

« [Have we become easy street for public assistance?](#)

[CRMC continues on its road to a clean bill of health](#) »

August 6th, 2010

Dramatic workshop brings Rivoli back to life

By Bill Liblick

I remember summers past my parents would take me to the Rivoli Theatre in South Fallsburg to see a bargain priced movie, and then we would go to Pop-Ins for dessert.

It was always a thrill going to the Rivoli to see its grand Art Deco that was once home to Vaudeville.

Like many other of our famed institutions, the Rivoli shut its doors because of bad economic times. Thankfully, The Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop, our longest standing Community Theatre Group, moved in and it is once again home to live theatre.

The ambitious dream to restore the Rivoli to its original splendor is underway, and the theatre was recently granted Landmark status in the National Registry of Historic Places. The Nartoff-Wells Auditorium seats 475 and is fully heated and air-conditioned.

Founded in 1950, the workshop is a private, not-for-profit organization devoted to providing and promoting quality theatre in Sullivan County. Those interested in live theatre from behind-the-scenes to center stage can polish their craft, while providing countless audiences with hundreds of memorable performances.

Many productions have not only earned critical acclaim, but have also received awards from the Theatre Association of New York State.

For the next two weekends they will be presenting the musical "Little Shop of Horrors" starring Scott Eckers of Swan Lake.

Set in 1960 in urban Skid Row, the story follows a sincere nebbish of a botanist, Seymour Krelbourn (Eckers) who, after a total eclipse of the sun, finds a "strange and interesting plant" and nurtures it to thriving health at the florist shop where he works. Scott's dad Allen is also part of the production.

Eckers, a newcomer to the theatre group, is certainly not an unknown to our famed Borscht Belt Circuit, making this a nice transition for him. You might have seen Ecker's performing his solo act in local communities, bungalow colonies, or one of the many hotels that also once existed.

He was featured last week in a benefit concert at Liberty High School along with Richard Chiger and Bob Alper. His soaring vocals on songs such as "Skid Row", "Suddenly Seymour", and "The Meek Shall Inherit" will certainly fill the Rivoli's cavernous auditorium.

Eckers was also instrumental along with Nancy Levine in opening the museum in Swan Lake celebrating the hamlets heritage and playing tribute to its past hotel and bungalow resort days. The exhibit compiled by Eckers is a fascinating look into our past.

Lori Schneider-Wendt, Director of "Little Shop of Horrors" told me, "The cast and crew of "Little Shop" is one of the most talented and warm groups I've ever worked with. The passion for theatre is palpable and I think audiences are in for a real treat."

People always say there is nothing to do in Sullivan County, treat yourself and your family to a great theatrical event while supporting the Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop. For information, phone (845) 436-5336 or log onto www.scdw.net.