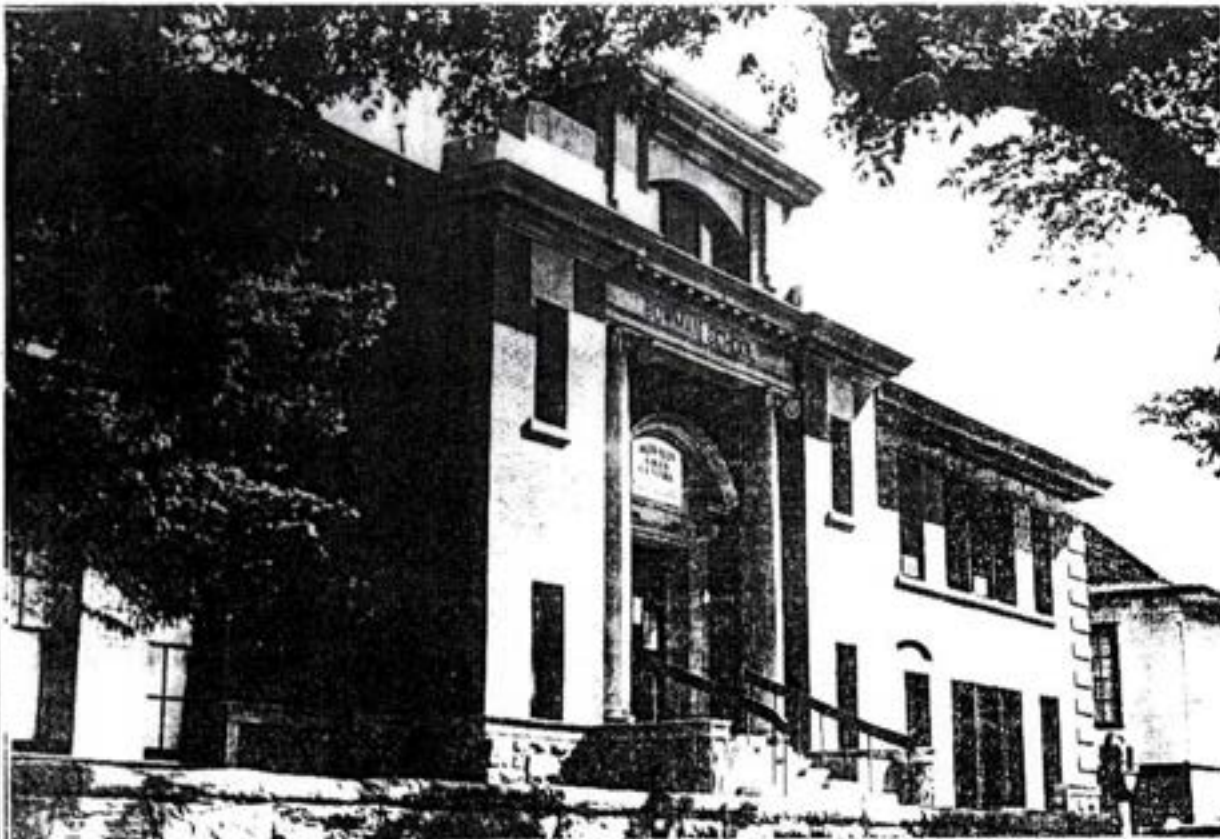


ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL
OF LETHBRIDGE

A HISTORY



BOWMAN ARTS CENTRE - CITY OF LETHBRIDGE

Occasional Paper 1

From The

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THE ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Citizens of Lethbridge became interested in cultural activities at an early date. The town in 1885 and later was dominated by a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant elite of professional and business men with respectable southside addresses. The culture that interested them was the kind of culture they had known in Eastern Canada. They had no patience at all with the rich ethnic cultures that surrounded them, an attitude that did not change appreciably in Lethbridge until the 1940s.

