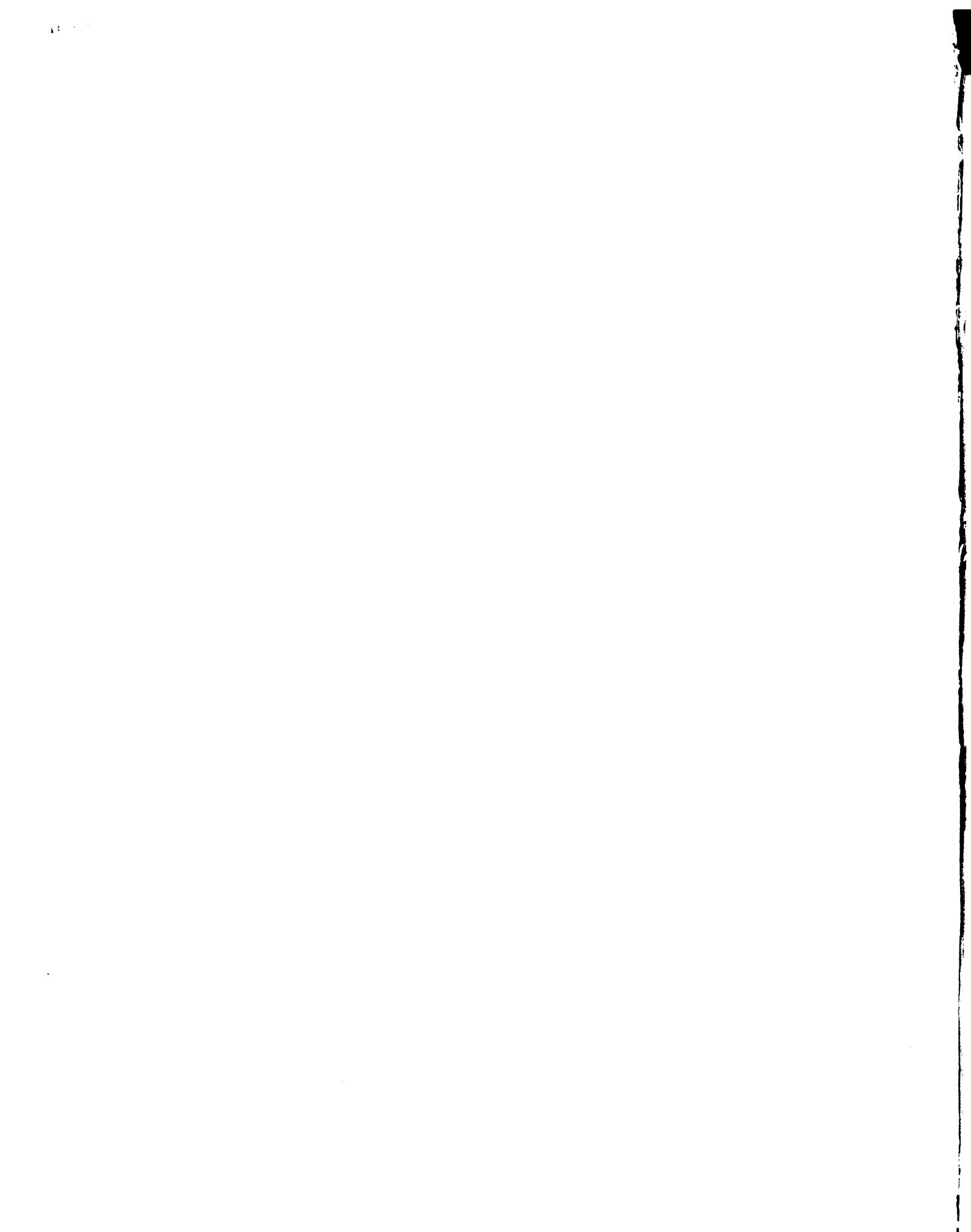


A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE  
FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
Peter Henry Blake  
1956



A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE FLINT  
COMMUNITY PLAYERS

By

PETER HENRY BLAKE

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts  
Michigan State University of Agriculture and  
Applied Science in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

1956

*Approved*

*Stuart Clemmets  
Major Professor*

## ABSTRACT

### Purpose

The author's purpose in making this study was to describe and, wherever appropriate, to evaluate the organization and activities of the Flint Community Players. It was felt that a study of this nature should be of value to all persons interested in the work of the community theater.

### Procedure

Procedure followed by the writer involved, first of all, the reading of works dealing with the community theater in America. This was done in order to augment his knowledge of the general history and organization of community theaters. The next step was an intensive study of the records of the Flint Community Players which consist of thirteen scrapbooks of play programs and newspaper clippings and five loose-leaf volumes of minutes of meetings. The final step was the actual writing of this thesis.

### Results

In Chapter I the historical background of the



Flint Community Players is discussed. This chapter takes note of the beginning of the organization in 1929, and important developments in the organization since that time. Previous sites used by the group and the present facilities and equipment are discussed.

Chapter II discusses the organizational structure of the Players with particular attention to the duties of committee chairmen and other officials.

Chapter III discusses the financial growth of the Flint Community Players and the financial procedures to which this growth can be attributed.

Chapter IV discusses the problem of the turnover of personnel in the organization and suggests possible reasons for the existence of the problem.

Chapter V is a classification of the plays produced by the Flint Community Players in recent years and a discussion of the various factors involved in play selection.

Chapter VI discusses the Flint Community Players as a community enterprise. The number of persons working on and attending the plays and the cooperation of the Players with other civic organizations are the subjects of this chapter.

A summary and conclusions are to be found in Chapter VII. In this chapter the author discusses the success and permanency of the organization in terms of assets and years of operation and indicates the place of the Flint Community Players in the cultural life of the community.

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Acknowledgment is hereby made to Mr. Russell Barr, Librarian of the Flint Community Players, for the cooperation which made this study possible. Acknowledgment is also made to Professors Chenoweth, Walker, Buell, and Thomas of Michigan State University for their guidance and supervision in the completion of this thesis; and to my wife whose patient understanding and countless hours of typing were invaluable.

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the Flint Community Players, of Flint, Michigan, as the organization existed in 1955 and continues at the time of this writing. Background material, dating from the origin of the organization in 1929 is surveyed in order to show how the group came into existence and how the present financial and organizational status of the group came about. Particular attention is paid to present practices and procedures, specifically those relating to organizational structure, financial operations, standards of production, and the relation of the Flint Community Players to the community of which it is a part. The activities of the group and development of the organization are recorded and, wherever possible, an interpretation of the data cited is offered.

The main source for the data used in this study is the records of the Flint Community Players. These consist of thirteen scrapbooks of play programs and newspaper clippings dating from the start of the organization, and five loose-leaf notebooks containing minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors and the

Active Membership. These records have at points been supplemented by conversations with members of the Community Players who, by reason of length of membership and official positions held in the group, could be expected to clarify various points in question.

The author of this study has had contact with the Players since the early part of 1942 and has maintained active membership in the group since September, 1946. He has served one term of office as Treasurer of the Active Membership. In the course of his participation he has acted both leading and supporting roles and has held many production and administrative positions. These production assignments include experience as assistant director, production manager, stage manager, and service on make-up, sound, lights, set construction, and other committees. This intimate knowledge of the organization makes it possible for the author to compare official statements of procedure with practices known to be followed.

The problem of relating specific details of community theater activities to the size, location, and type of community being served is beyond the scope of this study. However, a general description of the community is included here for purposes of orientation.



Flint is an industrial city of nearly 200,000 persons located some sixty miles north of Detroit. It is the county seat of Genesee County which adds over 100,000 more persons to the total population of the area.

Automotive manufacturing is the main industrial activity, and Chevrolet, Buick, and other divisions of General Motors Corporation have factories in the city.

Three institutions of higher learning are located in Flint. They are: General Motors Institute, Flint Junior College, and the Flint College of the University of Michigan.

It is hoped that this study will be of value to groups considering the formation of a community theater and to established community theaters in other cities which may be considering modifications of their organization or their operating procedures. It is also felt that this study should be of value to theater students who are interested in the work of the community theater. Finally, perhaps the Flint Community Players will be able to derive certain values from an overview of its structure and procedures.

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although there are some indications in the Flint Community Players' records of earlier amateur dramatic presentations not directly related to the present organization, the modern history of community theater in Flint begins in 1928 with the formation of a group which was later to become the Flint Community Players.

Newspaper clippings from 1929 issues of the Flint Journal<sup>1</sup> and official press releases of the Players in later years make it evident that a small group was formed in the summer of 1928 with the aim of studying drama in order that members might increase their enjoyment of professional theater productions. Early in 1928 the Wright Players, a professional theatrical company which had operated in Flint for at least three seasons, was disbanded. This left Flint with the motion pictures as the principle medium of

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<sup>1</sup>Daily newspaper of Flint, Michigan

dramatic entertainment. In order to remedy this situation, approximately eighteen persons, including the original play-study group, banded together for the purpose of presenting amateur legitimate theater productions. They called themselves the Flint Theater Guild.

A certain confusion as to the name of the organization is evident at this time, but a study of newspaper clippings and play programs shows that the group was soon known as the Industrial Mutual Association Playhouse.<sup>2</sup> Under this name three plays were given at the Industrial Mutual Association Auditorium. However, it was soon discovered that this 6,000 seat auditorium was much too large for successful operation, and a move was made to facilities provided by the News-Advertiser.<sup>3</sup> Seating capacity and other data concerning this site could not be established, and the building involved has long since been remodeled for other uses. All that can be definitely stated is that the facilities consisted of space in the building owned and

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<sup>2</sup>The Industrial Mutual Association is an organization of Flint industrial workers, primarily social in character, which erected an auditorium in Flint in the mid-1920's. The only connection between the Players and this group appears to have been use of the auditorium.

<sup>3</sup>A morning newspaper published twice each week in Flint.

occupied by the News-Advertiser. Along with the move to these quarters in April, 1930, came another change of name, this time an incorporation as the Flint Playhouse Association. The trustees of this corporation were E. A. Atwood, A. M. Davison, R. Spencer Bishop, E. H. Watson, and Harlow H. Curtice, all prominent in Flint banking, business and industrial circles. Fifty-dollar memberships in the association were sold, and a goal of four hundred and fifty memberships was set, with the proceeds to provide the necessary capital for the erection of a theater. This membership fee was to be returned over a period of time in the form of tickets to productions. However, this association was short-lived. The papers of incorporation were not renewed after the first year, and the group has been known as the Flint Community Players since that time.

At this point special mention should be made of three other names from the early years of the Players. These are Bertha Creighton, Stanley Clarke, and Helen Hardy Brown.

Miss Bertha Creighton, leading lady with the Wright Players at the time they ceased operations, worked with the Flint Community Players until 1942, except for periods of residence in other parts of the country

occasioned by theatrical engagements. As director of many plays during those years and leading lady in some of them, her contribution was immeasurable. Miss Creighton received occasional remuneration from box-office receipts and, as far as is known, has been the only Player to receive any form of pay.

Stanley Clarke, another charter member of the organization, was also an early play director and leading actor. Most of his work came in the period from 1930 to 1932, when business called him to another city. During these years he directed the productions in the absence of Miss Creighton.

The third member of the original group who deserves special tribute is Helen Hardy Brown. Mrs. Brown is the only charter member of the group who is still active with the organization. She has directed many plays and acted many leading roles. At various times since 1929 she has also held practically every important administrative post in the organization.

The next major development in the history of the organization came in 1933 with a move to Flint Central High School Auditorium which has a stage with a proscenium opening of approximately fifty feet and a seating capacity of 1,000.

In March, 1937, the Flint Community Players joined the Michigan Association of Nonprofessional Theaters.<sup>4</sup> As the Flint group supplied the president, secretary, and treasurer of the state organization during the 1939-40 season, it can be assumed that Flint was one of the more active members of this association.

State-wide recognition came to the Flint Community Players in 1942 with the award of the Sprowl Plaque by the Michigan Association of Nonprofessional Theaters for the highest standing among Michigan little theaters that year. An honorable mention also came from the National Association of Little Theaters for being one of the few community theaters to operate without a financial deficit.

