

**Calliope Productions Presents**

# **Our Town**

**by Thornton Wilder**

**March 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11**

**Thu. - Sat. at 7:30 pm; Sundays at 2:00 pm**

**Tickets:**

**\$20 Reg. Admission**

**\$17 Stu. & Seniors**

**Calliope Theatre  
150 Main Street  
Boylston, MA**



**Call 508 869 6887 or visit [www.calliopeproductions.org](http://www.calliopeproductions.org)**

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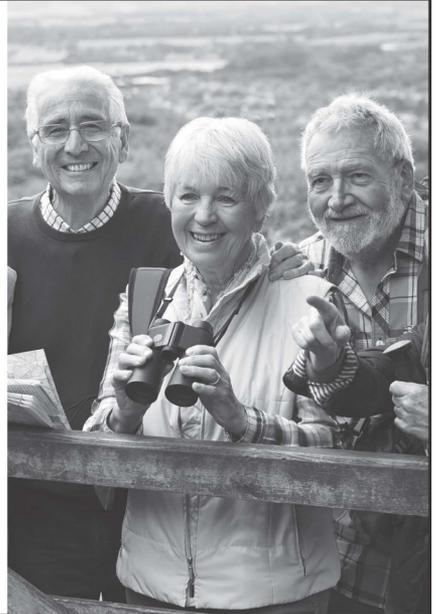
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Calliope Productions Presents

# Our Town

## by Thornton Wilder

Directed by Dave Ludt

### CAST

Stage Manager. . . . . Ian Dowell  
Dr. Gibbs. . . . . David Nestelbaum  
Joe Crowell. . . . . Nathan Spadafora  
Howie Newsome. . . . . Matt Cogswell  
Mrs. Gibbs. . . . . Karen Jobbacher  
Mrs. Webb. . . . . Donna Williams  
George Gibbs. . . . . Patrick Wilcox  
Rebecca Gibbs. . . . . Lily Ruggieri  
Wally Webb. . . . . Felix Gregory  
Emily Webb. . . . . Allyson Cashin  
Professor Willard. . . . . Larry Loring  
Mr. Webb. . . . . Ed Moynihan  
Belligerent Man in Auditorium. . . . . Kevin Briggs  
Simon Stimson. . . . . Matthew Cory  
Mrs. Soames. . . . . Janice Spada  
Constable Warren. . . . . David A. Vilandre  
Si Crowell. . . . . Nathan Spadafora  
Sam Craig. . . . . Kevin Briggs  
Joe Stoddard. . . . . Doug Beller  
Farmer McCarty. . . . . Larry Loring

*Act One 1901*

*Act Two 1904*

*Act Three 1913*

*~ There will be a 10-minute Intermission  
Between Acts ~*

Our Town is Being Produced by Special Arrangements with Samuel French, Inc.,  
New York City

The incidental music used in this production is from Aaron Copland's score for the 1939 Hollywood film version of *Our Town*.

## Program Notes:

Thornton Wilder's **Our Town** premiered on January 22, 1938, at the McCarter Theatre in Princeton, NJ, where it was met by an enthusiastic audience. Three days later, it opened in Boston at the Wilbur Theatre for a pre-Broadway tryout that was cut short by negative reviews by Boston critics, who were not receptive to the non-conventional aspects of the play.

The production moved to New York for a Broadway opening on February 4, 1938, that garnered universal acclaim from audiences and critics alike. On May 2, 1938, **Our Town** received the Pulitzer Prize for drama and was on its way to becoming the most popular American play ever performed – a recognition it retains to this day.

**Our Town** was unlike any previously produced play. Wilder's minimalist approach to sets, scenery, and props, along with his incorporation of pantomime, challenged audiences to accept a new way of experiencing theatre. In addition, he used a meta-theatrical focus that embraced – rather than disguised – the fact that audiences were watching a play.

He also created a central character (the “Stage Manager”) who manipulated the chronology of the play's actions and broke the “fourth wall” by speaking directly to the audience as though the audience members were participants in the events of the play.