Thus on 15 January 1886, a Quadrille Club was organized to sponsor dances; it was re-formed and re-organized periodically for the next 20 or 30 years. On 26 January 1888, a Dramatic Club and Literary Society were formed, apparently at separate meetings; members of the North-West Mounted Police detachment were prominent in the former. On 10 October 1888, a Scientific and Historical Society was organized; early names associated with it included Charles A. Magrath, Charles McKillop, John D. Higinbotham, and Alexander Moffat. Agitation for a Public Library started in 1886 and, by 30 April 1890, the Alberta Railway and Coal Company's Employees' Reading Room and Library Society had been formed; totally unlike organizations--the Lethbridge Miners' Library Club Incorporated (ca. 1918) and the Lethbridge Public Library (1919)--evolved out of it.

The Lethbridge Musical Society was formed on 10 June 1896. But an earlier organization existed because, on 2 March 1892, officers were elected to a Musical and Dramatic Club. A Dancing School was started on 25 May 1899.

Books soon began to be written about the region. One of the first was "A Summer in Prairieland: Notes on a Tour Throughout the North-West Territory" by Rev. A. Sutherland (1881). Others were written by Rev. John Maclean, first Methodist minister in Southern Alberta. Maclean's works included "Lone Land Lights" (1882), "The Indians" (1889), and "Canadian Savage Folk" (1894), the latter probably his best-known book.

Several of Lethbridge's early citizens wrote passable poetry, the best of which they published privately. These included John D. Higinbotham and C. F. P. Conybeare and, later, David H. Elton and Norman R. Priestly. Charles Mair, a poet and writer of national stature, was with the Immigration Service here from 1907-1911. Mair was 69 years of age when he arrived in Lethbridge, his productive years were far behind him, and, as far as we know, he wrote nothing of significance during his stay. (An account of an 1899 visit by Mair to the Athabasca and Peace River districts appeared in 1908 as "Through The Mackenzie Basin.")

From Lethbridge's beginnings in the early 1880s until into this century, entertainment tended to consist of locally-produced events. Talented individuals and groups entertained their neighbors and friends in many ways--by putting on skits and plays, by singing, by strumming a banjo, or by dancing. Readers were popular. (Readings and recitations were standard fare at almost all public and social gatherings for literally thousands of years.) With no instrument other than the human voice, good performers were able to mesmerize audiences with recitations of familiar works. Locally, the last of the genre was John Dykes, a Scotsman, whose recitations of the works of Robert Burns delighted Lethbridge audiences

until after the Second World War.

Visiting entertainers tended to minstrel shows, often with heavy emphasis on blackface comedy, choral groups, lantern slide lectures, musicians, comics and poets and authors. Many touring theatrical groups visited Lethbridge in the early days, including the Caroline Gage & Keene Theatre Company (1889), the Connery & Keley Company (1890), the Fraser Dramatic Company (1896), the Wilber Stock Company (1896), the Harry Lindley Company (1897), the French Theatre Company (1898), the Bittner Theatre Company (1899), and the Columbia Comedy Company (1900).

At first, accommodation was limited. In 1886, Dr. F. H. Mewburn and a few Lethbridge businessmen organized the Lethbridge Building Company, Ltd., sold shares, and in 1890 erected what became known as "The Opera House." (The building was demolished in 1966; the Downtown Safeway Store on the corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue now occupies the property.) The Opera House, also known as the Irrigation Hall or the Building Company's Hall, contained a large meeting room, which seated 400, with stage and dressing rooms on the first floor, and suites and offices on the second and third floors. Unfortunately, the company was unable to keep up the mortgage payments and, about 1899, the building was taken over by Elliott T. Galt as offices for his companies and as living quarters for himself.

Another meeting room became available in 1891 when the Alberta Railway and Coal Company's Employees' Reading Room and Library Society converted the Galt Company's No. 1 Boarding House to a reading room, hall, and gymnasium. (The No. 1 Boarding House was one of two long frame buildings on the north side of what was then the Macleod Road and was

located in what became the western portion of CentreSite, Lethbridge.) The hall measured 7.3 x 21.3 m and included a stage and dressing rooms.

Oliver's Hall began to be used in 1900. Named for William Oliver, mayor of Lethbridge from 1901-1904, inclusive, the hall later appeared to be replaced by the Oliver Block at 316 - 5th Street South (then Round Street). Oliver's Hall had sufficient seating capacity to attract good vaudeville and theatrical companies. The first crude moving pictures were shown there in 1901.