Further evidence of the interest of the Flint group in state-wide activities can be found in the minutes of the Board of Directors for January 9, 1943, when a motion to join the Michigan Association of Community Theaters was approved.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>A forerunner of the present Community Theater Association of Michigan. It was founded in 1933 and continued activities until World War II.

<sup>5</sup>Little could be discovered concerning this organization, but statements by Flint Community Players active at that time indicate that it was an abortive attempt

The Second World War brought problems to all amateur dramatic groups, and the Flint Community Players was no exception. The greatest of these problems appears to have been the shortage of personnel resulting from the flow of manpower into the Armed Services and from the lengthening of hours for civilians. Minutes of Board of Directors meetings show that the Players even considered discontinuing operations for the duration of the war. However, a reduced schedule of three plays per season was decided upon, and the records, therefore, show a total of only nine plays between October, 1942, and May, 1945.

Time was also found for activities in support of the war effort. A benefit performance of Private Lives was given for the United Service Organizations, and another benefit performance was given for British War Relief. A series of short radio plays on Civil Defense was produced by Community Players personnel, and there is some mention in the official records of one-act plays given for meetings of patriotic groups.

The year 1945 was an important one for the

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to reorganize the Michigan Association of Nonprofessional Theaters. There is no further record of this organization since that time.

Flint Community Players. A new constitution<sup>6</sup> was adopted in January of that year. With the end of the war in sight, plans were also made at that time for the resumption of a five-play schedule during the 1945-46 season. In October, 1945, the Players moved from Central High School Auditorium to Homedale Elementary School Auditorium in time for the opening play of the season. This shift of location appears to have been due mainly to difficulties encountered in scheduling use of the high school auditorium in a satisfactory manner. School and civic activities often conflicted with performance dates desired by the Players. Few rehearsals could be held at the high school, and the stage had to be cleared of furnishings each night because of daytime use by high school students. This change of playhouses from one seating 1,000 persons to one seating 550 was accompanied by an increase in the number of performances presented. Previous to the move each play had been given one or two performances. At the new site this schedule was increased to four, five or six.

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<sup>6</sup>See Appendix A for a copy of this constitution. It is discussed in Chapter II.



An important addition to the resources of the Flint Community Players came in November, 1949, when Mrs. Adah M. Swan donated her house to the group. This property, which included nearly two acres of land, was located within a few blocks of Flint's business section, and tentative plans were made for building a theater on the site. When the Players learned that zoning changes necessary to permit such use could not be obtained, negotiations were opened for the sale of the property. Purchase by the Riverside Tabernacle<sup>7</sup> was arranged in May, 1950, and the \$25,000.00 realized on the property was placed in the Players' Building Fund. Mrs. Swan and her husband, the late F. W. Swan had given previous support to the Players through permission to use a building located on the property for set construction, storage space, and rehearsal space. Mrs. Swan continues to be active in Community Players affairs.

Inadequate facilities handicapped the Players at Homedale School. Although the auditorium which seated approximately five hundred and fifty persons was

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<sup>7</sup>A Flint Protestant religious group which later erected a church on the site.

considered to be of the desired size, the stage and backstage facilities left much to be desired. Access to the dressing rooms was possible from only one side of the stage during a performance as the set usually reached the back wall, and there was no doorway to the corridor on the other side. Classrooms were used as dressing rooms, and, consequently, all costumes and make-up had to be packed away each night in order to clear the rooms for their primary daytime function. Because of these difficulties, a move was made in the fall of 1951 to better facilities in the newly-opened Freeman Community School. This elementary school in the southeast sector of Flint is still the site of Community Players productions at the time of this writing.

The present facilities at Freeman School have been found to be much more acceptable. The auditorium seats only three hundred and twelve persons, fewer than most members of the group consider desirable. However, this disadvantage is outweighed by superior stage and backstage facilities. The stage has a twenty-seven foot wide proscenium opening and measures eighteen feet from proscenium to back wall, with approximately four feet of apron space in front of the proscenium. With

an average setting in place, approximately four to six feet of space is available between setting and stage wall at each side. This allows reasonably adequate room for the activities of technical crews. Doors leading from the stage to the backstage area allow traffic to and from either side of the stage while a performance is in progress. Two dressing rooms, a property storage room, and a workshop area adjacent to the stage complete the facilities. At the present time these facilities are used exclusively by the Players.

Several thousand dollars worth of equipment owned by the Community Players is used in conjunction with the school facilities. This equipment includes a vacuum cleaner, a power saw, a paint sprayer, and complete lighting and sound systems, in addition to the customary hand tools owned by most dramatic groups. The scenery inventory consists of approximately thirty-five flats which are twelve feet high and of various widths, plus auxiliary items such as doors, platforms, and a fireplace. A fabric ceiling is used with all sets. With the exception of a few articles, no wardrobe of costumes is owned by the Players. Costumes for period plays are rented from Detroit or New York companies. Actors follow the custom of the commercial

theater and supply their own clothing for modern plays, with some articles occasionally being borrowed from local stores.

The lighting system consists of a switchboard containing eight 1,350-watt and four 750-watt dimmers, three strips of three-circuit footlights, and twenty-four spotlights. These spotlights are evenly divided between ellipsoidal and conventional types. Six of the Lekolites with ellipsoidal reflectors are suspended from the auditorium ceiling in order to provide proper down-stage illumination. The switchboard was custom built for the Players and cost \$1,500.00 exclusive of other items in the system.

The sound system consists of a cabinet which houses two variable-speed turntables and provides switches for telephone, doorbell, and clock-chime sound effects. This unit also has six loudspeaker outlets which can be controlled separately. A telephone intercommunication system allows technical cues to be given from the projection booth in the rear of the auditorium, and loudspeakers in the dressing rooms, wired to an on-stage microphone, keep the actors informed of the progress of the play.

The summary of the high points in the history

of the Flint Community Players and a brief review of production facilities are presented as background for the major portion of this study, an analysis of the practices and procedures of the organization as they existed in 1955 and continue at the time of this writing. In this present period the Flint Community Players is an organization of nearly two hundred persons, none of whom is paid for any work done for the group. Five major productions are produced each year, with six to nine performances of each. A Children's Theater presentation is also produced annually. The five major productions alone attract a yearly audience of nearly 10,000 persons. The annual budget of the group exceeds \$10,000.00, and the liquid assets of the organization are in excess of \$50,000.00. Performances of one-act plays are supplied to local civic organizations, and cooperation is extended to the Mott Foundation<sup>8</sup> program and any other worthy civic project. Liason with other community theaters is maintained through member-

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<sup>8</sup> A philanthropic organization established in Flint by C. S. Mott. Educational and recreational programs on both child and adult levels are the principle beneficiaries of this fund.

ship in the Community Theater Association of Michigan.<sup>9</sup>

The chapters which follow consider in more detail the various phases of Flint Community Players activities. Additional historical data is included as it pertains to the particular point under discussion.

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<sup>9</sup>Founded in July, 1951, as the successor to the Michigan Association of Nonprofessional Theaters and the Michigan Association of Community Theaters with the following fourteen charter members: Allegan Civic Theater, Ann Arbor Civic Theater, Battle Creek Civic Theater, Dowagiac Allied Arts Guild, Flint Community Players, Grand Rapids Civic Players, Jackson Civic Theater, Kalamazoo Civic Players, Lansing Civic Players Guild, Lowell Village Players, Marshall Civic Players, Midland Little Theater Guild, Greater Muskegon Civic Theater, and Twin City Players, Inc..

## CHAPTER II

### ORGANIZATION

Until recent times, the organizational structure of the Flint Community Players was rather informal. The governing body of the group was a Board of Directors, but this board appears to have been self-perpetuating and without direct control from those participating in the production of the plays. According to early members of the Players, this system was fairly satisfactory under a strong leader such as Bertha Creighton,<sup>10</sup> but, after her resignation from the group in 1942, a growing need was felt for a more democratic organization and a clear-cut division of responsibility for various phases of production. In response to this need, the Flint Community Players was incorporated under a new constitution on January 9, 1945. This constitution, a copy of which is to be found in Appendix A, sets forth the organizational structure in use at the present time.

Under the constitution there are two types of

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<sup>10</sup>See Chapter I, p. 6.

membership in the Players, Associate and Active. An Associate Member is a person who has purchased one of the four<sup>11</sup> types of season tickets, and this type of membership carries with it no rights beyond attendance at the regularly scheduled plays. An Active Member is a person who has completed one assignment with the Players and paid the one dollar annual membership fee. It is the organization of the Active Members with which this portion of the study is concerned.

The Active Membership annually elects the following officials: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. These officials, in addition to discharging the customary duties of their offices, become members of the Board of Directors during their terms of office. Six other persons are elected to the Board by the Active Membership for two-year terms, with three of the six positions being filled each year.

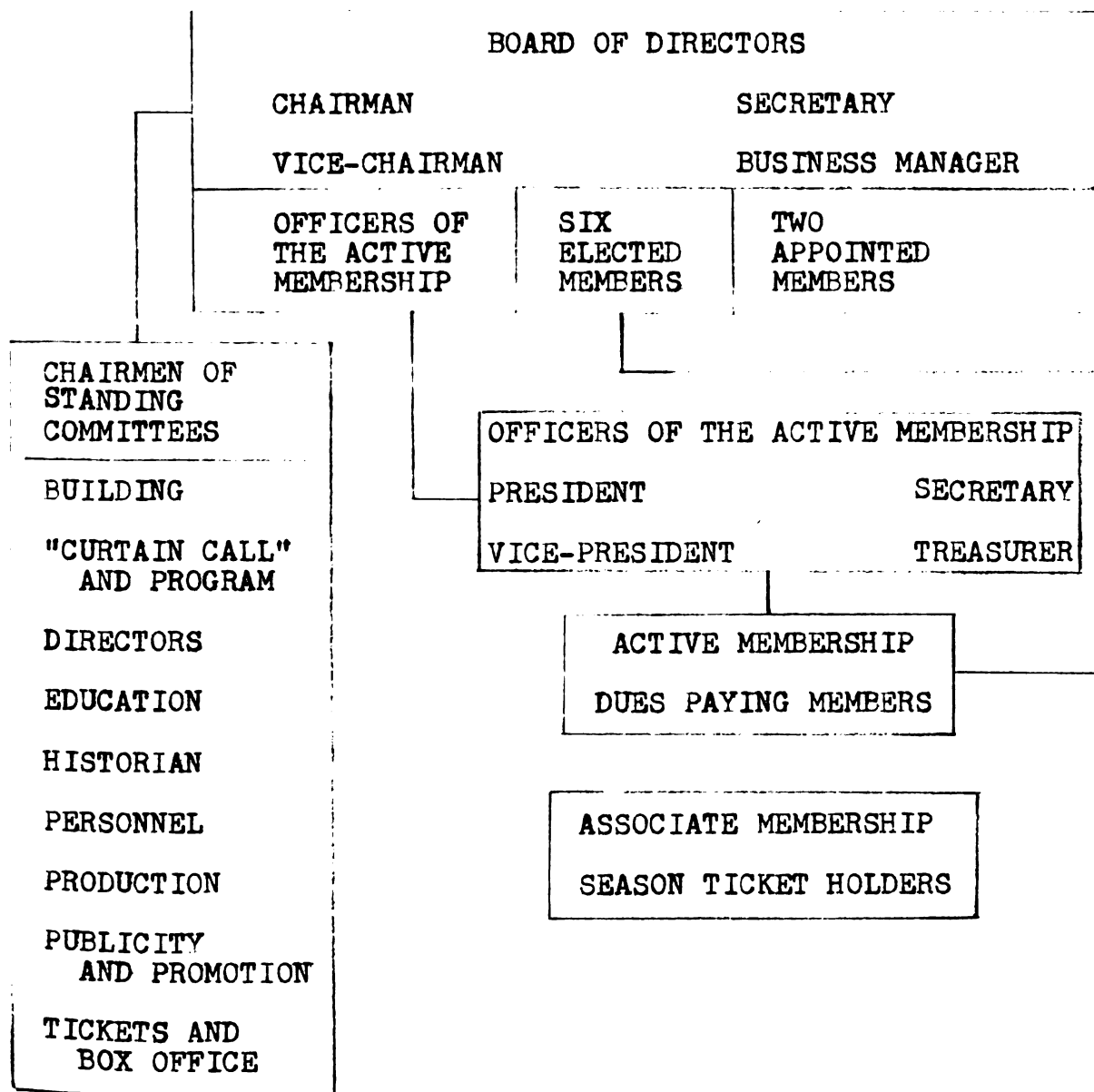
With the selection of the above officials, the main responsibility of the Active Membership is discharged. The Active Membership meets on the Tuesday following the final performance of each play for social activity and in order to receive reports from and to

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<sup>11</sup>Regular, family, patron, and sustaining.



