

**MHS DRAMA PRESENTS:**



**APRIL 16 AND 17, 2010**



McFARLAND HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS

# A FEW STOUT INDIVIDUALS

BY

**JOHN GUARE**

February 13 & 14, 2009, at 7 p.m.

Director. . . . . Eric Brehm  
 Assistant Director. . . . . Leah Grinvalsky  
 Technical Director. . . . . Jerry Bouzek  
 Stage Manager. . . . . Erek "Gimps" Weis  
 Costume Designer. . . . . Bernie Friedman  
 Lighting Designer. . . . . James Hickey  
 Sound Designer. . . . . Michael Gray  
 Props Mistress. . . . . Lydia Collins  
 Program Cover Design. . . . . Ally Schmaling

As a friendly reminder, please be aware that no flash pictures or videotaping are allowed during the performance.

Our cast and crew always appreciate it if cell phones are set to "vibrate" or "silent" mode, and if all text messaging is held until the end of the performance.

*Produced by special arrangement with Dramatists' Play Service, Inc.*

## Cast

The Emperor of Japan. . . . . Alexander Brown  
 Ulysses S. Grant. . . . . Brandon Zimmermann  
 Samuel Clemens. . . . . Sam Siegmann  
 Mrs. Grant. . . . . Alyse Weber  
 Adam Badeau. . . . . Kevin Dobosenski  
 The Empress of Japan. . . . . Hannah Polipnick  
 Karl Gerhardt. . . . . Trevor Pike  
 Harrison. . . . . Ben Kregness  
 Nell. . . . . Rachel Stetenfeld  
 Fred. . . . . Barry Bakunowicz  
 Buck. . . . . Ben Psyk  
 The False Cyrus. . . . . Adam Rowe-Johnson  
 Adelina Patti. . . . . Ally Schmaling

## Special Thanks To:

Bill Foust	Mike Swenson	Jim Hickey
Sherry Holly	Scott Braun	Julie McPhee
Cheryl Ackley	Betty Kahlhagen	Anne Nichols
Ginger Kinder	Westfield High School	
The entire MHS custodial staff		
The parents of this entire cast and crew, for loan of your sons and daughters for the past several weeks		



## Who's Who in the Cast

**Barry Bakunowicz** (Fred) is a junior who portrayed farmer Andrew Carnes in Oklahoma territory and Vernon the Shortstop for the Washington Senators in past musical productions. Barry is thrilled to perform in his non-musical debut. He enjoys playing Fred, one of the Grants' sons, and hopes you enjoy the show!

**Alexander Brown** (The Emperor of Japan) is a senior who is overjoyed to be in the production this year, but saddened that it will be his last. He has most recently been involved with the Madison Savoyards and Quick and Dead Productions. He thanks his family, friends, and others.

**Kevin Dobosenski** (Adam Badeau) is a senior who has been involved in the drama program for the past several years, appearing in *Oklahoma*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Boy Friend*, and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.

**Ben Kregness** (Harrison) is a freshman who was ecstatic about receiving his role and is hoping his performance reflects all of the hard work put into the show. Along with being involved with drama, Ben is also on the track team and occasionally dances in the rain.

**Trevor Pike** (Karl Gerhardt) is a senior who has appeared in the last four productions and is excited to be a part of *A Few Stout Individuals*. He would like to thank his parents for their support and Mr. Brehm for giving him this opportunity. Thank you and enjoy the show!

**Hannah Polipnick** (The Empress of Japan) will be ending her MHS acting career with a gong. . . err, bang! As the Empress, she has had a comical time learning interpretive dance and has mastered the art of standing still. Hannah has previously performed *Damn Yankees*, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, *Oklahoma*, and *Alarms and Excursions*. She would like to thank Lady Gaga for her inspiration along with her beloved parents Gary and Carol. She salutes the McFarland Drama Program and hopes you enjoy the show!

