

Windmill marks anniversary

By Joann Newton

HIGH RIVER—Well Hello Dolly! It's so nice to see you back on stage again with all those other Guys and Dolls we haven't seen for a while. This year, many of the Windmill Theatre Players' past members have returned to the rehearsal floor to participate in a 76 Trombone salute to WTP's 20th anniversary. Entitled Musical Memories, the production is scheduled for showing at High River's Highwood Memorial Centre this November.

In the past 20 years, WTP has brought to the High River stage many familiar musicals such as Finian's Rainbow, The King and I,

Kiss Me Kate, and Carousel. To celebrate this achievement, a production committee was formed and, after much deliberation, one song from each of the 19 musicals was selected for a musical revue.

The producer, Marlene Suitor, director Karen King, musical director Bonnie Duffell, and choreographer Jana Wager have combined their talents with the performers to put together a show that will recapture not only the music but also some of the moments both on and offstage that made each of these productions memorable.

Best of all, it was decided that not only would the songs be

performed again, but each of the original performers of the numbers would be invited to sing them once again. In between the songs, other members will get to Sound off about what they remember of the production. The result is sure to give new meaning to WTP's motto Anything Goes!

Some of the well-remembered past WTP members returning to the stage will include Jack Pickersgill (South Pacific, Pajama Game, Brigadoon); Roy Meadows (Oklahoma); as well as My Fair Lady Barb McInerney and WTP's Music Man Lorne Ball. In addition, such out-of-towners as Hazel Parker (Fiddler

on the Roof) and Graham Smith (Guys and Dolls) are back, as are many others. The Memorial Centre's halls are alive with The Sound of Music as these performers add their voices to enrich the harmonies of the chorus line.

To accompany the performers, Helen Klassen, Ev Pickersgill, and Laura Wall will team up on double pianos while Greg Pippus handles percussion, perhaps giving the phrase Anything you can do . . . new meaning in music.

There will be dinner theatre showings November 17, 18 and 19, an afternoon matinee on

November 20 and regular evening performances November 24, 25 and 26.

Dinner theatre patrons may make bookings by calling Marlene Suitor at 652-7605. Tickets for the matinee and regular performances will be available at Pickersgill's Clothing, High River (652-2252) beginning October 17.

Rehearsal time is always a special time for making and renewing old acquaintances. This year, WTP is especially thankful to past and present performers for coming together to remind us all There's no business like show business.

H.R. TIMES Nov. 6/94

Times gone by



Not the Easter parade

Costumes were at their utmost during Windmill Theatre's production of *My Fair Lady* in the late '70s. A 20-year musical

review will head on stage later in November.

Times archives



ATTENTION

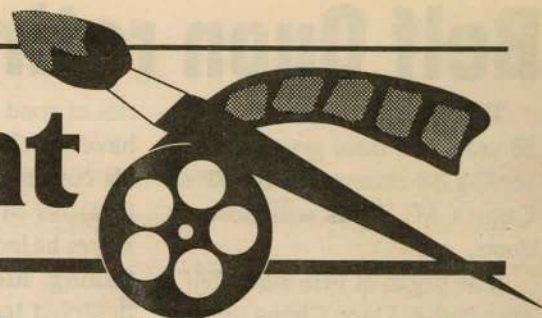
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Windmill Theatre Players

If you have not heard about our special 20th anniversary events planned for November 26, please contact Laura at 281-5505 or Karen at 260-1111.

Regional Nov. 7/94

Arts & Entertainment



Windmill Theatre's 20 years of musical memories

By Paul Hanner

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of Windmill Theatre Players. The anniversary will be celebrated with a pot pourri of "Musical Memories", headlining show-stoppers from Windmill's nineteen musicals. The anniversary show will be produced by Marlene Suitor and directed by Karen King. Dinner theatre performances are scheduled November 17, 18 and 19, to be followed by regular performances November 24, 25 and 26. An extra matinee performance is set for Sunday, Nov. 20.

A lot of memories and nostalgia have been experienced since that classified advertisement appeared in the *High River Times* back in November, 1973, asking anyone interested in "live theatre" to attend a meeting in the Town Hall's recreation office.

On an overcast Monday, Dec. 3 evening, six women and two men were on hand for the momentous meeting that was to form High River's first theatre company.

They were Sheila Rowland, Wally Geres, Paul Neville, Helen

Reinders, Ruth Tarasoff, Chris Tannas, Fadie Gardiner and Joanne Hall.

The first order of business was to select a name, and following several suggestions, it was decided to name the group after a prominent High River landmark — the windmill, located in Pioneer Square.

The young theatre company was full of enthusiasm, and set about readying its first production — *The Matchmaker* in the spring of 1974.

A \$25 Federal Arts Council

Grant and a \$900 provincial grant (matched by Windmill's members) was the initial investment. All other costs were charged on credit, with the fervent hope that *The Matchmaker* would be a hit.

A hit it was, and following four sold-out performances, Windmill Theatre Players was established, and more importantly, solvent! All the bills were paid and theatre was alive and well in small town Alberta!

When it was announced that Windmill Theatre Players was going to mount its first Broadway

musical, *My Fair Lady*, pianist Ev Pickersgill, a devotee of the musical stage, convinced her husband Jack (a full-time businessman/part-time musician) to answer the casting call.

Jack, along with the band's drummer, local electrician Dan Dale, were on hand, when more than 75 theatre enthusiasts turned up at the Highwood Memorial Centre. Pickersgill at the time was leader of a local five-piece dance band, supplementing his income as proprietor of Pickersgill's Men's Wear, the first business to occupy Pioneer Square.

