



**The National Society for  
the Preservation of Tent,  
Folk & Repertoire  
Theatre**

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Collections Supervisor  
Martha Hayes

The museum is open from  
Memorial Day  
to Labor Day  
Tuesday through Sunday  
10:00-4:30

During the winter months  
the museum is open by  
appointment

**The Winging It**

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52641

# Winging It

## National Society for the Preservation of Tent, Folk and Repertoire Theatre

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### President's Message

For most of the past 33 years, I have been giving tours at the museum on the Saturday during the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion. I do not think that I have ever had a better time talking to non-theatre people about the rich history and heritage that we preserve than I did this year.

I met many a visitor who were intrigued by our collection. and saw the importance of popular entertainment as it applies to American history, Rural America, and Theatrical history. This reassured me how important our mission is and how we are so much more than a "Toby Museum"

Your board has been working hard with ideas and projects to advance our mission. During the Reunion, Carla, Brian and Toby Dick worked to excite young people about the museum with the "Freckles" project where children attending the Reunion were given free Toby/Susie make-up and educated about the museum.

On Oct 16, we will have the first Society produced production in many years. As most of you know, "Toby's Corntussel News", a radio play, will hit the stage to raise more funding for our mission. Mark Tubbs will take over the Web-site update soon so we don't have to wait for monies to refresh, upgrade and update the web-site and planning for the 2015 (and 2016) Conference is underway.

As a result, membership is growing and we are becoming more visible and viable!

With the help of volunteers, interns and funding from the Society and MOSTA, we are continuing to enter information into the new Past Perfect computer program to make our research materials more accessible and organized.

This process is slow for an organization as small as ours is but we are forging ahead. Please help! Get involved, send ideas, tell others about our mission, encourage membership and volunteer. Together we can preserve this wonderful heritage and history.

David



## Lennis Moore

With the death of Lennis Moore, the National Society and the Theatre Museum lost a long-time, good friend. As the Administrator of Old Threshers, he was involved with the numerous groups that are part of that organization, yet he always had time to work with us on the needs of the building and our programming. Lennis regularly attended the Society's board meetings, which was most helpful to keep open the lines of communication. He was a good problem solver, and had many helpful suggestions for us.

He assisted with the planning and set-up of the annual conference . He regularly provided welcoming comments at the seminar and attended our annual dinners.

The summer "Toby" play project was dear to him. He provided much behind-the-scenes support of the project.

During my tenure as President of the Society, I had several occasions to visit with him in his office. Some of our discussions were routine, others involved awkward or sensitive topics. I always found him to be direct, honest and genuinely interested in helping find solutions.

In addition to his many talents of organization, diplomacy, problem solving and communication, he was an artist. Two of his prints are proudly on display in my home.

Indeed, we have lost a true friend.

Dr. Michael Kramme

## YES! I want to be a part of the Theatre Museum.

### Membership Levels

Student..... \$15	Business Supporter.....\$100
Individual.....\$20	Director's Circle.....\$150
Family.....\$30	Angel.....\$500
Actor's Circle.....\$50	Gabriel Himself.....\$1,000

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**Lennis Moore**  
**1950—2014**

Lennis Moore was born February 20, 1950, in McGregor, Iowa and passed away June 11, 2014 at his home in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. He was the son of Leonard and Bernita Moore. He was raised on the family farm between Elkader and Elgin, Iowa. He graduated from Valley High School in 1968. In the fall of that year, Lennis enrolled at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. While at Luther, he studied under Orville M. Running, specializing in woodcut printmaking. He was conferred with a Bachelor of Arts Education from Luther in 1972. He met Sandra Lynn Sabin at Luther College, and on September 9, 1972, Lennis and Sandy were united in marriage at the Zion Luther Church in Rake, Iowa.

In January 1973, Lennis was hired by the Sanford Museum and Planetarium in Cherokee, Iowa, where he built museum exhibits and taught classes in

Cherokee schools.