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PLAYERS



make recommendations to the Board of Directors. However, full authority rests with the Board. The Constitution states, "The Board of Directors shall serve as the administrative body of the corporation; it shall elect its officers, appoint the director and production staff for each of the productions and such other officers as may be necessary, and it shall control the finances of the corporation."

The only exception to the above provision is that the Active Membership dues remain in control of the Active Membership and are used for such purposes as the renting of meeting places, the engagement of guest speakers, and the provision of refreshments. Ticket receipts and all other funds are controlled by the Board.

The Board of Directors is composed of those members already mentioned plus two additional members appointed by the Board for one year terms. These appointive members are usually prominent civic, industrial, or business leaders in the community and may or may not be regular members of the Players. The Board elects its executive officers which consist of chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and business manager. Neither the chairman nor business manager may also be an officer of

the Active Membership.

In an organization such as the Flint Community Players, which operates with no full-time or paid personnel, the committee structure is of great importance. The Constitution of the Players empowers the Board of Directors to appoint "such other officers as may seem necessary," and under this provision the Board each year appoints chairmen of the following standing committees: Building, "Curtain Call" and Program, Directors, Educational, Historian, Personnel, Play Reading, Production, Publicity and Promotion, and Tickets and Box Office. These chairmen have the authority to ask such other persons as they wish to serve on their respective committees.

The names of the committees listed, in many cases, make their functions self-explanatory. However, a more detailed consideration of each one will show its duties more clearly.

The desire for a permanent, Player-owned theater probably goes back as far as the Players' organization in 1929. The existence of a Building Committee for at least the past ten years is an expression of that desire. This committee has been responsible in the past for having theater plans drawn and for inves-

tigating real estate which might be suitable for the Players' use. At present the main duty of this committee is to negotiate with the representatives of the Cultural Center Fund<sup>12</sup> in order to determine the status of the Community Players in regard to that project.

The "Curtain Call" and Program Committee is in charge of writing and arranging for the printing of the "Curtain Call" and program for each play. The "Curtain Call" is an advance notice and seat reservation blank sent to each season-ticket holder prior to each production. This committee also secures advertising in these publications to defray their cost.

The Directors Committee, all members of which have directed Community Players productions, passes on the qualifications of potential directors and, subject to approval by the Board, chooses a director and assistant director for each play of the season.

The Educational Committee's duties vary from year to year but generally can be said to include the planning of training sessions for Players personnel and making arrangements for experts to address the

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<sup>12</sup>A \$15,000,000.00 building fund which eventually will provide quarters for many Flint cultural organizations. This project is discussed more fully in Chapter VI.

group on various phases of theater work.

The Historian has charge of the library of play scripts and technical books and keeps all non-current records of the Community Players in order.

The Personnel Committee maintains a file on each person active with the Players. This record, in addition to name, address, and telephone number, shows acting and backstage work on Players' productions and committee posts held in the organization. At least one member of this committee attends each tryout session and Active Membership meeting in order to enroll persons new to the organization who appear at those times and to add their names to the mailing list. A further duty of this committee is to advise the appropriate production committee chairman of any new members expressing a desire to participate in backstage activities.

The Play-reading Committee reads and discusses possible scripts and recommends to the Board of Directors five plays and two or three alternates for the next year's productions.

The Production Committee chooses, subject to Board approval, a production manager for each play.

The Publicity and Promotion Committee is entrust-

ed with the job of working with the newspapers and radio stations of Flint in order to insure proper publicity for Players' productions. One of the most important functions of this committee is the planning and organization of the annual ticket-sales campaign, conducted in the spring of each year. Season-ticket holders are mailed a season-ticket order-blank which is enclosed with the play tickets for the final production of the season. This ticket order-blank is so phrased as to assume that the ticket holder will wish to reorder. It provides for a choice either of making payment for new tickets before the middle of June and receiving a bonus of one or two extra admissions for the following season, or, of being billed in September. Those ticket holders who do not indicate their intention of reordering are contacted by members of the Players in order to ascertain if this is an oversight or actual intent. Ticket campaign workers also contact any interested persons who may have not previously held season tickets.

The Tickets and Box Office Committee mails to season-ticket holders individual reserved seat tickets for the night requested and mans the box office at performances.

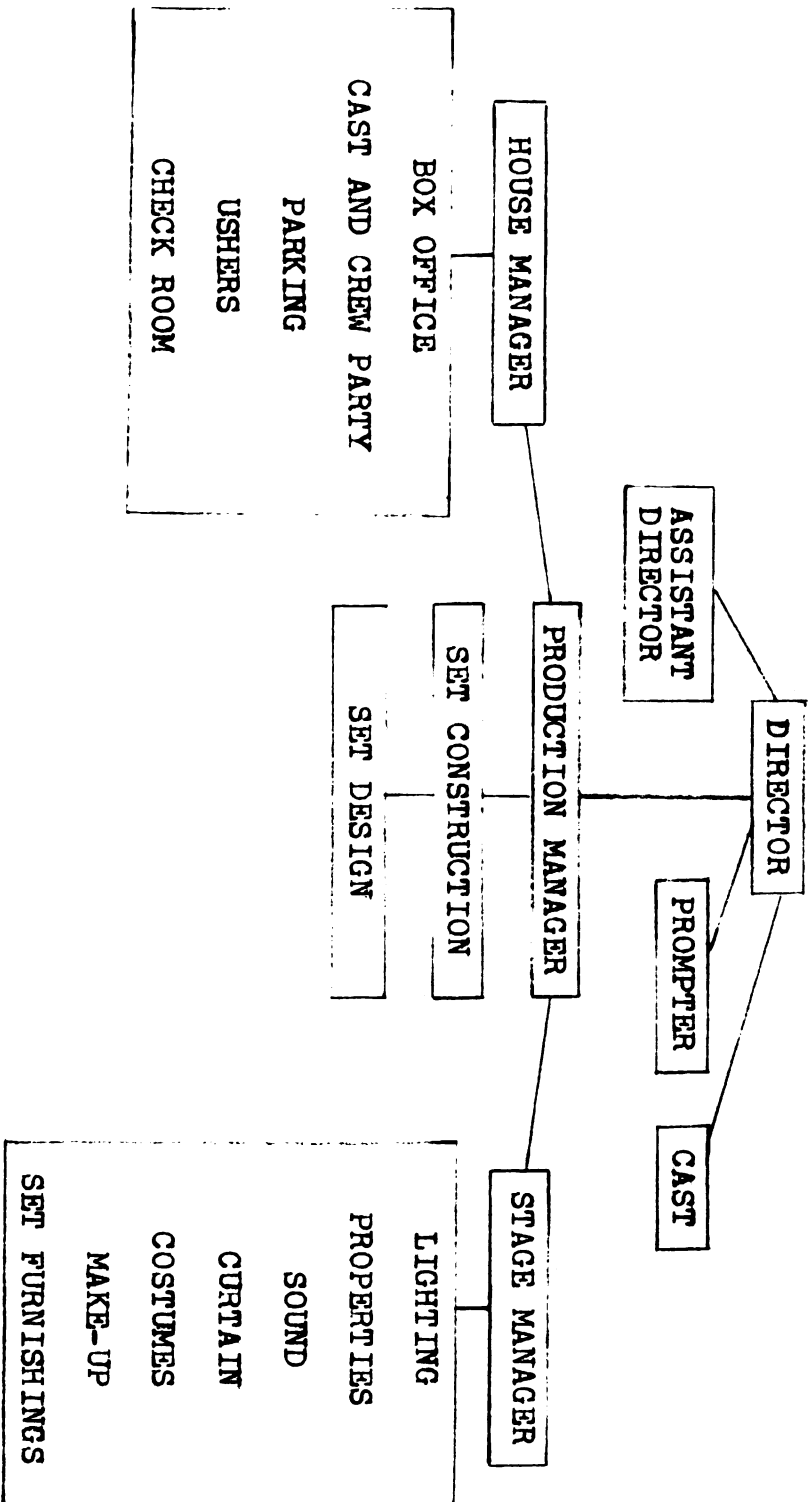
Whenever possible, the chairman of each of these committees is someone who has previously served on that committee and consequently is familiar with its duties and procedures.

The temporary organization established for each play also follows a standard set of procedures. Each play has a director, assistant director, production manager, stage manager, and house manager. Also there are committees on set design, set construction, lighting, sound, hand properties, set furnishings, costumes, make-up, parking, ushering, check room, and the cast-and-crew party.

The ranking member of this organization is the director. He is solely responsible for casting and directing the play, and his wishes in regard to setting, properties, sound and lighting effects are respected unless some insurmountable technical difficulty arises. He is directly responsible to the Board of Directors. The assistant director, the cast, and the prompter are under his immediate authority.

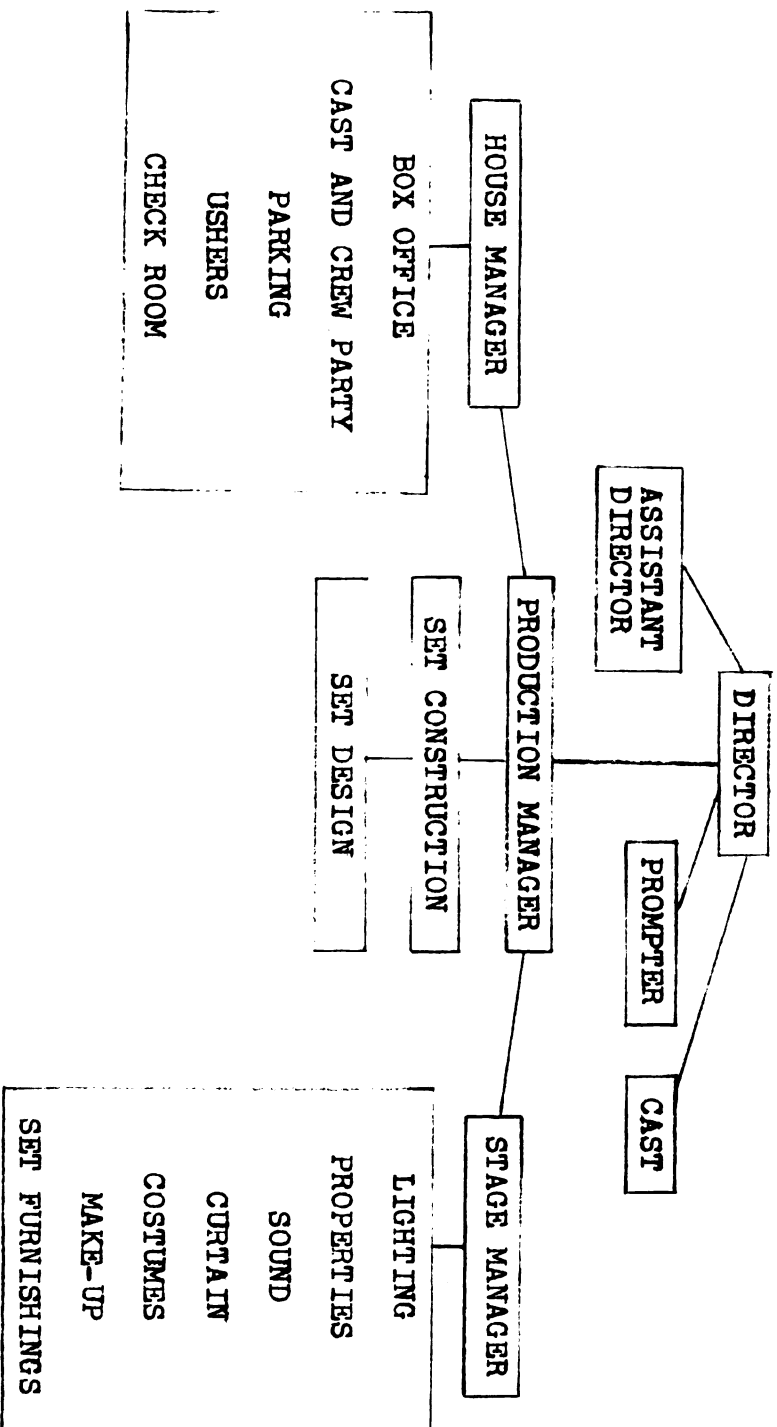
Working with the director is a production manager. The production manager is in complete charge of all technical committees and all off-stage personnel. He is assisted by a stage manager and a house manager.