Windmill Theatre Players was one year old when Jack Pickersgill was badly bitten by the theatre bug, and signed on as a member of the chorus. *My Fair*

Lady was to be the first of 15 productions in which Jack was involved.

Jack remembers with much affection his involvement with Windmill and *My Fair Lady*.

"Paul Neville was our director, and brought that necessary touch of professionalism to the show. Probably the show's most important acquisition was the arrival of Glenna Carley from Toronto."

"Glenna was a professional dancer whose credit included a regular spot on the Wayne and Shuster television series. Upon moving to High River, she opened a dance studio in the Teen Town Room (located in the Memorial Centre's basement). Shortly afterwards Glenna accept-

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Eternal love

Fiona (Paula Steel) and Tommy (Jack Pickersgill) pledge eternal love for each other (even though the miracle of time will separate them) in Windmill Theatre Players' production of *Brigadoon*.

Times archives

A lot of hard work went into fancy final footwork

CONTINUED FROM Page 8

ed the choreographer's job, taking a cast of clumsy would-be actors, and turning them into clumsy would-be hoofers." Jack Pickersgill laughs as he remembers those first days of dance rehearsals... all the painful tumbles and ankle-knocks:

"There were dancers with two left feet and dancers with two right feet, but it somehow worked out right in the end." Jack continues: "Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers we weren't, but the sold-out crowds convinced us that we were."

My Fair Lady played three evening performances to turn-away crowds. Barb McNerney was Eliza Doolittle and Don Corns portrayed Professor Higgins. Evelyn Leitch, then in her mid-70s, appeared as Higgins' mother.

My Fair Lady and its cast and crew of 60, set the standard by which future Windmill productions would be judged. All the outstanding bills were paid, and the fledgling theatre company was a viable entity.

Jack Pickersgill counts his association with Windmill Theatre Players among the most significant in his life. His years as a musician and actor have produced countless memories.

He talks about one in particular: "Playing trumpet for the *Roy Rogers Show* at the Calgary Stampede was an unbelievable experience. The show was produced in the Corral, and the orchestra was under the direction of Raphael Mendez, acknowledged as one of the world's foremost trumpet virtuosos. I really believe that playing with Mendez made me a better musician, and for that, I'll always be grateful."

With two shows a year — a

musical in the spring, and a regular play in the fall — Windmill established itself in southern Alberta as a major player in live theatre.

The Matchmaker, *My Fair Lady*, *Oklahoma* and *Arsenic And Old Lace*, all enjoyed critical acclaim, and equally important, box-office success.

Temperament is an emotion, not unknown among stage performers. Such an incident occurred during the 1978 spring production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*. Jack Pickersgill tells the story as he remembers it: "The show starred Jennie Stone and Chris Loree. I think it was the second night that a white-faced Jennie announced, two minutes before curtain-time, that she would not go on — no reasons, no explanations!"

"A cool Chris Tannas saved the day, taking Jennie to the far corner of back stage. What was said or done was never revealed, but Jennie went on stage to give the performance of her young career."

Carousel produced another oddity. Roy Meadows lost his voice mid-song. In keeping with the theatre's famous motto: The Show Must Go On, Roy assumed a Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong gravel-type voice, and was able to finish the performance. By remaining silent throughout the next day and continual throat medication, Roy was able to complete the show's engagement.

The spirit of comradeship between Windmill's members was akin to that of soldiers under fire during wartime conditions. Over the company's 20-year existence, many friendships were formed, relationships cemented.

Jack Pickersgill remembers the spring of 1979, when he co-

starred with Paula Steel in the musical *Brigadoon*: "It sounds kind of hokey, but Alan Kemery and Isola Wright, two dedicated Windmill performers decided to exchange their marriage vows on stage. So the mythical Scottish vottage of *Brigadoon* became the setting for the Kemery/Wright wedding. It would only happen in show business." Pickersgill smiled.

Jack enjoyed his dual involvement in the 1980 spring production of *Annie Get Your Gun*. The smash Broadway hit and Hollywood movie starred Cheryl Howell as Annie Oakley and Stephen Hall as Frank Butler. Jack reminisces: "I portrayed Foster Wilson, the hotel manager. I had this great production number *Doin' what Comes Naturally*. Working with such an enthusiastic and talented performer as Cheryl, in addition to co-ordinating the musical aspects of the show, was an invaluable experience."

Pickersgill is quick to acknowledge the many behind-the-scenes contributions that are vital to a show's success: "Let's not forget our musicians, especially the pianists who supplied the accompaniment for Windmill's 19 musical productions. Some that come to mind — Marg Fraser, Connie Hut, Laura Ferguson, Peggy Montgomery, Esther Brown and I mustn't forget Ev, my lovely and supportive wife."

Also behind-the-scenes were important contributions from the choreographers. Jack smiles as he looks back over the years to those many painful hours of dance rehearsals: "These are the folks who deserve all the praise in the world, for their talent, teaching skills and most of all, having the patience of Job. Glenna Carley

was the first and set a high standard for the choreographers to follow. Others included Marg Poland, Alet Ferry, Ed Lord, Dan Kohn, Bev Versluys-Colbow and Jana (Wardley) Wager."

The spring of '81 saw Windmill's most ambitious production to date, as a cast and crew of over a hundred went into rehearsal for Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*. Top roles went to Barb McNerney as U.S. Navy nurse Nellie Forbush and Roy Meadows as plantation owner Emile de Beque.