In 1978, Lennis and Sandy moved to Mount Pleasant, where Lennis began 36 years of service with Midwest Old Settlers and Threshers. There he oversaw every aspect of the operation, including designing and installing many of the interpretive museum exhibits and coordinating the annual Midwest Old Threshers Reunion.

Lennis was a lifelong printmaker. In Mount Pleasant he worked with Iowa Wesleyan College and collaborated with artists on many woodcut and printmaking exhibitions. In recent years, Lennis' woodcuts were represented by the Iowa Artisan Gallery in Iowa City, Eckheart Art Gallery in Decorah, Lanesboro Art Center in Minnesota, and on the web at [lennismoore.com](http://lennismoore.com).

In Mount Pleasant, Lennis was a member of the First Presbyterian Church where he sang in the Westminster Choir and was a member of the Mount Pleasant Kiwanis Club. Lennis and his wife Sandy also owned the Iris City Antique Mall. For many years Lennis was the announcer for the Mount Pleasant Community High School Marching Band Invitational. He served as a Natural Resource Commissioner for the Iowa DNR and was an honorary colonel in the Iowa National Guard for his service to the State of Iowa.

Lennis loved to travel, especially to visit his children and grandchildren, both in Iowa and abroad. He enjoyed spending time outdoors, fishing and photographing the Midwest to find images for new woodcuts. He and Sandy also spent many happy hours at their home with their children.

Those thankful for sharing in Lennis' life include his wife Sandy of Mount Pleasant, their children: son Lucas, wife Erin and daughter Amber Rose, of Coralville, Iowa; son Benjamin and wife Sarah Frydenlund of Decorah, Iowa; and daughter Catie, husband Bob Scott and son Anderson James, of Kyiv, Ukraine; and many cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. He is preceded in death by his parents.

Editors note: reprinted from Midwest Old Threshers' Chaff.

## Ad Libs

By Grace Swank-Davis

Greetings from beautiful downtown Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Well, congratulations go out to Terry McWilliams for being named CEO of Midwest Old Threshers. Terry, who has been associated with Old Thresher since 2001, is following in the footsteps of the late Lennis Moore. We are confident that the museum will continue to have the same strong relationship with Terry as we did with Lennis. Best of luck to Terry!

As some of you know, Collection Supervisor, Martha Haynes was hospitalized in September and is recuperating at home. I am sure she would love to hear from her many Theatre Museum friends. In addition, former trouper Floyd Ditto was in a bad car accident this summer. He is also recuperating at his home. Our best wishes to both of them.

The annual Old Threshers Reunion was held over Labor Day. The five-day event enjoyed decent weather and drew good crowds. The museum received a large influx of visitors and we are grateful for our many volunteers. Our thanks to: Martha Hayes, Claudia Streeter, David Wagaman, Dick Ellis Elsenpeter, Monie Hayes, Brian Haymond, Carla Tree and David and Michelle Ripper. My thanks to Carla Tree and Brian Haymond for helping with the candy sell when I could not be there. "Chain Stores" was the Neil and Caroline Schaffner play presented at the James V. Davis Performance Center on the lower level on the museum this year. The play was sold out almost every night and two matinees were added this year during Old Threshers. Pictured on the left is Claudia Streeter and David Wagaman manning the ticket box.



Congratulations to Carla Trees on her Freckles Project. Carla and Monie Hayes are shown on the right with a very happy young man who enjoyed being made up as Toby.

In the museum's continued effort to be more involved in the Mount Pleasant community, we have joined the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber Alliance. In July, the museum hosted the Chamber's monthly Alive After 5 event. It was a big success and we got a lot of positive feedback. Pictured are Michelle Ripper serving at the wine bar and Karol Schaffer & Carla Trees working the buffet table. Thanks you ladies and all who volunteered.



We also set up a table at the Iowa Wesleyan College annual new student welcome event. On the left is a photo of our table. I manned it on my own with a little help from Martha Hayes who was working another table close by.



