

Playhouse Holiday fonds

Compiled by Chris Hives (1987)
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University of British Columbia Archives



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Fonds Description

Playhouse Holiday fonds. – 1966-1975.

2.7 m of textual records and published materials.

Administrative History

The name HOLIDAY has meant theatre to thousands of B.C. school students since 1953, when Joy Coghill, Myra Benson and five other artists each contributed twenty dollars to form a theatre company devoted to the interests of children. The name Holiday was chosen to represent the spirit and enthusiasm of the organization. The original idea of the Holiday Theatre (1953-1965) was to tour throughout the province presenting plays for the elementary grades. From the outset, this proved to be an enormously successful venture and expansion quickly ensued. While 1953 represents the official formation of Holiday Theatre, its origins can be traced back to 1949. In that year, UBC Summer Session School of Theatre (which specialized in children's theatre productions for many years) staged a production of *The Emperor's New Clothes* at the university. Children's theatre productions on the UBC campus were originally held in the old Auditorium. At a later date they were held in a former army hut named in honour of Professor Frederic Wood, the forerunner of the present Frederic Wood Theatre. As Holiday Theatre grew in reputation, various levels of governments began to provide grants to develop new projects. By 1966, the organization had purchased a building, produced sixty plays and performed to well over 100,000 children annually. In 1966, the Holiday Theatre and the Playhouse Theatre company formed a new association, Holiday Playhouse which was designed to encompass the educational activities of the two organizations. This included the Holiday Theatre touring operations. By 1967, the activities of the Holiday Theatre and the newly established Holiday Playhouse were defined:

1. Holiday Theatre presented a repertory of plays for Vancouver audiences and expanded the creative drama classes;
2. Holiday Playhouse expanded the touring operation and developed new forms of presentation.

In May 1969, the activities of the Holiday Theatre and Holiday Playhouse were again amalgamated with the activities of the Playhouse Theatre Company. The new organization, Playhouse Holiday operated from 1969 to 1974.

The connection between UBC and the Playhouse Children's Theatre is somewhat tenuous. The University provided a home for the children's theatre initially. It also provided, through the Department of University Extension, staff and advisors. The company itself, while fluid in personnel, had a base of UBC connected members for many years. Ultimately the links were broken, but when the question of disposal of the

records arose, it appeared that those that possessed them had close University ties and were anxious for them to be returned to their original home base, the University of British Columbia. Dorothy Somerset, Nora Gregory and Joy Coghill Thorne asked that the Rushton Collection be deposited in the University Archives. Because this collection contained Holiday Theatre and Holiday Playhouse records, it appears that the Vancouver Playhouse considers the UBC Archives a suitable repository for the remainder of the Holiday Playhouse material.

Scope and Content

Fonds consists of financial statements, correspondence, itineraries, publicity material, and a scrapbook pertaining to the administration and performances of Playhouse Holiday and some of its predecessors. Fonds includes administrative materials pertaining to the Playhouse Theatre Company's Audience Development Campaign. Fonds also includes scripts of Holiday Playhouse performances.

Notes

File list available.

For more information about children's theatre in British Columbia, refer to the [Margaret Rushton Theatre Collection](#), which includes records of the Vancouver Children's Theatre, Community Children's Theatre, Holiday Theatre, Holiday Playhouse and Playhouse Holiday. Other related records may be found in the [Joy Coghill fonds](#).

Series Descriptions

Administrative series. – 1966-1975.

60 cm of textual records.

Series consists of financial statements, minutes of meetings, correspondence, mailing lists, itineraries, tour reports, publicity materials, reports, registration forms, printed material, and workshop proceedings pertaining to the administration of Playhouse Holiday. Series also includes administrative materials pertaining to the Playhouse Theatre Company's Audience Development Campaign.

Scripts series. – [n.d.].

2.1 m of textual records and published materials.

Series consists of scripts of Playhouse Holiday performances.

