

53 Year History Recalled Romeo and Juliet

It has been 53 years since Dalhousie students first started to agitate for a Student Union Building.

In 1911, a full-time secretary was hired to handle business concerning demands for a YW-YMCA building which was to have offices, reading rooms, and lounges. However, the property now called Studley Campus, then the Studley Estate, was acquired by the university and the idea was shelved. In 1914, with support from the Board of Governors and Alumni Aid promised, the students launched a one week "blitz" campaign which raised \$12,000 in Halifax and \$19,000 outside.

In 1924, SUB faded as other projects took priority. All money collected until that time was in-

vested in an open-air rink. In 1940, there was the prospect of a Men's Residence and in 1945, the cry for a War Memorial Rink.

A three man committee was created in 1957 by the Student Council to investigate Student Union Buildings in general. Their report was tabled the following year, an examination in detail of SUB's across Canada and the U.S. The committee was then asked to continue, with a special view toward the possibility of a SUB at Dalhousie. A fund was established with an initial grant of \$15,000. Moral support from the Board of Governors followed.

The Student Council, responding to increased student pressure in 1959-60, held a "forum" which unanimously approved the principle of raising Council fees to

finance the building. A new SUB committee was appointed and students were asked by referendum to accept a \$10.00 per student fee increase. The Board of Governors agreed to provide the necessary land when the Council had enough money to build. Architects, meanwhile, prepared preliminary drawings.

After a large majority voted "yes" on the referendum, the architects, to quote the Gazette, "presented the plans to the Financial Committee, which is composed faculty, Alumni and students. The committee devised a plan which could make the SUB a reality in five years (1965)". To date, 150,000 dollars has been collected through raised fees. The building now envisaged could cost over one million dollars.

"Dalhousie's production of Romeo and Juliet will be the only Elizabethan Shakespeare in Canada to date this year," said John D. Ripley at the first meeting of the Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society last Thursday night.

Dr. Ripley, assistant professor of English at Dalhousie and director of the forthcoming production, explained that the sets, stage, and costumes will be patterned as closely as possible on Elizabethan style.

"It will be an apron stage production," Dr. Ripley said. Part of the stage will extend toward the middle of the floor area. This part will be 32 feet long and 32 feet wide, and completely bare of any furniture or sets. "Shakespeare's greatest power was his poetry," he said, "and by leaving the apron bare, the actor carries the full responsibility of communicating with the audience."

The costume and dance instruction are under the supervision of Mrs. A. D. Dickson. The measurements that are taken will be sent to Montreal where specifically designed costumes will be made for each member of the cast.

Miss Susan Valence from Stratford, Ontario is coming to Dalhousie to take charge of speech and movement instruc-



Dr. John D. Ripley

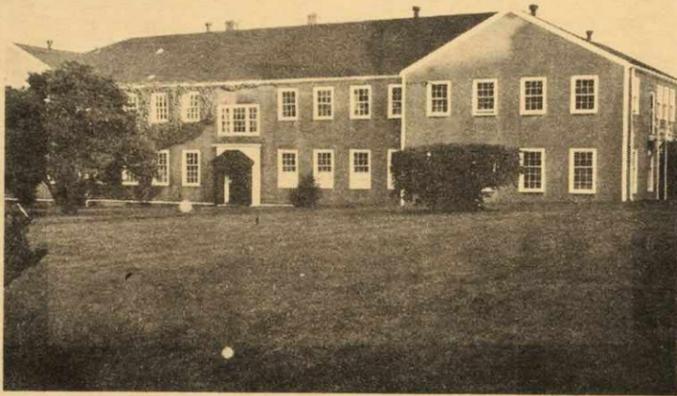
tion. Dr. Ripley said that 100 people, including technicians, stage crew, and actors, will be required for the play which opens Nov. 18 and runs to Nov. 21. There will be matinees on Nov. 18 and 20.

Oh, Dad...

The Neptune production of Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Momma's Hung You In The Closet And I'm Feelin' So Sad leaves the audience hanging in the closet and feeling perplexed. The play itself is complex and disturbing; it interweaves hilarious comedy with tragic elements and, since it is 'absurd' theatre it defies logical analysis as to its meaning. Its hero, or anti-hero, is a young man whose overbearing mother has left him spineless and infantile. The central conflict hinges on the potentially opposing forces of his mother's inhuman possessiveness and the possessive but human love of the girl, Rosalie. In the somewhat unsatisfactory conclusion however, it appears that neither the hero, Jonathan, nor the author, Kopit, knew how to resolve the conflict, with the result that it is removed rather than resolved.

The outstanding character in this production is Madame Rosepettle, played with intelligent wit and a fine sense of timing by Mary McMurray. It is she who gives the world of Oh Dad its dimensions, and she who, in fact, anchors the play to some level of meaning, since it is her insanely coherent world-view which controls the action. The other main performers are David Brown as Jonathan, the son, Milo Ringham as the girl Rosalie and Bernard Behrens as Commodore Roseabove. These three were certainly as competent actors as Miss McMurray but their performances were somewhat less satisfactory because they all had a tendency to over-play which heightened the comic aspect of the drama but detracted from the prevailing atmosphere of nightmarish horror. Most disturbing in their farcical treatment was the stylized childish-

SUB 1964 destroyed 1945



ness adopted by Jonathan and Rosalie. Their Dick-and-Jane tones placed the play at yet one more removed from reality and furthermore obscured the underlying tragedy.

