

Don't be
SKEERD!
The characters will not bite.

'The Return of Aunt Susan'
First showing
Thursday, September 18th
Second showing
Saturday, September 20th



Rivertime Players keep
Tent Show act alive

A truly American art form, the red-headed, freckle-faced Toby was the most enduring character on the American stage. For over 100 years, Toby shows entertained millions. At their peak in the first two decades of the twentieth century, these traveling Toby troupes numbered nearly five hundred, traveling throughout the Midwest and South. Toby shows developed out of a number of different stage styles including melodrama, chautauquas, the circus, and vaudeville. According to Toby, a Toby show is "sorta like a vaudeville show with a plot, but a real thin plot." Surrounding this plot are comedy gags, music, variety acts, and, now and then, serious drama.

Several people in Decatur County can remember the excitement felt by the community when the Bisbee's rolled into town. For 42 years the Bisbee's Comedians entertained thousands as they traveled from Memphis through Tennessee and Kentucky. The tour began every April, with Parsons being the second stop, and concluded in Collierville in October. The show began each evening with a 30 minute concert by the orchestra. After the orchestra, the play began. The play was typically a three or four act comedy drama with vaudeville specialties between the acts.

The origins of the Rivertime Players Tent Show can be traced to its original founder, Richard Henderson, who formed the Henderson Stock Company on December 8, 1898 in Otsego, Michigan. Henderson formed the company with the intention of temporarily employing himself and his out-of-work actor friends. Henderson successfully toured his company until his retirement in 1934.



The Return of Aunt Susan will be performed by The Rivertime Players Thursday and Saturday night during the Peavine Festival. Advance tickets can be purchased at the Parsons Municipal for \$7.00. Tickets the night of the show will be \$8.00.



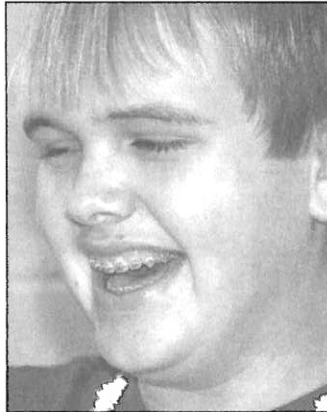
"Toby"
Shane Bridges



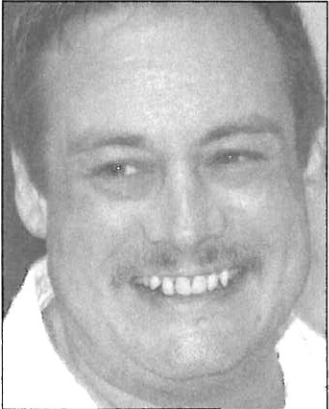
"Eloise Hanson"
Elicia Jo Spain



"Jerry"
David Taylor



"Robert Wentworth"
Clayton Quinn



"George Cubine"
Mark Tubbs



"Aunt Susan"
Dotty Hill



"Aaron Kronkheidt"
Bill White



"M'Liss"
Alyssa Brittain

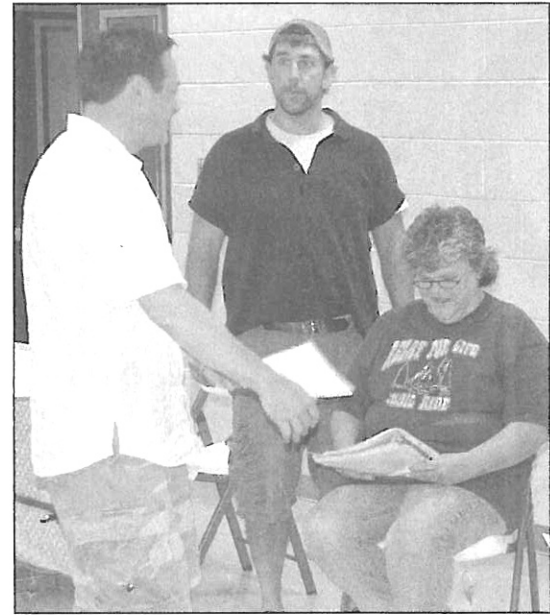
Harold Rosier, a featured actor in the show, managed the company after Henderson's retirement. He later purchased the company from Henderson's widow in 1937 and changed the name to the Rosier Players. In the spring of 1966, the Rosiers bought the Collier Show in Farmer City, IL, and added the contents to their current collection.

Harold toured his company through the Midwest until a heart attack forced him from the road in 1975. After the 1976 season, the Rosiers donated the show to the Jackson Community College in Jackson, Michigan. The college continued the show until the end of the 1991 season when everything was packed away in storage.

In 1997, the widow of Harold Rosier, donated the complete tent show to Dr. Dawn Larsen and the Hard Corn Players of Gallatin, TN. The Hard Corn Players were 10 to 15 young actors hired to function as an old time tent company and tour throughout the Southeast in the summers. The actors functioned as a troupe; driving the trucks, cooking meals, selling tickets, and sleeping in smaller tents surrounding the big tent in order to protect it from the weather. The actors truly experienced a "stand with a tent show."

The show includes a 45' x 90' tent, four 1942 stake trucks, 300-400 original scripts, costumes, painted drops (some 100 years old), 300 blue folding chairs, and other necessities of the road.

In November 2006 the show was donated to the Parsons Arts Council. With this gift The Rivertime Players were born and our first production of "How Now White Cow" took place on September 22, 2007 during the 1st Annual Peavine Festival.



Premiering
**The Return
of Aunt Susan**
1st Showing
Thursday, September 18th
2nd Showing
Saturday, September 20th

Pre-show 7:30 p.m.
Play 8:00 p.m.