Jack Pickersgill was cast in the role of Luther Billis, an American seaman, and tells this story: "Ev and I went to Hawaii for a vacation, and knowing of our involvement in *South Pacific*, brought back an authentic grass skirt and coconut shells (for his *Honeybun* number with Barb) as well as all kinds of material for sarongs, muu-muus and flower leis."

Jack considers *South Pacific* as his favorite show: "I was able to identify with my character Billis. It probably goes back to my time in the Navy." Pickersgill served in the North Atlantic on Corvettes from 1943 to 1945.

As Billis, Jack had a tattoo of a battleship on his stomach: "Half an hour before every perfor-

mance, Hazel Parker painted this tattoo on my stomach. Once the show was over, I kind of missed those 'art sessions'."

South Pacific was Windmill's first show that featured a full orchestra. Bob Parker recruited and conducted 12 musicians from the Senator Riley high school band — Darren Hedley, Karen Lange, Brad Osberg, Shannah Fossen, Gord Poelman, Mike Vooyo, Carmen Shier, Leah Langenberger, Russ Honeyman, Jeff Butler, Kevin Fisher and Stephen Platt. The same ensemble was on hand for *Guys And Dolls* and *Pajama Game*. A 13-piece band, drawing on young musicians from the HMCS Tecumseh Band, played for *Mame*.

Another of Pickersgill's favorites was Windmill's 1982 production of *Guys and Dolls*. In this he portrayed the Damon Runyon character, Nicely Nicely Johnson. Jack remembers rehearsing his musical numbers with Lorne Ball: "Lorne would finish his *Wake-up Alberta* radio program — then come over to my store (Pickersgill's Men's Wear)."

"Around 10 o'clock every morning, we'd rehearse our routines at the back of the store. Sometimes I'd wonder what my

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Happy couples three

Steve Young, youngest member of *The Matchmaker* cast speaks to a capacity audience at the conclusion of the Windmill Theatre Players' production. Times archives

Be sure to bring a tissue to this performance

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customers were thinking as they spied Lorne and I working on our *Fugue For Tin Horns* number. I always explained it away with 'that's show business!'

Over Windmill's 20 years, there have been many families who've devoted their time and energy to the theatre. Jack remembers a few: "The Suitors have contributed so much to Windmill . . . Marlene, Dave, Jodie, Erin and Cheryl. Then there's the Penmans, Parkers, Burtons, Hunts and Tannas family; and who could forget the Rowlands . . . Sheila, Tadric, Brett, Jessica and Courtney. Husband Bob Rowland deserves mention for the countless nights he

babysat while Sheila was contributing her many talents to Windmill."

Guys and Dolls saw a major family contribution from the Beatons, with Alex, Faye and Heather all appearing in the show.

Some of Windmill's important participants are no longer with us, and Pickersgill remembers with some emotion the contributions of Tom Motil, Dan Dale, Arlene Hippard, John Hansen, Allen Cowx and Harold Millard.

In Windmill's 20-year history only two incidents occurred when the show did not go on. One occurred on the second night of *The Odd Couple*, Robert Fox (in the role of Oscar Madison) com-

plained of a headache following the opening night. The next morning he suffered a stroke and the ensuing performances were cancelled. Years later, Fox still enjoys talking about his association with Windmill Theatre Players.

When asked to look back over his 20-year affiliation with Windmill, Jack Pickersgill closes his eyes and remembers: "Viv and Rod Chant — their set design and construction was so creative. Toots Young, Mildred Brocklebank, Mim Meadows and 'Biddy', for their expertise in costumes, props and make-up.

"Who could overlook May Bowman and Marlene Suitor for their front-of-house management

and ticket administration . . . and when it came to concessions you could always count on Don and Chris Tannas."

Twenty years of Windmill Theatre Players' productions have brought together a troupe of veterans and relative newcomers to celebrate an anniversary of accomplishments.

Producer Marlene Suitor and Director Karen King have assembled the stars of years gone by, to recapture their successes with show-stoppers from *My Fair Lady*, *Mame*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Guys And Dolls*, *Oklahoma*, *Hello Dolly*, *South Pacific*, *The Music Man*, and *Fiddler on The Roof*, to name just a few.

Recreating their original roles will be Barb McInerney, Jim Goodwin, Paula Steel, Cheryl Howell, Bonnie Duffell, Lorne Ball, George Stone, Roy Meadows, Laura Wall, Grace MacLeod, Graham Smith, Celia Penman, Mark Aitchison, Ray Fox and Jack Pickersgill.

During last Wednesday's rehearsal, the cast and crew gathered for an anniversary portrait, and many a tear was quietly shed.

Jack Pickersgill was among the group: "It was like turning back the hands of time — all those friends and all those memories — it's so sad that they all couldn't be here to share this very special moment."

Be sure to bring along a good supply of Kleenex to the Highwood Memorial Centre, when you help The Windmill Theatre Players celebrate their 20th anniversary with a nostalgic trip down memory lane.

Windmill Theatre Players
celebrates 20 years of
Musical Memories

EVENING PERFORMANCES - 8:00 P.M.
November 24, 25, 26, 1994
Tickets \$8.00, \$6.00 - Seniors & Students

MATINEE PERFORMANCE - 2:00 P.M.
November 20, 1994
Tickets \$6.00

HIGHWOOD MEMORIAL CENTRE, HIGH RIVER
Tickets for reserved seating on sale at
Pickersgill's Clothing, High River

DINNER THEATRE PERFORMANCES
November 17, 18, 19, 1994
For ticket information call 652-7605

Congratulations on 20 years Windmill Theatre

CONGRATULATIONS TO High River's Windmill Theatre Players who have successfully completed one weekend of their performance of *Musical Memories* with one more weekend to go and most coming from it will

tell you it is a delight.

