

LAKE MELVILLE SCHOOL

Northwest River

Presented by

"JANET'S DREAMS"

Reflections on the distant and recent past of Northwest River are followed by an account of how the community developed and its present status. What will happen in the future?

CAST

Heather McLean
Bobby Jo Campbell
Candy Michelin
Barbara Michelin
Ashley Michelin
Laurie Leonard
Lorne Blake
Colleen Blake
Allison Montague

Pauline Leonard - Teacher



JANET'S DREAM

written by .

Grade Five Class

LAKE MELVILLE SCHOOL

Labrador Arts Festival
1983

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Act I

Miss - Colleen Blake
Janet - Heather McLean
Trapper - Lorne Montague
Alvin - Ashley Michelin
Ivan - Laurie Leonard
Martha - Candy Michelin
Molly - Allison Montague
Jimmy - Laurie Leonard

Act II

Miss - Colleen Blake
Janet - Heather McLean
Uncle Ned - Lorne Montague
Bill - Ashley Michelin
Jim - Laurie Leonard
Teacher - Allison Montague
Bay Clerk - Bobbi Jo Campbell
Hospital Employee - Barbara Michelin

Act III

Miss - Colleen Blake
Janet - Heather McLean
Student 1 - Bobbi Jo Campbell
Student 2 - Candy Michelin
Student 3 - Ashley Michelin
Student 4 - Allison Montague
Student 5 - Lorne Montague
Student 6 - Barbara Michelin
Student 7 - Laurie Leonard

ACT I

Scene I

Setting: Teacher and student in class after school.

Janet: Oh Miss, why am I the only one who has to ~~stay~~ behind after school.

Teacher: Well, Janet I think that's obvious. You're the only one who didn't pass in anything on the North West River history assignment.

Janet: But Miss, I find history soooo boring.

Miss: Boring!! Boring!! Janet this is your history we are talking about. If you understood more about it I think you would discover it to have very exciting beginnings. North West was founded on a strong and rare breed. Take the trapper for instance, he led a very solitary existence for many months of the year. (teacher looks at watch) Oh, wait, I have to tend to something, be back shortly. Read your notes.

Janet: The trapper led a solitary life, hmmm ..(she looks around the classroom) I think I know how he felt... ho, hum (yawns and puts head down).

(The lights dim, the trapper is lit up)

Scene II

Setting: Trapper at his tilt getting ready to go home.

John: Hmmm! I should get a good price for all these furs. Martha sure is going to be happy when she sees these. Yesiree! I guess I'd better load them up on the sled. There now, I'll tie them down after I feed the dogs. They're gonna need a good meal in them. It's a long haul back to North West. I hope Martha's got a big pot of soup on the stove when I get back home.

Scene III

Setting: Two fishermen out on the lake.

Alvin: Ivan, bye, we've been out here for hours and we haven't got anything yet. They're scarce here today.

Ivan: Yeah, Alvin, I guess we'll have to be headin' now. By the looks of it, there's a nor'easter coming on the blow.

Alvin: Ivan bye, look, whose that headin' out to the point?

Ivan: Let me see now, oh yeah, looks like Dr. Paddon's team o'dogs. Guess he's going out to check on ol'Tom out on the point.

Alvin: Yeah, I guess you're right. He'll probably be spending the night by the looks of this weather. We'd better pack up and get in.

Ivan: Yes, bye, Let's get back to the house for a mug up.

Scene IV

Setting: Molly's house. Molly is sitting up in the kitchen, knitting.

(Enter Martha)

Martha: Hi, Molly, any chance of getting a cup of tea.

Molly: Yes m'dear, come in. I just finished making my bread. I got to wait for my boy to get back with a couple of rabbits to make a good stew for supper. Alvin will be starving when he gets in from fishing.

Martha: Yes maid, I'm expecting John home from trappin' anyday now. I hope he got lots of furs to bring home.

Molly: You never know how they're gonna do, do you? Sometimes there's lots and then there's times it's scanty. But you know you always make do with whatever there is.

(Enter Jimmy, Molly's son)

Jimmy: Here Mom, I got you some fresh rabbit.