By October 1908, the Eureka, Lyceum and Bijou (later the Variety) moving picture theatres were in operation. They were followed by the Griffith's Theatre, which opened in 1910 with a production of "The Gay Musicians" starring Miss Texas Guinan. It was renamed the Majestic Theatre almost immediately. The Majestic was designed for live performances; Sir Harry Lauder, the Dumbells and other highly-rated troupes played in it. It was converted to a moving picture theatre in the 1920s (the first "talkies" showed there) but never caught on and, in the 1940s, was made into a dairy. The Lyceum was renovated in 1910 and reopened in 1911. It was known for a short time as the Star, then became the Starland (1911), the Phoenix (1919), the King's (1921), and the Kings (1922). Alfred W. Shackelford came to Lethbridge in 1922 to manage the Kings Theatre. Other Lethbridge theatres of the time were the Morris, which opened in 1911; the Empress, which opened in the former Salvation Army Citadel in 1912, becoming the Roxy in 1933; the Monarch, which opened in 1912, closed from 1918-1938, then became the Lealta; and the Regent, which was in operation on 13th Street North in 1915. The Morris was an attractive theatre and featured a

canopy running out to the curb. It was enlarged and renovated several times and was known successively as the Morris (1911), the Sherman (1913), the Orpheum (1917), the Colonial (1919), the Palace (1924), and the Capitol (1929). For a long time the showplace of Lethbridge theatres for both film and live performances, the Capitol was closed in 1969 and demolished in 1973 to make way for Woodward's shopping complex.

During those years, also, the small, frame churches of pioneer days were being replaced by larger, more impressive structures. The first St. Augustine's Church, on the corner of 2nd Avenue and 8th Street South, was a good-sized structure when built in 1887. It continued to be used for such things as theatrical rehearsals until 1928. Knox Church, later the Baptist Church, was built in 1909 and the third Wesley Church, later Southminster Church, in 1914. Southminster could seat about 800, the largest capacity in Lethbridge until Alfred W. Shackelford and his sons built the 950-seat Paramount Theatre in 1950.

The evolution of cultural organizations continued into this century and continues today.

A Music Conservatory (now the Spudnut and Ice Cream Bar at 1102 - 5 Avenue South) was in operation in 1910. (In 1906-07, according to J. A. Jarvie, an exploratory natural gas well was drilled in the yard at this address. No gas was found.)

Around 1916, Gladys Attree, an Englishwoman who had trained with the Russian Ballet, taught dancing one day a week to Lethbridge students. Miss Attree danced only male roles during her professional career as she was an exceptionally tall woman.

In 1916, a 60-year-old Englishwoman named Edith Fanny Kirk emigrated to Canada, taught briefly in rural schools in Southern Alberta, then settled in Lethbridge. She began to teach drawing and the use of water-colours and oils to the genteel young women of the community, using a small room on the ground floor of the YMCA building at 4th Avenue and 10th Street South for this purpose. Miss Kirk was Lethbridge's first instructor in the visual arts. In 1938, one or two of Miss Kirk's old pupils got together and, with others, organized the Lethbridge Sketch Club. Its members soon took advantage of summer and extension training courses offered by the Banff School of Fine Arts. In 1954, since the Isolation Hospital at 1920-7th Avenue South was no longer needed, the Sketch Club made several efforts to obtain the building as a gallery/workshop. City Council objected to its use for this purpose because it was so far from the centre of the city, and they thought its interior design made it unsuitable for an art gallery. In 1955, the building was sold to Arthur L. Batty.

Many highly-rated artists have come from this region, among them Roloff Beny (later an internationally-known photographer and book designer), Gerald Tailfeathers, Donald A. Frache, Dennis Burton, Brent Laycock, Cornelius (Corne) Martens, Frederick G. Cross, and Annora Brown.

