

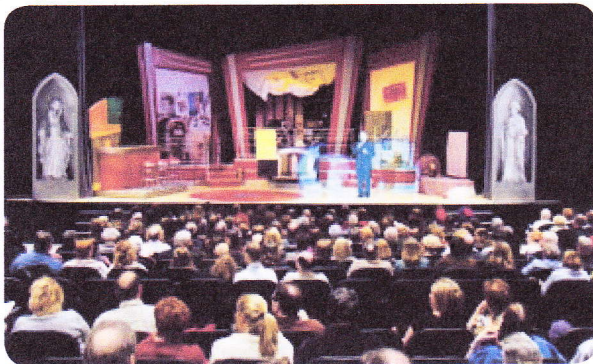
The Devon Wants To Entertain You

It's been about a year and a half since the doors opened at the beautifully renovated Devon Theatre and a lot has happened since then. There's been numerous events held there, some very successful like WIP's Joe Conklin's comedy show featured here in the OOT and some not as successful but still entertaining. Although there's been changes within The Devon their mission remains the same, "Keeping the theatre alive so it can serve the people in the area while being a great influence of culture and entertainment in the Northeast." I stopped by to meet the new Facility Director Andy Wertner to find out more about The Devon Theatre.

"The Devon is a 400 seat former movie theatre located in Northeast Philadelphia in the Mayfair section at 6333 Frankford Ave. It was renovated about a year and a half ago. We offer refreshments such as Coke products, Snacks, Pretzels, Chips plus we have our liquor license that includes Wine and Beer. The theatre is fully heated and air conditioned. We have an upstairs room called the Marquee Room it's for smaller events. It has a large screen TV plus capability for bar service. We have 18 plush VIP seats in that area which is excellent for a private party to view a concert or event. We have a parking lot a few blocks away at Ethan Allen Elementary School. There's a Free Shuttle Service with Vans that take you door to door. The lot is safe, secure and monitored."

"Our website is www.devontheatre.org. You can find out more information about us there. We're constantly looking for volunteers like ushers or backstage workers depending on what's needed. We'll also have audition information on there as well as full time employment opportunities when available. If we're doing a show that we're producing in house then we'll hold open auditions for the community. We're considering doing some community theatre shows for people that have a casual interest in acting as well as our acting classes for children. We showed movies here over the summer and that's something we're also looking at doing again. Our new focus will be on smaller events that are a little less grand in structure."

"We opened up with some musical theatre shows. The show Nunsense was very successful and sold out. The Odd Couple followed that. There was also a camp for kids that involved a performance of The Music Man which was a community performance and that too was quite successful. We began our first season with a couple of Broadway Shows including Little Shop Of Horrors and Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat but due to some funding issues we had to make some changes to our season. Some of the musical acts that came here were Danny Seraphine the drummer from Chicago. He was here in October when we had a little concert series. That event went very well and a lot of people enjoyed that show. It was qual-



ity music obviously from a great legendary musician. We also had a big band come in, The Brian Pastor Big Band. That was another great event and a lot of people really enjoyed it. In addition we had Beru Revue and people had a lot of fun with that one. We did it the day before Halloween and held a costume contest. That was a really fun evening of rock and roll. We're currently moving forward changing our schedule and focusing on smaller events like Comedy Acts, Concerts, things that are a little bit more manageable."

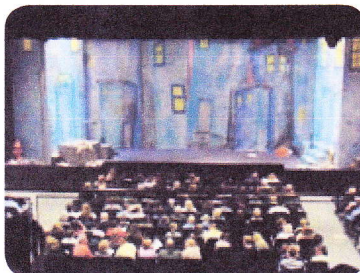
"If someone wanted to book The Devon to hold a performance, a play, a comedy act or whatever just contact me online. We have dance studios coming in for private rentals. You can also book it for a large corporate event. We have a full movie screen that can be lowered so you can show a power point on that. If you want to hold a smaller even like a Bridal Shower, Communion or something like that, we can have it catered. We hear a lot of good suggestions. We take them to heart and we consider them all. We do all kinds of things. One night you'll see a Rock concert, a Dance concert, a Comedian or a Community show. We're here to serve the best interest of the community. We can work out different things since we're tired in with the Mayfair Community Development Corporation who actually owns the theatre and runs it. They have the best interest of the community at heart. It's always going to be focusing on what's good to bring in for the community culturally and entertainment wise in addition to bringing people in. We're really much a mixed bag and I think that's good for this area because it gives a lot of diversity so we can focus on many different events."

"The next public show is Feb 26 featuring the Glimmer Twins. They're a Rolling Stones Tribute Band and are a very accurate representation of the Rolling Stones in their prime. They look like Keith Richards and Mick Jagger and pride themselves on emulating their music. We're also bringing back Memories of Elvis starring Vince DeBlasis and the TCE Band on March 20. He was here on January 9 and it sold out. We're working on booking acts in March for an Irish Weekend to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. It's going to be Irish bands playing Irish music."

"I'd like to see the Devon booked almost every night of the week and have it alive with activity constantly so we can have great shows whether they're produced here or brought in from somewhere else. It's here for the community, it's a beautiful facility it should be used. My hope is that it really takes off as something that is used constantly. It's a great experience to come out and see a place that used to be so run down, so decrepit that it was a drain on the community but is now vibrant, alive and beautifully restored featuring great entertainment. You'll find the staff is very friendly, very helpful, have a drink watch a show you really can't beat it."

"Tickets can be purchased by cash or checks at our box office. We'll be having our ticketing system back online so you can purchase them with your credit card online, over the phone or at the box office. There will be an additional fee for using credit cards though." Concluded Mr. Wertner.

By John J. Ruppert 1-21-2010
www.myspace.com/jrupp1
www.devontheatre.org



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