Molly: Well done, Jimmy.

Jimmy: Mom, did you hear about Aunt Flo?

Molly: No boy, why, what happened?

Jimmy: I ran into Uncle Joe heading out to the point, looking for the doctor.

Martha: My gosh, by the looks of this weather, he shouldn't be headin' out anywhere.

Jimmy: Yeah, well, Aunt Flo slipped on the ice when she was getting a bucket of water. Uncle Joe says she's in a lot of pain.

Molly: Oh my goodness! I'd better get over there. She might be needin' some help.

Martha: Yeah, me too, Molly. I sure hope she's not in need of any hospital care.

(Exit Molly and Martha)

Scene V

Setting: Classroom, Janet is dozing. Enter Miss.

Miss: Janet, now that you've done your readings you should do a good assignment tonight.

Janet: Oh, ah, yes Miss (she is sleepy and looking around in wonderment). I feel like I could write something now.

Miss: Good, see you tomorrow, Janet. Pass me in your assignment first thing in the morning so I can read it. We will discuss it further tomorrow, after school.

Janet: OK, Miss. See you tomorrow.

(Exit Janet)

CURTAIN CLOSES

ACT II

Scene I

Setting: Janet sitting up in seat. Enter Miss.

Miss: Well Janet, you did an excellent job on North West River's past. You must have read your notes very carefully yesterday evening.

Janet: Well, Miss, it all sort of just came to me. (said cautiously)

Miss: OK, Janet. Let's take a look at North West as it is today. What changes have taken place?

Janet: Oh, that's easy. For one thing, we don't have to fish and trap for a living now. Most people got jobs. Oh yeah, and now we have a hospital to take care of our sick people. Poor Aunt Flo would have been better off today.

Miss: Hmm? What? Who's Aunt Flo?

Janet: Oh! Oh! I was just .. ah .. thinking about someone I met .. ah, saw .. no, ah, .. heard about.

Miss: Very well, Janet, let's not get off the topic. (said impatiently) We'll look at a significant event in North West River's recent history. Ah, maybe the bridge being completed.

Janet: Oh yeah. I can remember that event. Sure, it was only a few years ago. Uncle Ned cut the ribbon.

Miss: Really? Well, you think about the people's reactions to the opening of the bridge. I'll be back shortly.

Janet: Yeah, there was lots of excitement then, I'll tell you. All the people were gathered around. Uncle Ned was grinning from ear to ear. (Janet sort of leans back in chair and closes eyes.)

Lights dim. Lights show on opening of bridge.

Scene II

Setting: Opening of North West River bridge.

Uncle Ned: Good day everybody. Isn't this a wonderful sight? A bridge we have been long waiting for. I am very happy to be part of this grand event. Yes sir North West River has really come a long way since my trapping days.

(cuts ribbon; crowd claps)

Jim: Well, bye, I wish I could feel so happy about it all. But somehow I just as soon see no bridge. I don't like the idea of having cars running around all over the place. Soon they'll be telling us to take our skidoos off the road.

Teacher: Well, Jim, I can't see anything wrong with that. I know I'll certainly be glad to be able to bring my car up to my door instead of coming across in the cable car.

Uncle Ned: Yeah, Jim, you should be happy to see these changes around here. North West is a thriving community. We've got a new bridge that connects us to Goose. We've got lots of work for people here.

Bay Clerk: Yes, that's right. Since I've been working at the Bay I can afford to buy lots of things for myself and my family. Why, just last year I was able to go visit my sister in Alberta. I wouldn't have been able to do that ten years ago.

Hospital Employee: Right you are, my dear. I've been working at the hospital ever since my husband died. How would I ever be able to feed the kids without being able to work? Why, I wouldn't be able to do it, that's all. Yes, tis a wonderful thing, that hospital.

Teacher: Yes, and don't you forget about the new school that's been built. With so much going on in North West there's lots of people here. And with a new bridge, a hospital and a Bay store, there's gonna be more people here, wait and see.