The first Chautauqua in Canada was held in Lethbridge on 7-13 August 1917. Chautauqua was live stage entertainment in tents, which were used because few of the towns and cities Chautauqua visited had large halls. (Oddly enough, the Lethbridge Chautauqua was held in Eckstorm Auditorium, in Henderson Lake Park, which had been established to accommodate the Seventh International Dry Farming Congress of 21-26 October

1912.) In October 1916, S. S. Dunham, a Lethbridge lawyer, was approached by J. M. Erickson, who wanted to bring Chautauqua to Canada. Dunham, who came from the United States where Chautauqua had been a factor in small-town and rural life since the 1870s, knew that it filled a desperate need. It brought drama, glamour, soloists, lecturers, and other professional performances to rural communities when many prairie roads were mere trails and grass grew between the ruts of the side roads. Many prairie men and women hungered for what Chautauqua had to offer. And Lethbridge business and professional men were well aware of their dependence on their farming/stock-raising hinterland. Thus, in 1917, Dunham had the distinction of being the first person in western Canada to sign a Chautauqua contract; his signature was followed by the signatures of 29 other Lethbridge businessmen willing to underwrite the \$1,500 guarantee. The Lethbridge Chautauqua of August 1917 started the institution on a successful run that lasted until better roads, radio, and the proliferation of other entertainment killed it in about 1935.

The Playgoers Club began in January 1932. Its formation followed the 1921 arrival in Lethbridge of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest G. Sterndale-Bennett, an English couple with a background in theatre. Its first officers were president H. W. Church, secretary Ralph A. Thrall, treasurer Louisa Smith, general director E. G. Sterndale-Bennett, musical director C. J. Ferguson, and a committee of Mrs. J. Norman Ritchie, Hilda Church, A. Raworth and J. Davies. Its first play, "Going Up," with a cast of 58, was staged in April. Later in the year, Mrs. Sterndale-Bennett formed the Little Theatre. The 1923 Little Theatre included interested members from the

parent Playgoers Club and was designed to put on one-act plays and to teach directing as well as performing. Membership of the Playgoers, available to performers and theatregoers alike, peaked at about 800 in 1932. That year Ernest and Mrs. Sterndale-Bennett left Lethbridge for Toronto. A marked decline in active membership then set in as a result of the departure of the Sterndale-Bennetts and a deepening economic depression, followed by six years of war. By its 40th Anniversary in 1963, the Playgoers had 48 active members.

Some well-known names associated with the Lethbridge Playgoers Club included William R. (Bill) Matheson, Edmonton, a well-known media figure; William John (Bill) Fruet, Toronto, who received critical acclaim for the CBC film "Wedding in White," which he wrote and directed in the early 1970s; F. M. (Sandy) McCallum, an employee of CJLH-TV who left Lethbridge in the late 1950s to join the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis; and Charles R. Matthews, Mabelle Bryans and Lena Connors who carried the traditions of the Playgoers from the pre-war to the post-war era. Joan Waterfield, Denise Black, B. Wayne Matkin and many other talented locals were active members in the immediate post war period. (Southern Alberta even had a tenuous link with Hollywood through Fay Wray, the heroine in the 1933 classic, "King Kong," who was born in 1906 on her father's ranch, called Wrayville, near Mountain View.)

Ernest Sterndale-Bennett was credited in a brief history written by the late Chris Gibson with being mainly responsible for the creation of the Alberta Drama Festival and, in 1942, with the creation of the Dominion Drama Festival. According to an article in the Toronto Globe and Mail,

Sterndale-Bennett was "an untiring worker toward Canada's artistic progress."

The Immediate Post-Second World War Period

The general pattern of activity outlined above--a few clubs operating in a vacuum, usually dependent upon one or two enthusiasts--characterized the long economic hiatus and the two world wars of 1914-1945. Wartime prosperity, however, resulted in a build-up of surplus funds in the City of Lethbridge treasury. Conventional economic wisdom held that the war would be followed by depression and widespread unemployment among returning veterans. Thus, as a kind of post-war, make-work project, City Manager John. T. Watson in 1944 unveiled a \$300,000 development for the Mounted Police Barracks Square, to be called the Civic Centre. (See Appendix A.) A combined Library-Museum-Art Gallery was shown in the northwest corner of the Square where a Provincial Courthouse later was built and a civic auditorium was shown just south of the proposed City Hall.

