

HOPEWELL MEMORIAL JR. HIGH SCHOOL

proudly presents

Once Upon A Mattress YOUTH EDITION

Stage Crew Information Packet

Welcome, Students and Parents, to the Hopewell Jr. High Musical!

We are thrilled to have you join us as part of the 2023-2024 production, "Once Upon A Mattress (Youth Edition)." Many of you are returning after being a part of "Seussical, JR." last school year, and we hope to continue our high level of success this year. To those who are joining us for the first time, I guarantee your experience with musical theatre will leave you wanting more.

This packet serves to provide you with some basic information about the production and procedures for this year's show. If you have any questions at any point during the musical season, please do not hesitate to ask! Our belief is that open lines of communication are essential to a successful production. You can find my contact information below.

Once again, welcome! And thank you for choosing to be a part of this wonderful opportunity!

Sincerely,



Chad Toporski

Producer & Club Sponsor

toporskic@hopewellarea.org

PRODUCTION TEAM

Sarah Bober - *Stage Director*

Austin Almendarez - *Artistic Director*

Sarah Nicoletti - *Choreographer*

Lindsay Bosco - *Vocal Director*

Celeste Beley - *Costumer*

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Staying Connected

The key to any successful production is making sure all information is communicated clearly and quickly. While we will occasionally send out paper flyers home to get information home, the absolute **BEST** way to stay on top of news and changes is to connect digitally. The following methods of communication will be used extensively by the musical directors to post information, reminders, and other announcements:



Music Website (*general information*)

<http://www.hopewelljrmusic.com/musical.html>



Facebook (*parents only*) - **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hmjhs mattress/>



Remind (*students and parents*)

<https://www.remind.com/join/hmjhsouam>

- OR -

Text @**hmjhsouam** to **81010** using your mobile phone for text notifications.

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Important Dates

*** *All activities and events will take place at the High School Auditorium.* ***

Script Read-Through:

- **Script Read-Through:** Wednesday, September 13th @ 3:30–5:30 PM

Rehearsals:

- **Stage Crew Workshops:** Every Monday @ 3:30–5:00 PM, starting on September 25th
- **Run-Throughs:** Mondays through Thursdays @ 3:30-6:00 PM, starting on October 23rd

Tech Week / Dress Rehearsals (MANDATORY):

- Tuesday, November 13th – Thursday, November 16th
5:00 - 8:00 PM

Performances:

- *Elementary Preview Show:* Friday, November 17th @ 9:30 AM
- Friday, November 17th @ 7:00 PM
- Saturday, November 18th @ 2:00 PM
- Saturday, November 18th @ 7:00 PM

Musical Family Banquet:

- Saturday, November 18th @ 4:00 - 6:00 PM (*in between performances*)

Set Strike, Costume Return, and Clean-Up (MANDATORY):

- Sunday, November 19th @ 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
- Students may stop in at any point to pick up a signed poster and help clean up.

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Show Summary

Many moons ago, in 1805 to be precise, author Hans Christian Andersen was born in Denmark. At the age of 14, without completing a formal education, he left home for the big city of Copenhagen to pursue a career in the theater. He did not find success and turned to writing, but was told that he lacked the basic skills necessary to be a good writer. Hans returned to grammar school as a 17-year-old, learning alongside students that were at least 5 years younger than him. The schooling paid off as Hans went on to university studies and began to find success as an author. In 1835, he published his first collection of fairytales (*Tales, Told for Children – First Booklet*). This work featured four fairytales, including *The Princess and the Pea*, a simple story of a prince in search of a true princess. Hans Christian Andersen went on to write more than 150 tales including *The Little Mermaid*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Thumbelina*, and *The Snow Queen*.

In 1958, more than 120 years after the publication of *The Princess and the Pea*, the fairytale was adapted into a one-act musical for the Tamiment Playhouse at Camp Tamiment in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. The show was a success and was seen by Broadway designers and producers who were interested in a full two-act version with their sights set on Broadway. In just six weeks, the creators expanded the script and *Once Upon A Mattress* opened Off-Broadway in May 1959 directed by legendary writer, director, and producer George Abbott. Because of its popularity, the show transferred to Broadway later that year and was nominated for the 1960 Tony Award for Best Musical.

This was the first musical for composer Mary Rodgers, the daughter of composer Richard Rodgers, whose musical *The Sound of Music* won the Best Musical Tony Award that year. This was also the Broadway debut of leading actress Carol Burnett in the title role of Princess Winnifred the Woebegone. Both of these women went on to successful careers in various fields. Rodgers continued composing and also became an author and screenwriter. Her most well-known book for young readers is *Freaky Friday*, which she also adapted into a popular film. Burnett had further success in the theater and in films, but became most beloved for her television variety series, *The Carol Burnett Show*.

Once Upon A Mattress, like its composer and leading lady, also went on to future success. Hundreds of productions are mounted all over the world each year at school, community and professional theaters, including a Broadway revival in 1996 that was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical. The musical has been filmed for special television broadcasts three different times. The first two telecasts featured Carol Burnett as Princess Winnifred. The most recent television version aired in 2005 and featured Carol Burnett yet again, this time as Queen Aggravain, along with TV and movie star Zooey Deschanel as Lady Larken and Broadway and TV star Matthew Morrison as Sir Harry.

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Stage Crew F.A.Q.

What is Stage Crew?

Stage crew students are a vital part of a production's success. Even though they aren't seen throughout the show, they work behind the scenes to make sure all the technical elements are running smoothly. Being a member of stage crew is a demanding job, because one wrong move could affect the show more noticeably than a forgotten line or missed entrance. Every cue needs to happen on time and in exactly the right way for things to run safely and smoothly.

What jobs or roles are available?

There are a few different types of jobs the stage crew members can fulfill. These include:

- **Stage Hands** - they work onstage moving set pieces during scene changes
- **Rail Operators** - they fly vertical scenery in and out using the ropes backstage
- **Spotlight Operators** - they run the follow spots to highlight specific actors onstage
- **Light Board Assistant** - helps coordinate the light board cues and changes
- **Sound Assistant** - helps run the accompaniment tracks at the sound board

How does my child get assigned a job?

Weekly workshops will be held for all stage crew members to learn the basics of every job and familiarize them with each aspect of technical theatre. They will thoroughly understand and demonstrate good safety practices, as well as get hands-on learning opportunities with guidance from experienced teachers.

A couple weeks before the show, we will assign specific jobs and tasks to each crew member based on their skillset and familiarity with them. Those students who demonstrate more responsibility and reliability during the workshop process will likely be given more important tasks during the show. Just like the cast, though, there is a role for everyone, and it is our job to make sure we find the best fit for each crew member as it relates to the needs of the production.