



January 4, 2013

CLIFTON PARK: “The Beast” is an original play written by Marty Egan of Clifton Park, NY. Sponsored by the Town of Clifton Park and presented by NOT SO COMMON PLAYERS at the CLIFTON PARK-HALFMOON LIBRARY on January 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM with a matinee at 2 PM January 27<sup>th</sup>.

All performances are FREE.

“The Beast” is a play set in one of the darkest periods of World War II. From mid-1940 till late 1944, most of France was occupied by the German Army, led by Hitler’s Nazis. What remained of the French Army were in prison camps or had escaped to England to join the Allied forces. The French people had to wait and hope for the war to end, while the Nazis rounded up and deported Jews, Gypsies and other “undesirables” to camps in the East. Some of the French formed a *Resistance*, a loose collection of small groups who caused as much trouble as they could for the German occupiers. For their part, the Germans reacted ruthlessly, and by 1943, when our story takes place, the *Resistance* has come to a standstill. Also, by then, the German Command, expecting an invasion, increased their forces in northern France, moving into the smaller villages and quartering their officers in local homes.

The Mercier Family is one of those told to expect an officer to be living with them. Gerard Mercier is the town’s banker, a quiet man who only wants to be left alone and wait for the war to be over. He is confident of his ability to handle their new tenant, a major named Kessel. This Major Kessel seems pleasant enough, but things are not always what they appear at first glance. Before he realizes it, Mercier is drawn into the German officer’s plans, little step by little step until it seems there is no hope of finding a way out.

Produced and directed by Monica Cangero, the cast includes Jimmy Cupp (The Agent), Stephen Henel (Wilhelm Hartmann), Brian Toal (Gerard Mercier), Aaron Holbriiter (Otto Kessel), Sue Katz (Madeleine Mercier), Lydia Nightingale (Julie Mercier) and Rick Reed (The Priest).

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