It was about this time that the first faint stirrings were heard of the need for an organization to speak for the cultural affairs of the city. Lethbridge had always been sports-minded and the provision of sporting facilities had tended to dominate the thinking of City Council. Even the 1944 Civic Centre plan leaned heavily to sports facilities with a soccer and rugby field, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, playground shelters, children's playground and wading pool, outdoor skating rink, and a sports auditorium known at the Fritz Sick Memorial Centre. (The Fritz Sick Memorial Centre was built with \$100,000 donated by Mr. Sick on the

occasion of his 83rd birthday. This donation represented the beginning of the modern Civic Centre.)

The proposal for a combined Library-Museum-Art Gallery (a cultural centre) and a civic auditorium soon disappeared into limbo. But by 1945, many civic leaders again were talking of the need for an enlarged central library to form the core for cultural life and to accommodate a wide range of cultural activities.

There was much activity in the cultural community all across Canada at this time. The Canadian Arts Council was formed in 1945 to bring together national and provincial cultural societies for political action. In 1946, Vancouver citizens saw the need for a co-ordinating agency and set up a Community Arts Council. Calgary's Allied Arts Council was born a month or two later. In 1946-47, Wilfred B. Hallifax and others held a few meetings to discuss the need for an Allied Arts Council in Lethbridge. According to a 1952 report, an Allied Arts Council was formed in Lethbridge on 15 November 1949. Its purpose was to add cultural activities to the city's recreational program. It operated out of the Sports Centre, now the Senior Centre, at 500 - 11th Street South. The Council, formed by local speech and visual arts groups, must have had a short, unpublicized life.

An organization with many of the attributes of later Allied Arts groups was formed in Lethbridge in 1946. It was called the Lethbridge Community Council; its president was Alick Harper. City Council depended on the group for advice on cultural matters. By 1948 it had been instrumental in forming a Young People's Orchestra, a record library in

the Public Library, a local branch of the John Howard Society, a local Canadian Appeal for Children, and a YMCA Provincial Board, and in organizing Sunday afternoon concerts in the parks and playgrounds. Still other completed projects included the formation of a Lethbridge Boys' Band, obtaining of a violin teacher for the city, and development of a YMCA Youth Guidance Clinic. Projects the Lethbridge Community Council hoped to carry out included organization of an Annual Hobby Fair, creation of a public Bowling Green, formation of a residence or a club for the aged, formation of a Human Welfare Council, establishment of an Agricultural School in Lethbridge, and formation of a Folk Dancing Festival.

In 1949, the Hon. Vincent Massey was appointed chairman of a Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. Popularly known as the Massey Commission, it presented its monumental report in 1951. Other than a heightened awareness across the country of culture generally, the most significant result of the Massey Commission report was the formation of the Canada Council, still the country's outstanding philanthropic agency in the artistic and intellectual fields. Charged with the promotion of the arts, humanities and social sciences in the total Canadian context, it was launched in 1957 by Act of Parliament with initial funding of \$100,000,000. Frank Lynch-Staunton, a Lundbreck rancher and later Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, was one of the first appointees to Canada Council, serving from 1957-1962, inclusive.

Canada Council operated at arm's length from Government and, hence, was less susceptible to political interference or control than other such agencies. In 1982, the Applebaum-Hebert Report of the Federal

Cultural Policy Review Committee suggested that the Arts and Culture Branch of the federal Department of Communications had assumed too prominent a role in cultural funding initiatives and that the Branch was vulnerable to political controls. The report pointed out that Canada Council was best equipped to handle cultural funding and that the Arts and Culture Branch should keep hands off.

All of these developments had their impact on Lethbridge's cultural community.

It is worth noting in passing that, instead of being followed by economic depression and widespread unemployment, the Second World War was followed by 36 years of unprecedented prosperity--the longest such period Canada ever experienced or is ever likely to experience. This fact had considerable bearing on the post-Second World War flowering of the arts in Canada and, hence, in Lethbridge. Had economic conditions in Lethbridge followed the pattern of the post-First World War period, there probably would be no Bowman Arts Centre, no Southern Alberta Art Gallery, no Yates Centre, no Sir Alexander Galt Museum/Archives, and no University of Lethbridge with its Drama Department, Music Department, Art Gallery and Performing Arts wing.

