



# CELEBRATE RESTORATION

ON THE ELKS OPERA HOUSE 105TH ANNIVERSARY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2010 · 5 - 9 P.M.

It's that time of year again when we celebrate The Elks Opera House and 105 years of service to our community. She has been with us through lean times and good times, during flu epidemics and wars, at holidays and graduations. She has given us the gift of laughter, tears and sometimes has asked us to think about the vexing issues of our times.

And finally we have drawn together to give her a gift. All ladies need a makeover from time to time and hers has been well over due. So The Elks Opera House is off for an extended spa treatment, a retreat where she will receive a face lift and a new lease on life. Stripped to her bare bones, layer by layer she is being re-built so that all that she was in the beginning and all she needs to be in the future will once again bring us a present, that with pride, we can enjoy and pass on to the next generation and their stewardship.

If you are alone in the theatre you can feel the soft brush of air moving across your cheek, hear the whistle of the wind from a storm in the pin loft. With just a bit of imagination you can see the full house filling all 900 seats on opening night, February 20, 1905 when Florence 'ZaZa' Roberts, first lady of San Francisco theater, alighted from the train and performed the Catalan play *Marta of the Lowlands*, bringing the cosmopolitan worlds of San Francisco, New York and Europe to the stage of the newly minted Elks Opera House. You can smell perhaps the ghostly perfume of the roses, carnations and violets decorating the lobby, hear the rustle of taffeta gowns, and feel the acrid taste of a gentleman's cigar in the back of your throat. From vaudeville, to film, to live theater The Elks Opera House has been there. From her stage she launched political careers, set our young people on their

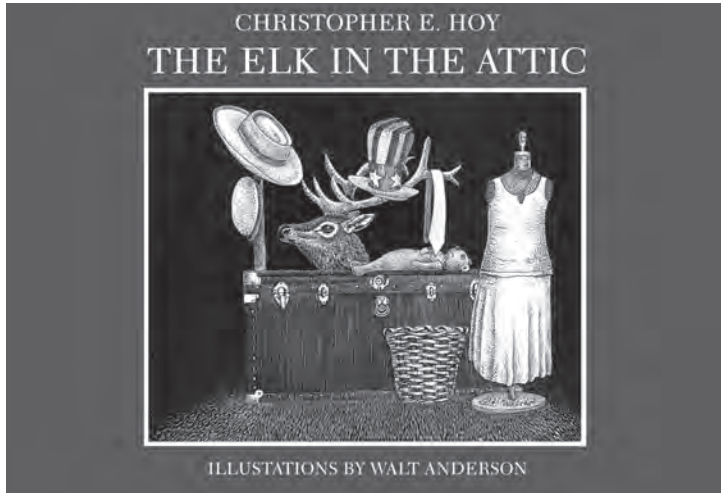
adult paths at graduations, and saw them get married. Both youth and adults have made their debuts there as musicians, actors, magicians, comedians. Activists have called us to our better selves to change our world and make it a better place. The opera house was there when we honored and remembered those we lost. She is embedded in so many of our lives and continues to be so as children build a new generation of memories taking their turn on her stage and leaving behind the echoing notes of their voices. Through the remarkable generosity of the James Family Trust and countless others who have given funds, time, and expertise, The Elks Opera House will continue to grace our community.

So join The Elks Opera House Foundation as we continue to write history with a celebration on Saturday, February 20, 2010, exactly 105 years from the first opening. It's an Open House from 5 to 9 p.m. Ghosts from the past will make an appearance; entertainers from our own time will be there; but best of all you can see the old girl in her before state, without the grand finery coming in the months ahead. Free and open to the public this is a fundraiser to ensure that all the fine embellishments and finishing touches all ladies need are in place when she makes her 'after' appearance in July. We are in the final stages and we need everyone's help, so whether your donation is large or small please be a part of making this debut a stunning one.

*Gail Mangham, Elks Opera House Foundation Board*

For Details visit [www.elksoperahousefoundation.org](http://www.elksoperahousefoundation.org) or call 928.445.1298 or email [gailm@elksoperahousefoundation.org](mailto:gailm@elksoperahousefoundation.org)

# THE ELK IN THE ATTIC – THE MUSICAL



In 2007 when author Chris Hoy donated his children's book, "The Elk in the Attic," to the Elks Opera House Foundation as a fundraiser, he did not know that he would later adapt the story into a musical play. But now that over 700 copies of the book have been sold, Mr. Hoy (with encouragement from Elisabeth Ruffner and technical advice from City of Prescott Event Coordinator Dawn Castaneda, Prescott College drama professor Charissa Menefee, and his wife and editor, Leslie Hoy) has now written a three-act play based on the book. If everything

goes as planned, "The Elk in the Attic – The Musical" will premiere on the newly-renovated Elks Opera House stage in the autumn of 2010, featuring a large cast of local child actors, original music and delightful animal costumes.

"The Elk in the Attic" is about drought-weary forest animals that temporarily seek refuge in a small town. Nine-year-old Tim Armstrong discovers a bull elk named Bill living in the attic above his bedroom, and Tim is not the only kid at his school with new animal friends. The adults in town grow increasingly concerned, while the anxious animal visitors, trained by Coyote and guided by Grandmother Owl, struggle to survive in close proximity to humans. Just as events threaten to get out of hand, high-flying Eagle returns from a trip to the top of the world with news about a welcome change in the weather.

