

# *Anne of Green Gables*

## SHOW DESCRIPTION

This year, the Knickerbacker Middle School and Rensselaer Park Elementary School Drama Club proudly presents ***Anne of Green Gables***, the debut novel of Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery, and the first book in the *Anne of Green Gables* series. This beloved children's classic tells the story of Anne Shirley, an over imaginative orphan who, the second she arrives at the snug white farmhouse called Green Gables, is sure she wants to stay there forever...but will Marilla and Matthew send her away? Anne knows she's not what they expected—a skinny girl with fiery red hair and a temper to match! Anne is not like anybody else, the Cuthberts agree: she is special—a girl with enormous imagination. This orphan dreams of the day when she can call herself “Anne of Green Gables.”

## **SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY**

Marilla and Matthew are unmarried siblings who live on their ancestral farm, Green Gables, in the quiet town of Avonlea on Prince Edward Island, Canada. Matthew is sixty, and since he is getting too old to handle the farm work on his own, the Cuthberts decide to adopt an orphan boy to help him. When Matthew, who is terrified of women, arrives at the train station, however, he finds a girl orphan instead of a boy: the orphanage sent the eleven-year-old Anne Shirley by mistake. Anne's talkativeness and spirit charm Matthew, who shyly tells Marilla that he wants to keep her.

As a child of imagination, Anne takes much joy in life, and that joy propels her into wild adventures even as she quickly adapts and even thrives in the close-knit farming village of Avonlea. The play recounts Anne's adventures in making a home: the country school where she quickly excels in her studies; her friendship with Diana Barry (her best or "bosom friend" as Anne fondly calls her); her budding literary ambitions; and her rivalry with classmate Gilbert Blythe, who teases her about her red hair. For that he earns her instant hatred, although he apologizes many times. As time passes, Anne realizes she no longer hates Gilbert but cannot bring herself to speak to him. Episodes include her play-time with friends (Diana and Ruby Gillis), her run-ins with the unpleasant Josie Pye, and domestic mishaps such as accidentally getting Diana drunk (by giving her what she thinks is raspberry cordial but is currant wine).

Near the end of the play, tragedy strikes when Matthew dies suddenly. Out of devotion to Marilla and Green Gables, Anne gives up the scholarship to stay at home and help Marilla, whose eyesight is failing. In an act of friendship, Gilbert Blythe gives up his teaching position at the Avonlea School, knowing that Anne wants to stay close to Marilla after Matthew's death. After this kind act, Anne and Gilbert's friendship is cemented, and Anne looks forward to what life will bring next.

## **PRINCIPAL ROLES**

*a lot of dialogue, MANY Rehearsals*

**ANNE SHIRLEY:** An imaginative, talkative, red-headed orphan who comes to live with unmarried siblings Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert.

**MARILLA CUTHBERT:** Matthew's sister, she is an austere woman who tries to subdue Anne's imaginative, unusual ways. Though she is conservative in her rules, she does love Anne and has the glimmerings of a sense of humour and a hidden soft side.

MATTHEW CUTHBERT: Marilla's brother, a shy, awkward man who takes a liking to Anne from the start. The two become fast friends. He is a good listener. Because Marilla has primary responsibility for rearing the girl, he feels no qualms about "spoiling" her and indulging her in pretty clothes and other frivolities.

DIANA BARRY: Anne's bosom friend and kindred spirit. Anne and Diana become best friends from the moment they meet. She is the only girl of Anne's age who lives close to Green Gables. Anne admires Diana for being pretty and for her amiable disposition. Diana lacks Anne's powerful imagination but is a loyal friend.

## **SUPPORTING ROLES**

*Medium amount of dialogue, MANY Rehearsals*

GILBERT BLYTHE: A handsome classmate who tried to get Anne's attention by pulling her hair and calling her "Carrots" (unaware of her sensitivity about her red hair). Anne reacted by refusing to have anything to do with him for the next few years. Although Gilbert repeatedly apologized, Anne rebuffed him for years. However, Gilbert never abandoned his quest for her friendship (and eventually, love). Anne finally forgave him at the end of the book, when he gave up his job as teacher at the Avonlea school for her, to enable her to live at Green Gables with Marilla.

MRS. RACHEL LYNDE: A neighbor of Matthew and Marilla, and the nosiest person in town. She soon warms to the freckle-faced orphan. She is industrious and helpful, and does work for the church. She is married and has raised ten children, but her husband, Thomas Lynde, is mentioned briefly and never speaks.

MISS MURIEL STACY: Anne's energetic new teacher. Her warm and sympathetic nature appeals to her students, but Avonlea's conservative parents disapprove of her liberal teaching methods. She forms a special relationship with Anne, who views her as a mentor. Miss Stacy encourages Anne to develop her character and intellect, and helps prepare her for the entrance exam at Queen's College, where she comes joint first with Gilbert Blythe.

MRS. BARRY: Diana's mother. Mrs. Barry expects her children to follow strict rules. Mrs. Barry rejects Anne until she saves Minnie May.

MRS. BLEWETT: Mrs. Blewett offers to take Anne in as a babysitter when she learns that Marilla intends to get a boy orphan in Anne's place. Marilla decides to keep Anne because Mrs. Blewett is a stingy woman not fit to care for a child.

MRS. SPENCER: responsible for bringing Anne to Matthew and Marilla.

MISS HARRIS: works at Lawson's Market