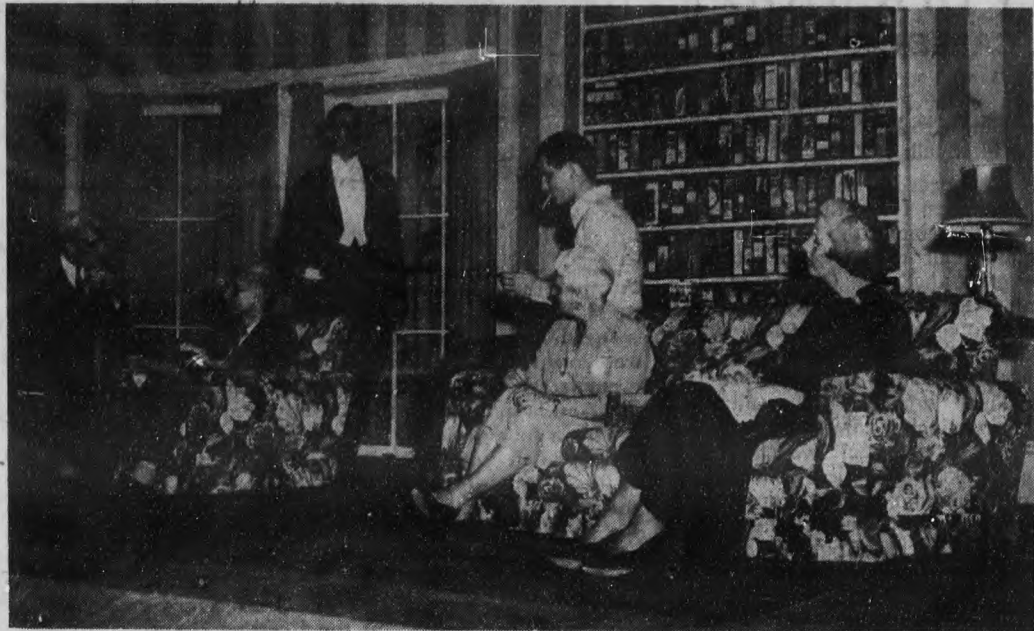


ANTIGONE TO BE STAGED

DRAMA 1953 . . .



The above is a scene from the Drama Society's 1953 fall production "The Chiltern Hundreds" which was very well received by the Fredericton audience. Most of the players pictured are still active in the Society and will re-appear in productions this season. Left to right, we see Miss Gertrude Gunn, an active member of the Society this year, Mrs. Eleanor Brophy who will appear in next week's production, Ian Sandbach who no longer attends this university, Ian Barr also appearing in Antigone, the inimitable Bill Barwick who has left drama to edit the '55 Year Book, and the present director of the Society Professor Alvin Shaw.

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50 YEARS TODAY

Fredericton (UNB) — Women were first admitted to the University in 1885, but it was not until 1902 that they ventured into college dramatics. Up to that time the college play was an annual event but it was produced entirely by men, and women's parts were taken by them very successfully.

A favourite form of entertainment was a double program, the first part consisting of musical numbers, the second part being a short play. This entertainment was called the Glee Club concert — the Glee Club being for many years an active organization. On April 25th, 1901 one of the "concerts" took place the second part of the program being a short play called "Ici on parle Français", and in that play for the last time, men took women's parts — those so distinguishing themselves being R. C. Colwell, '04, S. L. Colman, E. R. Golding, '05, and K. W. Massie '04.

During the winter of 1902 the Y.M.C.A. found itself, strange as it may appear — in need of funds. One member made a very novel and daring suggestion that the women should stage a play. The idea was well received and preparations for the event began. After considerable difficulty they obtained permission to use the college library for the production, and a quite undistinguished play called "Diamonds and Hearts" was accepted with great alacrity.

The play was produced on March 14th, there being five women and six men in the cast — and is worthy of remembrance because it marked the first appearance of women students in a play at UNB, though it was not the regular college play. The plot of the play has left no real impressions but it is remembered that there was much laughter, and they were complimented by no less a person than Professor Tyng Raymond upon the naturalness of mirth. The truth was that several untoward incidents had made the players almost hysterical and their laughter was perfectly spontaneous and not at all owing to premeditated art. However on the strength of it two of those in the cast — Miss Osborne and Miss Mesereau were asked to take part in the next college play, Sheridan's "Rivals" and needless to say they accepted.

