

For Immediate Release

July 12, 2007

What happens when two Fringe Festival directors and an archivist read the amazing letters of a frontier doctor? A fringe play is born.

Letters from Battle River
The Adventures of Dr. Mary Percy Jackson

Letters from Battle River previews for media, on July 27th at 7pm, as a part of the Edmonton and Athabasca District Historical Festival. It goes on to a run at the Edmonton Fringe Theatre Festival.

“I am hoping to get in some duck-shooting. This of course is strictly against the law, out of season, and therefore can’t be indulged in anywhere the policeman is likely to come.” **Dr. Mary Percy Jackson**

In 1929, a young British woman answered a call for British doctors, and was sent up to the remote district of Battle River Prairie (now Manning, Alberta). In a series of letters home, she reveals humour, courage – and a brilliant snapshot of the era. Dr. Jackson stayed in Alberta’s Peace Country, serving the community for seven decades. She went on to be the Alberta Medical Association’s first of 100 Doctors of the Century, named to the Alberta Order of Excellence and a member of the Order of Canada.

Letters from Battle River is a solo performance by Heather D. Swain. Director David Cheoros has adapted the letters of Dr. Mary Percy Jackson. Karen Simonson of the Provincial Archives of Alberta is the dramaturge.

Swain is an actor and street performer, formerly a director of the Edmonton Fringe, and now based in London, England. Cheoros is also a former Edmonton Fringe director, and has co-produced the Comedy Arts Festival and managed Theatre Network. Simonson holds a masters degree in archival studies focused on Alberta’s part

The three began work on this piece after hearing some of Dr. Jackson’s letters read at the Provincial Archives of Alberta last October. The show features over 200 archival images and songs from the period.

Follow the brilliant and humourous true tales of a female doctor from England send to Battle River to tend to the 911 calls of 1930’s Alberta.

Letters from Battle River is presented with the support of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and the Film and Video Arts Society – Alberta.

Letters from Battle River will have a press preview at the Roxy Theatre (10708 – 124 Street) on Friday, July 27th at 7:00pm. Tickets are \$10, and can be ordered from 780.453.2440. Every day during the Fringe Festival, it is performing at BYOV H, the Strathcona Public Library (8331 – 104 Street). Tickets can be ordered through the Fringe at 780.409.1910.

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For photos and more information:

Contact David Cheoros: 780.668.2440

Or go to www.lettersfrombattleriver.ca