

Broke With the Wind Closes Tour to Thunderous Applause

Cris Melton

The cast of the Rivertime Players closed out the Ol' Time Toby Show Saturday night to thunderous applause and the uproarious laughter of a large crowd. As part of the Peavine Heritage festival, Shane Bridges and his talented troupe revived the long lived tradition of the travelling Toby Tent Show with clean Vaudeville humor and intriguing melodrama. For more than one hundred years, tent shows toured the South and entertained millions. During their peak in the early twentieth century, nearly one thousand such

traveling shows traveled the region putting on variety shows and melodramas. For Decatur County, it was the Bisbee players that came to town to entertain the crowds. In November 2006, the big top as well as three stake trucks and props, costumes and chairs were donated to the Rivertime Players and their first production, *How Now White Cow*, was performed at the 20047 Peavine Festival.

This year's show opened with Shane aka Toby leading the crowd in a sing- a- long to several classics such as *You're A Grand Old Flag*, *Bill Bailey*, and *Five Foot*

Two. The cast performed *Broke with the Wind* a comedic rendition of *Gone with the Wind*, seventeen years after the fact. In the opening half, Scarlett and her son Franklin, played by Dotty Hill and Brett Jordan respectively, are facing bankruptcy in the harsh times following the Civil War. She receives a letter stating that her long lost love, Ashley Wilkes, will be visiting soon. Scarlett quickly summons her loyal house servant, Chris, played by the animated Hunter Jordan, to make her a new dress using the tablecloth as every other fabric, including the curtains, had already been used to make the now plump Scarlett a suitable outfit.

Unexpectedly, Rhett Butler and his now seventeen year old daughter Prunella, played by David Taylor and Jenni Turner, arrive and throw a wrench

into Scarlett's plan to woo the debonair Ashley and marry him in order to pay the back taxes and save Tara from foreclosure and calamity ensues.

Cleverly written, the play not only tickled the funny bone of audience members, but the characters were engaging. The stoic Mr. and Mrs. Wilkes played by Mark Tubbs and Elicia Jo Spain, served to frustrate the over the top Scarlett as did the frank Poke Salat, played by George Pettigrew. Especially fun to watch were the kids, who all turned in stellar performances for their first time on stage with this production. The three hour show was well worth seeing and left the audience wanting more.

DVD's of the performance are available for purchase by visiting the troupe's website at www.rivertimeplayers.org. and all donations to the troupe are tax deductible.