

Medicine Hat Musical Theatre Newsletter

MHMT Now Sole Owner of CTAC

Effective September 1, 2011, Medicine Hat Musical Theatre became the sole owner and operator of the facility formerly known as CTAC—Community Theatre Arts Centre.

At long last our goal of more theatre, involving more people, can be realized. Each theatre company can now pursue their own visions.

For Musical Theatre, our future will be busy. We have three shows planned for the season:

The Sound of Music in November

The Grinch, a pantomime, in December, and

Clue The Musical in March 2012.

We have renovations planned for our new home and our goal is to offer a season of shows during 2012–2013. In addition, we are undertaking a major fundraising drive.

Our 50th Anniversary will truly be a memorable year.

Lawrence Gordon, President

Issue 10
Fall 2011

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Name Change for CTAC

The Board of Directors of Medicine Hat Musical Theatre voted in favour of changing the name of the building from Community Theatre Arts Centre (CTAC) to “**Musical Theatre Playhouse**”. With the purchase of the building, the Joint Venture Committee

has been dissolved and the two organizations no longer operate the building under the name of CTAC.

A name change at this time seemed appropriate as we move forward with our theatrical endeavours.



Medicine Hat
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Dick Mells ... Founding Member of Medicine Hat Musical Theatre

On June 30th, 1960, Dick Mells and his friend, Lew Bobb, were passing through Medicine Hat on their way to Calgary to catch a flight back to their homeland in New Zealand. They had been teaching at Hodgeville High School in Saskatchewan and had completed their contracts.

Lew is a superb pianist and a pupil of Oscar Peterson. The two gentlemen happened to stop by Joe Levinson's Music Store. Lew sat at a piano and began to play, amazing Levinson who, in his capacity of Medicine Hat School Board Chair, immediately offered them both a teaching position. Mells and Bobb liked the ambiance of Medicine Hat and accepted. They flew back to New Zealand, collected a few possessions and in September of 1960, Dick Mells and Lew Bobb became "Hatters".

Dick was very much involved in theatre in New Zealand, both in University and community theatre. He even had a short stint in professional theatre and had once been thrust into the directorship of "Oklahoma" when the original director became ill.

Wanting to become involved in Medicine Hat theatre, Dick was surprised to learn that no operatic group existed in Medicine Hat as practically every city, town or village in New Zealand had such a group.

According to Mells, *"there was, however, a very active drama group, the Medicine Hat Civic Theatre, with an excellent director, Henry Allergoth, and some very fine actors. When I talked at parties mainly (Medicine Hat was a great party town in the sixties), I discovered that many people, including local bank manager, Wally Hayne, were most interested in a group that would produce Broadway musicals. So I made it a personal assignment to form such a group"*.

Avoiding the name, "Operatic Society",

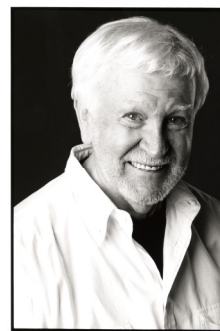
Mells chose the name

The Medicine Hat Musical Theatre.

From then on, it was mostly a matter of knocking on doors of potential enthusiasts. The list of his enthusiastic supporters included the following: Art Heller, Henry Allergoth, Adele Armstrong, Lorne Havard, Dorothy Jones, Evan Tonin, Skip MacDonald and Tillie Ganden. All of whom were involved with the production of OKLAHOMA in February of 1961.

Bank Manager, Wally Hayne, provided the capital for this new venture. An executive Board of Directors was formed and Mells believes that he and Tillie Ganden are the only survivors of that Board.

In 1963, Dick left Medicine Hat to become Superintendent of Culture and Recreation for the City of Lethbridge



RICHARD MELLS

Theatre History.

Dick Mells now lives in Sidney-by-the-Sea near Victoria, BC. He is still very involved with theatre.

Recently, he directed a production of GODSPELL for the Peninsula Players of his community.

He also directed a musical version of THE WIND IN THE WILLOW, which

played at three theatres in the Victoria region over the 2010 Christmas season. Dick wrote the script for this production and also composed several of the songs.

A similar version of ALADDIN was a virtual sell-out during Christmas of 2009.

Mells has directed over 120 productions, including producing and directing the Opening Ceremonies for the Canada Games on two occasions.

"You may imagine how elated I am that the vision of a few enthusiastic Hatters in 1961 has approached 50 years of continuous success!"

where he started the Lethbridge Musical Theatre and was its Artistic Director for seventeen years.

In 1980, he moved to Fort MacMurray and became Director of Theatre Operations at the Keyano Theatre at Keyano College.

In 1987, Mells semi-retired to New Zealand and formed the Devonport Theatre Company. He returned to Canada and settled in West Vancouver, directing several award winning productions for the Eldercollege Theatre Company at Capilano University, where he also conducted courses in Musical

Medicine Hat Musical Theatre was incorporated under the Societies Act December 17, 1962. Thanks to the Dederer family, movies were cancelled in order that the "Oklahoma" performances could take place at the Towne Theatre.