WTP is another example of the talent which lies in the Foothills. Each play comes with a lot of hard work from volunteers, but your fans and community appreciate it.

Thanks for the memories.

Dessert theatre and auction raises \$3,000 for Nanton library

By Steve Sears

NANTON — A dessert theatre and auction raised an estimated \$3,000 for the Thelma Fanning Memorial Library in Nanton on October 29.

All money raised at the benefit at Nanton Community Centre will be used to add new books and videotapes to the library's shelves.

The audience was treated to a performance of Chekhov's *Trout*, from the pen of Nanton playwright Larry MacKillop.

Inspired by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov's *Marriage Proposal*, MacKillop's play is set in contemporary Alberta. Farm families face problems to which the largely farmer-oriented audience could identify. The audience responded with appreciative laughs and chuckles as the dialogue touched close to home.

MacKillop's play had its debut in High River in February 1991 by Windmill Theatre and was performed last weekend in Claresholm at a dessert theatre in support of that library.

Cast members included Cheryl Howell, George Stone, Diana Bird, Larry MacKillop, and Mark Aitcheson. Chekhov's *Trout* was directed by Bill Tupkal.

Stage management, lighting and sound was handled by Aitcheson and Tupkal.

Proceeds from the auction of donated items totalled \$2,532.50.

Items for sale included two batches of four gourmet dinners. The first dinners, donated by Leslie Birrell and Louise Adie, sold for \$150 to George White. The second batch, donated by Diane Tse of Ken's Restaurant, sold for an average of \$67.50 to Mary Gibson (two) and the McDougalls (two).

Jugs of Dino DePaoli's homemade wine fetched \$50 from Joanne Cooper and \$65 from George Gaschler.

A one-hour massage by Herb Johnson was worth \$100 to Sheila Macklin. Ryan Mahaffy figured Sheila Macklin's herbal first aid kit was worth \$52.50.

A colonial dresser and hutch with mirror, donated by Jim Carr of Gotta B Wood, sold for \$500 to Jim and Betty Lowe.

For \$65, Donna Coulter bought a 30-minute sight-seeing flight for three, donated by Alex Bahlsen of the High River Flight Centre.

A double-sized woolen mattress pad donated by Bonnie Gardner of Bonnie's Comfort Quilts brought \$100 from Dr. Corbett of High River.

A ceramic floral pitcher, basin and matching table cloth from Diane Wilson and the Dressing Up store brought \$30 from Bill Tupkal.

A clock, donated by Jerry Farrow of Stedmans V&S Department Store, was bought by Kathie Wilson for \$25.

A 45-litre camping cooler

with a three-litre juice jug, four drink holders, a butane lighter, two plastic cups, barbecue grease buster and brush, Off Skintastic lotion, and paper napkins donated by Tom McDougall and Home Building Supply, was bought by Alex Bahlsen.

Two \$30 gift certificates donated by Peter and Theresa Lee of Tom Boy Foods sold to Bill Loree for \$70.

A mounted Vincent Van Gogh street scene print donated by Claire and Joe English of Western Art and Farming sold to Bob and Jodie Roddie for \$110. A still life oil painting from Margaret Koinberg sold to Neil Wilson for \$50.

Two sets of Pinnacle golf balls donated by Nanton Insurance sold to George White and Bob and Jodie Roddie for \$35 per set.

A set of angle clamp booster cables from Terry's Tire — Tirecraft was sold to Fay Katay.

Two wills donated by Roddie, Gordon, McLellan were acquired by John and Patricia Blake for \$100 each.

A handcrafted wooden deer donated by John Fox sold for \$45 to George Gaschler.

A handcrafted wedding vase donated by Mary Stapley sold for \$35 to Dr. Corbett.

Five pounds of sausages donated by Gordon Denoon were

acquired by Paul Lievaart for \$140 and resold to Bob Lowe for \$100.

Kathy Wilson won a door prize, a meal at the Promoters Seafood Dinner on December 4.

Other auction items included a pie, homemade jam and a bottle of rum.

Library board chairman Paul Lievaart and directors Louise Adie, Leslie Birrell, Jean Comstock, Marian Greig, Tom McDougall, Janet Melbourne and Lizabeth Dwyer were kept busy throughout the evening making coffee, tea, serving desserts and cleaning. Other volunteers that evening were the "Cottage Caterers" Diane Wilson and Lynn Knight who set up the dessert table.

After the sale the audience lined up to choose from desserts baked by library members.

Music was provided by the quartet of Carmen Ackroyd, Neil Wilson, Herb Johnson and Gordon McCartney. The Dressing Up store provided tuxedos for the three male musicians.

Bernie Lalonde did a fabulous job entertaining the audience as the auctioneer.

Louise Adie was the driving force behind the idea for a dessert theatre which was initially introduced to the Board by Larry MacKillop.



Larry MacKillop looks on as George Stone listens intently to Cheryl Howell in MacKillop's production of *Chekhov's Trout* at the Dessert Theatre performance in Nanton, Saturday, Oct. 29. Photo by Karen Freeman.

WTP reviews 20 years of entertainment

Even though it's officially summer and usually a time to take a break from plays, Windmill Theatre Players (WTP) is already starting the behind-the-scenes preparatory work for a special production this year.

