

Ida and Old Baldy's Seniors' Theatre

Peter Blacklock started Seniors' Theatre in 2012 with two groups in Blind Bay and Salmon Arm. Then in 2013 Shuswap Theatre received a grant from the federal New Horizon programme. This grant was used to make the dressing room bathroom wheelchair accessible and to hire Peter to develop a model for a Seniors' Theatre programme that would be self-sustaining and to develop a handbook, available on line, that could be used by any community to start their own Seniors' Theatre group. The handbook and other resources are available at <http://seniorstheatre.ca>.

Peter led the Shuswap Theatre group, SPLATT (Seniors Playing AT Theatre), for the first 2 years. Astrid Varnes led the group the next year, then this past year various members took turns leading each session.

Every Tuesday morning from 9.00 to 11.00 from October to April approximately 20 people (some are seniors) come together to laugh, stretch their creativity and comfort zone, challenge their brains and make friends. Sessions include theatre warm-ups and games, the telling or writing of stories, preparing and sharing scripted or original scenes. The goal of each session is not performance but the process of creating, laughing and reminiscing together. Some of the participants joined with the Blind Bay Seniors theatre group to perform a play for Theatre on the Edge in July.

Submitted by Joyce Henderson