According to Evan Tonin, the Resident Charter Members of Medicine Hat Musical Theatre are:

Adele Armstrong
Otto Bernhardt
Kay Cooney
Cory DeJong
Tillie Ganden
Heather Hall
Mary Hanlon
Clarence Heringer
Anne Kisinger
Joan Mayer
Ron Miller
Bertie Mills
Julie Rogers
Evan Tonin



50th Anniversary Celebration Activity Highlights

We are thrilled to Celebrate our 50th with the presentation of

The Sound of Music, Directed by Bill Cocks

Opening Night, Friday, November 18, 2011

- Dinner Theatre Guests receive a complimentary 50th Anniversary souvenir.
- Dinner Theatre Guests are invited to the Green Room after the show in the Studio Theatre of The Esplanade for a meet and greet with the cast and crew. No Host Bar.
- Dinner Theatre is limited to 125. Please purchase your tickets soon!

Saturday, November 19, 2011—2:00 p.m.—“The Main Event”

- Members, invited guests and dignitaries are encouraged to attend and renew old acquaintances, visit with Dick Mells, enjoy refreshments, view our displays and share memories. No Host Bar. Come in costume, if you wish.
- “The Main Event” will take place at the Musical Theatre Playhouse (1221—10th Avenue S. E.)

Sunday, November 20, 2011

- Immediately following the Matinee performance, members, cast and crew, invited guests and dignitaries are invited to attend a Coffee Party at the Musical Theatre Playhouse for a closing visit.

For further information, please contact a 50th Anniversary Committee member:

Sharon Regehr, Brad Neubauer, Ron Zablocki, Delle Lovig, Lynda Darley, Gail Williams, Pat Jamieson, Tillie Ganden or Dick Mells.



Welcome New Board Members

At its Annual General Meeting in the Spring of 2011, members elected the following individuals to the Board (in alphabetical order):

Dean Bradford

Dave Cruikshank

Paul Francis

Mike Waskalik

These gentleman now join currently serving Board members:

Dave Cannon

Lawrence Gordon

Pat Jamieson

Amber Krause

Lynda Darley

Mike Groth

Della Jesse

Delle Lovig

Derek Martin

Sharon Regehr

Gail Williams

The Board is now 18 members strong.

Bert Propp

Bill Taylor

Ron Zablocki

Lawrence Gordon was elected President

Ron Zablocki was elected Vice President

Amber Krause was re-elected Secretary and Della Jesse was elected Treasurer.

Our previous Treasurer, Brenda Neilson, has moved to Calgary. Our best wishes are extended to Brenda as she enjoys her home and her friends in that city.

Medicine Hat Musical Theatre Presents
Its 50th Anniversary Production...

the SOUND of MUSIC

Music by Richard Rodgers
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse
Suggested by "The Story of the Trapp Family Singers"

November 18, 19, 23, 24, 25 & 26 at 8:00 p.m.
One Matinee on November 20 at 2:00 p.m.
\$30.00, plus GST & Esplanade Service Charge

Dinner & Show Package on Opening Night—November 18
\$65.00, plus GST & Esplanade Service Charge
Dinner Served in The Esplanade Studio Theatre

TICKETS AT THE ESPLANADE

WWW.TXXX.CA
TICKET HOTLINE 502-8777
MON TO FRI 10 - 5PM
SAT / SUN 12 - 5PM
TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE AT MEDICINE HAT MALL
CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK



ESPLANADE
ARTS & HERITAGE CENTRE
WWW.ESPLANADE.CA



Introducing the Cast

Maria		Cara Legare
Captain von Trapp		Randy Feere
Lisel	Jordan Weisgerber	Hannah Myers
Friedrich	Hunter Semrau	Jason English
Louisa	Amie Weisgerber	Samantha Frelick
Kurt	Joshua Hirsch	Simon Frelick
Brigetta	Samantha Scott	Sydney Frelick
Marta	Loni Nickel	Hannah Blackmer
Gretl	Gabrielle Campbell	Ashley Gilmore
Rolf	Hayden Martin	Brett Salmon

Mother Abbess	Heather Macnab
Sister Berte	Shannon English
Sister Margaretta	Jennifer Duiguid
Sister Sophia	Carol Whaley
Franz	Greg McLean
Frau Schmidt	Yvonne Nickel
Elsa Schraeder	Erika Bodnaruk
Max Detweiller	Andrew Plait
Herr Zeller	Doug Frelick
Ursula	Tristan Edmundson
Admiral von Schreiber	Paul Sevcik
Baron Elderfeld	Gordon Nott
Baroness Elderfeld	Judy Taylor
Frau Zeller	Holly Warman

Nuns Chorus:

Jasmyn Bojakli (New Postulant)	Logan Bodnaruk
Lori Frelick	Snookie Welling
Tenille Camphaug	Amanda Peterson

Party People:

Jeff Welling	Paul Nederveen	Hugh English	Tristan Edmundson
Morgan Bosch	Margaret Laing	Julia Bruins-Jacobson	Justin Burkett Robert Grewer

Soldiers:

Robert Grewer	Justin Burkett
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