It is WTP's 20th year in local theatre production this year. To celebrate its anniversary, WTP is preparing to take a retrospective look at some of the songs and memories from its long list of musical productions including *Sound of Music*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The King and I* and *South Pacific*.

Rehearsals for the 20th anniversary production will begin in September. It will combine the work of both present and past WTP members as it brings back the singers who originally performed them in order to "play it again, Sam".

In addition, Windmill's 20th anniversary committee is planning other gala events. WTP has already hosted both the Regional and Provincial One Act Play Festivals this past February and March which has brought more good memories.

At the WTP's annual general meeting this year in May last year's events were reviewed, upcoming events projected and a new executive was elected. Bill Tupkal passed the presidency on to Greg Smyth with Mark Aitcheson as vice-president. Three new directors Karen Lawrence, Shannon Simington and Cliff Cameron were elected and have already conveyed a welcome interest in taking WTP into the next 20 years.

Members and general public may now use WTP gift certificates for a dramatical gift option by calling Marlene Suitor 652-7605.

Theatre group's going strong

Windmill veterans gather to prepare special show for 20th anniversary bash

By Shirley Hartig
Windmill Theatre Players

"We were just a few people with a very large idea," said Sheila Rowland regarding Windmill Theatre Player's eight founding members. With a lot of hard work and ingenuity, the idea was turned into reality.

Throughout the past 20 years, the original "cast" has been supported by numerous stars with varied theatrical abilities and talents. In fact, a list resembling a phone book would be required to name each one who played a part in Windmill's success. They all worked toward a common goal from behind the scenes to centre stage.

In the beginning, the original members had had previous theatrical experience of varying degrees. Paul Neville, WTP's first director, had worked with the Morningside Players and Swanson Little Theatre in their productions of musicals such as Oklahoma and South Pacific. Wally Geres found his niche on stage with the Regina Little Theatre. He directed plays and productions as a high school teacher, hence, Windmill's second director.

As time passed, other talents appeared on the scene and were incorporated into the fold. Their knowledge and past experiences were an asset to the group.

Shannon Simington's first part with WTP was wife number nine in *The King and I*. She has done community theatre for over 15 years and during that time was involved in about 60 productions. Shannon has been awarded best director at both the regional and provincial levels for one act plays, and has two best actress awards to her credit in community theatre. The duties of house manager will be filled by Shannon for Musical Memories.

Another actor, Lorne Ball, brings his experience as a former radio and television personality. He first appeared in *Guys and Dolls*, then continued on stage with *Music Man*, *Finian's Rainbow*, and a supporting role in *Sound of Music*. Lorne is with us once again for *Musical Memories*.

Laura Wall, a music teacher in Calgary, has done numerous productions and duties with WTP. For instance, she was Mame in *Mame*, Maria in *Sound of Music*, directed *Can't Take It With You*, and was musical director for *Finian's Rainbow*.

Some fledgling actors caught the theatre bug from WTP, then went on to study drama at the post secondary level. Fortunately, they remained with Windmill after completing their education. Ro Montgomery, a junior high drama teacher, always loved being on stage.

"My mother put me on stage when I was three and I loved it," said Ro. However, it wasn't until she was in high school that Ro became the reluctant debutante. Many productions later, she continues to assist fellow actors and the whole group.

The Matchmaker was Windmill's first production, however, the theatre company continued playing the role of matchmaker when "Steve met Celia" during the spring production of *Hello Dolly*. Steve Penman's job was the lighting. Rumor has it that Steve wrote in Celia's program something to the effect of his stage job being redundant because of her smile. Ahhh! They married in January '85. Several other matches were made within the group, as well.

"My sister dragged me down here," said Steve. Good going, Sis, since Steve Penman got the lead role in a one act play called *Dust of the Road* in 1982. Since that time, he has been busy taking part in about 25 shows as an actor and director. While remaining active with theatre, Steve worked toward his Bachelor of Education and majored in drama.

As he put it, "It is what I love to do and hope to have it become my living."

The director of *Musical Memories*, Karen King, also began her career in High River when she was asked to write a children's play for a Christmas production.

"Until that time, I had never written a play," said Karen. Although since 1985, she has written several one acts and directed plays and musicals. Some of her accomplishments include winning director at the regionals of 1993 with *Il Fornicazione*. The *House Still Stands*, a play written by Karen received honorable mention at the provincials in 1992. *Musical Memories* was co-written by Karen King and Cliff Cameron.

Another category of actors are those who began with Windmill, then moved on to bigger stages of their careers. Lawrence Larson started in the chorus of *Pajama Game*. He went on to star in several one act plays and dinner theatre comedies. Lawrence has appeared in some shows with Theatre 80. At present, he is in L.A. pursuing a film career.

A young high school student, Steven Young, played Barnaby Tucker in *The Matchmaker*. Later, he found himself on television doing commercials. Steven now lives in North York and recently received a major promotion as senior cast director for the CBC.

This look back at actors who have moved on would not be complete without sounding off about the star of *Charlie's Aunt*. Chris Hunt is now a full-time actor.

"My first mainstage experience was *Sound Off*," said Chris. Then came *Annie Get Your Gun*. "Being a part of WTP is definitely the reason I went for my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drama," remarked Chris.

Being the 20th anniversary for WTP, many memories are called to mind. However, Windmill is always propelling forward. Although the fall



The Mother Abbess (Celia Penman) discusses Maria's future at the abbey in Windmill's 1988 production of *The Sound of Music*. A review of 20 years of WTP musicals will take place later in November. Times archives.

production of *Musical Memories* has yet to open, next spring's program is already in the works. Shannon Simington will direct *Gone to Glory*. From what I've been told about the play, spring is just too far off.

All productions take place at the Highwood Memorial Centre which is home to WTP. They have in turn assisted with improvements such as; curtains, stage floor, stage drapes, and curtains. Their efforts benefit other groups who use the centre.

This fall, Windmill enters a new stage of community involvement. There will be a dessert table of tummy-tempting treats featured at the regular performances and profits will be donated to the Emergency Food Service. Boxes for non-perishable items will be provided as well. Be a star. Come out and let your light shine for others less fortunate.

In this production, no one has been named as lead. So, who are the stars? Every member of the cast and crew.

Musical Memories dinner theatre is November 17 to 19; matinee, November 20 at 2 p.m.; regular performances November 24 to 26.

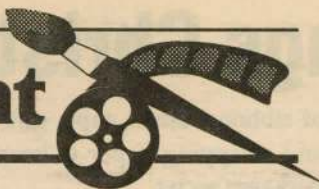
For dinner theatre tickets phone 652-7605. Regular performance tickets are at Pickersgill's Clothing 652-2252.

A little puff of wind: All former WTP members are invited to the special gala event on November 26.

For information, members may phone 281-5505.



Arts & Entertainment



WTP hosts dessert theatre

The three final performances of Windmill Theatre Players' *Musical Memories* will take place Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening of this week at the Highwood Memorial Centre.

Originally, these performances were to have featured theatre-style seating, however this plan has been modified in

— Proceeds to Emergency Food Service

favor of table seating — similar to that found at dinner theatre.

This change will allow Windmill to offer dessert theatre to its audience. Patrons will be able to purchase desserts and refreshments prior to the performances and during inter-

mission. All profit from these sales will be donated to the High River and District Emergency Food Service.

Theatre-goers can also bring a donation of non-perishable food to the centre and leave it in the collection box in the lobby.

The call is out!

On Canada Day weekend next year, High River will be invaded by hundreds of former residents who will be here for Homecoming '95.

In 1980 the town hosted a very successful high school reunion. Again in 1985 and 1990 similar reunions were organized.

Another half decade has passed and once more plans are under way for another gala get-together. In the past, the reunions included only former students of High River and Senator Riley high schools. This time, however, invitations are going out to all former High Riverites, whether or not they attended HRHS or SRHS. That certainly opens up

the guest list in a big way.

The challenge now facing the organizers is to get in touch with all these prospective visitors — and to do that, they are asking for your help.

Townspersons are being asked to pick up invitations and registration forms (available at local business places) and send them to any friends and former neighbors who might be interested in attending the homecoming.

Events planned for Homecoming '95 include a wine and cheese social, a town tea, a banquet and dance, a barbecue in the park and a farewell breakfast.

Please do your part to see that no one is missed, because Homecoming '95 promises to be a most memorable event.

UPA
WINDMILL

**Bill
Holmes**



Twenty years of Windmill Theatre Players' *Musical Memories* will light up the stage of the Memorial Centre and the hearts of local theatre-goers starting this week.

Musical Memories is a collection of the best-known songs from all the musicals produced by WTP since the group was founded 20 years ago.

Thursday is opening night for dinner theatre with further performances Friday and Saturday evenings. Non-dinner shows take place on Sunday afternoon and Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Nov. 24 to 26.

H.R. Times **Nov. 15-94

TALE-ENDER — It's time to make plans to construct and enter a float in High River's Santa Claus Parade. The parade and ever-popular Moonlight Madness will be held on Friday, Dec. 2.



A BLAST FROM THE PAST — Buffalo Bill (l - Mike Hartman) listens to Frank Butler (Stephen Hall) as he vehemently denies a point made about his Annie Oakley in the 1980 Windmill Theatre Players' production of *Annie Get Your Gun*. Many classics will be reviewed to celebrate 20 years of Windmill November 17-20 and 24-26 in High River.

REGIONAL Nov. 7/94



Alive with the sound of music

Max Detweiler (Lorne Ball) shows the Salzberg Festival program to the von Trapp children in Windmill Theatre Player's 1988 production of *The Sound of Music* a review of 20 years of WTP will take place the weekends of November 17 and November 24. Times archives

Nov. 15-94

Windmill fans delighted with 20th anniversary gift

By Paul Hanner

"Happy 20th anniversary Windmill!" This appeared to be the sincere sentiment of a near-capacity Highwood Memorial Centre dinner-theatre crowd, as it applauded every song, every dance and every joke, during the two-and-a-half-hour production of *Musical Memories '74-'94*, Thursday evening.

As the title suggests, the evening consists of show-stoppers from Windmill's 20 years of musical productions.

Following a fast-paced opening medley (*Sound of Music*, *Get Me To The Church On Time*, *Getting To Know You*, *People Will Say We're In Love*, *If This Isn't Love* and 76 Trombones), Lorne Ball sets the scene and mood of the evening by tracing the evolution of Windmill from its inception in 1974 to the present day, with some humorous anecdotes along the way.

Special tribute was paid to a couple of Windmill supporters: Ma Crosby, for her support through her *Times* column and Julia Toth, who has never missed an opening night since Windmill's first production of *The Matchmaker*, in the spring of 1974.

There were 19 production numbers, each one introduced by rotating groups of Windmill members who had been involved in the original performances. Sets were kept to a simple minimum,

comprising of three moveable bleachers, allowing for a fluid continuity from one number to the next.