Mr. Hoy suggests children ages 7 to 10 might want to read "The Elk in the Attic" now and then try out for parts in the play this spring. A sample chapter is online at Mr. Hoy's website ([www.elkintheattic.com](http://www.elkintheattic.com)). The book is on sale at The Worm, Hastings, Highlands Center for Natural History, Sharlot Hall Museum and Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary gift shops, and the Prescott Chamber of Commerce. It can be purchased online at [www.elksoperahouse.com](http://www.elksoperahouse.com).



## CURTAIN UP!

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# CELEBRITY SEATS FOR THE ELKS OPERA HOUSE

Endow a seat in the name of a celebrity who has appeared on the stage at the Elks Opera House or appeared in a movie. There are lots of remarkable local folks including politicians; Sir Percival Lowell, a renowned scientist, and many schools which held graduations there or were the recipients of benefit shows. Elks Opera House Historian Parker Anderson has compiled a list from perusing the newspapers and other records, such as original programs, published since 1905 when the theatre opened on a grand evening with every seat taken when the house seated 900! Florence "Zaza" Roberts was the star of an original play presented that night, February 20, 1905, called "Marta of the Lowlands." A plaque with her name will be placed in one of the new beautiful seats which will be in place for the Grand Opening Gala on July 24, 2010.

This new opportunity to become a part of the restoration of this 1905 theatre is now available due to the generosity of one donor who has chosen to honor five remarkable performers. Both Tom Mix and Tony the Wonder Horse have appeared on the Elks stage in a benefit for the Monday Club. Mike Dawson was a sidekick of Tom Mix, who played in many of his films including "The Cactus Kid," shown in the 1930s in the Elks.

The same generous donor has chosen to honor Prescott's own Dorothy Fay Southworth and her husband Tex (parents of the late John Ritter).

Others honored include Katharine Hepburn who starred in the film "Philadelphia Story" shown in Prescott in the 1940s; historic Prescott figures Grace E. Sparkes, founding director of the Yavapai County Chamber of Commerce; Gail I. Gardner, cowboy, postmaster, graduate of Dartmouth College and author of the famous poem "Tyin' Knots in the Devil's Tail"; six members of the Ruffner family including long time Sheriff George C. Ruffner; Frances Willard Munds, second woman in the United States to be elected to public office - The Arizona Senate; A.H. Favour, distinguished attorney and legislator; and Inez Morrison McDonnell Prescottonian all her life, who like many others on the Prescott celebrities list performed on the stage with her peers for Elks Minstrels and many locally written and produced plays as well as with professional troupes who recruited locals to fill out the bill.

More contemporary performers include "Wallace and Ladmo," the long running children's TV show starring Ladmo Kwiatkowski (1928-1994), Pat McMahon and Bill Thompson. In

the late '60s the group took their show on the road and appeared at the Elks to a full house, their only live appearance in Prescott. They gave out Ladmo bags and showed a 1961 science fiction film "Battle of the Worlds."

The entire list of celebrities, which include actors, lecturers, musicians and singers from afar, magical movie memories, organizations, politicians and Prescott personalities, may be accessed on the Elks Opera House Foundation's website: [elksoperahousefoundation.org](http://elksoperahousefoundation.org). Phone contact may be made at 925.445.1298. Celebrity seats are \$500 and the name honored will appear in a plaque on the arm of the new seats to be installed in the near future.



Tom Mix on Tony the Wonder Horse, filming near Prescott on the rail line near Yeager Canyon, "The Texan" was released in 1920. Featured in the film was Bradshaw Mountain Locomotive #52 a local steam engine which was used in many films.



## TELL US YOUR ELKS OPERA HOUSE STORIES

In preparation for the Grand Opening of The Elks Opera House on July 24, 2010, please send your memories or the memories of family members handed down through the years to Gail Mangham, c/o Elks Opera House Foundation, POB 3692, Prescott, AZ 86302 or email [gailm@elksoperahousefoundation.org](mailto:gailm@elksoperahousefoundation.org). On the Foundation website the webmaster will post the best of the memories sent in on a Blog. Also watch for a Donate Button on the website where you can help ensure that the Elks Opera House continues to thrive through the 21st century.

VISIT [WWW.ELKSOPERAHOUSEFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.ELKSOPERAHOUSEFOUNDATION.ORG)



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*Façade at the completion – computer assisted design provided by Otwell Associates Architects*

The Elks Opera House Foundation, working as partner with the City of Prescott through Administrative Services Director, M.J. Fenech; Elks Opera House Manager, Dawn Castaneda; Otwell Associates Architects; The Haley Construction Company; and all of the people involved with the restoration, expresses sincere appreciation for the superb performances of all concerned. Without the generous donors throughout the years none of this monumental work of restoring the Elks Opera House to the glorious appearance of 1905 and the state of the art technical qualities would have been possible.

CURTAIN UP!

ELKS OPERA HOUSE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER