



Weatherwane

— PLAYHOUSE —

78th Season -- 2012-2013 -- Production #562
April 4 - 21, 2013

Charley's Aunt

By Brandon Thomas

Directed by Nancy Cates



Stage Manager
JILL FORSTER

Sound Designer
MARK D. STOFFER

Sound Co-Designers
EILEEN & STEPHEN MOUSHEY

Properties Co-Designers
**TOM ABDON
SYLVIA COLLIER**

Costume Designer
JASEN J. SMITH

Scenic Designer
ALAN SCOTT FERRALL

Charley's Aunt is produced by special arrangement with
Samuel French, 45 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10010-2751.

Weatherwane Community Playhouse, 1301 Weatherwane Lane, Akron, OH 44313-5186
Ticket Office: 330-836-2626 ♦ Fax: 330-873-2150 ♦ weatherwaneplayhouse.com



Cast Biographies



TIMOTHY CHAMPION (Stephen Spettigue) This is Tim's 35th Weathervane production; he has received seven Chanticleer Awards. He is always delighted to work with Nancy Cates, with whom he has created many memorable characters here including Launce/*Two Gentlemen of Verona*; Thomas More/*A Man for All Seasons*; Julian/*Communicating Doors*; Frank/*Over the River and through the Woods*; Tito Merelli/*Lend Me a Tenor*; Jim Bayliss/*All My Sons*; Richard Maynard/*Moon Over Buffalo*; James Cagney/*Shakespeare in Hollywood*. Outside the theatre, Tim serves as a Cantor and Lector at Akron's St. Vincent Catholic Church, and as principal baritone for the Canticum Novum Choral Ensemble. Tim practices Probate Trust & Estate, and Elder Law at Champion & Company, LPA in Fairlawn.



HENRY C. BISHOP (Colonel Sir Francis Chesney) started working at Weathervane Community Playhouse in its 50th year, 29 years ago. He was in 2 plays that year, *Amadeus* and *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow*. Many of the people from that time are now literally and figuratively gone from this stage. That includes Mel Wolfman, who was among the most brilliant and the most pleasant of them all. Henry will miss Mel, as will a host of others, in and out of the theatre community.

In recent years, Henry has only worked at Weathervane Playhouse, Coach House, and Ohio Shakespeare Festival both up the hill. These theatres pretty well satisfy Henry's performance appetites (although he would like to do more musicals, there are not that many roles for a septuagenarian).

Henry lives in Wayne County with his wife, Karen L. Wood, and an ageing and ailing pet, Not-Our-Cat, whose story is much longer than this Bio.



SCOTT SHRINER (Jack Chesney) is happy to return to Weathervane after most recently appearing in *Next Fall* in the Dietz Theater. His many performances here have included Chanticleer Award-winning roles in *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Moon Over Buffalo* and *All My Sons*. His favorite role is Nick Cristiano in *Over the River and through the Woods* in 2005, which was his first show with director Nancy Cates (*Charley's Aunt* is the 18th). Scott also is a company member of Ohio Shakespeare Festival and a frequent performer at Coach House Theatre. Love to

my fiancée, Emily!



DAN SEKANIC (Charles Wykeham) is thrilled to be making his first appearance at Weathervane! He has had a busy few years, either directing, (*Taking Steps*, *Perfect Wedding*, *Heaven Can Wait*, *The Odd Couple*, *You Can't Take It with You*, *Squabbles*, *Noises Off* and many more at other area theatres), or performing, (more than 40 shows around Northeast Ohio, including *Rumors*, *The Nerd*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Foreigner*, *Visiting Mr. Green*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *Barefoot in the Park*). He really needs a nap. Much love to Linda, the wife he never seems to get to see. Oh, and his evil cat Solar, says, "Ghastly Farrago!"