Barb McInerney opened the evening, reprising her 1976 role of Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, singing *I Could Have Danced All Night*. From then on, it was one hit after another, each met with an enthusiastic audience response.

The show's highlights were supplied by George Stone and Mark Aitcheson (*Brush Up Your Shakespeare* from *Kiss Me Kate*—1990); Jack Pickersgill and Barb McInerney (*Honey Bun* from *South Pacific*—1981); Jim Goodwin and Gordon Scott (*Both Sides Of The Coin* from *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*—1993); and Ray Fox and Laura Wall (*Shall We Dance* from *The King And I*—1993). These four numbers were flawlessly reprised and drew thunderous applause.

Windmill veteran Paula Steel was in good voice as she (and Jack Pickersgill) performed *The Heather On The Hill* from *Brigadoon* (1979) and the title song from *Hello Dolly* (1984).

From Windmill's 1989 production of *Finian's*

Rainbow, Cheryl Howell's *How Are Things In Glocca Morra?* was a delight, as were George Stone and Hazel Parker with *Sunrise, Sunset* from *Fiddler On The Roof* (1986), and the irrepressible trio of Lorne Ball, Jack Pickersgill and Graham Smith from *Fugue For Tin Horns* from *Guys And Dolls* (1982).

Other noteworthy performances came from Roy Meadows (*Oklahoma!*—1977); Celia Penman (*The Sound of Music*—1988); Laura

Wall, Ray Fox and Jim Goodwin (*The Pajama Game*—1983); Bill Stevenson and Celia Penman (*Mame*—1991); Darlene Goodwin (replacing Jenny Stone, *Carousel*—1978) and Grace MacLeod (replacing Alet Rasmussen in *Sound Off*—1979).

Following the intermission, orchestra conductor Bonnie Duffell traded in her baton, to open up the second half of the evening. In her role of Reno

Sweeney, Bonnie was effortless, singing the title song from Windmill's 1987 production of *Anything Goes*.

It was left up to Lorne Ball, a crowd favorite throughout the evening, to apply the icing to Windmill's 20th anniversary celebrations, with the show-stopping finale. It came from the 1985 production of *The Music Man*, and Lorne's inspired *You've Got Trouble* (*In River City*) was a fitting conclusion to a finger-snapping, toe-tapping evening.

The cast of 33 were all on stage for *There's No Business Like Show Business* (from *Annie*

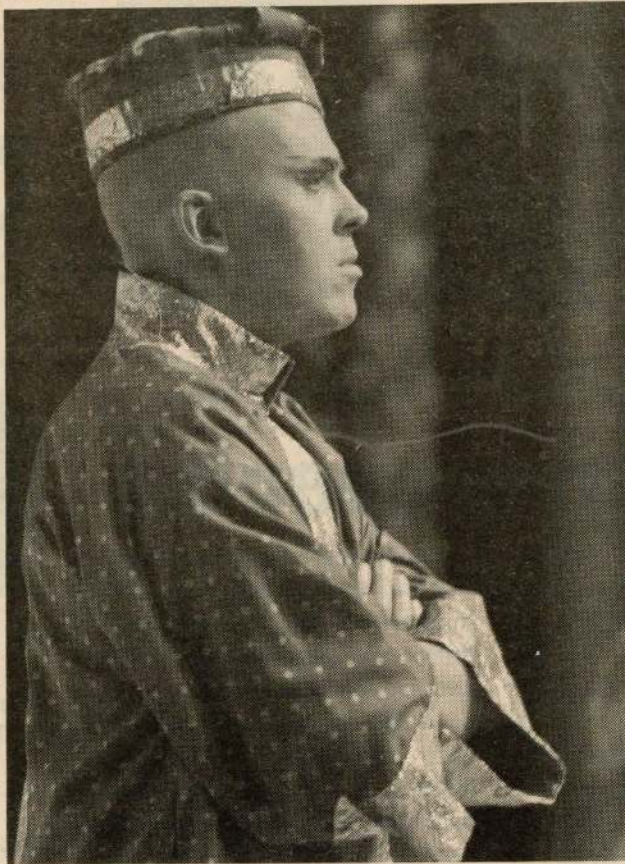
Get Your Gun—1980) . . . the rousing encore, that had the opening-night audience clapping along with the music.

Behind-the-scenes kudos must go to Marlene Suitor (producer), Karen King (director), Cheryl Suitor-Fox (assistant director), Bonnie Duffell (music director), Jana Wager (choreographer), Greg Smyth (stage manager), Joann Newton (costume designer), June Polnau (make-up) and Steven Penman (set design).

The orchestra was outstanding in its support of the singers and dancers, and deserves a special mention . . . so take a bow Helen Klassen, Ev Pickersgill and Laura Wall on piano, Greg Pippus on drums and page turner Chantelle Duffell. The orchestra was under the direction of Bonnie Duffell.

Regular performances of *Musical Memories*—Windmill's 20th anniversary production continue this Thursday, Friday and Saturday (November 24, 25 and 26) at the Highwood Memorial Centre in High River. Advance tickets can be picked up at Pickersgill's Clothing (652-2252), or at the door, prior to each evening's performance.

It's a great night out, so join friends, relatives and supporters of WTP, and help them celebrate 20 years of musical memories (and plan on being around for the next 20 years!)



Ray Fox made an impression in *The King and I* in 1993.

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CALGARY MIRROR, Saturday, November 26, 1994

Drama company marks 20th year

Twenty years ago, eight people gathered in High River to form a drama group.

