



Humorist Alan Kitty enthralls Dover audience with presentation and declaration

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Wicked Local Dover-Sherborn

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Dover — This past Saturday in Dover, Mark Twain announced his candidacy for U.S. President in 2012 to a large crowd seated in Mudge Auditorium.

The proclamation came near the end of a humorous performance by **Alan Kitty**, who began impersonating Twain more than 30 years ago.

“Twain’s Last Stand” commemorates the Mark Twain centennial and was presented by the **Dover Historical Society**.

According to Elisha Lee, the Society’s president, “The board decided to do something featuring Mark Twain because of the recent centennial of his death and the release of Volume I of his autobiography. We felt, too, that it would be fun to do something a bit different from our usual lecture format and thus settled on one of the several Twain impersonators who are available. Mr. Kitty’s qualifications and what we saw of his performance on line impressed us.”

As he walked out on stage, the white-haired Kitty wore a white suit and held a large cigar. He immediately made many laugh when he asked the approximately 100 audience members, “Does anyone have a light?”

Someone shouted out, “No one smokes!”

He joked that reports of his death in 1910 were greatly exaggerated and in fact, not two hours ago he was mistaken for Colonel Sanders. He also often gets confused with Albert Einstein.

“And who the hell is Hal Holbrook?” Kitty asked.

Holbrook is a Hollywood veteran well known for his portrayal of Twain.

Kitty went on to tell stories based on Twain’s real life, many admittedly embellished with lies. Twain was known for his droll sense of humor and Kitty did not disappoint. Throughout the evening he told homespun tales echoing his philosophy that “life is bursting with reruns” or “the more things are restricted, the more we desire.”

Kitty educated the audience on the life of Samuel Clemens who used Mark Twain as a pseudonym for classics such as “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” and “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.”

With his autobiography, Twain stipulated that his memoirs not be published for 100 years after his death. His impersonators have been in great demand ever since the publication of the surprise best-seller, the 736-page “Autobiography of Mark Twain” edited by Harriet Elinor.

Kitty writes a lot of the material for Twain’s “lectures.”

“I thought he was great and very much in the spirit of the man himself,” Lee said.

In fact, Kitty finds a number of coincidences in comparing his own life to Twain’s.

“My sense of humor is also very similar,” he said.

Kitty decided to impersonate Twain because he was not only a great humorist but knew how to work an audience, “he was that way 140 years ago ... he was the first modern stand-up comic.”

Kitty has expanded into giving educational programs for students K-12 in order “to inspire children who want to read.”

He also speaks at corporate events getting employees to collaborate and use team building to figure out solutions for a failed project. For even Mark Twain had to file for bankruptcy after a risky business venture.

Twain ended by traveling through time, telling the audience that sometimes he thinks imbeciles who really mean it are running the world.

“They are putting us on,” he said.

In running for President in 2012, Twain articulated that one of his qualifications is that he’s dead: “We are never fully and completely our true selves until we are dead.”

He assured the audience that in running for office, he would lie judiciously: “There is nothing sadder than an honest person going into politics.”

Twain has no official connection to Dover, but after Kitty’s impersonation, Lee noted that it “may be the closest we’ve come since the Charles River School produced “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” as their school play back in the 1940s.

“That Huckleberry was in our audience last night, though he revealed his identity only upon a sworn oath of eternal anonymity. I think he enjoyed the show...”

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