The Yates Will

The death of Deane Roscoe Yates on 3 June 1957 turned out to be the single most important event in the history of cultural facilities development in Lethbridge.

Deane R. Yates was a prominent Southern Alberta retail lumberman. He was a member of the Chinook Club and it was during discussions there

that he came to realize how valuable the addition of a cultural centre would be to the City of Lethbridge. When his will was probated, its terms were found to include bequests totalling \$9,000 to various individuals, the rest of the estate to be converted to cash and then divided into ten shares. One of these shares was to go to St. Augustine's Church, one to the Public and Separate School Boards to fund a scholarship, and eight shares were to go to the City of Lethbridge for a cultural building. The Yates home and furnishings were left to Mrs. Genevieve Easton Yates, the widow. Also, Mrs. Yates was named one of two trustees, the net effect of this being that the ten shares did not become available until her death.

The clause in the Deane R. Yates will that concerns us here was: "I direct that the remaining eight shares or portions shall be paid to the City of Lethbridge aforesaid in trust to be used as a Memorial Fund and to be known as 'The Genevieve E. Yates Memorial' and said eight shares or portions shall form the nucleus of a sufficient sum to erect in the Civic Centre of the City of Lethbridge a cultural building equal to the needs of the City of Lethbridge and District and of such architecture and construction as may be a credit to the City of Lethbridge. Without dictating, I would suggest a central auditorium that would comfortably seat about seven hundred people and have a suitable stage and dressing rooms. I would also suggest that provision be made for a room or rooms for the use of the Lethbridge Old-Timers' Association (the Pemmican Club) and the Lethbridge Historical Society and perhaps to house a collection of historical objects. I would further suggest that a room or rooms be provided for the Lethbridge Sketch Club, the Lethbridge Photographic

Club, and the Playgoers Club. (Other than the last, none of these organizations benefitted in any very tangible way from the Yates bequest although, as a sop, the Pemmican Club was given access to a wooden frame building at the corner of 5th Avenue and 9th Street South, originally a kindergarten. Because it was mentioned in the will, The Playgoers attempted to obtain an actual cash portion of the Yates money but the effort came to naught.

In typical Lethbridge fashion, groups surfaced to argue for a civic auditorium, a large theatre, a small theatre, or a combination centre with many cultural activities. Seating capacity of a new auditorium should be 1,500, 1,000, 500 or 300 people, depending on which organization currently was making the greatest fuss. For example, the Allied Arts Council agitated endlessly for a 500 seat auditorium while the newly-formed Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra under Albert E. Rodnunsky was intent on getting a 1,000-1,500 seat auditorium. Many favored using the money to provide additional sporting facilities although this was completely contrary to the terms of the Yates will. Others saw it as an opportunity to revive the Public Library expansion issue, which had been simmering away since 1951, and agitated particularly for a Library in conjunction with a cultural building on the Civic Centre grounds. There were endless quarrels over site, Henderson Lake Park, the Junior College, Galt Gardens, and the Civic Centre all being suggested as suitable locations for whatever was to be built. At one time there were indications that City Council might attempt to change the terms of the Yates will and to use the Yates money for purposes not intended by the donor; at least two prominent Lethbridge

citizens threatened court action if anything of the sort was undertaken. As will be explained, much of the activity of the new Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge during 1958-65 was devoted to these issues.

Formation of the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge

The Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge was formed on 20 March 1958. Later reports indicated that this move had been contemplated for three or four months and, in fact, one sometimes sees 1957 listed in reports as the founding year. But there seems little doubt that the death of Genevieve E. Yates on 10 March 1958 and, hence, the eventual release of the Yates money, was one of the direct reasons for its formation, and one which directly affected the Arts Council for the next several years.

At the 20 March meeting, a temporary constitution was adopted and Dr. Van E. Christou was elected president pro tem by acclamation. Edward G. (Ted) Godwin was elected vice-president, also by acclamation. Later, David Howell and Jessie Baalim were named treasurer and secretary, respectively.

