Don't Fail Confederation Centre Pleads Mother Of Can. Theatre

By GEOFF TURNBULL

Last weekend one of the most distinguished theatre personalities in Canada paid an impromptu visit to Charlottetown to see what her son has been doing this year, especially during the Centennial summer now edging into the past.

Mrs. F. J. Moore, Mrs. Canadian Theatre, has seen theatre grow in Canada from the days when there was no television, no radio, and little besides in the way of canned entertainment. In those days the young Scottish Canadian woman was attending Toronto University in pursuit of a degree in English.

One day there came to the campus a group of distinguished travelling Shakespearean players from England, including the still well known name of Sybil Thorndike. In playing something by that rather well known playwright this group inspired in the girl a driving ambition — to study drama, and to teach it to this country.

CREST THEATRE BORN

Even 20 years ago Toronto, Canada's most, or at least second most, culturally aware city, had little drama, and even less native Canadian offerings from bards past and present. Eighteen years ago Mrs. Moore started the New Play Society, devoted to the enlarging of drama in Canada by Canadians. Only 11 years ago the now famous and half-defunct Crest Theatre, which began as a summer playhouse, came into existence.

This summer Mrs. Moore's son Mavor, organized a summer festival of the finest Canada has to offer in the way of visual arts, music, and fun in a theatre barely completed in time for its debut during the Dominion Drama Festival. Into the beautiful complex have poured performers as good as any in the world to give Charlottetown something to sing about at a time when history was being fondly remembered instead of cursed.

The Fathers of Confederation not only made this country possible; 100 years after they made the cultural complex named after them possible, and also helped to start tying the country, in some ways falling apart at the seams, at least culturally back together again.

"Take hold of this opportunity: don't let it fail. You on the Island can make it work and must make it work. You must not let what has started here deteriorate. Culture is a funny thing. With it a people can do, can become, almost anything. Without it there is a terrible void. It was wonderful to see the way your people so warmly accepted the performers here last night and the night before (for Wayne and Shuster and the Oscar Peterson Jazz Trio). This spirit was truly wonderful to behold. It would not have happened at all that way in Toronto," expressed Mrs. Moore.

About eight years ago Mrs. Moore, who has trained many well-known Canadian performers, remembered having Robert Goulet speak one line and sing another, or something like that, in one of the productions she was responsible for.

SPRING THAW TRADITION

When she and her son produced the first Spring Thaw a decade and a half ago the response gave birth to what is now a tradition in Canadian theatre. This summer The Best of Spring Thaw, with Dave Broadfoot carrying the star role, came to Confederation Centre Theatre. Peter Mews, with the show since its inception, was there, too.

Eight years ago Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster left the stage completely for television, notably their own show and then the Ed Sullivan show, and built for themselves and for Canadian theatre a name that is one of the best-known in the Western world of comedy. Last week and the week before that a Mavor Moore — directed revue, Wayne and Shuster in Charlottetown, came to Confederation Centre Theatre.

Anecdotes about the past and about the names in Canadian entertainment come a - dime-a dozen from Mrs. Moore. Connections with theatre in Canada abound — Stratford, the beginning of Crest, and so forth.

Nowadays Mrs. Moore runs a school for drama in Toronto, where she teaches teenagers basic theatre.

"Sex in the Hollywood image is played up too much today. I take my youngsters and try to teach them poetic love. At first they shy away when I give them Shakespeare's approach. But then—it's quite a sight to see two 14-year olds making love to each other in a scene from Romeo and Juliet. Children today though are very much mixed-up. They have no goals set for themselves, no purpose in life. This is why there is so much unhappiness in the world. Bright youngsters have nothing to work for and so begin to fall in life. They become unhappy, lost. Hopefully they eventually straighten out, but it's a terrible waste."

Waste is something which Mrs. Moore detests. For that reason she wants to see Confederation Centre work, and not merely the theatre which is her first love. She has done much herself in Toronto to further the acceptance and veneration of culture among people who might otherwise live existences the barrener for its lack.

DON'T MISS CHANCE

The moral is: when you've got a chance like the one offered Islanders for a historical vagary, jump at it.