A special thanks to Karol Schaffer for her extra work on our outside flowers.

We have acquired additional copies of *The Fabulous Toby & Me* by Neil Schaffner.

They are good used copies ...so if you want a copy let us know, all profits support the museum.

That's all for now and remember, you're always welcome on the lot.



Let us know if you would prefer to receive your copy of *Winging It* by e-mail. Just drop us a line at [theatremuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:theatremuseum@yahoo.com)  
Please make note of our new  
e-mail address:

[theatremuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:theatremuseum@yahoo.com).

## School Days on Rep; and I Don't Mean Repetition

By Mickey Lacey

I suppose there were many ways for show brats to follow the road to education. Home schooling, tutoring, correspondent courses etc. My sister, Karalee, was tutored at her grade school level for a period of time by Rod Brasfield's wife Elenor. I was also tutored for a period of time by Neva Brasfield, Boob Brasfield's wife. Later, Karalee started a correspondence course. However, there was the other way as well. By the seat of your pants, as I like to call it. Just enroll where you are playing or wintering at the time.

I always loved to hear (and still do) some people talk about how many times they had to change schools locations. Job changes, military transfers etc. When discussing it you might hear, "Sometimes I'd change schools three, four times a year"! They had it made.

I had many ways of getting an education at an early age. Especially real life education. Being raised around actors, musicians, magicians, vaudeville entertainers, acrobats and yes, canvassmen. I even learned to make small change working around the concession stands. I really didn't learn that in school.

When I began school at the first grade level we were winter quartering in Pittsburg, Kansas where my Aunt Bess had retired out of the Rep show business. Mon and Dad had enrolled me there for the winter and spring months. When the time came for my folks to pull out and head for rehearsals and the spring season under canvas I remained in Pittsburg to finish the last few months of the school year. Although, I loved my aunt and uncle, I absolutely hated the idea of being left to finish those few months and I guess my little over dramatized attitude showed it. That was the last time I was left behind.

My sister had no problem staying in Pittsburg as she had stayed there to finish the school year for the past two or three years. As she said in later years, she had made a lot of good friends and didn't mind staying.

Aunt Bess and Uncle Raymond would always make the trip to bring Karalee to join Mom, Dad and myself on the show after her school year ended.

From the beginning of my second grade level, I enrolled in each town we were playing at the time. Be they week stands or where we were wintering at the time for circle stock or other means of the business.

My grades were basically made by simply taking "continuous" tests. Test after test. Actually, it was the only way the powers that be could know just how well my grade levels were. Basically, I always did pretty well. I always kept around a "B" average or so. My mom made sure of that by also tutoring a little between schools. I was cut no slack when it came to keeping my grades up.

My report cards were usually just in letter form. Written on the school letter heads and signed by the teacher in charge as well as the principle of the school. My daughter now holds the copies I had left. Or I should say that my mother kept all those years. The letters would list each subject given with a short note followed by the grade level the powers that be felt were rightfully justified.

Needless to say, I can't begin to remember each school I attended during spring and fall seasons of the shows. However, I can remember most of the schools attended wintering or while on circle stock season. Some of the circle stock locations were, Abilene, Kansas, Columbus, Kansas, Olwien, Iowa, Hebron, Nebraska, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Wynnewood, Oklahoma, Pittsburg, Kansas, and Springfield, Missouri.

Changing schools locations while trouping on shows wasn't all just "book learn'in" as they say. I learned very early that plain old charisma (which wasn't taught in schools) was a very important "subject." Especially when dealing with ever changing school mates, teachers and keeping an image up for the show.

However, it was an easy subject for me. Learned from troupers and my mom and dad. Although at the time, I didn't even know what the word meant or what I was learning. Now I know it was almost as important as the curriculum I was being taught.

Looking back now, I know very well that without that important subject of charisma, I most likely wouldn't have faired as well in my schooling as I did. After all, it wasn't exactly like reading, writing and arithmetic.

To be continued

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