

Classic Sherlock Holmes Tale Told

Last weekend, we drove some 200 miles on Friday night, which culminated in rush hour in Chicagoland. Saturday was go-go-go, but no complaints here since we got to see Jack Hanna's stage show, something I have been waiting over a decade to see! After a (much too) short visit with family, we were on the road again late Saturday night, and traveled the 200+ miles back home again, arriving about 2am. We got up early for church, and with my blurry tired eyes, I carefully went over my lesson plan for my 1st grade Sunday school class since I was anticipating a special guest. I'm happy to report that my class went off without a hitch, so thank God for answering my prayers – after leaving it in God's hands, I was not even nervous about it, which speaks volumes if you know me and my ability to let my nervousness get to me!!

So needless to say, by Sunday night, I was wiped. But I had been asked by some friends to attend the special press night of their stage play, the Sherlock Holmes mystery *The Hound of the Baskervilles* to write a review for our local paper. I happily obliged, especially because seeing the show on this particular night helped our finding-a-babysitter situation. I didn't know how I would like a Sherlock Holmes stage play as I had never found the books entertaining. But I was entertained by the show, so I decided to put my review on my blog since some of my readers won't be able to see it in the paper. Note that each actor brought something unique to the show, but I was unable to include rambling accounts of each individual performance due to spacial limitations. If you are anywhere near Hicksville Ohio this weekend, I hope the following review will make you want to stop by the Huber Opera House to enjoy a great autumn mystery on stage!

From the Bryan Times – Thursday, October 14, 2010:

HICKSVILLE – While the leaves fall outside, an early darkened evening or a chilly autumn afternoon spent taking in a live stage play is especially enjoyable while viewing a chilling mystery.

This weekend, the historic Huber Opera House in Hicksville comes alive with a classic Sherlock Holmes whodunit, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Join the Hicksville Village Players this weekend as Holmes, Watson, and other curious characters guide you through the tale of the hound that haunts the halls of the Baskervilles. Intended for the audience to piece together, the show is a puzzle whose clues are carefully and individually laid out by the intriguing cast of characters.

Sherlock Holmes, the know-it-all yet admirable mystery-solver is extraordinarily portrayed by Bill Murphy. The audience is held captive while Holmes connects clues between puffs of his pipe. Nicely complementing Murphy's natural Holmes as the ever-faithful, always reliable assistant Watson is Travis Heffelfinger of Hicksville. Heffelfinger's Watson is dependable and sharp-witted, and he is observant enough to attain the job of Holmes' eyes and ears while protecting their client, Henry Baskerville. John Robinson of Bryan portrays Henry, a man who is fearful for his safety while he remains inquisitive as he tries to deduce who – or what – might have murdered his uncle. Providing clues and distractions alike for the famed detective are Dr. James Mortimer (Corey Fowler) and Beryl Stapleton (Lindsay Clem).

Once the investigation carries Holmes and the audience away from Baker Street and into the isolated countryside, strange stories are spun of murder, mayhem, thievery, and betrayal. Around the mysterious moor, the secrets begin to spill, and it becomes apparent that the odd collection of characters might not be as they appear. The audience joins Holmes as he tries to figure out if either the peculiar Mr. Stapleton (compellingly played by John Overberg of Montpelier) or the lady-like Laura Lyons (depicted elegantly by Courtney

Widdifield) can be trusted. Can Holmes' client, Henry Baskerville, presume that the keepers of Baskerville Hall, The Barrymores (persuasively illustrated by Jamy Shaffer of Edgerton and Amber Garza of Antwerp) are truthful witnesses? Why, "It's elementary, my dear Watson!"

In the atmosphere of the historic Huber Opera House, the wonderfully directed The Hound of the Baskervilles will transport you back to 19th century London and directly to Baker Street with Sherlock Holmes himself. The curtain opens Friday and Saturday nights, October 15 and 16 at 7:30pm and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 2:30pm on October 16 and 17.