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INTRODUCING ANTIGONE

By Dr. Mary E. Milham

Although in real life ancient Greek women were kept almost under lock and key, denied formal education and carefully guarded from the evils of the street and market-place, in Greek drama they came into their own, important enough even to become the heroines of classic tragedy. Thus we have Clytemnestra, who welcomed Agamemnon home only to axe him in his bath; Medea, sorceress from the East who murdered her own children to wreak vengeance on her husband; and gentle Alcestis, who went down to death so that the man she loved might live. And always we have Antigone, perhaps the most complex of all.

THE DIRECTOR . . .



. . . PROF. A. J. SHAW

Since 1950 Prof. A. J. Shaw has been faculty advisor-director to the Drama Society. This fall he is directing the play Antigone. The campus is by now familiar with the professional quality of Prof. Shaw's productions. He has produced here Robertson Davies' "Overland", Priestly's "An Inspector Calls", G. B. Shaw's "Press Cuttings", and Robertson Davies' "Fortune My Foe". "An Inspector Calls", and "Fortune My Foe" were both entered in the regional festival. Though neither play won, there was many a UNB student who, having seen the plays said "We wuz robbed".

Last year's entry in the festival was "Darkness at Noon" which was again a loser.

Prof. Shaw was an old hand in the theatre long before he came to UNB. His drama experience dates back to 1939 and high school plays in Owen Sound, Ontario. Overseas in England during the war he helped to organize and was the Vice-president of the Dramatic Society at the Khaki College of Canada in London. Later, at the University of Toronto, he both directed and acted in University College plays and revues, and also in the famous Hart House productions. In Fredericton, besides his work with the UNB Drama Society, he helped to organize and was first president of the local Players' Guild, and for two years he has lectured in drama at the annual New Brunswick Folk School at Shediac.

Last year he became first vice-president of the newly formed New Brunswick Drama League, and was appointed a governor of the Dominion Drama Festival.

In Sophocles' play, Antigone has but one purpose, to fulfil the sacred obligation of a sister and bury her brother Polyneices, although the king has decreed him a traitor and forbidden his burial on pain of death. Nothing can turn Antigone from her course, not the threats of the king, the entreaties of her sister, nor the pleading of the king's son to whom she is engaged. There is endless critical dispute over her character, some believing that she is a normal girl, normally in love with the king's son but convinced that family honor is more important than her own personal happiness. Others believe that she is a case for a psychiatrist, that she really has little feeling for the fiancé who commits suicide over her fate (she never mentions loving him or planning to marry him) but that she has an unnatural attachment for her dead brother and a stubborn desire to be a martyr.

When Jean Anouilh adapted the modern French version from the Greek, he altered the character of Antigone more than any other single aspect of the play. What Sophocles left unfathomable and therefore realistic, Anouilh has made consistently symbolic of resistance to dictatorship. The Antigone who walked in Sophoclean Thebes was quite another woman, strange, almost impossible to analyze, but eternally intriguing.

UNB Drama Society Stages Good Cast

The Drama Society will present on November 23, 24 and 25 a modern version of the Sophocles play "Antigone". This tragedy of the conflict between a woman's conscience and the law of the state was first enacted on the Athenian stage some 2400 years ago. In 1943 Jean Anouilh's version of "Antigone" was successfully produced in German-occupied Paris, and in February, 1946 the Lewis Galantiere adaptation of the Anouilh play was given in New York.

In the coming UNB production Alda Mair will play Antigone and Ian Barr, Creon. Miss Mair will be remembered for her performance as Luba in last year's "Darkness at Noon", for which she won the award as best female actress in the Regional Drama Festival. Mr. Barr, the president of the Drama Society, played the prison commandant in "Darkness at Noon" and Beecham in the fall play "Chiltern Hundreds". He was last year's winner of the Bailey Trophy given annually to the best student actor at the university.

Several other members of the cast of eleven have been seen in previous UNB plays: Professor Alvin Shaw, who plays the Chorus; Mrs. Eleanor Boby, of the Library staff, who plays the nurse; Neale Hargrove and Ellsworth Briggs, Sophomore Arts students who will be guards and Robert Hawkes, Junior Arts, who is the Messenger. Newcomers to the Fredericton stage are Esther Harrison of Vancouver, a post-graduate student in History, Jack Sheriff, post-graduate in English, and Walter MacDonald, a B.Ed student.

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