

Roseburg Merely Players Open In New Home

By ANDY FAUTHEREE
News-Review Staff Writer

The Merely Players, Roseburg's little theater group, gave its first play Thursday night in its new home, the Umpqua West Theater.

"Bus Stop" is the climax of some four months of labor in getting the theater ready and rehearsing the play.

A theater of its own is probably the fondest dream of all little theater groups. The Merely Players are no longer among the "have nois" — they have a home now.

That "home" is a barn, formerly identified as the Preschern Barn, which was formerly occupied by a square dance group. It is located about two miles west of Roseburg on the Melrose Road.

After searching throughout the greater Roseburg area for a suitable building that could fit within the group's pocketbook, it settled on a barn, which in the back of the minds of many, is almost traditionally the home for little theater groups.

Long before a play could be presented before an audience, the barn had to be converted from a dance hall to a theater. This of course has meant the installation of special lighting, seating and the all-important stage.

Barn Converted

Although the players have had their ups and downs since they first organized in 1939 and presented "Solid Gold Cadillac" in the spring of 1960, they feel they finally have their roots deeply set. Several plays, dramas, comedies

and musicals, have been tentatively lined up to follow "Bus Stop," which will run again tonight and Saturday at 8:20.

The next play will be the famous Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "Flower Drum Song" to be given the latter part of July or the first of August. In the first part of the fall the players will present the "Rainmaker," followed by "Desire Under The Elms" and a comedy, that hasn't been decided upon yet.

Reaching into the future, spokesman and president of the group Don Baile, says it is the aim of the Merely Players eventually to set up a cultural center. It could start sometime this summer, he said.

Baile, who is an announcer for a Roseburg radio station, and comes to Roseburg from Hollywood where he has taken part in a number of movies and television productions, said it is the group's hope to hold classes in such fields as dramatics, dancing, art and music, stressing mainly dramatics.

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Summer Stock Eyed

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pany, that is, a summer stock theater. This would mean that big name leads could be brought to Roseburg supported by casts of local people," Baile said.

"This has been done in a number of places around the country, both in big and small communities, with great success," he said.

"Any place the size of Roseburg needs a good solid theater. Movies, television and other forms of entertainment are all unique in their own ways, and each has something to offer.

"For a theater to be successful, it must put on a good show, and there's no feeling in the world like that of accomplishing this feat. It takes a lot of work.

"We want to instill in people what theater is really like, enough at least to have them come out and see it. If a person can afford just a little time and effort, he can find a whole new world in theater. We're here to welcome any and everyone into the group, and say 'let's work together,'" Baile said.

"All the world loves a clown, whether it's the clown of comedy or the clown of tragedy. The theater is gratifying, rewarding and fun," he said.

All Welcomed

Membership in the organization is a simple matter. Whether a person has had any experience or not, he is welcome to join. Membership entitles a person to see all plays and attend meetings of the group, social functions and other activities. It also includes the right to vote at all general meetings on whatever business may come before the group.

Of great importance is the fact that it allows the person to work closely with other members of the group in all phases of the theater. Baile points out there is much more to the theater than just getting up in front of the lights on stage. There are the persons behind the lights, set designers and a host of other jobs.

Membership is not required to take part in any of the Players' productions. All readings are open to the public.

With a new theater and a new play to their credit, the Merely Players are looking forward to a bright future.

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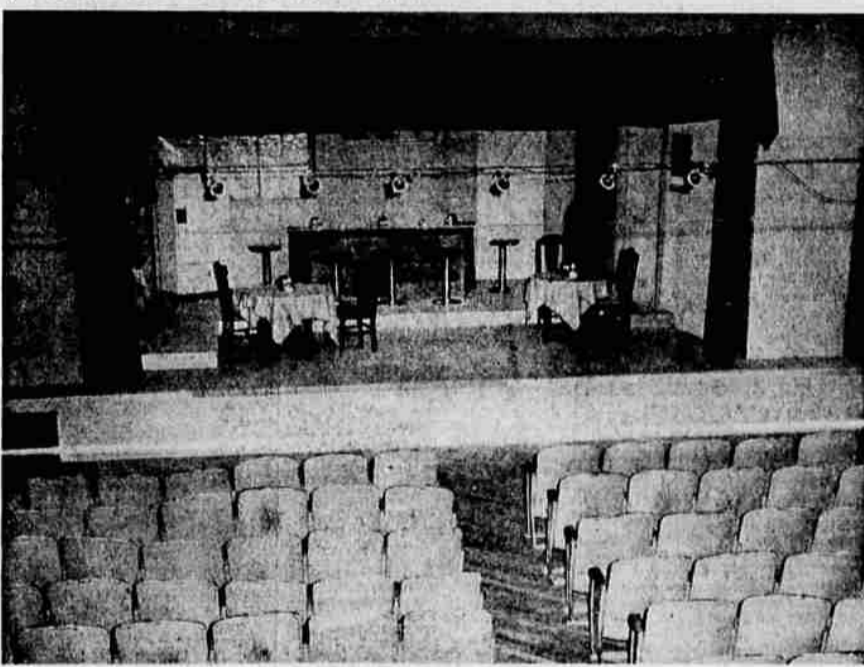
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UMPQUA WEST THEATER is the name given the barn the Merely Players of Roseburg have taken as their new home. It is located about two miles west of Roseburg on the Melrose road. The group has completely remodeled the inside with a raised stage and the addition of regular theater seats. (News-Review photos by Andy Fautheree)



EVERYONE PITCHES IN in a little theater group when it comes to construction. Judy Knight and Connie Bakke, both cast members of the group's first play "Bus Stop," now in production, take time out from rehearsals to work on the stage, which had to be completed before work on the sets could begin.