PLAY PRODUCTION ORGANIZATION





PLAY PRODUCTION ORGANIZATION



The stage manager is in command of the stage crew during dress rehearsals and performances, and the house manager supervises such matters as ushering and check room service.

Tracing the development of a typical play may serve to clarify the production organization. Details may vary with the particular play, but in general these procedures are followed.

The final choice of the play has been made several months before the production date, and the director and production manager have been chosen for at least a month before tryouts. The initial production step is then taken with the announcement of tryouts. This announcement is made in two ways: postcards are sent to all persons listed on the active membership rolls, and a newspaper notice, the first production activity of the Publicity Committee, also appears. Tryouts take place at a rented room in the Young Men's Christian Association building.

A few days after tryouts, the cast is chosen by the director, and rehearsals begin at the same site as was used for tryouts. This is four-and-a-half to six weeks prior to opening night. Rehearsals are scheduled at the discretion of the director, usually three

nights a week for the first two or three weeks and five nights a week for the final two weeks. Each rehearsal is usually of two-and-a-half hours duration.

While rehearsals continue at a steady pace, the production manager chooses committee chairmen, and the initial production activities commence. The set is designed and construction started. Members of the "Curtain Call" and Program Committee begin gathering material for inclusion in those publications. Tickets are ordered from the printer. The Publicity and Promotion Committee makes arrangements for a newspaper story on the cast to appear two or three weeks before the play.

Approximately two weeks before opening night, rehearsals are moved to the Freeman school stage and activity is increased in all production departments. The "Curtain Call" is sent to all season ticket holders, starting with patron and sustaining members, and ticket orders are filled in the order in which they are received. Erection of the set is started. The Set Furnishings Committee arranges with local stores for the use of appropriate furniture. The Properties Committee buys or borrows the necessary objects. The Costume Committee checks on the clothing to be worn by the actors and makes

arrangements for any needed items not owned by the actors. A newspaper story on the production crew is printed.

The last three rehearsals consist of a technical rehearsal followed by two dress rehearsals. During these rehearsals the lights are focused and sound cues checked. Make-up and costumes receive final approval. The same night as the final rehearsal a picture of a scene from the play, accompanied by a general publicity story, appears in the newspaper.

Presumably everything is in order and functioning properly on opening night. The house manager is seeing that parking, ushering and check room activities are progressing smoothly. The Tickets and Box Office Committee, which also occupies space in a downtown store several days prior to and during the run of the play, is now selling individual admissions, many of which have been ordered by telephone. The ushers are escorting people to their seats, all of which are reserved. Backstage the stage manager and the production manager are checking with committee heads to make sure that everything is ready. The director is having a few final words with the cast before taking his place in the audience. At eight thirty-five the house lights go

out, and the curtains are opened. The play has begun.

The initial performance is reviewed by the Flint Journal reporter who has written the previous stories. His review appears in the newspaper the following day.

After opening night, no deviation from production routine is scheduled until the last performance of the play. This performance is followed by a cast-and-crew party, planned by the cast and crew of the previous play. This party also takes place at Freeman school. The Costume Committee gathers all clothing worn in the play for laundering or dry cleaning at Players' expense. Sometimes the set is dismantled this night, but usually it remains on stage until it is taken down several days later.

On the Tuesday evening following the final performance an Active Membership meeting is held at the Federated Women's Club House. Here reports on attendance figures for the play are given. Generally, the next play is already in rehearsal, and the cast is announced to the membership.

A study of programs of past Players' performances reveals considerable duplication of committee personnel on any play. This is an accepted practice

as long as the committees' duties do not conflict. Thus, a person may help in set construction prior to the play and serve on sound or make-up committees during performances.

Programs in the files also show the same persons have been in charge of certain phases of production for several shows each year. If the production manager can enlist the services of such experienced personnel for the production in his charge, his task is, of course, much easier. These same programs also reveal that committees are frequently larger than might seem necessary. For instance, the Lighting Committee, which requires the services of only one or two persons at any one time, may have five or six members. This allows some persons to work on a play for one or two performances when they could not be available every night of the play. Also, each committee usually includes at least one person who is working in that capacity for the first time and is there primarily to observe and learn.

The organizational structure of the Flint Community Players can thus be seen to be based on a detailed plan of official positions and committee functions, provisions for which were made in the 1945 Constitution.

Executive authority rests with a Board of Directors; the members of which, with two exceptions, are elected by the Active Membership. The constitution gives broad powers to this Board, allowing it to choose its own officers, appoint two board members from the general public, and establish committees at its discretion. Standing committees and temporary play production committees act upon the plans made by the Board of Directors. There is nothing particularly original about the organizational structure of the Players. With the exception of the lack of a paid director, the system is quite similar to those discussed by Alexander Dean in his book, Little Theatre Organization and Management, and Talbot Pearson in Encores on Main Street.<sup>13</sup>

A possible weakness which is apparent in the operation of this system is that some persons who are not Active Members work with the group, and some who are Active Members rarely undertake a production assignment. This makes it difficult for production committee chairmen to know who is available for work as-

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<sup>13</sup> Alexander Dean, Little Theatre Organization and Management, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1926).  
Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Institute of Technology Press, 1948).

signments. However, the organizational structure seems to be satisfactory for the most part. Election of officers by the Active Membership provides for the democratic procedures considered desirable in community theater work by most authorities. Broad powers given to the Board of Directors allow for efficient action on matters which, due to their number and the detailed knowledge necessary for a decision, could not be put to the membership for action. Regularly scheduled Active Membership meetings, presided over by the officers of the Active Membership, provide a channel of communication between the Board of Directors and the membership. The committee system allows work, which in some other community theater groups is the responsibility of paid personnel, to be distributed throughout the membership in a reasonably equitable manner.

Finally, the most important criterion of any organizational system might be said to be whether or not it works. This one does. In over ten years of operation under this system only two performances have been postponed after the announcement of production dates to the public. The first occasion came when a death in the family of the leading actor for The Magnificent Yankee took him out of the city. The second



was in May of 1956 when a tornado struck Flint and forced postponement of one performance of Green Grow the Lilacs. The postponement of The Magnificent Yankee and a near-postponment of Craig's Wife, which was avoided by bringing in a professional actress from Detroit as a substitute, were due to the fact that, along with many other community theaters, the Flint Community Players does not use understudies for acting roles. It can hardly be said that these difficulties reflect on the organizational system which functioned smoothly even when a coal shortage in 1950 necessitated a move to a different site for the final performances of The Winslow Boy.

Since financial policies of the organization are established by the Board of Directors and acted upon by the committees appointed by the Board, the organizational structure of the group can be said to be largely responsible for the financial status of the Players which is the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### FINANCIAL STATUS

The financial growth of the Flint Community Players in the early years of its operation is difficult to trace. No financial records prior to 1936 can be found, and those of several later seasons are so fragmentary as to be virtually meaningless. Figures for the Building Fund, included in a statement covering only a portion of a season, are all that are available for some periods. This Building Fund, a portion of the total assets of the group, consists of money which has been set aside for eventual building use. Transfers from the operating surplus to this fund have been made at irregular intervals whenever the operating surplus has become sufficiently large to warrant such action. Another difficulty lies in the fact that each successive treasurer seems to have modified the previous accounting system. Because of these modifications it is almost impossible to cite any item in the early balance sheets and compare it with a later one. For example, a valuation of equipment larger than a previous

one might not indicate additional equipment. It might merely mean a different method of computing valuation. Thus, the equipment inventory was carried on the books at \$4,000.00 in 1953, \$3,488.00 early in 1955, and was written off in September, 1955, so that it no longer is listed in the balance sheets as an asset.

A Building Fund of \$506.00 is mentioned in the records of September, 1939, but because of the difficulties mentioned above the first reliable statement of net worth is not found until the end of the 1942-43 season. At this time the total cash assets of the Players were listed at \$1,163.00.

Thirteen years later, in March, 1956, the records show total liquid assets in cash and United States Savings Bonds of \$58,137.00. Of this total \$25,000.00 is the result of Mrs. F. W. Swan's generous gift to the Players.<sup>14</sup> However, without the inclusion of this item, an average gain of \$2,460.00 for each of the past thirteen seasons becomes evident.

This sizeable increase in assets has come about mainly in the past few years. The yearly surplus at the end of the 1946-47 season was only \$354.00, but by

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter I, p. 11.

the 1948-49 season this figure had increased to \$3,602.00. The 1949-50 season's records show a surplus of \$4,504.00, and both the 1954-55 and 1955-56 seasons have produced yearly surpluses in excess of \$7,000.00.

Approximately \$1,000.00 of each of these \$7,000.00 gains has been in the form of interest on bonds and deposits, but the remainder is due to the fact that total revenue has tripled while production costs have only doubled. Production costs, not including general expenses of the corporation, for the five plays of the 1946-47 season totaled \$1,671.00 for an average of \$334.00. The total income that year was \$3,305.00. Production costs for the five major productions of the 1954-55 season totaled \$3,297.00 for an average of \$659.00. The total income that year was \$11,750.00. Thus it can be seen that increased box office revenue has been largely responsible for recent gains in assets.

This increase in box-office revenue is due to two factors. More people see each play, and higher prices are charged for tickets. Records show that ticket rates during the 1939-40 season were \$2.00 for a season ticket and \$0.75 for a single admission. By

the 1946-47 season prices had been increased to \$4.00 for a season ticket and \$1.20 for a single admission. Prices for the 1954-55 season were: \$6.00 for a regular season membership, \$11.00 for a family membership,<sup>15</sup> \$15.00 for a patron membership,<sup>16</sup> and \$25.00 for a sustaining membership.<sup>17</sup> Single admissions were \$1.50. During the 1954-55 season eight sustaining memberships and one hundred fourteen patron memberships were sold. Five hundred family memberships and two hundred and forty-one regular memberships were also sold. These combine with one thousand single admissions for a total 8,425 individual admissions. Season tickets purchased before the June 15th prior to the opening of the season carry with them a bonus of one extra admission on regular memberships and two extra admissions on all others. As most season ticket purchasers avail themselves of this opportunity an additional 1500 admission can be added to this figure, giving a total of nearly 10,000 admissions sold during

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<sup>15</sup> Family membership -- two admissions for each play.

<sup>16</sup> Patron membership -- same as family membership except for first choice of seats and a listing in the program.

<sup>17</sup> Sustaining membership -- same rights as a patron but involving a larger donation.

that year and a total box-office revenue of \$10,460.00. General operating expenses for the season totaled \$1,158.00.

In order to provide proper control of play production costs a production budget is drawn up by an appointee of the Board prior to each play and approved by that body. This budget, which shows estimated costs for each production department, is intended to serve as a guide rather than an arbitrary figure. It may be exceeded with Board approval, but more often costs are held well within the proposed limits.