Thornton Wilder had experimented with these non-traditional elements in his 1931 collection of shorter dramatic pieces entitled *The Long Christmas Dinner and Other One Act Plays* – but not to the same extent that he employed them in **Our Town**.

The origins of one of the themes found in **Our Town** can be traced back to 1920, when Wilder, then a 23-year-old archaeology student at the American Academy in Rome, observed that ancient and present-day people share a common bond of personal experiences and values that connect them across the ages. This led him to think about the interconnections we all have with one another, with nature, and with the universe.

Thornton Wilder wrote **Our Town** in 1937, while he was at the MacDowell artists' colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Grover's Corners – the fictional setting of the play – was modeled after the town of Peterborough.

Less than two decades after World War I and at the turning point of America's emergence from the Great Depression, 1937 was a pivotal year in which tensions and turbulence overseas were threatening the balance of world order. The saturation bombing of Guernica, the Japanese invasion of China, Stalin's *Great Purge* in Russia, and the publication of the *Hossbach Memorandum* which outlined Hitler's plans for conquering Europe presaged the horrors to come for a world that was tottering on the brink of World War II.

In setting his play in a small rural town in the period from 1901 to 1913, Thornton Wilder harkened back to a bygone period of innocence and simplicity – a fitting focus for his homage to humanity and the human condition.

We invite you to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this quintessential modern drama by travelling back to the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and spending time with us in **Our Town**.

~ Dave Ludt



**Doug Beller** (Joe Stoddard, assistant director/stage manager). Although more often seen – or not seen – in his capacity as stage manager, Doug often doubles up as actor and stage manager/assistant director, as he is doing for *Our Town*. Doug made his first Calliope appearance in *Stepping Out* in 1990, and has been a stalwart member of the company ever since. His most recent role was that of Armand in Calliope's production of *Once on This Island* last May. He is thankful to his family for their patience and indulgence.



**Kevin Briggs** (Belligerent Man, Sam Craig). Although he has been a belligerent man for years, he was excited when he heard that he may be applauded for it this time, instead of being asked to leave the premises. This is Kevin's second show at Calliope, having previously appeared in the 2015 production of Matthew Cory's comedy, *Hugh's Your Daddy*.



**Allyson Cashin** (Emily Webb) is making her Calliope debut in this production of *Our Town*. She is a student at Algonquin Regional High School, and over the past two years has appeared as young Cosette in *Les Miserables*, Michael in *Elf*, and Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde*.



**Matt Cogswell** (Howie Newsome) is reprising the role that he played in Calliope's 2001 production of *Our Town*. His favorite performance roles include Jack and Norman in *The Boys Next Door*, David in *Company*, Satan in *Christmas Tidings*, George in *The Actor's Nightmare*, Shrek in *Shrek the Musical*, Cal in *Ordinary People*, Phil in *All Play and No Work*, Jurors 12 and 2 in *Twelve Angry Jurors*, Sam Feinschreiber in *Awake and Sing*, and Tom Jenkins in *Scrooge!* Matt teaches public speaking and composition at Quinsigmond Community College, and is studying acting with Kelly Morgan.



**Matthew Cory** (Simon Stimson) has appeared in over a dozen Calliope productions. Some of his Calliope credits include plays like *Ten Little Indians* and *The Front Page*, musicals like *Oliver!* and *Annie*, and British farces too numerous to list. His last on-stage appearance at Calliope was in December as Cousin Warren in *A Taffeta Christmas*. He has written and directed comedies that have appeared on Calliope's stage like *All Play and No Work* and *Hugh's Your Daddy*. Matthew lives in Worcester with his wife, author Cheryl Cory, and works for the Boston Red Sox.



**Ian Dowell** (Stage Manager) played the role of Gerald Croft in Calliope's 2016 production of *An Inspector Calls*. He has worked with several Boston-area community theatre groups, where favorite roles have included Elyot in *Private Lives*, Charles in *Blithe Spirit*, Richard in *The Lion in Winter*, C. K. Dexter Haven in *The Philadelphia Story*, Hal Carter in *Picnic*, Raul in *Extremities*, Ernest in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Reg in *Table Manners*. Ian dedicates his performance in *Our Town* to the "eternal part" of his father, Chris Dowell, who introduced him to theatre and particularly this play.



