

Original Play Tells the History of Township Hall

Town Hall has a colorful history of civic involvement and lively public performances.

Soon its history will be captured in an original play, "Tear This Town Hall Down Today," a lively ride through the history of Centerville/Washington Township's most enduring public landmark.



The play assembles an unlikely parade of characters, bringing together figures from local history with the three little pigs, George Washington, Cruella De Vil and others.

Included in the mix is Louis Campbell, the real-life fire chief who once lived in Town Hall, and the Maytag repairman, a character made famous by actor Gordon Jump who performed on the Town Hall stage in his early years.

The play was inspired by a story that's been passed around for decades, said Mark Metzger, manager of Town Hall Theatre. Local lore has it that a member of the Fire Department suggested the idea of tearing down Town Hall in order to provide better access to the fire station located at the back of the property.

The half-hour living history presentation presents the case for keeping Town Hall and ends with a splashy musical number, complete with all characters on stage, Metzger said. The script was written by Rayya El Zein, a local playwright currently completing her master's in performance studies at New York University.

"Tear This Town Hall Down Today" will be performed three times throughout the July 4th Americana Festival on the Town Hall stage. Between performances, a 15-minute documentary will be shown about the building's 100-year history.

"Tear This Town Hall Down Today" Performances are: 1:15 p.m., 2:15 p.m. & 3:15 p.m.

The theater box office also will feature ticket specials for the upcoming 2009-2010 "Now and Forever" Town Hall Theatre season. Call 433-8957 for more information.