General operating expenses are budgeted on the basis of the previous year's operations. Unusual expenditures, such as equipment purchases, must have Board approval.

The business manager, an officer of the Board of Directors, is the key financial figure in the Players. He is responsible for all receipts and disbursements, preparation of budgets, and making a monthly financial report to the Board of Directors. He also works with the Certified Public Accountant, who audits the books and prepares an annual comprehensive financial statement. A copy of the financial statement for September 8, 1955, will be found in Appendix C.

Financial records dating from 1936 indicate that the Flint Community Players has been solvent since that time, and no evidence of serious financial difficulties prior to that time could be found. However, the records of the group show very slow financial growth until about 1948 and much more rapid growth since that time. This growth, with the exception of the proceeds from the sale of the Swan residence, has been largely due to increased box-office revenue which in turn has stemmed from larger audiences at the plays and higher ticket rates. The result of recent financial growth is \$58,000.00 in total liquid assets as of March, 1956.

The Flint Community Players thus appears to be in a sound financial position with extensive assets, adequate control of finances by the Board of Directors, and the safeguards provided by an annual audit of the organizations' books.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PERSONNEL PROBLEM

One of the most serious problems encountered by the Flint Community Players has been the attraction and retention of enough active members to carry out the yearly program. It is even difficult to provide a clear definition of an Active Member.

The Constitution states that an Active Member shall be one who has completed satisfactorily one assignment with the Players and has paid an annual membership fee of one dollar. It further states, "Individuals who were Active Members but have been inactive for two or more years will be required to complete another assignment in addition to paying the membership fee before becoming an Active Member."

Nowhere in the Constitution is there a stipulation that one must be an Active Member in order to participate in Players activities. Formal membership merely bestows voting rights and the right to hold office. Because of this, many persons each year work with the Players who are not listed as Active Members. In addition to this, the constitutional clause



referring to inactivity of Active Members has never, to this author's knowledge, been invoked, and a few persons are listed as Active Members who merely pay their annual dues.

As was mentioned in Chapter I, "Organization", the Personnel Committee maintains on file the records of those persons considered active. But, since few persons ever formally resign from the group, this file gives only an approximate indication of the number of persons currently available for production activities. Unless a person is known to have moved from the city or has sent in a letter of resignation, he is recorded in the files as active for several years after his last work activity with the group. This procedure is necessary due to the number of persons who, for example, may be active one year, inactive the next two years, and active once more the following season.

Because of the above factors, the best indication of the number of persons active in the Players comes not from the official membership list of slightly over one hundred persons for each of the past several years, but from a study of names listed in programs and the Players' Directory. The latter is revised at irregular intervals, the most recent issue having been

printed during the 1953-54 season.

A study of the programs for the 1954-55 season shows several facts which throw some light on the personnel situation. During this season one hundred and eighty-five persons worked on the five major productions, excluding ushers who are usually drawn from some local high school dramatic group. The first production program lists ten persons in the cast and sixty-five in the crew, and figures for the other productions are similar. Of the one hundred and eighty-five persons, approximately eighty worked on only one production. On the other hand, ten names show up in all five programs, indicating that these persons worked on every play that season. From this it would appear that from one hundred and seventy-five to two hundred persons can be considered active in varying degrees during this season.

The turnover of personnel in the Flint Community Players is difficult to gauge exactly, but there is evidence that it is considerable. Only one person who served on the Board of Directors prior to 1945, Helen Hardy Brown, can still be considered fully active with the organization although some others maintain their membership and occasionally render service

on committees. Mrs. Brown is also the only charter member active at the time of this study.

A Players' Directory printed in 1953 lists one hundred and seventy-five persons as being available for work. Of these possibly eighty-five could be considered active in 1956. One hundred and eighteen of the persons listed in this directory were also listed in the play programs of the following season. This does not, of course, indicate a loss of sixty-seven active persons from the organization as some of these were again active during the 1955-56 season. It does, however, indicate that the turnover is sufficient to affect adversely the operations of the organization. A certain amount of new blood is a healthy thing if a group is to escape stagnation and provide opportunities for participation to the whole community. No one should be indispensable to the continued operation of an organization. However, the loss of a large number of experienced actors and technicians who must be replaced by less experienced persons, unfamiliar with the procedures and traditions of the group, can be a handicap to the maintenance of high production standards.

Very few persons who leave the Players state

that a disagreement with policies and procedures of the organization is the reason. Therefore, other reasons beyond the control of the organization probably account for the majority of the turnover. The Community Players' records give no indication of the relative importance of various aspects of the personnel problem, but the pressure of vocational or personal activities is probably the most important factor. Another factor to be considered is that a role in a play requires approximately five weeks of rehearsal with three to five evening rehearsals a week plus seven to nine nights of performance. A major production assignment consumes two weeks of final rehearsal and production time. A person may find that a promotion to a more demanding position or a change in family status, such as the birth of a child, makes it impossible for him to continue Community Players activities. Others move from the city in pursuing their careers. A few persons lose their enthusiasm after one or two plays and drift away from the organization.

Whatever the cause of membership loss, recruitment of new talent is a continuous task. Tryouts for productions are announced in the newspapers, and postcard notices are sent to those on the mailing list.

Each play has at least one or two new actors in the cast, frequently in leading roles. Newspaper and program announcements also invite any interested person to attend Active Membership meetings, and their names, along with the names of new persons who are unsuccessful in play tryouts, are added to the list of available workers.

Thus it can be seen that the personnel problem which exists in the Flint Community Players is serious enough to warrant consideration. Such evidence as can be found points to a considerable turnover in the organization which can be attributed largely to the pressure of personal activities and the time-consuming character of community theater work. A realization of this problem on the part of the group is evident from the activities of the personnel committee and other attempts to attract new members. However, it is possible that some additional steps should be taken to attract new members and to discover if any practices of the organization could be modified in order to retain present members.

## CHAPTER V

### PLAY SELECTION AND PRODUCTION STANDARDS

Talbot Pearson states that the goal of the community theater should be "a diversified repertory with gradually rising standards both of materials and and performance".<sup>18</sup> A diversified repertory is evident in the one hundred and forty-nine Community Players' major productions<sup>19</sup> as well as certain patterns of play selection which have been followed.

Throughout most seasons it is evident that a play selection plan of three light and two serious plays has been followed. A broad definition of light and serious is being used here so as to include both Joan of Lorraine and Dial M for Murder as the "serious" plays of the 1955-56 season. This selection practice is in line with Alexander Dean's suggestions that a popular play open and close the season and that at least

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<sup>18</sup> Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, p. 143.

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix B for complete list and classification.



one serious play, chosen for its literary quality, be produced each year.<sup>20</sup>

The second evident fact is that one play, set in an earlier period than the contemporary one and requiring costumes of that period, has usually been produced each season.

Next it can be seen that a large number of the plays selected has been professionally produced in New York City. Fifty-two plays on the list can be found in The Best Plays series originated by the late Burns Mantle.<sup>21</sup> Twenty of these have had Broadway runs of over five hundred performances. Five have been awarded the Pulitzer prize, and one, Death of a Salesman, has been given the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. Standard works and plays by outstanding authors have included Oscar Wilde's Lady Windemere's Fan, Ferenc Molnar's Liliom, Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House, George Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man and Pygmalion, Eugene O'Neill's Anna Christie, Noel Coward's Hay Fever,

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<sup>20</sup>Alexander Dean, Little Theatre Organization and Management, p. 111.

<sup>21</sup>Louis Kronenberger (ed.), The Best Plays of 1953-1954, The Burns Mantle Yearbook; (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1954).



Blithe Spirit, and Private Lives, Edmund Rostand's Cyrano de Bergerac, Rudolph Besier's The Barretts of Wimpole Street, Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, and Maxwell Anderson's Joan of Lorraine. Noticeably absent from the complete list of performances are the experimental productions and works of rising but still unknown writers which Kenneth Macgowan, in his book, Footlights Across America, considers to be a responsibility of the community theater.<sup>22</sup> Since Mr. Macgowan's book was written however, Edwin Schoell and Talbot Pearson<sup>23</sup> have both pointed out that other opportunities for these authors now exist in radio and motion picture work. The Flint Community Players has never included as one of its aims the provision of a hearing for beginning authors. The organization was started mainly to fill the void left by the closing of the only profession legitimate theater in Flint. The purpose of the organization, as stated in the pres-

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<sup>22</sup>Kenneth Macgowan, Footlights Across America, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929).

<sup>23</sup>Edwin R. Schoell, "The Drama in the Community Theatre: 1940-1950", Educational Theatre Journal, V (May, 1953), pp. 128-133.  
Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, p. 77.

ent constitution, is as follows: "It shall be the purpose of this corporation to foster and promote through dramatic productions and other related activities a community interest and active participation in the dramatic arts on an educational basis." The list of plays produced indicates that the educational basis refers to education of the participants rather than the audience. In practice, the statement appears to mean that the Community Players bring as much of Broadway to Flint as is possible.

As the Players moved to the more adequate Freeman school facilities<sup>24</sup> at the start of the 1951-52 season, this event provides a convenient starting point for a closer analysis of recent activities.

First it becomes evident that of the twenty-five plays produced since that time nineteen have required only one set. Two sets have been used for each of three plays and three sets have been used for each of the remaining three. There is no indication that costs of production or other considerations are involved here. It is probably due to the fact that most Broadway plays, from which selection is made, require only

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<sup>24</sup>See Chapter I, p. 12.

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one set.

Next, it can be seen that comparatively large casts do not present an insurmountable problem to the Players. While the number of persons cast in the last twenty-five plays has averaged seven men and four women, First Lady had a cast of eleven men and twelve women for a total of twenty-three, and Two Blind Mice called for sixteen men and five women or a total of twenty-one. Cast size, like the number of sets, appears to be a result of the play chosen rather than the choice of plays being based on casting considerations.

An analysis of the number of performances of various plays reveals that seventeen have been given for six nights each, three for seven nights, four for eight nights, and one, Harvey, for nine nights. A normal series of six performances is scheduled for the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights of two successive weeks, with additional performances scheduled for Wednesdays or Tuesdays of those weeks. This is done in order to increase attendance. A breakdown of attendance records by the various nights is not available for sufficient plays to provide any comparative figures, but experience has shown that Friday and Saturday night performances are usually given before capacity houses.

The auditorium is usually about two-thirds full for other performances with the poorest attendance coming on opening night.

Total attendance figures are available, however, for every play of recent seasons. These show a total attendance of 8,949 for the 1951-52 season, 9,111 for the 1952-53 season, 8,611 for the 1953-54 season, 9,216 for the 1954-55 season, and 8,979 for the 1955-56 season. Individual play figures for the past five years show The Man and Death of a Salesman to have drawn the smallest audiences with 1,316 and 1,375 respectively. During the same period the largest audiences were drawn by Time Out for Ginger with 2,364 admissions and Harvey with 2,603 admissions. These last-mentioned plays were aided in drawing patrons by their position as the final plays of their seasons. Many persons use the remaining admissions on their season tickets to bring guests to the last play of the year. However, these and other play attendance figures indicate a definite preference of Flint Community Players audiences for light rather than serious plays.

The desires of the people of Flint who attend the plays have had a great, although indirect, influence on the plays which the Flint Community Players



choose to produce. At the end of the 1941-42 season a questionnaire was distributed to season-ticket holders which asked them to state the play which they enjoyed the most of that season's productions. Noel Coward's Private Lives proved to be by far the most popular. In the same questionnaire several categories of plays were provided for consideration. Of these comedy received three hundred and nine votes, mystery received one hundred and fifteen votes, and serious drama received only fifty-four votes. Several of the categories listed in this questionnaire overlapped, destroying somewhat the validity of this poll, but it at least provided an indication of audience tastes. Subsequent experience, shown in the attendance figures previously cited, has intensified the impression gained from the results of this questionnaire.

While the preferences of the Flint playgoing public are generally known, the public's reaction to any particular play is difficult to predict. Therefore, plays must be accepted for production or rejected by the Board of Directors on a subjective basis. Some plays are rejected after consideration because of staging or other difficulties, but interest in the play among Players personnel seems to be the principal

criterion for selection.

In addition to interest in the play, the question of good or bad taste is sometimes raised as a criterion of play selection. This is another aspect of selection which has no objective basis and for which public reactions are difficult to predict. In practice this means that a play such as Tobacco Road, in spite of its long Broadway run, would not be considered by the Players because of the danger of offending the audience by the language and situations involved in that play. However, The Moon is Blue, Bell, Book, and Candle, Born Yesterday, and The Happy Time have been produced with no lines cut from the script and have played to capacity audiences.

Following each of these plays, as well as many others, letters of criticism have been sent to the Players in which the writer has threatened to cancel his season-ticket due to "indecent situations" or "profane language" in that play. An example of this type of criticism can be found in the May 13, 1953, issue of the Flint Journal in which a letter from a person signing himself "Two on the Aisle" was printed in the "Letters to the Editor" column. The writer termed the Community Players' production of Bell,



Book, and Candle "morally low tone, suggestive, and profane." Some of these irate subscribers may have even carried out their threat of attending no more Players' productions. Generally it may be said that as long as the audiences are large and the letters few, the Community Players is not too greatly disturbed by the comments.

Thus it can be seen that play selection is based on a known public preference for light plays which have been reasonably successful in professional production. However, some variety in theater fare is introduced by the production of two "serious" plays each year. On the average, one play each year is a costume production. Most of the plays produced require only one set and have approximately eleven persons in the cast. The normal sequence is six performances of a play, and the total yearly attendance is usually in excess of 9,000. Finally, selection of plays is by the Board of Directors, acting on the recommendation of the Play-reading Committee, and the possible reaction of the public to the particular play is taken into consideration in reaching a decision. These factors in play selection are consistent with the aim of community service expressed in the consti-

tution.

Production standards offer a less fertile field for comment than does play selection. There is general agreement that an appropriate set properly lighted, a suitable cast, and such direction as insures a sensitive, polished performance are the ingredients of a good production, but it is difficult to go beyond this point. It has been the experience of this author that Flint Community Players' productions generally meet these requirements, particularly in regard to the settings. However, no objective comparison can be made.

A director's critique, in which the members of the Directors Committee meet with the director of the play and attempt to evaluate the production, is usually held following each play. In order to promote free discussion no minutes of these meetings are kept. Any difficulties which may have arisen during the production are discussed in an attempt to discover the causes. This procedure indicates a concern with production standards on the part of the group, but it also fails to provide a basis for any objective comments that could be made in regard to these standards.

Newspaper reviews dating from the earliest pro-

ductions can be studied in the Players' records, but these are unreliable as a criterion of performance quality. Most of them are of the type, common to amateur drama, in which a great deal of space is devoted to stating the plot, and there is only a brief complimentary mention of the actors. In the past few years an attempt at critical reviewing has been made by reasonably competent reporters, but even this has produced only one noticeably unfavorable review. The Players' productions may have been good, but it is doubtful if they have been as uniformly excellent as the newspaper records imply.

Thus it can be seen that the Flint Community Players produces a diversified program of plays with the emphasis on light rather than serious productions. There is also evidence of a desire for high production standards.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS

#### AS A COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

For many reasons the Flint Community Players can be considered to be truly a community project. Not only is this organization a non-profit corporation with no paid personnel, but membership in it is open to anyone in Flint or surrounding communities.

As has already been noted, nearly two hundred persons are afforded the opportunity to develop their dramatic skills and to enjoy social fellowship by participating in Players activities. Due to the fact that most people use their previously unused admissions to take friends to the plays, and because there is no way of telling how many individual admissions are sold to persons who see more than one play each year, it is difficult to estimate how many different persons view a Community Players' presentation during any particular season. However, on the basis of nearly ten thousand admissions sold in the average season, 2,500 persons would seem to be a conservative

figure.

Training for professional work is not one of the stated aims of the Players, but at least one person has risen from Community Players' activities to a successful professional career. That person is Mr. Robert Adams who first exercised his dramatic talents as one of the original members of the Flint Community Players. Mr. Adams left Flint in 1935, to establish himself in professional work in New York City. By 1948, he was a national program director for the National Broadcasting Company. He was also associate producer of a professional production which appeared in Detroit in 1948. In the summer of 1955 Mr. Adams set up the Flint Musical Tent seven miles north of Flint on United States route number ten. This professional company operates for a three-month summer season with nightly performances in arena style. The productions are mainly recent musicals, and the second season is already successfully under way.

Through the years the Community Players have also served Flint in many more direct ways. World War II activities, for instance, have already been cited in an earlier chapter, and a lengthy list of one-act plays presented for meetings of various local organ-

izations since that time could be compiled. These range from If Men Played Cards As Women Do, presented before a Junior League meeting, and A Pair of Lunatics, presented for the Civic Park School Parent-Teachers Association, to Christopher Fry's A Phoenix Too Frequent which was first presented before an Active Membership meeting of the Community Players in September of 1955 and is still available for the entertainment of any interested group at the time of this writing. George Bernard Shaw's Man of Destiny was presented before a meeting of the Flint Suburban Forum in March, 1955. This presentation, too, has since been available for other organizations. Still other one-act plays from recent seasons have been When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet and Suppressed Desires, both of which have been presented several times. This information was all taken from Flint Journal newspaper clippings, but, as there is no record of presentations which were not reported in the newspaper, the list cannot be considered complete as to names of plays or number of performances.

In 1952 a theater course for children was conducted under the joint sponsorship of the Flint Community Players and the Mott Foundation program. The

course consisted of ten two-hour acting sessions on successive Saturday mornings for children of the ages from eight to twelve. The Flint Community Players provided teaching personnel, and the Mott Foundation Program paid all costs of the project.

An outgrowth of this Children's Theater course was the Community Players' Annual Children's Theater presentation which also started in 1952. Each spring the Flint Community Players, in cooperation with the Mott Foundation, the Elementary Principals Association, the Junior League, and the American Association of University Women, present one or more performances of a children's play. This play is usually based on a well-known fairy story and is chosen for its appeal to children of elementary school age. The cast varies in age according to the roles played but consists mainly of junior and senior high school students. Some adult actors are used occasionally. Direction, equipment, and technical personnel are provided by the Community Players. Tickets, publicity, and other phases of the project are the responsibility of the cooperating groups.

Perhaps the best evidence that the Flint Community Players is considered by the people of Flint

to be an important civic organization comes from its proposed inclusion in the Flint College and Cultural Center project. A fund of fifteen million dollars is being raised for this project by private subscription, and the erection of a group of buildings adjacent to Flint Junior College and the Flint College of the University of Michigan is being planned. It will include a planetarium, a campanile, an historical museum, a new public library, an art institute, an auditorium seating two thousand persons, and a theater seating approximately four hundred and fifty persons. Present expectations are that this theater will be the new home of the Flint Community Players. Tentative plans for this building result in an estimated cost of approximately three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and at least one hundred thousand dollars of the general fund has already been specifically designated for it. As the Cultural Center fund lacks two or three million dollars of the proposed total at the time of this writing, and as building plans and operating agreements have not been fully determined, it is impossible to say when these facilities will become available to the Community Players. However, all press releases concerning the Cultural Center indicate a completion date some-



time prior to 1960.

Criteria with which the relationship of the Flint Community Players to the community may be evaluated can be found in the writings of several authorities. Alexander Dean<sup>25</sup> gives the three purposes of the community theater as (1) the production of plays where otherwise there would be none, (2) the furnishing of an opportunity for creative work, and (3) the creation of opportunities for social intercourse. Virgil Baker speaks in a similar vein when he states that "The real drives behind the community theatres are: (1) the desires of scores of individuals in every community to participate in activities which give them satisfying self-expression, and (2) the desires of local audiences to see legitimate theatre performed on home stages."<sup>26</sup> Talbot Pearson gives the opinion that the sale of individual play tickets at the box office, rather than limiting the audience to a select group of subscribers, is a valid criterion

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<sup>25</sup> Alexander Dean, Little Theatre Organization and Management, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup> Virgil L. Baker, "The Community Theatre as a Force in Adult Education", Educational Theatre Journal, IV (October, 1952), p. 228.

of the community theater.<sup>27</sup> Alexander Dean states that a children's theater program is an important part of community theater work.<sup>28</sup> Finally, the idea that community theater organization should be controlled according to democratic procedures is either stated or implied in the writings of most authorities.

The Flint Community Players fulfills the above requirements. Membership in the organization is open to all interested persons and the general public is encouraged to attend play performances through the use of newspaper and radio announcements. Control of the organization is exercised by the general membership through the operation of democratic processes. An opportunity for creative work and recreation is afforded the people of the community and a children's theater production is a regular part of the yearly program. In addition a cooperative relationship exists between the Players and other civic organizations. Because of these factors, the Flint Community Players can be considered to be truly a community theater.

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<sup>27</sup> Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, p. 146.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander Dean, Little Theatre Organization and Management, p. 71.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to describe and, wherever appropriate, to evaluate the organization and activities of the Flint Community Players, particularly in regard to organizational structure, financial operations, standards of production, and the relationship between the group and the community it serves.

As a result of this study certain facts are now evident. The Flint Community Players is an amateur dramatic organization which was established in 1929 and has produced an annual series of plays since that time. At present five plays are produced a year with from six to nine performances each at Freeman School Auditorium.

In organizational structure the group is a corporation with a Board of Directors, elected by the Active Membership, exercising executive authority. Membership is open to any interested person in the community. There is no paid personnel in the Players,

and activities are planned and executed by a large number of standing and temporary committees.

The financial status of the Players has shown a steady growth to total liquid assets in 1956 of \$58,000.00. The business manager is responsible for the financial records, which are audited annually by a certified public accountant.

Play selection is based primarily upon the known preferences of the Flint playgoing public with three light and two serious plays being given each year. Most of the plays produced have previously been successful productions of the professional theater.

Finally, the Flint Community Players enjoys a cooperative relationship with the community of Flint. Attendance figures show an annual audience of approximately 9,000 persons, and personnel records indicate that nearly two hundred persons are active with the group each year. One-act plays are provided for the entertainment of other civic organizations, and a children's play is presented each year. Community recognition of the group is evident from the proposed inclusion of the Community Players in the Cultural Center which is now being planned.

While most aspects of the Flint Community Players' operations seem appropriate to the group and the community, questions in regards to three of them might be raised. The first of these questions is whether Players' activities might not benefit from the services of a full-time, paid director. Kenneth Macgowan, in his book, Footlights Across America, implies that the employment of a paid director should be the goal of any amateur dramatic group.<sup>29</sup> Talbot Pearson's Encores on Main Street is mainly concerned with the groups employing a professional director although he states that only about one-third of existing community theaters have this type of leadership.<sup>30</sup> Alexander Dean also considers the paid director system desirable.<sup>31</sup> On the other side of the question, only eight of the nineteen Michigan groups listed in "A Directory of Nonprofessional Community Theatres in the United States" had professional leadership in 1952.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Kenneth Macgowan, Footlights Across America.

<sup>30</sup>Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, p. 5.

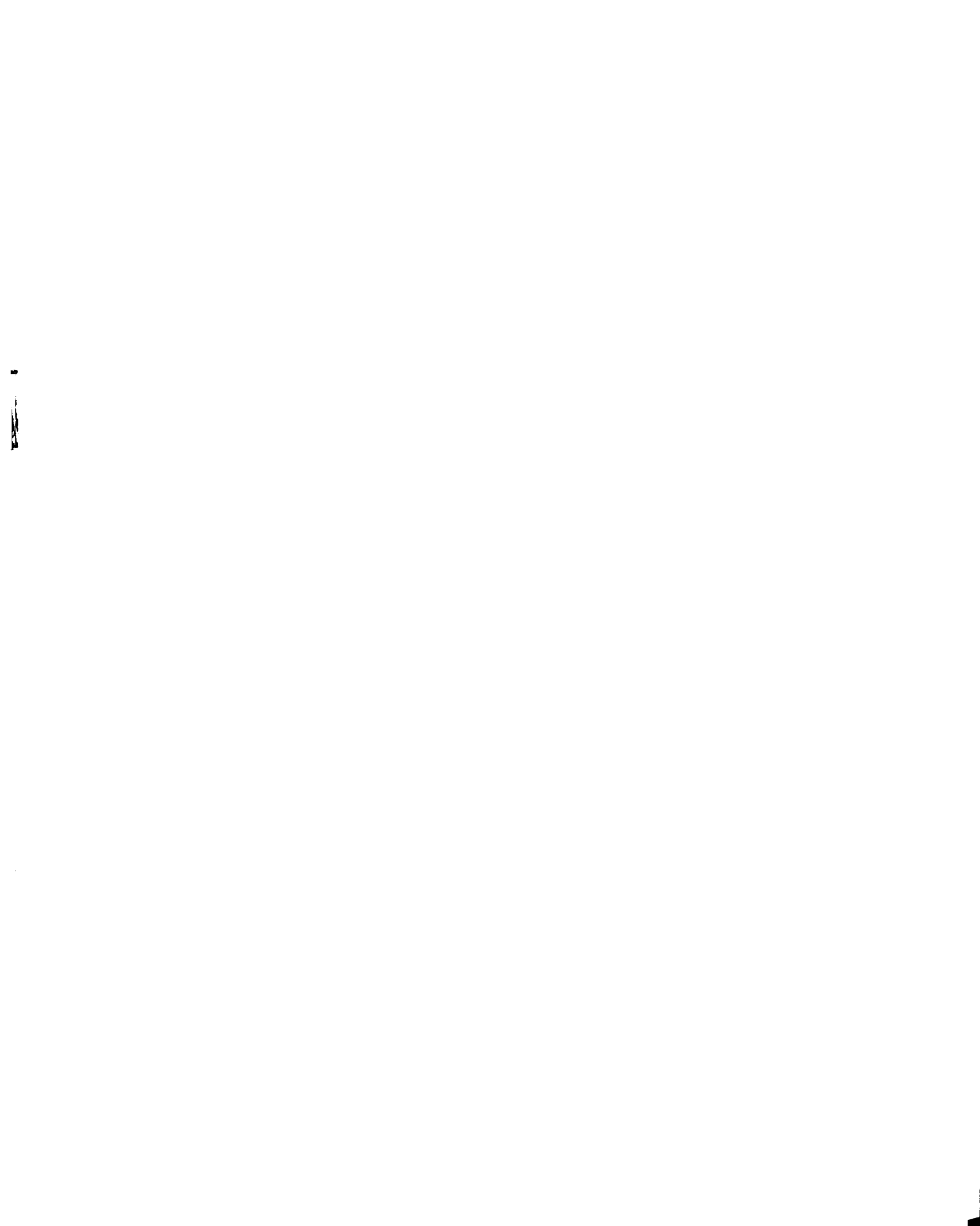
<sup>31</sup>Alexander Dean, Little Theatre Organization and Management, chap. xvii, pp. 296-326.

<sup>32</sup>Mary Eva Duthie, "A Directory of Nonprofessional Community Theatres in the United States", Educational Theatre Journal, V (May, 1953), pp. 146-147.

This question has been discussed by Players' personnel at various times and the advantages of full-time, expert leadership weighed against the possible disadvantage of the expense, the necessary delegation of authority to the director, and the probable lessening of interest by some persons who now feel a deep responsibility toward the group. However, many members still consider the question worthy of further consideration.

The next problem is that of the personnel turnover in the Community Players. While few persons would consider an unchanging membership desirable, the loss of experienced personnel increases the difficulty of improving production standards. There are indications that this problem should perhaps be explored more fully by the Players with the aim of retaining present members and encouraging full membership on the part of those persons who are only casually associated with the group.

The third question is whether the Flint Community Players should present new plays which have not received professional production. Talbot Pearson implies that this is no longer an important function of the community theater, but it is possible that the oc-



casional production of a new play or a meritorious play which was not well received on Broadway might add variety to the Players' program.<sup>33</sup>

As far as can be determined, the Flint Community Players is a successful organization with a permanent place in the cultural life of the community. Assets totalling \$58,000.00 and an annual budget in excess of \$10,000.00 would seem to indicate successful operations. Over a quarter of a century of activity, during which time the organization has survived a financial depression, a world war, and an almost complete turnover of personnel, denotes permanency. The organization's relationship to the cultural life of the community is in part indicated by the statement in the Players' Constitution: "It shall be the purpose of this corporation to foster and promote through dramatic productions and other related activities a community interest and active participation in the dramatic arts on an educational basis." Additional indications can be found in the active participation and the financial support which the records show the people of Flint have given to the group.

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<sup>33</sup>Talbot Pearson, Encores on Main Street, pp. 77-78.



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by Special Permission

Title: *Blakey*  
*P. H. - H. H. H.*

Date: *8/1/65*

Due: AUG 8 '65

Division *Hum. H.*

Signed:

*J. J.*

Finally, the assertion that the Flint Community Players is truly a community theater rests on the representative examples of cooperation with other civic groups and projects which have been cited in this study.

APPENDIX A

CONSTITUTION OF THE

FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS, INC.

ARTICLE I

Name. The name of this organization shall be the  
Flint Community Players, Inc.

ARTICLE II

Purpose. It shall be the purpose of this corporation  
to foster and promote through dramatic productions  
and other related activities a community interest and  
active participation in the dramatic arts on an educa-  
tional basis.

ARTICLE III

Membership and Voting Rights

Section 1. Membership. There shall be two types of  
membership in this corporation, to be known as As-  
sociate Memberships and Active Memberships:

Group 1. Associate Members shall be those who  
hold season tickets.

Group 2. Active Members shall be those who have  
completed satisfactorily one assignment for the Play-  
ers, pay an annual membership fee of one dollar, and  
meet such other requirements as may be established by  
the Membership. Individuals who were Active Members  
but have been inactive for two or more years will be  
required to complete another assignment in addition to  
paying the membership fee before becoming an Active  
Member again.

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Section 2. Voting Rights. The Active Membership shall elect the Board of Directors, including four officers -- President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer -- of the Active Membership; it shall vote on all amendments to the Constitution; and it may plan social or special events for the Membership.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### Officers

Section 1. Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of twelve members, as follows: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Active Membership, with a term of office of one year; six other persons elected by the Membership, with a term of office of two years; and two persons appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors with the approval of the Board, with a term of office of one year. The six Board Members shall have been Active Members for one year or more prior to election and three shall be elected each year.

The Board of Directors shall serve as the administrative body of the corporation; it shall elect its officers, appoint the director and production staff for each of the productions and such other officers as may be necessary, and it shall control the finances of the corporation.

Section 2. Officers of the Membership. President of the Active Membership -- the President, besides serving as a member of the Board of Directors, shall preside at all Membership meetings, call special Membership meetings, and perform such other duties as the Membership may direct, provided they do not violate any part of this Constitution.

Vice-President of the Active Membership -- the Vice-President besides serving as a member of the Board of Directors, shall, in the absence of the President, preside at Membership meetings. He shall perform such other duties of the President as may be required by the absence or illness of the President. Other responsibilities and duties may be delegated to the Vice-President by the Membership.

Secretary of the Active Membership -- the Secretary, besides serving as a member of the Board of Directors, shall keep minutes of the Membership meetings and such other records and correspondence as required by the Membership.

Treasurer of the Active Membership -- the Treasurer, besides serving as a member of the Board of Directors, shall keep the accounts of the Membership, including all dues and special assessments, and make such expenditures as authorized by the Membership.

Other Officers of the Active Membership -- the Membership may elect such other officers as it may deem necessary as long as the responsibilities of such officers do not conflict with the responsibilities and duties of the offices established by this Constitution.

**Section 3. Election Procedure.** The annual election of the Board of Directors and the officers of the Active Membership shall be held on the second Tuesday following the opening performance of the last play of the season, and the officers shall take office immediately.

The President of the Membership shall appoint a nominating committee a reasonable time before the meeting designated above, which committee shall prepare a slate of the candidates for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Active Membership, and three positions on the Board of Directors. Said committee shall report at the meeting, placing in nomination the names of those members it has selected as candidates. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the proper time during the meeting. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Membership at such elections to have available a list of the names of those members entitled to vote in such election.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the Chairman of the Board of Directors with the approval of the Board, except in the case of a vacancy in one of the four offices of the Active Membership, in which case the Membership shall elect a new officer to complete the term.

The Secretary of the Board shall report any member of the Board who declares necessity of absence from the Board three consecutive meetings and the Board must therefore determine whether such office is to be considered vacant to be filled by regular procedure.

**Section 5. Place of Meeting.** The Directors may hold their meetings, have an office and keep the books of the corporation in such place or places within or without the State of Michigan as the Board of Directors may, from time to time, determine.

**Section 6. Meeting.** Meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chairman, Secretary, or any three (3) members of the Board, notice being given by the Secretary of the time and place.

**Section 7. Quorum.** A majority of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 8. Action by Unanimous Written Consent.** When the Directors shall severally or collectively consent in writing to any action to be taken by the corporation, such action shall be as valid corporate action as though it had been authorized at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

**Section 9. Honorary Membership.** The Board may, in acknowledgment of services rendered the corporation or the community, bestow honorary memberships, such honorary memberships not being subject to dues and having no vote.

**Section 10.** Members of the Active Membership who are members of the Board may also be officers of the Board. Only the Chairman and Business Manager may not hold two offices simultaneously.

**Section 11.** Should the Board of Directors deem it necessary

- (a) to use money previously designated as a part of a building fund for purposes other than a building or property for such a building,
- (b) to borrow money for any use against such property or buildings as may be owned by the corporation,

(c) to dispose of such property or buildings as may be owned by the corporation,

(d) to borrow money for any purposes whatever, it shall be necessary for such action to be approved before the fact by two-thirds of those present at an Active Membership meeting, notice of which has been sent to Active Members of the current year and previous year.

## ARTICLE V

### Meetings

**Section 1. Time, Place and Purpose.** Meetings of the Members of this corporation shall be held biannually -- one at the end of the season for the purpose of electing Directors, and one at the beginning of the season to start the program for the new year and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before the meeting. Special meetings shall be called by the Board of Directors or by the officers of the Active Membership group.

**Section 2. Special Meetings.** Special meetings of members may be called by the President and Secretary and shall be called by either of them at the request in writing or by vote of a majority of the Board of Directors or at the request in writing of twenty-five percent of the Members of the corporation in good standing.

**Section 3. Notice.** Written notice of any meeting of the Active Membership shall be mailed to each Active Member at his last known address as the same appears upon the books of the corporation, or otherwise, at least three (3) days prior to any meeting, and any notice of special meetings shall indicate briefly the object or objects thereof.

**Section 4. Quorum.** Presence in person of twenty-five percent of the members of this corporation shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Members.

**Section 5. Giving Notice.** Any notice required by statute or this Constitution to be given Members, Directors, or Officers of the corporation shall be deemed sufficient if given by depositing the same in a



Post Office Box, with postage paid, addressed to such person at his last known address, and such notice shall be deemed to have been given at the time of such mailing.

## ARTICLE VI

### Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by the Board or by a majority vote at any authorized membership meeting and such amendment shall become effective after it has been passed by a two-thirds vote at the Membership meeting called for this purpose.

## ARTICLE VII

### Enactment

This Constitution shall become effective after it has been approved by the Board of Directors and accepted by a majority vote at a Membership meeting called to consider the adoption of a new Constitution.