AFTER AN ESTIMATED 500 to 600 man hours, the inside of the Umpqua West Theater is ready for an audience. Seating capacity in the first permanent home of the Merely Players is 168. The stage measures 35-by-20 feet and plans are to extend the side areas out farther for the up-coming summer musical, "Flower Drum Song."

'Baby Boom' Youngsters Now Flood Labor Force

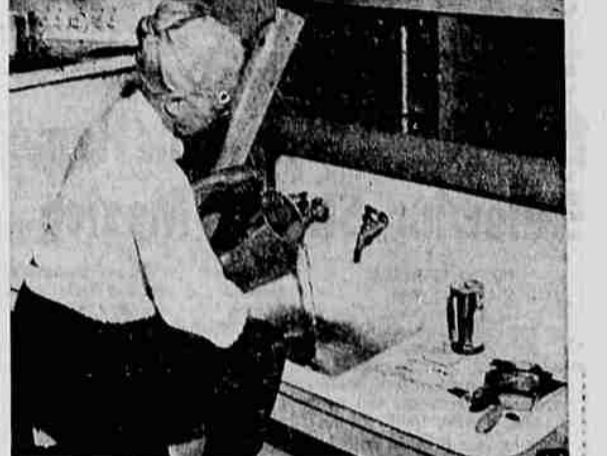
WASHINGTON (UPI) — Teenagers born during the post-World War II "baby boom" flooded the nation's labor force last month to push the unemployment rate to 5.9 per cent, the government reports.

The job picture was darkened by the problem of teen-aged joblessness, which Labor Department officials said soared to 18 per cent in May. This was more than triple the rate for adults and caused the over-all seasonally adjusted jobless rate to rise from 5.7 per cent in April and from 5.5 per cent in May, 1962.

Labor Secretary W. Willard Wirtz said in a statement issued with the job report that teen-aged unemployment could become "one of the most explosive social problems in the nation's history."



INGENUITY plays a major role when it comes to constructing and equipping a theater with limited funds. Allen Nash is shown here fitting tin cans as reflectors and covers for special lights.



NOT THE HANDIEST, PERHAPS, but this floor-level sink was the result when the stage was built two feet above the old floor. However, it still serves its purpose and was a real boon to the group as a source of water for hot coffee during the long hours spent in readying the theater for a play, as demonstrated here by Patsy Barker.

Clayton Buys Forest Tracts

Two tracts of Umpqua National Forest timber on the Little Ranger District were sold by the Roseburg supervisor's office Thursday. Both sold to O. E. Clayton of Roseburg.

Neuberger Asks Control On Highway Billboards

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. Maurice B. Neuberger, D - Ore., called Wednesday for extension of legislation to keep billboards off the interstate highway system.

The first was the Panther Creek Salvage Sale No. 2 47 miles southeast of Roseburg on 450 acres. This was a 100 per cent Frieda blowdown tract with a total volume of 1,300,000 board feet appraised at \$25,439.

Firm Gets Edison Award

DENVER (UPI) — Portland General Electric Co. received the highest award the electric utilities industry can bestow Wednesday when it won the Edison Award from the Edison Electric Institute.

The high bidder was Clayton with a bid of \$36,934. His bid was \$31.05 on the Douglas fir and pine and the appraised price on the other species group.

Canyonville Family Is Host To Visitors

Mrs. Jim Sproul and children of John Day and Mrs. Ron Warren and children of Columbia City were guests of the Oscar Hoversons in Canyonville recently.

Monza Spyder Convertible

Monza Spyder Club Coupe

Come hill... or high water

Vacations go smoother in a Chevrolet Corvair

Bring on those mountains! They're not so high and mighty any more when you've got Corvair's gummy six and rear-engine traction working on them.

You scurry up the meanest grades. You move with sure-footed agility on wet pavement, muddy lanes, gravel and other would-be miseries.

And with most of Corvair's weight bearing down on the rear wheels, you have an easy time steering, too. Fact is, the handling's so light we don't even offer power steering for the car.

And there's more to feel good about. No problems with your radiator boiling over or going dry, because there's no radiator. Corvair's engine is air cooled. No concern about brake adjustments, either, because the brakes adjust themselves. Nothing much to think about at all except the good time you're having (and maybe the next mountain you're going to flatten).

Like to do that in a sporty bucket-seated Monza Club Coupe or Convertible? Like to spring into summer with a 4-speed stick shift* and Spyder package* with its 150-hp Turbocharged engine, special instrumentation and insignia? Your dealer's got just the Corvair and the Trade 'N' Travel deal on it to put you in a holiday mood.

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