"We were just a few people with a large idea," said Sheila Rowland, founding member of Windmill Theatre Projects.

Since that day, Dec. 3, 1974, the original idea has continued to grow.

The group's anniversary theme is *Musical Memories*, a collection of past performances of song and dance by some original cast members, along with some memorable mayhem.

Musical Memories was written by Cliff Cameron and Karen King, a Calgary playwright. King received an honorable mention at the Provincial One-Act Festival in 1991 for *The House Still Stands*, which she wrote and directed.

In 1993, King won at the regionals for her direction.

Memories is produced by Marlene Suitor, a long-time and very active member of WTP.

A dessert table of treats is being featured at the performances, with proceeds donated to the food bank. In addition, drop-off boxes are available for those wishing to donate non-perishables.

This weekend is your last chance to catch *Musical Memories*. For tickets, call 652-2252.

Windmill Theatre Players would like to thank the following contributors to our recent silent auction.

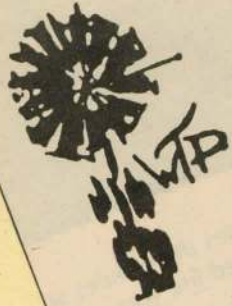
Mark Aitcheson	Emor's Saddlery
Austen Jewellers	The Flour Garden
Marnie Ball	Donna Fox
Brambles Books and Crafts	Inner Health
T. Dawson	Karen Lawrence
Photo/Graphics	Steve Penman
A. George Dearing	Petticoat Lane
Dolphin Health and Massage	River Roadhouse
	Padric Rowland

Congratulations to the successful bidders. A total of \$998.51 was raised to assist with the purchase of the new front stage curtains in the Memorial Centre. Thank you to Pat LaPierre of Photo Encounters and Ken Staves of Chesapeake Design for lending us easels.

H.R. Times Dec. 20-94

H. R. TIMES DEC. 27 / 94

**Windmill Theatre Players
AUDITIONS
for Spring Production
"Gone to Glory"**



2 Male and 4 Female Roles
Sunday, January 8 - 2:00 pm
Monday, January 9 - 7:30 pm
Highwood Memorial Centre

For more information call Cheryl 652-4931
or Shannon 652-4892

**River Roadhouse Restaurant
& Windmill Theatre**

presents

*Murder Mystery
Dinner Theatre*

THURSDAY, JAN. 26, 7 P.M.

Tickets \$15.95 per person (includes dinner)

Tickets available at the River Roadhouse or Cheryl at 652-4931 or Marlene at 652-7605

Limited Seating — Reserve Early!

River Roadhouse "Where the Fun Begins"

*Monday Night
is Pasta Night*

\$6.95

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*"Have you tried
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*Gunbarrel
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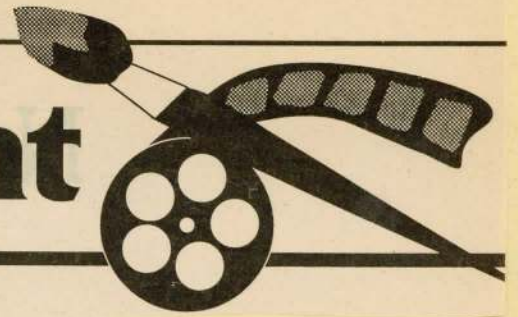
**Every Sunday
4 'til 9 PM**

RESERVATIONS
RECOMMENDED FOR
PARTIES OF 6 OR MORE.

River Roadhouse Restaurant & Bar 420 Centre St. N., High River, 652-1555

H. R. TIMES JAN. 17 / 95

Arts & Entertainment



Windmill one-act plays coming

By Ann Holmes

In preparation for the annual Regional One-Act Play Festival, February 17 and 18, High River's Windmill Theatre Players will perform a pre-competition showing at Dessert Storm III, February 10 and 11 at the Highwood Memorial Centre.

Seven one-act plays will be performed by the High River group, including *Boxing Day* by Larry MacKillop, a comedic look at AIDS and homophobia; *Polite*


Conversation by Karen King, portraying a cold-war stand-off in a campus dorm; *Thursday Continued* by Larry MacKillop, depicting the daily battle of life waged by a man who has suffered a brain injury; *Married Bliss* by Mark O'Donnell uses word play in its love triangle; *Nosey Parker* by Rose Scollard demonstrates the war of the sexes; *Courtship* by Steve Penman depicts some tactical moves of courtship through senior gentle-

men; and *Stalag 69* takes a look at life in a POW camp. Try as they might, the cast has a bigger battle off stage against incompetent stage crew members.

Windmill fans will note that five of the seven plays have been locally written.

Dessert will be served at 7 p.m. with curtain at 8 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door for one or both evenings. Those in attendance are encouraged to bring their own dishes.

Windmill Theatre Players
PRESENTS
 the 1995 Alberta Zone B
 One Act Play Festival



Ten plays presented over three sessions.
 Friday, February 17, 7:30 pm
 Saturday, February 18, 1:30 pm
 Saturday, February 18, 8:00 pm

TICKETS
 \$5.00 per session
 or \$10.00 for a festival pass
 Available at the door

Any questions, call Steve Penman at 652-7913



Windmill
 Theatre
 Players
 presents

**Dessert
 Storm III**



Two evenings of one-act plays
 with
 song and dessert interludes.

February 10 (4 plays)
 February 11 (3 plays)

Highwood Memorial Centre, High River
 Tickets available at the door.
 \$8.00/night • \$15.00/both nights