

SUMMER LIVING

“Jessie’s Landing” now on stage at Lighthouse Theatre has a few “goose bump” moments

By LYN TREMBLAY

“Even in our darkest hours there is always levity and humour,” said Lighthouse Festival Theatre Artistic Director Derek Ritschel, on opening night. With that, he left the audience to enjoy ‘Jessie’s Landing’, a World Premiere currently being presented on the Port Dover stage.

We meet Harold (played by David Rosser) and Jessie (played by Maria Dinn), the father and daughter characters who bring to life the play written by John Spurway. The two haven’t seen each other in four years, not since Jessie left her father a short note on the day of her mother’s memorial that simply said, “I’m sorry”. They’ve each been coping with her death alone.

Harold is slowly easing into his first serious relationship since his wife’s death, and is surprised one evening to find Jessie at his door. She’s come home after a life-changing experience that has prompted a major decision.

And so begins the story about a father/daughter love, but one that is burdened by old wounds, the should haves, the failures, the denials, the sorries, and the regrets.

While audience members of course were all teens and young adults at one time in their lives, most have also been parents and know, in the words of Harold, “when you raise a child you make a million decisions, some big, some small, some right, some wrong.” They’ve stood on the threshold of their child’s future and know how scary it is to let them go.

But there are deep dark secrets here in Playwright Spurway’s story, things that need to be told by both father and daughter before they can move forward. Hence, audiences are surprised and intrigued when a little suspense becomes a twist in this skilfully played out drama.

David Rosser is a genuine fit for the role as Harold, and audiences love Maria Dinn’s convincing portrayal of his young daughter, as she expertly nails those special nuances every parent is familiar with. Narration is inserted to round out the script, allowing audiences to more easily follow the story, and Playwright Spurway has sprinkled enough

humour throughout to balance the drama. Expect, if not a tear or two, at least a few goose bump moments.

Jessie’s Landing runs until July 30th. For tickets call the Lighthouse Box Office at 519-583-2221.



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Sheppard Furniture remains Norfolk County’s only independent furniture store in an era when big chain stores have muscled their way into the market. “We’ve seen many stores come and go over the years” said owner Terry Sheppard. Yet Sheppards have survived and thrived in the local market. Why? Because Sheppard Furniture has consistently offered quality Canadian products and, more importantly, experienced, personal service. “Our tag line is We Listen, We Help”, he said. Experience and expertise is often the missing ingredient in the impersonal high volume retail world these days. Sheppard Furniture is steeped in both areas.

The business was born out of a devastating fire that destroyed the old Falls

Department Store in downtown Simcoe during the 1930s. Several Falls’ employees created businesses in their specialties, including Harold Lindsay, who opened a furniture store on Colborne Street South in 1936. Harold’s sons, Bob and Don, continued the business and brought Terry on board in 1973. Fifteen years later Terry and his wife Debbie took over the business. The first pieces of furniture were sold before the store was actually open for business, while Terry and Debbie and their family were painting and decorating the various settings. Terry and Debbie have put their own spin on the business, keeping up with current trends and business, but retain and embrace the original business model of personal, knowledgeable service and quality products.

Independent buying offers some great advantages; you buy what works in your own market, you can respond to current trends quickly and you have the flexibility to source many different and unique suppliers. Debbie is kept busy with in-home consultations and can put together custom orders to suit many different tastes, focusing on integrating new product into an existing decor. Most consumers today are inundated with home decorating ideas, whether from

TV or magazines, and usually have somewhat of an idea of what they want. While some interior decorators like to start from the bare walls, Debbie’s expertise is adding a few new pieces to a room even if the paint color and carpeting, or even a favourite recliner remain. Debbie noted “quality is important to our



Sheppard Furniture Present Day.

customers, they understand that our store sells a different type of product and are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of offshore products.” Sheppard Furniture also has strong ties to the community. Terry took a leadership role in the BIA for many years and was president of the Simcoe Lions Club. “It’s our community - our home; we have a vested interest and we’re here for the long haul. We’re a little different; try us - you’ll love us.”



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