DANIEL J. RYLANDER (Lord Fancourt Babberley) Last appearing on our stage in *Our Town* as Dr. Gibbs, Daniel was also seen earlier this season in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* as Deputy/Master Nick Cricker. He recently appeared in Coach House Theatre's production of *Black Coffee* playing the role of Edward Raynor. Other productions include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *Move Over, Mrs. Markham*; *Romeo and Juliet* and *Shipwrecked!* In 2007, Daniel was awarded the Chanticleer Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in Weathervane's *Over the Tavern*. He thanks his fellow cast and crew members for making this experience so enjoyable and his family for their support.



MARK D. STOFFER (Brassett) has been creating characters on area stages for many years, including recent performances as Dr. Carelli in *Black Coffee* and Martin Heyman in *Social Security*, both at Coach House Theatre. Other memorable performances over the years include Stanley Gardiner in *Run for Your Wife*, Dr. Armstrong in *And Then There Were None*, Cornelius Hackl in *Hello, Dolly!*, John Adams in 1776, and Prince Arragon in *The Merchant of Venice*. He most recently appeared on our stage as Daryl in last season's production of *Shakespeare in Hollywood*. Mark lives in Cuyahoga Falls with his wife, Sherri.



DEEDE KLEIN (Donna Lucia d'Alvadorez) was last seen on the Weathervane stage as Kate in *Dancing at Lughnasa*. Her many other productions at WCP include *The Goat or, Who*



Cast Biographies ~ Continued

is *Sylvia*? (for which she was honored with a Chanticleer Award), *The Lion in Winter*, *Angels in America* (Parts 1 & 2) and *The Glass Menagerie*. She has also performed with other area theaters including Coach House, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Beck Center, Chagrin Theatre and Aurora Community Theatre. Dede is a retired International Flight Attendant now spending her time on the ground with Bear, Percy and CeCe.



ERIN MOORE (Amy Spettigue) is very excited to be a part of another show at Weathervane Playhouse. She was most recently seen as Jean Fordham in *August: Osage County* at Weathervane.

She is a 2012 graduate of Malone University with a Bachelor's degree in Communications, concentrating in Theater. Her past credits at Malone include Anne Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Catherine in *Proof*, Lydia Bennett in *Pride and Prejudice*, Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Sarah in *God's Favorite* and Cindy in *A Toby Show*. While at Malone, Erin was a member of Chancel Players for three years and she was actively involved in Alpha Psi Omega. Erin thanks God, her family and friends, her teachers and mentors, and everyone involved in this production for all of their love and support.



TARA KODOSKY (Kitty Verdun) is incredibly excited to be starring in her first production at Weathervane Playhouse. Tara is a recent graduate of Ashland University with a BA degree in

Theatre. Her previous roles include: Rose Arnott in *Enchanted April*, Theresa in *Circle Mirror Transformation*, and Yvonne/Elaine in *Sunday in the Park with George*. And she can be seen in the upcoming independent film *Meat the Jones*. She thanks her wonderful family and friends for their constant support and love. She also thanks her fellow cast mates for making this show pure fun and an absolute riot to be a part of. "Hope you enjoy the show!"



NATALIE MILLAR (Ela Delahay) is a graduate of Kent State University and a resident of Bath Township. She was recently seen as Mrs. Webb in our production of *Our Town*. Natalie is excited

to be in this production and thanks Nancy for this opportunity.

Mark Your Calendar...

I ♥
WP

*Weathervane's
Annual Gala*

September 28, 2013

Creative Team Biographies



JILL FORSTER (Stage Manager) is a second generation Weathervaner and a 35-year veteran of stage management. She has three Chanticleers for lighting designs. In her long association with the Playhouse's Women's Board (now the Volunteer Guild), she has

served as treasurer for youth programs, as First Vice-President and President. Jill holds degrees from The University of Akron in sociology and criminal justice and has recently retired from her position as Director of Specialty Courts for the Akron Municipal Court. She thanks her husband Jim for his strong support.



