

Kanata Theatre has a winner

By Betty Swimmings
Assistant music and drama editor

The Kanata Theatre Group's production of *Dandy Dick* is off and running.

Wednesday night's opening performance of the Arthur Pinero farce was absolutely delightful — funny, charming and extremely well acted.

This 19th century comedy is as appealing today as it was when it was first produced in 1887.

Here is a stodgy, straight-laced old Dean, head-over-heels in debt, whose sister (a real race-track tout who answers to the name of George Tid) offers him a safe bet on the horse Dandy Dick and the fun begins.

The Dean is against horse racing because of what it might do to his image in the community, but he badly needs the money to help repair the spire on his cathedral and he weakens.

Adding a delicious filip to the proceedings is the romantic pinings of the Dean's two daughters, Salome and Sheba, who long for excitement and a change in their humdrum way of life.

With the introduction of their aunt, Georgiana Tidman, alias George Tid, and the Dean's old college friend Sir Tristram Marden, part-owner of Dandy Dick, their lives do alter and take a turn for the better.

The Kanata Group has done this play proud.

Phil Lawless has designed a very impressive and handsome setting for the production, the costumes

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are elegant and appropriate, and Brooke Keneford has gathered together a beautifully balanced cast and directed it with a keen regard for timing and dramatic tension.

The comedy in *Dandy Dick* is broad, but not once did the cast overstep and descend to slapstick. And there was a smartly paced flow to the show that not even an occasional memory lapse could break or interrupt.

Jenny Haynes and Rosemarie Lawless, as the two daughters, were particularly well cast and gave excellent performances. They simpered, they sighed and they fussed in a genteel Victorian lady-like fashion and not once

during the evening were they out of character.

Laurence Thornton, as the beleaguered Dean, was in fine form and gave a well defined portrayal of the debt-ridden clergyman trying to improve his fortunes and cope with the extravaganzas of his daughters. He was just as convincing as he blustered his way out of 'being caught gambling as he was looking boyishly imploring he mixed his potion to feed Dandy Dick. It made interesting viewing.

And the two guardsmen suitors for his daughters' hands were nicely played by Barrie Kirk (he was most amusing as the stuffy snob Darby) and Doug Strong, as the chronic invalid Tarver.

But it was Doreen Boss as the bluff, rough-and-ready Georgiana who stole the show.

Right from the minute she swept on stage with her horse blanket cape flying and her brisk voice spouting racetrack vocabulary she kept things buzzing.

The performance was clever, witty and always in character and her little scenes with her horseman partner, Sir Tristram, played rather well by Pat Carroll, were full of delightfully horsey expressions that were amusing and unexpected.

Dandy Dick is one of Kanata Theatre's better productions and makes for a great evening's entertainment.

DANDY DICK— Dec. 6-8, Earl of March High School, Kanata, Ont., curtain 8 p.m. Tickets \$1.50 and \$2.50 for adults and \$1 and \$1.50 for students and senior citizens, at the door.

kanata theatre

DANDY DICK

By
A.W. PINERO

5th - 8th
December

eleventh season
1979-1980

kanata theatre

by Robert Dingles

The Kanata Theatre Group seems to have discovered the formula for an excellent, affordable evening's entertainment.

For Kanata residents the venue is close by, the parking is free, the tickets and refreshments most reasonably priced, and their latest production, *Dandy Dick* was superb.

The cast, lead by Laurence Thornton as the initially straight-laced and tight-fisted Reverend Judd, and Doreen Boss as his horse-fancying, gambling sister, maintained a lively pace throughout this light-hearted Victorian comedy.

Jenny Haynes and Rosemarie Lawless were excellent as the Reverend's two simpering daughters out to get their men, the men being a doddering army major and his pompous lieutenant. These two relics of military glory were finely

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portrayed by Doug Strong and Barrie Kirk.

Pat Carroll typified the British horsey set in his role as Sir Tristram Topping, and his horsey exchanges of wit with Doreen Boss, alias George Tid, his partner in ownership of Dandy Dick, were the essence of the spirit in which the production was presented, by Brooke Keneford, the director, light-hearted, witty and fast paced.

The remainder of the cast and the production staff provided more than adequate support, which was evidenced by the fine sets and wardrobes.

