

‘The Midvale High School 50th Reunion’

Scott Andrews

The Forecaster - Out & About | May 7, 2018

The Public Theatre of Lewiston-Auburn wraps up this weekend, too. The final offering for 2017-2018 is “The Midvale High School 50th Reunion,” a warm and wonderfully different romantic comedy.

May and June bring graduations and class reunions. And so it’s the perfect time for the Public Theatre of Lewiston-Auburn to present the Maine premiere of a wonderfully offbeat romantic comedy, Alan Brody’s “The Midvale High School 50th Reunion,” which runs through this weekend.

It’s a very new play. Brody is an English professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and “50th Reunion” had its world premiere less than a year ago at the Central Square Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Here’s the situation. Tom and Bettina start chatting at the reunion, although they barely knew each other in school. Both have enjoyed successful lives in the half-century since graduation. He’s found intellectual satisfaction in Maine as a bookseller and mystery writer; she’s found success and recognition in Baltimore as a medical researcher. Both were once married, but neither found true love.

Being a romantic comedy, the result is fairly predictable. What’s so interesting about this play is the way Brody covers the 50-year time span with a series of flashbacks.

Mel Shrawder and Joyce Cohen are warm, funny and convincing as Tom and Bettina, while Torsten Hillhouse and Nisi Sturgis ably portray a variety of characters from the past, including younger Tom and younger Bettina.