

Once Upon A Time

Don't Miss Sunday Afternoon Ladies Christmas Tea

The Ladies Christmas Tea at the Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast this coming Sunday afternoon, December 14th at 2:30, will highlight fantastic professional talent and a charming afternoon for all those who attend. Quinn Hawkesworth and Gwen Rainer, two very talented southern ladies will share a great afternoon of holiday stories over tea and refreshments.

Quinn Hawkesworth will present "The Giving Season" is a warm and welcoming holiday program--dramatic readings chosen as an antidote to the frantic pace and commercialism that overtake us this time of the year. These selections offer wit and humor, reminiscence and poignancy, with an emphasis on the giving nature of the human heart. "An Old-Fashioned Christmas", an Appalachian winter memory, a timeless folktale, a fresh bit of Charles Dickens, and a surprise piece that will send you home with a well-exercised funny bone--these are some of the choices you'll be hearing. And of course there will be snow...

Laurinburg's own long-time resident Gwen Rainer will tell the story of The Little Pine Tree, about a little tree that wants leaves instead of needles and perhaps she will favor us with a poem or two. Rainer used her storytelling talents while an educator in the Scotland County Schools for 30 years and currently as the media specialist at Bennettsville Primary School. The most important objective Gwen has as an educator is to create in her students a love of books and reading. Storytelling - bringing the characters to life for them - makes them want to read. They imitate her a lot, and sometimes create their own character voices and she loves it.

Quinn Hawkesworth hails from the little community of Abingdon, nestled in the mountains of Southwest Virginia. She is multi-talented, a fabric artist, an actress and a storyteller. Hawkesworth is a professional who has had the good fortune to escape typecasting. She has climbed inside a wide range of characters: the Emcee in "Cabaret", Amanda in "The Glass Menagerie", Emily Dickinson, Cleopatra, and countless others. She has worked off-Broadway and in regional theatres; while living in North Carolina she was a member of the North Carolina Touring Artists Program, touring to nearly every county in the state. She has been a member of the resident acting company of The Barter Theatre in Abingdon and the Burning Coal theatre of Raleigh. Quinn has made a specialty of one-woman performances: Ivy Rowe in Quinn's adaptation of Lee Smith's "Fair and Tender Ladies", Charlotte Bronte in "Mistress of the Moors", and Emily Dickinson in "The Belle of Amherst".

Gwen Rainer has been a storyteller for a long time. She began reciting poetry and telling stories as a means of entertainment as she babysat her younger sister. Paul Lawrence Dunbar is her favorite poet, and she loves reciting his poetry in dialect. Rainer said, “That’s actually how I got started [storytelling] with performing for people other than my sister. One day at Scotland High another English teacher was saying that she wanted to read some of Paul Lawrence Dunbar’s works to her class, but she couldn’t do the dialect. I told her that I knew lots of his poems and that I used to recite them to my sister all the time when we were growing up. The next thing I knew, I was doing poetry sessions for classes, then schools and the requests just kept coming. I like telling all kinds of stories, and although I tell a lot of folktales, I am always more interested in finding those that fit my style and personality regardless of the genre.”

Over the years Gwen has done poetry and story sessions for schools, churches, and organizations in Scotland and surrounding areas. “Storytelling is more of a hobby than a profession for me, but it’s one that I thoroughly enjoy,” shares Rainer.

Tickets are \$5. For more information or to reserve tickets, call 910-277-3599. Or drop in at the Storytelling Arts Center, 131 South Main Street to purchase your tickets and to check out the new SACS Book Shop for some unusual ideas for Christmas gifts.