**Ben Psyk** (Buck) is excited to charm the stage as Buck in his last performance at McFarland High School. He really likes this character and feels that he has been able to take his acting to the next level with the show. He feels blessed that he has been able to work with an awesome cast as well as a very inspiring director. He hopes you enjoy the show.

**Adam Rowe-Johnson** (The False Cyrus) is a freshman participating in his second production, having appearing in *Damn Yankees* last fall. He hopes you enjoy the show!

**Ally Schmaling** (Adelina Patti) – *A Few Stout Individuals* marks Ally's seventh and final production at MHS. She is truly grateful for all the memories she's made and friendships she's forged as a result of participating in drama; the amazing individuals with whom she's shared these last four years have changed her in countless ways and her memories of them will no doubt carry on in her pursuit of theater in the future. Next fall, Ally plans to attend Kenyon College, where she will pursue music and theatre. Tally ho, McFarland!

**Sam Siegmann** (Samuel Clemens) has been a mainstay of the MHS drama program for the past several years, including roles in *Alarms and Excursions*, *Oklahoma*, and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Most recently he appeared as Joe Hardy in *Damn Yankees*.

**Rachel Stetenfeld** (Nell) is a junior who got her start on the House Crew for *Rumors* her freshman year. She has since performed in *Alarms and Excursions*, *Oklahoma*, and *Damn Yankees*. Rachel is also an avid dancer.

**Alyse Weber** (Mrs. Grant) has been involved in the drama program since her freshman year, and has appeared in previous productions such as *Oklahoma* and *Damn Yankees*. She is enjoying her first leading role as Mrs. Grant. Enjoy the show!

**Brandon Zimmermann** (Ulysses Grant) has been actively involved with theatre in McFarland for the last four years, starting in the tech crew and rising through the ranks to his first leading role. He plans to study Musical Theatre at the University of Tampa, Florida. He hopes you enjoy his final performance on the McFarland High School stage.

## Drama Boosters

The MHS Drama Department wishes to gratefully acknowledge those who have supported this production as a Drama Booster. Your kindness and generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

*Anonymous*  
*John and Lisa Bakunowicz*  
*Nancy and Jonathan Pike*  
*Carol and Gary Polipnick and Family*  
*The Schmaling Family*  
*Ernie and Betsy Stetenfeld*  
*Kevin Weis*



## Technical Production Crew

Assistant Director. . . . .	Leah Grinvalsky
Stage Manager. . . . .	Erek Weis
Assistant Stage Manager. . . . .	Dakota Chambers
Lighting Designer. . . . .	James Hickey
Lighting Crew. . . . .	Michael Gray Sam Schutt Max Jackson
Sound Designer. . . . .	Michael Gray
Sound Crew. . . . .	Mike Loney Tyler McGraw
Costume Designer. . . . .	Bernie Friedman
Costume Crew. . . . .	Sam Bussan, Mariah Johnsen, Melanie Kloes, Brittney Leemon, Gena Roisum, Heather Traska
Props Mistress. . . . .	Lydia Collins
Props Crew. . . . .	Hayley Bristol Ali Carollo, Hannah Klecker Jenna Knoche, Mallory Radney
Make-Up Crew. . . . .	Gabriela Cristobal, Ellie Kalamarz Audrey Monfouga, Mallory Radney
Master Painter. . . . .	Sisco Hollard
Set Crew. . . . .	Lucas Bolender, Sisco Hollard Michelle Johnsen, Bridget Schwefel Alex Walker, Kate Zobel
Run Crew. . . . .	Dakota Chambers Kelly Campbell Jacob Aehl Carli Cherek Kim Herold Jake Barleen Victoria Jones Callie Orme

Coming Next Fall to MHS!



Original book and concept by Peter Stone

Book by Rupert Holmes

Lyrics by Fred Ebb

Music by John Kander

Additional Lyrics by John Kander and  
Rupert Holmes

In the MHS Auditorium  
November 2010



# About the Show

Virtually everything that you are going to see tonight is true.