**Felix Gregory** (Wally Webb) is 10 years old and not shy about performing. In second grade, he learned the *Gettysburg Address* and enjoyed reciting it in front of his school. He has performed in several of the pre-teen productions at Calliope, including the *Inside Pitch* and *Use Your Imagination*, and he is in rehearsal for the role of "Stinky" in *Pirates Past Noon*. Felix attends Paton Elementary School in Shrewsbury and enjoys playing the piano, playing basketball, and going on adventures with the Cub Scouts.



**Larry Loring** (Professor Willard, Farmer McCarty) is pleased to be reprising his role as the good professor. His most recent stage appearance was as the Old Man (typecast again, alas) in *Bathroom Humor*. Among his other favorite past roles are Lou Cohn in *1940's Radio Hour*, General Mackenzie in *And Then There Were None*, Dr. Einstein in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and Pastor Irving in *Hugh's Your Daddy*. Most recently he worked as assistant director in Calliope Productions' *First Things First*. Larry is honored to be on the same stage with this talented cast and crew. He thanks his wife for her continuing patience and support.



**Dave Ludt** (director) is a co-founder and artistic director of Calliope Productions, and also serves as its president. Since Calliope's founding in 1982, he has produced, directed, performed in, run lights and sound, or otherwise been involved in more than 270 Calliope shows. Dave is currently directing Calliope's May production of the Broadway musical, *Titanic*, and will be directing this summer's teen workshop musical, *Once Upon a Mattress*. Dave is grateful to his significant other, Lynne, for her understanding and support.



**Karen Josbacher** (Mrs. Gibbs) is delighted to be out of the box office and back on the stage, and sharing it with the talented cast of *Our Town*. She had taken a long hiatus from performing to accompany her nationally ranked gymnast daughter on her travels, but now it is time for her to fulfill her own dreams.

Previously, Karen performed extensively throughout Central Massachusetts, appearing in more than 40 musicals, dramas, comedies, mystery dinner theatre, radio dramas, and one made- for-TV movie. Karen has also been active off-stage on more than 200 productions. May the “lights of Broadway” shine brilliantly over Calliope for many years to come.



**Edward Moynihan** (Mr Webb) is from Worcester, where he owns a constable firm and also works as an adjunct faculty member in the Urban Studies department at Worcester State University. His role as Mr. Webb marks his first appearance on stage – ever!

He thanks Dave for this great experience and his patience. He thanks his castmates for their tolerance and forbearance. Most of all he wishes to express his love to his wife, Mindy, and their children – Connor, Joe, and Eva. May we always remember to take the time to really look at one another and realize life while we live it.



**David Nestelbaum** (Dr. Gibbs) ) is pleased to be returning to the Calliope stage in this wonderful production of *Our Town*. This is David's 10th show with Calliope. A 25-year veteran of over 60 community theatre productions in the Metro West and Central Mass areas, David's favorite roles include Teveye in

*Fiddler on the Roof*, Nathan Detroit in *Guys and Dolls*, Amos in *Chicago*, Herr Schultz in *Cabaret*, Mr. Bumble in *Oliver*, Max in *The Sound of Music*, Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz*, and Jud Fry in *Oklahoma*. David is an attorney and property manager in Worcester. He would like to thank Dave, Doug, Donna, and the entire cast and crew for a most enjoyable and meaningful experience.



**Lily Ruggiere** (Rebecca Gibbs) is a 4th grader at Calvin Coolidge Elementary School in Shrewsbury, and has appeared in Calliope's pre-teen workshop productions of *Press Start*, *The Inside Pitch*, *The Lion King (junior)*, and *Use Your Imagination*, and is currently in rehearsal for the April production of *Pirates*

*Past Noon*. She enjoys playing sports and loves animals - especially her cat Maisey for being the best friend ever. She would like to thank her mom and dad for supporting her love of theatre.