It is worth noting that this underlying tragedy recalls the structure of Hamlet in the situation of the murdered father and the son who is out of touch with society and incapable of normal relationship with a woman; this theme is still profoundly moving in the ironic mode of Oh Dad. Regrettably perhaps, the audience was more amused than moved by the events of the play and their reaction was largely due to the comic portrayal of Jonathan and Rosalie which deprived these characters of humanity and made them objects of ridicule. The Commodore also is a buffoon rather than a figure of normalcy whose world, like Rosalie's, is that of sensual relationships between men and women. In the case of all three characters, a more realistic interpretation would have heightened the frightening absurdity of the world we see before us on the stage.

At the same time, it must be admitted that Jonathan should

never attain the stature of a tragic hero. Unfortunately, one aspect of his character, that of a human personality pathetically trying to communicate with other personalities, is lost in this production, as the audience reaction showed. The fact of Jonathan's emotional frustration — an integral part of too many human lives — necessitates extreme delicacy in handling the role, in order that the pathos is neither embarrassingly obvious nor obscured by the comic elements.

Otherwise, the production is excellent. The movements on stage, especially of the bellboys, are well-timed, almost choreographed, and the technical aspects of set and props are extremely suitable and well-handled. It's almost worth going to see the Venus fly-traps and Rosalinda the fish. Indeed, the play is worth seeing because it is an important development in the theatre and because, for the uninitiated, certain formal elements make it more accessible than other absurd plays such as those of Genet.

—SMW

October 8 Moe Koffman, made internationally famous by "Swingin' Shepherd Blues", will open Dalhousie's Homecoming Weekend with a programme of Dixieland to Modern Jazz.

Two days after the Jazz Concert in the Memorial Rink, Koffman will team his quartet, lead trumpet and lead trombone with Halifax musicians to form a fifteen piece orchestra.

They will play for The Ball at the Mall (Halifax Shopping Center), thus capping the weekend with a second performance on October 10.

Mr. Koffman is recognized as one of the foremost flautists on the North American Continent. He is also a renowned saxophonist and has taken the first sax position with bands led by Sonny Durham, Ralph Flannagan, Buddy Morrow, Jimmy Dorsey, Tex Beneke, Charlie Barnet and Tito Rodriguez.

Mr. Koffman's group, after being launched by the "Shepherd Blues", have made several recordings whose following seems restricted to the U. S. and Europe. His performances here may be just the beginning for jazz bugs at Dalhousie.



William Archibald Benallick

Last summer a tragic traffic accident took the life of one of the most intelligent and considerate young men that I have ever known. "Bill" Benallick was a Sociology professor at Dalhousie 63-64, and those who knew him for the one short year that he was here will never forget the enthusiasm with which he tackled the social problems of the modern world.

It was my privilege and pleasure to work under this man during the first summer months, just prior to his death, on a Sociological Survey in Halifax which attempted to study the effects of urbanization on the small community in modern society. This was of special interest to Mr. Benallick since he was about to complete a dissertation on the problems of social equality in Canada for his Doctorate.

There are very few men in the world today who show such promise in the young, but vital, field of Sociology. Mr. Benallick was a cynic, and a professed atheist, but he was one of the first to realize that social institutions are a grave necessity in a changing world. It was his work and delight to study and analyze these institutions for their betterment and endurance. The world will miss this man and the void left by his departure will be a long time in filling.

E.W. CLARK

Mr. E.W. Clark is one of five students from Dalhousie, St. Mary's, and King's, who worked with Professor Benallick for the first two months of last summer.

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and we can engage architects to begin designing before the end of 1965."

The addition to the Chemistry, the building and construction of the Law School and the Medical Arts Building will be effected before work can start on the Student Union Building.

Expansion of facilities is urgently needed at Dalhousie University. Of the 42 acres which compose the campus (the Studley and Forrest campuses), there are 17 acres of floor space.

Besides, some of the present University assets are among the Commonwealth's oldest: the Forrest Building, now used for biology and physics, was erected in 1886, the Science Building is this year 50 years old and the Macdonald Memorial Library 49 years.

THIS WEEK

Wednesday, September 23 — DGAC Meeting in Rink (8:30 p.m.) with Guest Speaker Joe Rutigliano ("How to Watch a Football Game"), a football demonstration, and a Rookie Show.

Friday, September 25 — (Room 339, A & A) Dal University begins rehearsals (7:30 p.m.) My Fair Lady opens at QEH auditorium. Pre-Med Dance — Dal Rink.

Saturday, September 26 — My Fair Lady at QEH... Dalhousie vs Acadia Football Game-Studley.

Wednesday, September 30 — "The Seven Samurai" presented by Dal Film Society in Physics Theater of Sir James Dunn Building, 8:00 p.m.

"The International Lounge at the YMCA, 267 Barrington Street, opened its doors for another season last Saturday.

Mrs. Peter J. Dey, Program Assistant, told the Gazette that she is not in competition with Dalhousie's club since her activities are on a different night.

"Students, Haligonians and visitors from other countries have been visiting the Lounge for several years. Our program varies among dances, discussions, films, parties and games. There are club meetings every other Saturday night. When our pool is completed, I hope that it will also play an important part in club activities."