File List

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS SERIES

BOX 1

Financial Records

- 1-1 Financial Statements (1966-1968)
- 1-2/3 Financial Statements and Minutes (1967/68-1968/69)
- 1-4 Budget and Financial Information (1969/70)
- 1-5 Budget - Publicity Dept. (1969)
- 1-6 Financial Statements and Balance Sheets (1972-1975)

Correspondence

- 1-7/10 General Correspondence (1966-70)
- 1-11 Fund Raising - Correspondence (1969/70)
- 1-12 Publicity Correspondence (1971-1973)
- 1-13 Correspondence (1973)
- 1-14 Drama School Correspondence (1972)
- 1-15 Correspondence Re: Tours 1 & 2 (1972)

Tour Records

- 1-16 Mailing List for Tours
- 1-17 Tour Information (1971/72)
- 1-18/19 Itineraries - Tour #1 (1971/72)
- 1-20/21 Itineraries - Tour #2 (1971/72)
- 1-22 Accommodation (1971/72)
- 1-23 Tour Planning (1972/73)
- 1-24 Tour Information (1972/73)
- 1-25 Itineraries - Tour #1 (1972/73)
- 1-26 Itineraries - Tour #2 (1972/73)
- 1-27 Fact Sheet and Tour Reports (1972/73)

Miscellaneous Records

- 1-28 "Bus Acquisition" (1969/70)
- 1-29 References from 1971/72 Season

1-30 Canadian Mime Theatre - Publicity Files (1972/73)

Playhouse Theatre Company Records - Audience Development Campaign
[1970]

1-31 Budget and General Information (1969-1973)

1-32 Complaints (1970)

1-33 Weekly Reports (1970)

1-34 Statistics (1968)

1-35 Report (1970/71)

1-36 Advertising (1970/71)

1-37 Brochure/Fact Sheet

BOX 2

2-1 Completed Playhouse Theatre School Registration Forms (1974)

2-2 Western Association of Drama Teachers of B.C. [WADE] Printed Material,
Correspondence (1973/74)

2-3 Teachers Workshop (Oct. 1975)

2-4 "Educational Theatre Journal"

1959 Dec.

1960 March

1961 May, Oct.

1962 March, May

2-5 "The Stage in Canada"

1965 March, April, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct.

2-6 "The Stage in Canada"

1965 Dec.

1966 Jan., Feb., March, April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Nov., Dec.

1968 March, Oct.

2-7 "Children's Theatre Catalogue" [n.d.]

"Festival Handbook" - WADE of B.C. (1972)

2-8 Scrapbook [Oversize Box 4: stored in University Archives storage area in
Rare Books and Special Collections vault] - Includes a map of tours in British
Columbia, two architectural drawings for the design of stages (1962/63) and
assorted other memorabilia.

SCRIPTS SERIES

"Adventures of Harlequin"
"Age of Darkness"
"Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp"
"Almighty Voice"
"Amelia's African Adventure"
"Androcles and the Lion"
"The Bear and the Salmon"
"Behind the Scenes"
"Being Who You Are"
"The Bell"
"Beware the Quickly Who"
"Blackjack the Pirate"
"Bobino"
"The Brave Little Tailor"
"Calico Drum"
"The New Canadians"
"Cecile or the School for Fathers"
"Choice for the Future"
"Christmas Operetta"
"Cinderella"

BOX 3

"The Other Cinderella"
"The Circus Adventure"
"The Clam Made a Face"
"The Clown"
"Conn and the Conquerors of Space"
"Compressions"
"Cyrano de Bergerac"
"The Dancing Donkey"
"The Dandy Lion"
"Day of the Nirobe Trio"
"The Day the Whores Came Out to Play Tennis"
"The Decision"
"The Discovers"
"Don Quixote of La Mancha"
"Dragging His Feet"