**Janice Spada** (Mrs. Soames) is delighted to be performing with such a talented cast and crew. Calliope audiences will recognize Janice from her prior performances as Margot in *First Things First*, Mrs. Grant in *The Front Page*, Mrs. Cowper in *Cash on Delivery*, and Ms. Spader in *All Play and No Work*. She has also appeared as Rhonda in *Almost Maine*, Ms. Geneva in *Christmas Belles*, Miss Holroyd in *Bell Book and Candle*, and Mother in *A Christmas Story*. Janice takes pride in creating smiles by day as a dentist in Sudbury. She thanks LP. She dedicates this performance to her father who passed away on March 11, 2017.



**Nathan Spadafora** (Joe and Si Crowell) caught the theater and acting bug at the age of 8, when he joined an elementary school theater club. He hasn't stopped acting since. For two years he has been a part of Calliope's summer youth theatre program appearing as Grasshopper in the 2016 production of *James and the Giant Peach* and Barnacle in the 2017 production of *Honk!* He has also played the roles of Melman in *Madagascar*, Mr. Darling and the crocodile in *Peter Pan*, Rooster in *Annie*, and many more. Nathan loves to sing and dance as well, and is a member of the Worcester Boys Ensemble Choir and the Massachusetts Music Educators' Association (MMEA) District Junior Chorus.



**David A Vilandre** (Constable Warren) is proud to be a part of Calliope's celebration of *Our Town's* 80th anniversary. David most recently performed as Commander Harbison in *South Pacific* with JEMS. He has previously performed numerous times at Stageloft Theater in Sturbridge as well as the Westborough Players and the Pasture Time Players. David lives in West Boylston with his wife Michele and dedicates this performance to all the students he has shared *Our Town* with as a high school and college English teacher. He thanks Dave Ludt for this wonderful opportunity.



**Patrick Wilcox** (George Gibbs) is making his community theatre performance debut in this production of *Our Town*. He is a Boylston resident who is currently a senior at Mass Academy of Math and Science in Worcester, and will be a freshman at Cornell University pursuing a degree in Materials Science and Mechanical Engineering in the fall.



**Donna Williams** (Mrs. Webb). This is Donna's second show with Calliope Productions, having played the role of Nancy in its 2009 production of *Oliver!* She is active on the board of Central Mass Onstage, where she has played the roles of the Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and Ida Duck in *Honk!* Donna is a 5th grade teacher in Spencer, MA, and enjoys spending time with her husband, Rob, and daughter, Abby. When not at work or on stage, Donna loves working out with her "fitfam" at Stronger PT.

### Our Town Production Staff

Producer / Director . . . . . Dave Ludt  
Stage Manager. / Assistant Director . . . . . Doug Beller  
Lighting / Sound. . . . . Dave Ludt  
Costumes. . . . . Donna Reidy  
Set. . . . . Dave Ludt  
Cast Photos. . . . . Frank Josbacher

Special Thanks to: Matt Cory for assisting with the music, Larry Loring for the social media publicity, Frank Josbacher for helping with the mailing, Stephanie Ruggiere and Susan Gregory for taking on speaking roles at the last minute, and the entire cast for sharing its time, talent, and dedication.

Calliope Productions is a non-profit theatre company founded in 1982, and managed by the following members of its Board of Directors:

David E. Ludt (President and Artistic Director)  
Karen Josbacher (Vice President)  
Janice L. Fuller (Treasurer)  
Donna M. Reidy (Secretary)  
Doug Adams  
Megan Burke  
Tracy DeBlois  
Chris Harris  
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# Calliope's 2018 Performance Season

## TITANIC THE MUSICAL

By Peter Stone & Maury Yeston

**May 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27**

Thu - Sat at 7:30 pm; Sun at 2:00 pm

## Once Upon A Mattress

Broadway Musical by Mary Rodgers

**July 18, 19, 20, & 21**

Wed - Fri at 7:30 pm; Sat at 2:00 & 7:30 pm

## RECIPE FOR MURDER

**Oct. 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21**

Thu - Sat at 7:30 pm; Sun at 2:00 pm

## MARY POPPINS

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Thu - Sat at 7:30 pm; Sun & Dec. 8 at 2:00 pm

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