, by Daniel Decature Emmett, Frank Brower, "Billy" Whitlock and "Dick" Pelham. This quartette, known as the Virginia Minstrels, and attired in gaudy costume, produced a whole evening's entertainment, on the violin, banjo, castanets and tambourines, and with many songs and dances. Other companies like the Columbia, Christy, Campbell and Bryant's Minstrels were quickly organized and the minstrel craze swept the country. By the time of the Civil War, scores of troupes toured the provinces and played three-a-day shows in the best theatres of the leading cities from coast to coast. The 1870's and 1880's produced performers like Al Jolson, Frank Tinney McIntyre and Heath, and Nat Goodwin.

The stereotype of the American minstrel show was fixed by the E. P. Christy Minstrels as early as the 1850's. In the first part the show opened with a well-executed song and dance drill across the stage. At the famous command from the interlocutor, "Gentlemen, Be Seated," the performers took their places in a semi-circle, with the endmen, attired in extravagant and colorful costumes, and equipped with tambourines, bones and castanets, sitting at the ends, and the interlocutor in the middle.

There followed a well coordinated program of ballads, choruses and jokes, the black-faced endmen furnishing the comedy in lively repartee with the interlocutor. Minstrel songs and joke books were issued by the thousands in the heyday of minstrelsy.

The first part was followed by the olio with a variety of specialties comparable to the vaudeville show. There followed musical and dancing acts ending with a farce, or a song and dancing number, known as the "breakdown" or "hoe down" in which all members of the company participated.

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