"The Dragon's Grandmother"
"The Elves and the Shoemaker"
"The Enchanted Box"
"Johnny Fibber"
"Flash Gordon Conquers the Planet of Evil"
"Flibberty Gilbert"
"The Forty Errors of King Herod"
"The Fourth Wall"
"Gammer Gurton's Needle"
"Gift of the Sun"
"The Ghost of Mr. Penny"
"Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates"
"Hansel and Gretel"
"Happiness is..."
"The Hare and the Tortoise"
"The Heartless Princess"
"Hiawatha"
"Henry Mouse"
"Hullabaloo-Belay"
"Hut"

BOX 4

"The Indian Captive"
"The Ice Wolf"
"Incident"
"Indian Children of Inakeep - Tale of the Nativity"
"Inook and the Sun"
"Interview"
"The Island"
"Jack and the Beanstalk"
"Jeremy and the Thinking Machine"
"King Patch and Mr. Simpkins"
"The Ladder"
"Lady Precious Stream"
"The Land Before Time"
"Land of the Flowers"
"The Land of the Dragon"
"Little Black Sambo and the Tigers"
"Little Red Riding Hood"

"Long Nose"
"The Luck Child"
"The Lunatic View"
"Mad King Andrew"
"Maggie's Surprise"
"The Magic Donkey"
"The Magic Nugget"
"The Magic Shoemaker"
"Magical Faces"
"The Man in the Moon"
"The Marvelous Adventures of Tyl"
"Mau Aka and the River"
"Mimsy Were the Borgoves"
"The Most Honest Man"
"The Mirror Man"
"Mother Earth"

BOX 5

"The Nightingale and the Rose"
"Nonno"
"On Trial"
"Once Upon a Clothline"
"One Spring Morning"
"The Owl and the Pussycat"
"A Pair of Green Shoes"
"Parafanalia"
"The Pied Piper"
"Pinocchio"
"Ponsonby & Ponsonby Magical Box"
"The Popcorn Man"
"The Prince Who Found His Kingdom"
"The Princess and the Scullery Boy"
"The Princess and the Swineherd"
"Project Eden: Top Secret"
"Mr. Punch at Home"
"Puss in Boots"
"Rapunzel and the Witch"
"Raven Creator of the World"
"Reynard"

"Ralph Henley and his Friends"
"Red Riding Hood"
"The Reluctant Prophet from Solomon's Pools"
"The Riddle Machine"
"Right, Left and Centre"
"Robert and the Robot"
"Robin Hood"
"Rumpelstiltskin"

BOX 6

"St. George and the Dragon"
"Sauerkringle"
"Scapin"
"The Sea King's Daughter"
"The Seige"
"The Servant of Two Masters"
"Seven Dreams"
"Shortshrift"
"Sinbad and the Mermaid"
"Sing a Rainbow"
"Skokiam"
"Smokescreens"
"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"
"Socrates"
"Son of the Raven, Son of the Deer"
"Son of the Dragon"
"Song of the Serpent"
"Soup"
"Spirit of the Mountain"
"The Squire"
"Squirrel Nutkin"
"The Star Child"
"Strindberg"
"The Storytellers"
"Surprise II"
"A Tale of Three Princes"
"Them Damned Canadians Hanged Louis Riel"
"Three"
"Three Cluckolds"

"The Three Bears"
"The Three Little Pigs"
"The 13 Clocks"
"Thumbelina and the Witch"
"The Ticklish Harp"
"The Titanic"
"To Everything There is a Season"
"Toad of Toad Hall"
"Tom Sawyer"
"Too Many Kings"
"Trapped"
"Treasure Island"
"Two Pails of Water"
"Two Pigs in a Poke"

BOX 7

"Unicorns are Possible"
"We and They"
"Whendigo"
"And What Happens Now?"
"Where Are You When We Need You, Simon Fraser?"
"Who Needs Love?"
"Wild Bill Shakespeare and the Hee-Hee House"
"Winners"
"Winnie-the-Pooh"
"The Wise Men of Gotham"
"The Witch's Spell"
"The Wizard of Oz"
"Wonderful Nonsense Machine"
"World, World Go Away"
"Yes There is a Ham Virginia"
"You Can't Lose All the Time"