

LET'S DO LUNCH

Seattle Repertory Theatre
Presented by Maureen Harley

As a part of the monthly meetings of our volunteer group, the Seattle Repertory Organization, the volunteers have always enjoyed a no host, catered or potluck lunch which follows the business meeting and an interview with the actors or technical staff from the current play. Recently a new wrinkle has been added with the addition of planned lunch outings at local restaurants, sometimes chosen to reference the play; a Victorian tea room during the run of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (the menu included “Sherlock Holmes favorite tea”), or Texas barbecue for this seasons’ much anticipated duo of plays documenting the presidency of Lyndon Johnson. The lunches have garnered a devoted following of SRO members, family and friends, and serve also to promote the theatre and entice new volunteer members. On occasion the lunch opportunity has even allowed for a little fund raising. When the run of *Boeing Boeing* prompted a tour of *The Museum of Flight*, the tour was followed by lunch nearby and all was covered by a fee large enough to include a donation to the theatre. A play centered in South Africa, *The Suit*, resulted in a catered lunch of delicious specialties from a local South African establishment and was served at the theatre.

A committee was formed to research possible locations for restaurant visits and the committee itself has become very popular, as, of course, it is necessary to visit various locations to sample and approve the food and ambiance before committing to a venue. For lunches out, choice of menu is left to the individual and checks are separate. For large groups, the restaurant sometimes donates free coffee or a special discounted dessert.

When a lunch is catered at the theatre, the committee is careful to keep the cost within the limit of the usual \$15.00 charge for the monthly lunch, which must include tax and any service charge. Theatre staff may pay to join the lunch and actors who were interviewed at the meeting are invited to participate free of charge.

These adventures in eating are only occasionally fund raisers, but instead are aimed at fostering camaraderie between volunteers, exploring new restaurants in good company, and adding a new dimension to membership in our community of theatre staff, actors, and volunteers.