Creative Team Biographies ~ Continued



MARK D. STOFFER (Lighting Designer) is regularly found working backstage when not performing -- and even when he is! At Coach House Theatre, he has designed lights, sound and/or special effects for several shows over the past few seasons. He has previously designed lights here at Weathervane for *A Long Day's Journey into Night* and *Dancing at Lughnasa*. He also assists with lighting and this season will be his third as Master Electrician and second as Mainstage Music Coordinator for the Ohio Shakespeare Festival.



EILEEN & STEPHEN MOUSHEY (Sound Co-Designers) The Moushey Sound Design Team has provided aural delights for Weathervane productions including *Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge*, *A Tuna Christmas*, *Bloody Murder*, *Lend Me a Tenor* and last season's *See How They Run*. This show begins their 30th year of Weathervane involvement with Stephen



providing behind-the-scenes volunteer assistance in just about every area of stagecraft, and Eileen's participation as a director and coordinator of the 8x10 TheatreFest. Eileen and Stephen are the parents of three wonderful children and three grands.



TOM ABDOO (Properties Co-Designer) is a resident of Clinton whose previous props or props co-design credits with Weathervane include *A Tuna Christmas*, *Italian American*

Reconciliation, *Man of La Mancha* (for which he won a Chanticleer Award), *Tale of the Allergist's Wife*, *The Dinner Party*, *The Odd Couple (Female Version)*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Man for All Seasons* and *See How They Run*. He has also worked on props crews for many other productions. He works in the wholesale division at Parrish/McIntyre Tire Company and is the proud father of three and doting grandfather to six.



SYLVIA COLLIER (Properties Co-Designer) was raised in Eastern Europe. Generous family friends gave her the opportunity to attend Our Lady of the Elms High School from 1994-1998 when she decided to pursue her dream of becoming a veterinarian at The Ohio State University. She is the Associate Veterinarian at Mogadore Veterinary Hospital. She enjoys many outdoor

activities as well as reading. Since becoming interested in the Playhouse, she co-designed properties for *Italian American Reconciliation* and *See How They Run* and worked on props crews for *And the Winner Is*, *Ragtime*, *The Rainmaker* and *Perfect Wedding*.



JASEN J. SMITH (Costume Designer) joined the Weathervane professional staff in August 2008 as its Resident Costume Designer and Costume Shop Manager. Since then, he's

designed costumes for such Weathervane productions as *Children of Eden*, *Bloody Murder*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, among many others. His co-design credits include *Putting It Together* (with Adam Thatcher) and *Man of La Mancha* (with Hedy Jones), the latter of which earned him and his collaborator the Chanticleer Award for best costume design of the 2008-2009 season. He also won the 2009 Marquee Award for best costume design from the Youngstown Area Community Theatre Association for his work on Weathervane's *Children of Eden*. His other regional costume-design credits include Porthouse Theatre, Case Western Reserve University and Ohio Light Opera.



ALAN SCOTT FERRALL (Scenic/Lighting Designer) began at Weathervane as a backstage volunteer under the tutelage of the late John R. Thomas. This is Scott's 16th season as a

Weathervane staff member. Other design work includes Cuyahoga Falls High School, The Players Guild of Canton, Cleveland Signstage Theatre and Western Reserve Public Media (PBS-TV Channels 45/49). At Weathervane, Scott has earned seven Chanticleer Awards -- one as the stage manager for *Fences*; one each for his lighting designs for *The Laramie Project*, *A Lesson Before Dying* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*; and one each for his co-lighting designs for *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Full Monty* and *Man of La Mancha*. In his spare time, Scott has written three one-act children's plays that tour local schools: *Two Swords*, *a Bag of Marbles and a PB & J*, *The Mystery of the Missing Robot* and *How the Bee Learned to Spell: A Fable*. He also takes great pleasure in writing the end-of-the-season revue for the Not-Ready-for-Mainstage Players, who appear at Weathervane's annual Chanticleer Awards banquet. He was the recipient of the 2012 Trustees Award.