"Don't let this theatre, this art gallery, and the rest of the complex go to waste. Don't let it fail. It's too important. You dare not let it fail. It's one of the most wonderful things I've ever seen in all my life. There's nothing to equal it in all of Canada, both the structure itself and the great opportunity it offers."

Those words from Mrs. Moore may echo, perhaps, in the minds of Islanders whenever someone raises the questionability or the feasibility of the existence of their own national theatre and cultural complex.

A MOTHER AND SON combination famous in Canadian theatre circles for many years got together a few days ago in Mayor Moore's office in Confederation Centre. Mrs. Moore came to see her son's work at the Centre over the weekend and found herself caught up in the summer festival program now finished. Mrs. Moore, born in Scotland "more years ago than I care to remember" came to Canada as a young girl and has figured importantly in the furthering of Canadian theatre since then. She now thinks of herself as "completely Canadian, and proud of it," and decreed that Islanders, in their own interest as in that of the country as a whole, must make Confederalon Centre, its theatre, art gallery, museum and library, become a living embodiment of community life.

ISLAND NEWS PAGE

Historical Development Group Meets

Marine salvage, the marking of historical sites, and centenial projects in the historic field will be some of the topics discussed when the fourth Dominion-Provincial Conference on the Development of Historical Resources is held in Charlottetown Friday and Saturday of this week.

Approximately 30 delegates are expected to attend this "working conference."

Friday's sessions will discuss the marking of sites, matters arising from questionnaires, and marine salvage with special reference to protective legislation that might be adopted by the provinces.

Premier Walter R. Shaw will welcome the delegates.

The P.E.I. Government will sponsor a banquet Friday evening, with J. David Stewart, provincial secretary, as official host. Dr. Frank MacKinnon is scheduled as guest speaker. Chairman for the evening will be Wendall MacKay, deputy provincial secretary.

Hazelbrook Man Completes Month-Long Trip

Horace B. Carver, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Carver, Hazelbrook, has just returned from a month of travelling in the United States and Canada.

He travelled from the Island by car through 14 of the northern states to Regina. He visited the World's Fair, New York City, Boston, Chicago and Minneapolis.

He also spent two weeks at the home of his aunt and uncle Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Whitrow in Delburne, Alta. While there he visited the Mountains seeing Banff, Lake Louise and British Columbia.

He returned home by train and passed through nearly all of Canada's large cities in nine provinces.

Tignish Schools Have Eight New Teachers

TIGNISH — School opened in the village of Tignish Tuesday morning with an increased enrollment over the last year.

Tignish Regional High enrolled 235 pupils in three grade nine classes, three grade 10, grades 11, 12 and commercial.

New teachers on the staff are Sister St. John Francis, BSc, (home economics), Jeanne Hanrahan, BA; Hermil Corcoran, superior license; Sister St. Gerard Joseph, superior license; Sister St. Charles Patrick and Mrs. Daniel Christopher.

A team of 15 Indian scientists is taking part in a month-long exploration program of submarine canyons in the Bay of Bengal.

MOTOR REWINDING & REPAIRS
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NOTICE

There will be a special meeting of the Kinkora Dairying Co-operative Association Ltd., in Kinkora Regional High School Thursday, Sept. 10th at 8 p.m.

Patrons and shareholders are urgently requested to attend.

Signed:
J. Linus Mulligan
Secretary

ALL LEGIONAIRES and VETERANS

Are invited to participate in the parade and official opening ceremonies in connection with the 33rd annual provincial convention the Royal Canadian Legion.

Parade moves off from Charlottetown Branch Legion Home 6:30 p.m. Friday, September 11th.

Signed:
E. W. HOGAN, Secretary,
P. E. I. Command

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Albany Centennial Day Centennial Celebrations

Official Opening of new Lions community centre.
Official Opening of new Federal building.
Children's Rides.
Band Concert.
Turkey Dinner sponsored by Middleton and Albany Women's Institute.
Adult Social Evening including modern and old time dancing.
Tug of War Match.
Games for Children.
Refreshment and Games Booths.

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Men's Work BOOTS
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