

Players Celebrate 25th Anniversary

The Penn State Players will celebrate their 25th anniversary this year with a variety of programs. "Twelfth Night," a Shakespearean comedy being presented tonight and tomorrow, is the first offering of the year.

In addition to the play an exhibit of scene designs and water colors by Oliver Smith, co-producer of "On the Town" and a graduate of the College, will be on display in the Mineral Industries Art Gallery for two weeks beginning Monday.

Players will publish a commemoration booklet later in the year which will contain the history of the dramatic group and a record of its achievements during the past 25 years.

Other features being planned for the coming semesters are experimental productions, a guest speaker on theatre subjects, and several plays. An attempt is being made to have a nationally known star appear as a guest artist in one of the ensuing performances.

The Players will have an anniversary dinner and dance at the Nittany Lion Inn, February 17, for members and their guests.

Players Produce Varied Repertoire

In looking back over the history of the Penn State Players, one would think that the word versatility should be mentally associated with them.

Plays have been chosen from every period from the ancient Greeks to the modern American stage. Settings have taken the audience to China, England, France, the U.S.A., and even heaven, as in the last production, "Our Town."

Players began modestly with three one-act plays. In his reminiscences, Arthur C. Cloetingh, head of the Dramatics Department, reveals that only 11 persons chose to try out while 20 roles had to be filled. Eventually, the roles were assigned, and the plays, "Dawn," "Spreading the News," and "The Wonder Hat," were given. Money clinked merrily in the till and Players could prepare to give their second full-length production, "The Importance of Being Earnest."

In 1925 Players could, with all of the assurance of a well established campus group, celebrate their fifth anniversary. They produced "Children of the Moon," by Martin Flavin.

"Children of the Moon" had been contemporary. Next season Players turned to the Greek classics and presented "Medea," by Euripides. That it was successful was shown by the large audiences attracted. The following season, the campus dramatics group produced "Oedipus Rex," by Sophocles.

As their tenth anniversary offering, Players presented "Francesca Darimini," an American romantic tragedy. Elaborate souvenir booklets detailing the history of Players were distributed at this time.

Until 1931 Mr. Cloetingh had assumed all the directorial chores. That year Frank Neusbaum, a Player alumnus, directed Ibsen's "The Master Builder."

Between 1932 and 1937 Players produced such diversified plays as the melodramatic "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the ultrasophisticated "Devil's Disciple" by G. B. Shaw.

(Continued on page five)

College Alumnus Plays Leading Role In 'Winged Victory'

Cpl. Don Taylor, who plays the leading role of "Pinky" in "Winged Victory" now showing at the State Theatre, was graduated from the College in 1942. While a student here he was active in the Penn State Players, having title roles in 12 productions.

It was during a rehearsal of "The Taming of the Shrew" in Schwab Auditorium that Hollywood scouts saw Taylor for the first time and took him to the west coast for screen tests. He was



CPL. DON TAYLOR

playing minor roles for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer when his draft number came up.

Stationed with the signal corps attached to the Army Air Forces at Drew Field, Fla., when Moss Hart wrote his "Winged Victory," Corporal Taylor was determined to get a part. Hart was scouring the camps for men with some experience to come to New York for tryouts.

Taylor was spending a furlough in Pittsburgh last August, carrying his orders to report to New York for a tryout during October, when he slipped and twisted his knee. He was hospitalized there until the middle of September, and upon his return to camp he found the orders for New York had been moved up. The train had left the day before.

Frantically he tried to have his orders changed. He telephoned and telegraphed Mr. Hart to await his arrival in New York before casting, but received no answer. In the meantime Hart had cast the five leading roles but couldn't find the sixth someone to play comedy and heavy drama. He realized that somewhere in

(Continued on page five)

Drama Group To Publish Memorandum

A memorial booklet commemorating the 25th anniversary is now being prepared by Players. Prof. Frank Neusbaum is editing it and is being assisted by Mrs. Margaret Tschan Riley, former member of the organization.

The memorandum will present a story and pictorial history of the organization since its founding, February 6, 1920, by Prof. Arthur Cloetingh. Faculty sketches of Professors Neusbaum, Cloetingh, and Lawrence Tucker, Miss Grace Clayton and Mrs. Dorothy Scott will also be included.

Several feature articles and stories of general interest about the stage will be published in this booklet as well as a complete list of all plays produced by the drama group and comments on past and present activities of the actors.

A special article on the alumni and their individual accomplishments since graduation is being prepared by Professor Neusbaum. Supplementing the booklet will be a complete mailing and occupational list of the 541 alumni which will be sent exclusively to former Players. Included in the alumni are only active members of the organization and not every student who participated in productions.

In order to gather accurate statistics concerning graduates of the organization, Professor Neusbaum has mailed questionnaires to each one which are being filled in and returned. The director said that more than 30 per cent have already been returned to the Players' office.

The memorial booklet will be distributed to the alumni and to college and community theatres all over the United States. It will be on sale for the general public.

Mrs. Frances Bolderoff, of the Public Information office, is designing the cover for the booklet and is taking care of business arrangements.

Jerome Kern Music Score

(Current)

Long the acknowledged dean of American composers, Jerome Kern was a natural choice to write the music for Deanna Durbin's first Technicolor musical, Universal's "Can't Help Singing," which is now at the Cathaum Theatre. There could be no better combination of musical talents than Kern's songs and Deanna's golden voice.