About Our Director



Nancy Cates (Director) is so pleased to have the opportunity to direct this turn-of-the-century gem, the granddaddy of the modern farce. She began directing at WeatherVane at the turn of the most recent century, beginning with *Blythe Spirit* and *A Man for All Seasons*, and followed by fifteen others, including, most recently, *Shakespeare in Hollywood*. A big fan of style comedy and farce, Nancy has directed a dozen or so Noel Cowards, and another half-dozen Ken Ludwigs, including Chanticleer-winner *Lend Me A Tenor*. Nancy is one of the two Artistic Directors of both Coach House Theatre, where she directed *I Hate Hamlet* and *Social Security* earlier this season, and Ohio Shakespeare Festival, which is currently preparing *The Comedy of Errors* and *Cymbeline* for the summer of 2013. Nancy has spent 33 years absolutely loving directing almost 200 shows in Virginia, Maryland, Washington D.C., Pennsylvania and California, and looks forward with great anticipation to the next 200!

Join Us Again Soon!



May 2- 19, 2013

Comedy by Patrick Barlow



June 6 - 30, 2013

Musical by Meredith Willson

*Bring your
group to
WeatherVane*

*Group Leaders:
Call Lisa Mansfield
330-836-2626*

lmansfield@weathervaneplayhouse.com



About the Play and Playwright

In its original 1892 production in London, *Charley's Aunt* broke all box office records and ran for nearly 1,500 performances. Almost overnight, the smashing success of the play spawned several touring companies across England as well as dozens of productions throughout the English-speaking world. In America, *Charley's Aunt* was first produced on Broadway in 1893, followed by five revivals (in 1906, 1925, 1940, 1953 and 1970). For the silver screen, *Charley's Aunt* was filmed in 1915 and 1925 (both of which were silent) and the first "talkie" version followed in 1930. Jack Benny played the title role in a popular 1941 American film version. Broadway showman George Abbott and *Guys and Dolls* composer Frank Loesser reworked *Charley's Aunt* to create a musical version of the comedy, called *Where's Charlie?*, which played on Broadway between 1948 and 1950. This popular musical comedy starred Ray Bolger (the Scarecrow from *The Wizard of Oz*) as Charley and his "aunt," and he repeated the role for the 1952 movie version. In 1957, the CBS anthology series *Playhouse 90* aired its adaptation of *Charley's Aunt* with a cast that included Art Carney and Jeanette MacDonald (in what would be her final performance). Weathervane Playhouse first produced *Charley's Aunt* in 1949. The production, directed by Margaret Moore, was staged at the Pythian Temple on South High Street in downtown Akron (which served as Weathervane's temporary venue from October 1948 to July 1949).



About the Playwright

Born in Liverpool, England in 1848, Brandon Thomas was an English actor, playwright and composer of songs. The son of a bootseller, Thomas was educated at the Liverpool Institute and then continued his education at a private school in Lancashire. He learned bookkeeping as a young man and then served as a clerk (first with a couple of timber merchants in the Liverpool region, later with another company in the town of Hull). He supplemented his clerk's salary by working as a freelance journalist.

Mostly, though, he was attracted to the theater, and he started taking roles in amateur productions and music hall revues, often playing the piano and singing his own songs. This led to his association with theater owners and managers and, in April 1879, he made his professional stage debut at the Court Theatre in London in *The Queen's Shilling*. His London debut opened doors to additional character roles in other theatrical productions, but at the same time he continued to write. Court Theatre managers William and Madge Kendal produced his play *Comrades* in 1882. When he was not writing, he was almost always performing and the drama critics of his day noted that, as an actor, Thomas had a keen talent for duplicating regional accents.

