

Programme Note

While Mr. Twain's selections will come from the list below, we have been unable to pin him down as to which of them he will do. He claims this would cripple his inspiration. However, he has generously conceded to a printed programme for the benefit of those who are in distress and wish to fan themselves.

The Dangers of Abstinence from "Following the Equator"; Adventures Out West, The Sandwich Islands, Grandfather's Old Ram, from "Roughing It"; An Encounter with an Interviewer from a short story; Railroads, from "Literary Essays"; The Creator's Pet, from "Letters from the Earth"; A Reading from Huckleberry Finn; On Reform, from his autobiography; and Recipes for Life from Mr. Twain's Collected speeches.

(A calliope player has been engaged, but is unreliable and should not be expected to appear.)

Wrightstage Productions, LLC
10 Stoddard Avenue
Glens Falls, NY 12801
www.wrightstage.net

Humor!

THE CHARLES R. WOOD THEATER
AND
WRIGHTSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

Proudly Present

Neil Akins
in
Mark Twain Tonight!

Selections from America's Humorist
Originally adapted, edited, and arranged by
Hal Holbrook



Charles R. Wood Theater
518/798/9663 for tickets

September 17-18, 2010

Back in early September of 1947, Hal Holbrook and his wife were in their final year at Denison University. The head of the theatre department, Mr. Ed Wright, called and asked them if they would like to tour high schools in the Southwest for 30 weeks next season at \$225 a week. Holbrook said, "Ed, we don't have a show!"

"You can get ready this year. I'll let you do add it as an honors project. Think it over and call me back."

Hal and Ruby thought it over: They had no show. They had no money and no car in which to make the tour. But they had youth. They called him back and said, "We'll do it."

Ed gave them a copy of Mark Twain's *An Encounter with an Interviewer*.

That was Hal Holbrook's introduction to Mark Twain, and the beginning of his education about him.

19 years later, in March of 1966, after countless appearances in schools, hospital suicide units, Kiwanis Clubs, and retirement homes, Hal Holbrook opened **Mark Twain Tonight!** at the Longacre Theatre where it ran for 85 performances. Mr. Holbrook won that year's Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play. He reappeared in 1977 at the Imperial Theatre for 11 performances and again in 2005 at The Brooks Atkinson Theatre for 15 performances. He appeared locally at The Glens Falls High School in 1964 prior to his Broadway debut.

WrightStage Productions is dedicated to bringing quality theatre to local stages, and is the brain-child of local actor/director, Neil Akins.

A native of Glens Falls, New York, Neil had a 35 year career in private education where he taught math and English in the classroom and theatre arts as an extracurricular activity. Active in theatre since his high school days, Neil helped establish a regional theatre on Long Island in the 1980's. He has appeared to local audiences in Lake George since 1973 when he joined David and Vicky Eastwood at the Lake George Dinner Theatre and has appeared in 24 productions there, including the original production of Shear Madness. He reprised his role of Detective Rosetti in that record breaking show at The Kennedy Center in 1989. Retiring to his hometown in 2004 with his wife, Phyllis, Neil is active in The Glens Falls Community Theatre, directing A Few Good Men in 2006 and Our Town in 2008 as part of the Glens Falls Centennial Celebration. In 2009 he directed A Walk in the Woods and The Belle of Amherst for Wrightstage productions. Neil originally performed *Mark Twain Tonight!* in 1978 and toured throughout New York to many schools and organizations and is preparing the current edition for an appearance in Augusta, Georgia in October, 2010.



“Bringing quality theatre to your stage.”

Shows currently available:

A Walk in the Woods

The Belle of Amherst

Whose Life is it Anyway?

Contact us for information.

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