The music for "Can't Help Singing" culminates forty years of success for the composer. Although these years have brought drastic changes to the world and to the entertainment profession, Kern has continued his parade of hits without interruption. Music lovers never will forget his tunes from such shows as "Show Boat," "Sweet Adeline," "Sally," "Roberta" and "The Cat and the Fiddle."

Kern seldom is inspired to write a single number. His melodies are carefully planned to fit particular stories and personalities. It was in this manner that he composed "More and More," "Can't Help Singing," "Elbow Room," "Any Moment Now," "Californ-i-ay" and "Swing Your Sweet heart 'Round the Fire" especially for Deanna and her picture. Those who have seen the picture say that the charming star has never been in finer voice.

E. Y. Harburg, who has collaborated with Kern before, and who is a lyricist of considerable note, teamed with the composer in the writing of the score.—Adv.

NOTICE

Freshmen who have not yet obtained their permanent matriculation cards may do so at the registrar's office.

Oliver Smith Wins Theater's Acclaim After Gaining Honors At College

The success story about the lad who achieved fame in the cold world after being rudely unappreciated in college doesn't apply to Oliver Smith, Penn State '39, who was busy at stage sets for Players while only a freshman at the College.

Smith's first set for Players was done for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and after that he designed and personally painted the sets for numerous Player shows.

His professional career began in New York with the designing of backdrops for two ballets. After working with a summer theatre in Scarsdale, N.Y., and the Watergate Theater in Washington, he returned to New York to work for the Ballet Russe and the New Opera Company.

One of the most versatile men in the field, he has designed with equal facility for straight plays, musical revues, opera, operettas, and ballets. He also is one of the more prolific designers, having done seven shows in 1944, and having designed no less than 18 shows in the last four years.

In this same period, he has established himself as an important artist in water color, with a record of having been exhibited in eight important art galleries in New York and Chicago.

Recently, Smith has entered still another part of the theatrical field as co-producer of the musical hit, "On the Town." He has another play, "Undine," lined up for next season, and will be in Hollywood shortly to do the sets for the new Danny Kaye movie.

A showing of Smith's work, scheduled for the Mineral Industries Gallery, a feature of Players' 25th anniversary celebration, has been delayed because of shipping difficulties. Notice of its opening will be made when the exhibit arrives.

Included in the showing will be scene designs from plays, operas, operettas, musicals, ballets, and a number of photographs of scenes, mostly from "Rosalinda" and "On the Town." Some of Smith's watercolors, gouaches, will also be shown.

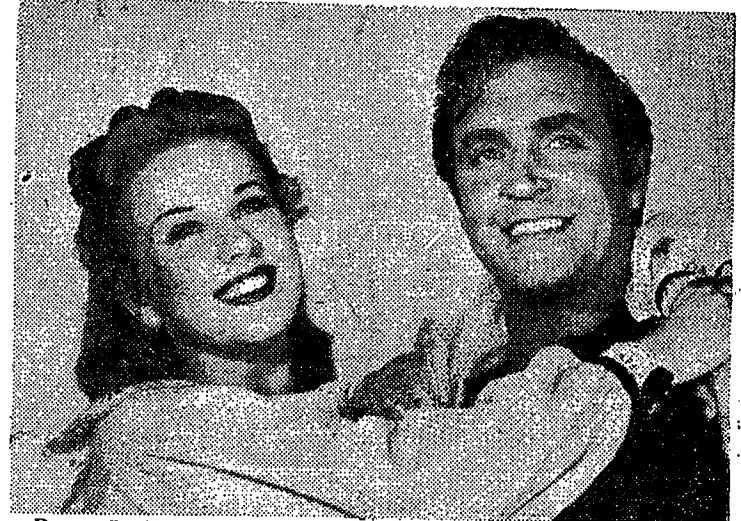
Some of the productions for which he has designed scenes are Saroyan's "Hello Out There," Samson Raphaelson's "The Perfect Marriage," "The Merry Widow," "Rosalinda," "On the Town" and the ballets "Rodeo," with music by Aaron Copland, "Fancy Free," with music by Leonard Bernstein, and "Waltz Academy."

Dinner-Dance Honors New Player Members

Players will entertain new initiates at a dinner-dance at the Nittany Lion Inn after initiation February 17. There will be dancing to the music of the Campus Owls following dinner.

Entertainment during intermission will consist of songs and skits by the dramatics faculty and students. New and old associates and cast and crew members of "Our Town" and "Twelfth Night" are invited to the informal affair.

COMES SATURDAY TO CATHAUM THEATRE



Deanna Durbin and Robert Paige in a romantic scene from "Can't Help Singing," a Technicolor musical.

WARNER BROTHERS
STATE
NOW SHOWING

Winged Victory
The Broadway Smash Hit on the screen!

with
Sgt. Mark DANIELS
Pvt. Lon McALLISTER
Cpl. Don TAYLOR
Jo-Carroll DENNISON
Sgt. Edmond O'BRIEN
and many more

MON., TUES., FEB. 12 - 13

EADIE was a **Lady**

with ANN MILLER
★ JOE BESSER
★ HAL MCINTYRE and his Orchestra

Congratulations

to
Players on Their
25th Anniversary

SMART SHOP