Despite her family's longstanding religious objections, Thomas married Marguerite Blanche Leveson in 1888. She, the daughter of a diamond merchant, and Thomas raised three children: Amy Marguerite Brandon Thomas, Jevan Roderick Brandon Thomas and Sylvia M. Brandon Thomas. (Amy and Jevan both pursued theatrical careers as their father had; Sylvia did not.)

Theatrical historians have written that Thomas wrote *Charley's Aunt* for his friend, the comic actor W. S. Penley, who originated the role of "Babbs" in the show's first production. Playwright Thomas originated the role of Colonel Chesney (which he continued to do on a regular basis in later revivals up to his death). Later, however, the two men fought, and even went to court over who could claim credit as the show's true creator.

Following the international success of *Charley's Aunt*, Thomas continued to work and thrive as a character actor. He also continued to write plays, though none ever quite matched the acclaim showered upon *Charley's Aunt*. On June 19, 1914, at the age of 65, Thomas died after a brief illness at his home in London's Bloomsbury neighborhood. The obituary printed in the June 20, 1914, edition of *The Times of London* quoted him as saying, "I hoped to go down to fame as a great actor. If I go at all it will be as the author of *Charley's Aunt*."



Production Team

Alan Scott Ferrall -- Technical Director
Kathy Kohl -- Assistant Technical Director

SET CONSTRUCTION

Ruth Richardson
Roger Dieringer
Tom Marshall
John Tynan
Todd Dieringer
Erin Katz Ford
Kevin Ford
Joe Hunter
Judy Willemssen
David Ruggles

COSTUMES

Jasen J. Smith
Loretta Brinton
Kaitlyn Glover
Diantha Seibert
Ann Lyman
Pat Nichols
Susan Davis
Dale DiBernardo

SOUND

Eileen Moushey
Stephen Moushey
Lois Bennett
Michelle Conner
Sue Snyder

PROPERTIES

Tom Abdo
Sylvia Collier
Barbie Trotter
Michelle Conner
John Tynan
Jared Sparks
Jim Bittner
Bob Yost
Jennifer Hayek

LIGHTS

Mark D. Stoffer
Sue Snyder
Nikki Rafferty
Anthony Kenney
Jason Maurer
Erin Katz Ford

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Enlarging Arts, Inc.
Stagecoach Antiques, Inc.
Ohio Shakespeare Festival

Thanks to Our Hard-Working Volunteers

The following are the dedicated volunteers who have assisted us recently.

June Bretzin
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Barbie Trotter
Verna Vander Kooi
Helen Vari
The Parents of the "Our
Town" Cast

JOHN HEDGES, Executive Director

Mr. Hedges is currently in his sixth season as Executive Director of Weathervane Playhouse. He has enjoyed an award-winning career as both a producer and an actor. In 2012 he received a BroadwayWorld Regional Best Actor Award for his portrayal of Michael in the Cleveland premiere of *God of Carnage* at Dobama Theatre. Prior to coming to Weathervane, John spent ten years in the Resident Acting Company at the Barter Theatre in Virginia where he performed in more than 60 shows. Other acting credits include performances at Broadway's Town Hall, the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival and the American Stage Festival in New Hampshire, where he appeared opposite Academy Award-winner Olympia Dukakis in *The Cherry Orchard*. Film work includes *Freedom* (Best Supporting Actor, SA International Film Festival) as well as *The Crimson Fold*. John has been Managing Director of First Stage Milwaukee, Associate Producer of North Shore Music Theatre, Business Director of Gloucester Stage Company and General Manager of New York's Pearl Theatre Company. Mr. Hedges is a member of Actors' Equity Association, has served on the Board of Directors of Boston's StageSource, been a Conference Panelist for the American Alliance for Theatre & Education, and written for American Theatre magazine. He studied at Indiana State University, the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware, is a graduate of the National Shakespeare Conservatory and holds an honorary MFA degree in theatre from Stafford University. He is a graduate of Leadership Akron (Class XXV) and he and his wife, Cheryl, live in Munroe Falls.