Ulysses S. Grant is usually portrayed in American history as a drunken general of the Civil War who managed to guide the North to victory in spite of himself because the South was out of money and manpower. He returns to our history textbooks as an ineffective president whose two terms were marked by scandal, wasteful government spending, and cronyism.

Our story, however, is set in the year 1885, nine years after Grant left the White House, when he really was confined to his New York home and dying of cancer. His entire family fortune had been lost in a bad business venture. Samuel Clemens (a.k.a. Mark Twain) agreed to publish General Grant's memoirs, with the idea that the two-volume set would be released on Memorial Day, marking the 20-year anniversary of the end of the Civil War. In this way, Grant hoped to revive his family's financial health before he died. The story of what happened in that year creates the story of our play.

With one notable exception, all of the characters are real-life figures. Grant and his wife and family are well-known, as is Sam Clemens. Emperor Mutsu-hito and his wife existed, and the emperor's life was used as the basis for the operetta *The Mikado*, written by Gilbert and Sullivan. Adam Badeau really did serve as Grant's secretary, and Harrison really was Grant's personal valet, and had served under him in the Civil War. Karl Gerhardt was a real sculptor who lived at the time. Adelina Patti was a renowned opera star, who did give repeated farewell tours. The only fictitious character is that of The False Cyrus, though for all we know he may have existed somewhere.

At the conclusion of his Presidency, Grant took a two-year world tour, dining with heads of state and being received by enormous crowds. Japan was included in that tour, and Grant considered it one of his favorite places in the world; he planted a tree in Tokyo that is still alive today. As used in the play, the Emperor and Empress of Japan are literary devices that exist only in Grant's mind; however, the story of the Emperor's bow and handshake is true.

Many of the issues discussed in the play are also real. Most citizens of New York at the time hated the idea of the Statue of Liberty, and



the U.S. Government refused to pay for a pedestal upon which to place it. William Henry Vanderbilt was indeed the richest man in America, though he was about to be overtaken by Andrew Carnegie and John Rockefeller. All writers, aristocrats, and notable figures mentioned are real.

You will no doubt notice (and perhaps object to) the medical regimen used to treat Grant. In 1885, cannabis, morphine, and cocaine were all over-the-counter pharmaceuticals and as easily available for purchase as aspirin. This lasted until the 1930's; coming out of prohibition, one of the first acts of the reborn alcohol industry was to lobby against those drugs that were its competition, and all three drugs were declared illegal during Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The lobbying arm of the alcohol industry still exists, though it has since allied with the tobacco industry: It is known today as the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. The inclusion of the three drugs in tonight's performance should be seen as a quest for historical accuracy, and not as an endorsement of their use.

Cold Harbor was a real battle, though Harrison's involvement in it has been imagined by the playwright. It was a lopsided and bloody assault by Union troops against a fortified Confederate position, beginning May 31, 1864, and continuing into June. The quote mentioned in the play is the only mention of the battle that appears in the whole of Grant's memoirs.

And the memoirs are also real, of course. The leather-bound volumes which cost five dollars in 1885 now routinely sell for 800 dollars or more. While dying of throat cancer, Grant managed to write, and Clemens managed to publish, one of the classic memoirs of American history. Reading Grant's writing has been described as reading Hemingway years before Hemingway ever published; Grant's simple and direct style conveys a wealth of information while maintaining an easy readability. All reviews and quotes about the memoirs are in fact real quotes from noted literary figures of the day, and the sales information presented is accurate. And yes, Mrs. Grant did indeed get her own memoirs published before her death.

So: "Who's buried in Grant's tomb?" Perhaps a drunken general, and perhaps an ineffective president. But also a fine writer, and a man about whom you might feel differently than you did when you entered the auditorium tonight. We hope you enjoy the show.