Jim: Well folks, maybe you're right. I don't know, but I just can't put my trust in all this progress. I feels a little bit uneasy about it all, you know. But then I'm just a fisherman, and that I'll be till I dies, I guess.

Teacher: Oh Alvin, don't be so silly. Everything's going to be fine.

Nurse: Yeah, three cheers for North West, the hospital, bridge and everything it does for us.

All: Hurrah! (Sing Song - Lights dim)

SONG

So now we have a hospital
We don't have far to go,
To get our broken bones fixed,
In our leg or arm or toe.

We used to have a cable car
But now we have a bridge,
To join us up with Goose Bay
So we can spend our pay.

Now our folks have steady work
Right here in dear North West,
For all these things we're thankful,
Of both worlds we have the best.

Scene III

Setting: Janet back in the classroom. Enter Miss.

Miss: Well Janet, do you think you're ready to write up your report?

Janet: Oh yes, Miss. (excitedly) I'll have it on your desk first thing in the morning. Bye.

Miss: (to herself) My, she is an unusual child.
(End of Act II)

ACT III

Scene I

Setting: Janet sitting in classroom with Miss.

Miss: That was a very perceptive report you did last night, Janet.

Janet: Thank you, Miss. I feel really proud to be a part of this community. The future looks so bright. There are so many careers open to me. Why, I can become a lab technician, a nurse, a doctor, or a teacher or maybe I can be the manager of the Hudson's Bay store. There's so much I can do here. I just never realized it before. North West River is a thriving community with a past to be proud of.

Miss: You are so right Janet. We can be optimistic about the future. That is a very valuable lesson you have learned. You get an A plus. You may go.

Janet: Terrific! See you tomorrow, Miss.

Miss: Good-bye, Janet.

Miss settles back to correcting work. She turns on the aadio to listen to some music while she is correcting work.

Miss: Oh, where is my red marker? Oh, I must have left it in the staff room. (said with annoyance) Oh, well, I'd better get it.

(Exit Miss)

Interruption in Music Program. News Flash of North West River Hospital Closing. (News Report is read)

CURTAIN CLOSES

NEWS REPORT

We interrupt this program to bring you the following news bulletin.

Minister of Health Wallace House has just announded that the hospital in North West River will be closed down. Repeating that: The Minister of Health has just announced the closing of North West River Hospital. It is not known what effect this event will hve on the future of the town.

We now return to our regular programming.

Scene II

Setting: Classroom scene. All the children are in their chairs talking excitedly. Enter Miss.

Miss: OK everybody, let's quiet down.

Janet: But Miss, did you hear the news?!

Miss: Yes Janet, I did. It looks as though the hospital here will close.

Student 1: My dad says we're going to have to move away to look for work if he loses his job at the hospital.

- Student 2: Mom says we're going to be right back where we started years ago, if we lose the hospital.
- Student 3: Yes, but losing the hospital is not the worst of it. Dad says when the hospital goes, so will a lot of the people. With most of the people gone there won't be any need for the Hudson Bay store to be here. So we might lose that too.
- Student 4: I wonder what will happen to the school if all the people leave? There might not be enough kids to keep this school opened.
- Student 5: Uncle Jim is some mad. He said he never wanted to see that bridge put here. He said if we weren't able to get to Goose so easily they wouldn't try to close down our hospital.
- Student 6: Do you think everyone is going to move away?
- Student 7: Mom says we're not going anywhere. She said she was born here and raised. And so were her mother and father and their parents, too. She says they used to have to trap and fish for a living and we may have to go back to that.
- Teacher: Well class, it certainly does paint a dismal picture for North West River. However, when we studied the history of this fine community I think we learned something about the people as well as the place.
- Janet: That's right, Miss. I learned that our ancestors weren't quitters. Even if the future does look bleak, I think we all have to stick together and work to keep North West River alive. I learned that we have a community to be proud of and I don't want to see it die.
- Miss: Janet, you speak very wise words and you are absolutely right. How do the rest of you feel?
- Others: Yeah, Miss, that's right.
- Miss: OK, since this is Music period let's sing a song to help lift our spirits and get rid of the gloom.
- All sing Sons of Labrador.

THE END