



WORLD FAMOUS PROVINCETOWN PLAYHOUSE
HOME OF EUGENE O'NEILL'S PLAYS
19- Cape Cod, Massachusetts -57



Another view of the Playhouse with the Town Hall & Pilgrim Monument peeking over it. - 1965

- June 25, 1964 -

O'Neill Opens Wharf Theatre

The Playhouse company is continuing its custom of opening the season with one of Eugene O'Neill's famous plays setting the tone of great theatre chosen each year from both contemporary and classic dramatists. "Ah, Wilderness," like last season's opening, "Long Day's Journey Into Night," is laid in New London where the O'Neill's lived when Eugene was growing up.

It reflects with tenderness what "Long Day's Journey" gives in tragic overtones. As the New York Times wrote when, in 1933, "Ah, Wilderness" first opened, "Mr. O'Neill's excursion into nostalgic comedy has resulted in one of his best works." All the critics reacted with amazement and approval. George Jean Nathan said, "In 'Ah, Wilderness! O'Neill has written as tenderly understanding a retrospective comedy — as the modern stage has offered us" and another critic, "For once O'Neill goes beyond penetrating his characters, here he loves them."

The Playhouse company has

added two actresses for this production, Marin Riley from New York, with Summers in Truro, plays Essie Miller, a lead role, the mother of the family whose Fourth of July holiday is the theme of the play. The comedy role of Nora, will be taken by Beatrice Paipert, actress and artist from Boston who has played with the company in several earlier character roles and is spending this Summer in Provincetown.

Clyde Norton, director, is taking Edward Thommen's place this season and will be remembered as a lead actor with the company and for the past several years directing professionally. Virginia Thoms plays Lily Miller, and Valerie Volz, actress with the Playhouse this season has the role of Belle, Richard whose scene with her is one of the famous episodes of the play is taken by Christopher Robinson a member of the company for his first season.

Nat Miller, his father, is played by Robert Summers, also new to Provincetown audiences, and the comedy character, Uncle Sid by Gerald Slavet. Sets are by Priscilla Alexander, designer for the Playhouse season.



- 1976 -

* March 25, 1977 *

By Steven Schwadron

The Provincetown Playhouse, a symbol of the town's literary heritage, burned beyond salvage Friday night after two boys set the building afire.

Police apprehended two Provincetown boys, 15 and 16, Saturday night. The juveniles later confessed with their parents present. The boys were caught syphoning gasoline the night after the Playhouse fire from a parked car on Harry Kemp Way, preparing to torch either the high school or the chamber of commerce building.

The boys were charged with arson for the fire and with larceny for syphoning the gasoline. Their cases were continued for a month in district court yesterday.

The police will petition the court to treat the suspects as adults. Meanwhile, they will undergo psychiatric examination and evaluation.

Police and fire spokesmen had no indication that the suspects were also responsible for the five cases of arson here last spring.

Firefighting efforts were hampered by the difficult access to the downtown Playhouse, pinned between the beach, the shops lining the Crown and Anchor parking lot and the alley extending from Gosnold Street.

Only a stiff northwest wind prevented the blaze from skipping to abutting roofs before firemen could control it. The abutting shops were partially protected by their concrete-block facing.

Fire Chief Wilbur Cook estimated the building was burning inside for two hours before the flames were visible to neighbors.