APPENDIX B

PLAYS PRODUCED BY THE FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS

1929 Summer Season

1. Meet the Wife
2. Aren't We All
3. Outward Bound
4. Our Husband (B.M.)
5. Dulcy
6. Lady Windemere's Fan

1929 - 1930

7. The Torch Bearers
8. Lilliom (B.M.)
9. The Silver Cord
10. Within the Law
11. A Successful Calamity
12. A Busman's Holiday

1930 - 1931

13. The Hidden Guest
14. The Haunted House
15. In the Shadow of the Rockies
16. The Racket (B.M.)
17. Camille
18. The Brat

1931 - 1932

19. The Makropoulos Secret
20. Square Crooks
21. The Queen's Husband
22. Pals First
23. It Won't be Long Now
24. First Night

1932 - 1933

25. Rebound (B.M.)
26. Dover Road (B.M.)
27. A Doll's House
28. The Animal Kingdom
29. In Love with Love
30. Arms and the Man
31. Crime at Blossom
32. April Showers
33. Diplomacy
34. Loose Ankles
35. As Husbands Go
36. Hay Fever
37. Ice Bound (B.M.)
38. Counselor at Law

B.M. -- Included in Best Plays series originated by the late Burns Mantle  
 O.D. -- Over five hundred Broadway performances  
 P.P. -- Was awarded the Pulitzer Prize

39. Your Uncle Dudley  
40. The College Widow

- 62. Night of January 16
- 63. Berkeley Square (B.M.)
- 64. Night Must Fall

1934 - 1935

- 41. The Drunkard
- 42. The Vinegar Tree
- 43. Another Language
- 44. The Bill of Divorcement
- 45. The Late Christopher Bean (B.M.)
- 46. The Trial of Mary Dugan
- 47. Three Cornered Moon
- 48. The Cat and the Canary

1938 - 1939

- 65. Stage Door
- 66. Room Service (O.D.)
- 67. Anna Christie (B.M., P.P.)
- 68. Accent on Youth
- 69. Outward Bound

1939 - 1940

- 70. The Royal Family
- 71. Our Town (B.M., P.P.)
- 72. Dodsworth (B.M.)
- 73. What A Life
- 74. Tonight at Eight-thirty

1935 - 1936

- 49. Dinner at Eight
- 50. The Shining Hour
- 51. The Man from Mexico
- 52. The Music Master
- 53. The Post Road
- 54. The Last of Mrs. Cheyney (C.D.)

1940 - 1941

- 75. Pygmalion
- 76. Criminal at Large
- 77. The Women (B.M., O.D.)
- 78. Yellow Jack
- 79. There's Always Juliet
- 80. Ladies of the Jury

1936 - 1937

- 55. Ode to Liberty
- 56. A Kiss for Cinderella
- 57. My Son
- 58. Libel
- 59. The Lily

1941 - 1942

- 81. The Male Animal
- 82. Ladies in Retirement
- 83. Cyrano de Bergerac
- 84. On Borrowed Time

1937 - 1938

- 60. First Lady
- 61. The Petrified Forest (B.M.)



## 85. Private Lives

- 1942 - 1943  
 86. Mr. and Mrs. North  
 87. Susan and God (B.M.)  
 88. Three Men on a Horse (O.D.)
- 1943 - 1944  
 89. Heaven Can Wait  
 90. George Washington  
     Slept Here (B.M.)  
 91. The Warrior's Husband
- 1944 - 1945  
 92. Claudia (B.M., O.D.)  
 93. Papa Is All  
 94. Kind Lady
- 1945 - 1946  
 95. Blithe Spirit (B.M., O.D.)  
 96. The Little Foxes (B.M.)  
 97. Kiss and Tell (B.M., O.D.)  
 98. Night Must Fall  
 99. Over Twenty-one (B.M.)
- 1946 - 1947  
 100. The Man Who Came  
     to Dinner (B.M.)  
 101. The Hasty Heart (B.M.)  
 102. Laura  
 103. The Late George Apley (B.M.)  
 104. Ten Little Indians
- 1947 - 1948  
 105. Dear Ruth (B.M., O.D.)  
 106. The Barretts of  
     Wimpole Street (B.M.)  
 107. My Sister Eileen (B.M., O.D.)  
 108. Angel Street (B.M., O.D.)  
 109. Our Hearts Were Young and Gay
- 1948 - 1949  
 110. State of the Union (B.M.,  
     O.D., P.P.)  
 111. Craig's Wife (B.M., P.P.)  
 112. John Loves Mary (B.M.)  
 113. An Inspector Calls  
 114. I Remember Mama (B.M., O.D.)
- 1949 - 1950  
 115. Life With Father (B.M., O.D.)  
 116. Dark Victory  
 117. The Winslow Boy (B.M.)  
 118. January Thaw  
 119. The Curse of an Aching Heart
- 1950 - 1951  
 120. Goodby My Fancy  
 121. A Doll's House  
 122. Light Up the Sky (B.M.)  
 123. The Heiress (B.M.)  
 124. The Philadelphia Story (B.M.)

PLAY	ATTEND- ANCE	NIGHTS OF PER- FORMANCE	CAST MEN WOMEN	NUMBER OF SETS	TYPE
<u>1951 - 1952</u>					
125. Two Blind Mice (B.M.)	1,483	6	16 5	1	Light
126. The Man	1,316	6	5 2	1	Serious
127. Born Yesterday (B.M., O.D.)	2,032	6	10 4	1	Light
128. The Silver Cord	1,515	6	4 4	2	Serious
129. Harvey (B.M., O.D., P.P.)	2,603	9	6 6	2	Light
<u>1952 - 1953</u>					
130. First Lady (B.M.)	1,785	6	11 12	2	Light
131. Uncle Harry (B.M.)	1,512	6	9 6	3	Serious
132. The Happy Time (B.M., O.D.)	1,947	6	7 4	1	Light
133. Guest in the House	1,641	6	6 7	1	Serious
134. Bell, Book, and Candle (B.M.)	2,226	8	3 2	1	Light
<u>1953 - 1954</u>					
135. Gramercy Ghost	1,458	6	6 6	1	Light
136. Death of a Salesman (B.M., O.D., P.P.)	1,375	6	8 5	1	Serious
137. The Curious Savage	1,828	6	6 5	1	Light
138. The Magnificent Yankee (B.M.)	1,736	6	15 2	1	Serious
139. The Male Animal	2,214	8	8 5	1	Light

1954 - 1955

140. My Three Angels (B.M.)	1,596	8	7	3	1	Light
141. The Country Girl (B.M.)	1,512	6	6	2	3	Serious
142. The Moon is Blue (B.M.)	2,045	7	3	1	1	Light
143. Ladies in Retirement	1,699	6	1	6	1	Serious
144. Time Out for Ginger (B.M.)	2,364	8	5	6	1	Light

1955 - 1956

145. Sabrina Fair	1,700	6	7	7	1	Light
146. Joan of Lorraine (B.M.)	1,438	6	13	4	1	Serious
147. The Silver Whistle (B.M.)	1,780	7	10	5	1	Light
148. Dial M for Murder (B.M.; O.D.)	1,984	7	5	1	1	Serious
149. Green Grow the Lilacs (B.M.)	2,077	8	10	4	3	Light

APPENDIX C

REPORT OF EXAMINATION BY W. SCOTT SWEET, CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

FLINT COMMUNITY PLAYERS, INC.

BALANCE SHEET

MAY 31, 1955

	<u>COMBINED</u>	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>BUILDING FUND</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>			
Cash on Deposit, Comm. A/C Citizens Bank	\$ 6,341.66	\$ 4,957.04	\$ 1,384.62
Cash on Deposit, Time Ctf. Citizens Bank	<u>37,158.13</u>	<u>37,158.13</u>	<u>37,158.13</u>
<u>TOTAL CASH</u>	<u>\$43,499.79</u>	<u>\$ 4,957.04</u>	<u>\$38,542.75</u>
U.S. Savings Bonds - Series "E" (At Current Redemption Value)	<u>7,489.86</u>	<u>7,489.86</u>	
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$50,989.65</u>	<u>\$12,446.90</u>	<u>\$38,542.75</u>
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH</u>			
Liabilities	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Funds' Surplus	<u>50,989.65</u>	<u>12,446.90</u>	<u>38,542.75</u>
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH</u>	<u>\$50,989.65</u>	<u>\$12,446.90</u>	<u>\$38,542.75</u>

ANALYSIS OF FUNDS' SURPLUS

	<u>COMBINED</u>	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>BUILDING FUND</u>
Surplus Balance - June 1, 1954	\$47,221.59	\$12,740.97	\$34,480.62
Plus:			
Excess of Receipts over Disbursements	7,211.94	6,149.81	1,062.13
(Year Ended May 31, 1955)	.3,000.00		3,000.00
Transfer from General Fund	<u>\$10,211.94</u>	<u>\$ 6,149.81</u>	<u>\$ 4,062.13</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	\$57,433.53	\$18,890.78	\$38,542.75
Minus:			
Write Off - Fixed Assets	3,443.88	3,443.88	
Transfer to Building Fund	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 6,443.88</u>	<u>\$ 6,443.88</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
<u>Surplus Balance - May 31, 1955</u>	<u>\$50,989.65</u>	<u>\$12,446.90</u>	<u>\$38,542.75</u>



STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	<u>COMBINED</u>	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>BUILDING FUND</u>
<u>Receipts:</u>			
<u>Admissions:</u>			
Season Tickets - Family	\$ 5,401.00	\$ 5,401.00	
Season Tickets - Patrons	1,710.00	1,710.00	
Season Tickets - Regular	1,446.00	1,446.00	
Season Tickets - Sustaining	200.00	200.00	
<u>TOTAL - SEASON TICKETS</u>	<u>\$ 8,757.00</u>	<u>8,757.00</u>	
Single Ticket Sales	1,507.50	1,507.50	
Other Admissions	196.17	196.17	
<u>TOTAL ADMISSIONS</u>	<u>\$ 10,460.67</u>	<u>\$ 10,460.67</u>	
<u>Interest:</u>			
Bank Interest on Time Ctf.	803.95		\$ 803.95
U.S. Gov't. Bond Interest	227.30	227.30	
<u>TOTAL INTEREST</u>	<u>1,031.25</u>	<u>227.30</u>	<u>\$ 803.95</u>
<u>Miscellaneous:</u>			
Building Fund Contributions	258.18	258.18	258.18
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	<u>\$ 11,750.10</u>	<u>\$ 10,687.97</u>	<u>\$ 1,062.13</u>
<u>Disbursements:</u>			
<u>General Operating Expenses:</u>			
Dues and Memberships	\$ 26.50	\$ 26.50	
Educational Committee	46.15	46.15	
Miscellaneous	110.47	110.47	
One-act Play Expense	9.16	9.16	
Play Reading Expense	8.37	8.37	

Postoffice Box Rental	218.38		218.38
& Postage	159.43		159.43
Publicity	82.24		82.24
Stationery and Printing	109.42		109.42
Telephone			
Tickets and Box Office	136.06		136.06
Expense	251.84		251.84
Ticket Campaign			
<u>TOTAL GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSE</u>		\$ 1,158.02	\$ 1,158.02
			\$ 0.00

Play Production Expenses:

Advertising	33.50		33.50
Auditorium Rental	1,000.00		1,000.00
Children's Theater	93.36		93.36
Costume Expense	363.68		363.68
Electrical Materials	49.32		49.32
Make-up Expense	35.35		35.35
Misc. Production Exp.	275.52		275.52
Properties Exp.	51.33		51.33
Rehearsal and Try-out			
Room Exp.	155.50		155.50
Royalty and Script Exp.	1,001.26		1,001.26
Set Furnishings and Materials	247.15		247.15
Trucking	74.17		74.17
<u>TOTAL PRODUCTION EXPENSES</u>		\$ 3,380.14	\$ 3,380.14
			\$ 0.00

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

	\$ 4,538.16	\$ 4,538.16
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EXCESS OF RECEIPTS

	\$ 7,211.94	\$ 6,149.81	\$ 1,062.13
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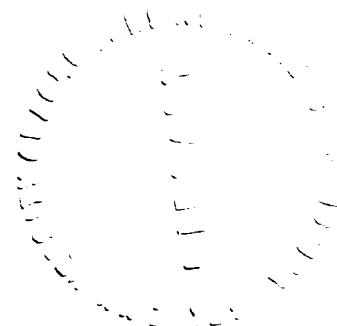
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#### Other Sources

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