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BUCKS COUNTY Courier Times

Theater

Sally Struthers strutting her stuff in 'Clue' at Bucks County Playhouse

- By Liz Johnson, Correspondent



Photo by Art Gentile

Actress Sally Struthers will star in a stage adaptation of the movie "Clue" written exclusively for the Bucks County Playhouse in New Hope. "Clue On Stage" premieres Tuesday.

Struthers, best known for her role as Gloria on the 1970s hit TV show "All in the Family," will play Mrs. Peacock in the play that's based on the whodunit board game.

At a press conference held at Parry Mansion in New Hope last week, Struthers said when she was sent the original script by director Hunter Foster, whom she'd worked with on a Broadway production of "Grease," she didn't like it. But she took the job to work with him.

Then the cast sat down for its first reading of a revised script three weeks ago. “We laughed every 20 seconds,” she said. Over the next two days, the players honed the script even more, tossing the bad lines and adding new ones that drew more laughter.

“It was everybody riffing and bumming lines off each other,” said Kevin Carolan, who plays Col. Mustard.

What they came up with was “all original material,” said actress Erin Dilly who plays Mrs. White.

The play takes place on one of those dark and stormy nights where six guests assemble for a dinner party in a mansion. The host turns up dead and each guest is considered a suspect until her or she turns up dead as well.

Clue game players will know the names, rooms and murder weapons used, each presenting a unique challenge to the production, explained Foster.

For example, portraying nine rooms on a single stage was difficult, he said, and took a year’s worth of planning.

“It worked out in a way I never could have imagined,” he said.

Equally challenging was getting the group of six actors to move across the stage “as a company, a unit,” said Foster. He left the solution up to his wife, choreographer Jen Cody.

The dialogue aims to create a comic farce which “is not as easy as it sounds,” said Foster.

“I need psychotherapy after this,” joked Struthers, who has been doing regional theater for the past 10 years.

This is her first appearance in New Hope, a town she says she’s fallen in love with.

“I’d like to buy a house here. It’s like England or Ireland,” said the Los Angeles-based actress. “It’s kind of like me, old and quaint.”

If You Go

Want to know more?

"Clue On Stage" runs from May 2 through 20 at the Bucks County Playhouse, 70 S. Main St., New Hope. For more information, call the box office at 215-862-2121 or visit www.bcptheater.org