A week later, Dr. Christou announced that the Allied Arts Council would sponsor the appearance of the National Ballet in Lethbridge on 3 May; the company was to present two complete programs in the Capitol Theatre, an afternoon matinee and an evening performance. Dr. Christou went on to outline the general policy of the Allied Arts Council and to say that, on 3 April, committees would be named to handle Finance, Education, Constitution, and Publications. A mailing list of all interested persons and organizations was being compiled.

On 5 May, a delegation from the Allied Arts Council (Christou,

Godwin, Baalim) appeared before City Council to outline the objectives of the organization and to request support in furthering cultural development in Lethbridge. Objectives of the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge were to foster and encourage cultural activities in Lethbridge and the surrounding district; to coordinate activities of member organizations; and to cooperate with persons, groups and organizations in the promotion of cultural activities and the provision of cultural facilities. Plans were to encourage the bringing of cultural entertainment to the city; to aid in expansion of activities within member organizations; to provide a newsletter to serve members and thus create an awareness of and an interest in cultural activities; to provide instruction in art, music appreciation, and ballet where school curricula did not provide such instruction; and to compile a directory of local cultural programs so as to avoid duplication and conflict in scheduling such programs. The delegation concluded its presentation by telling City Council that the purpose of the Allied Arts Council was not an immediate concern with the Yates bequest but, rather, to offer the services of the Council in developing an active cultural program and in planning for a cultural centre to serve Lethbridge and Southern Alberta.

At this time, membership in the Allied Arts Council consisted of 16 local organizations plus many individuals who were not affiliated with any particular group. (In 1982, from 35-40 local organizations belonged to the Allied Arts Council.) Member organizations in 1958 were the Playgoers of Lethbridge, Women's Music Club, University Women's Club, Classical Record Club, Lethbridge Ballet Auxillary, Alberta Architects Association,

Colour Camera Club, Lethbridge Handicraft Guild, Lethbridge Registered Music Teachers Association, Quota Club, Lethbridge Jazz Society, Alberta Teachers Association, Lethbridge Philosophical Society, Black and White Photography Club, Lethbridge Public Library Board, and City Council of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority.

The first annual meeting of the Allied Arts Council was held on 9 June 1958 in the Lethbridge Public Library. Acting officers were re-elected, namely, president, Dr. Van E. Christou; vice-president, E. G. (Ted) Godwin; treasurer, David Howell; and secretary, Mrs. Jessie Baalim. On motion of Godwin-Kloppenber, "all directors were re-elected." (This seemed to be a good way to handle it as there were 19 directors at the meeting and, presumably, some absentees. It is hard to follow the election procedure but it seemed that every member organization was permitted to appoint one director and there were provisions for directors-at-large. Membership on the Executive Committee seemed to be limited to one-third of the total directors.)

The Bowman Arts Centre

In February 1960, arrangements were made for Archie F. Key, Calgary, to visit Lethbridge and to speak to the Allied Arts Council and to local service clubs. Key had helped to organize the Calgary Allied Council in 1946 and had set up Coste House, its headquarters, a year or two later. His message was that the presence of an Allied Arts Council in a community was "a drawing card for industry." He believed in having as many member organizations as possible "under one roof." According to the minutes of 21 April 1960, Key had a good influence on the City of Lethbridge Auditorium

Committee and on local service clubs. All indicated more sympathy for the position of the Allied Arts Council after Key's visit than they had shown before.

The Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge began actively to look for a "home" in October 1960. Possibilities investigated at that time included "the house on the old Lund property" and "the old Nurses's Residence at the Galt Rehabilitation Centre." The need for such a headquarters was looked upon as temporary, or "until such time as our Cultural Centre becomes a reality." A later report indicated that neither property was available. Someone looked into the possibility of converting the old Lealta Theatre at 3rd Avenue and 13th Street North into a cultural centre but it was found to be in very bad shape. About this time, also, the first mention was made of the possibility of hiring a Cultural Director for Lethbridge; discussion ensued as to how the salary of such a person might be raised.

On 9 January 1963, the Public School Board announced that it intended to close the Bowman Elementary School and to sell the property. The building had been constructed in 1911-1912 as the Manual Training School and offered adult evening courses as well as manual training for Grades 6 to 10. Vocational classes were terminated in 1915 because of the First World War and the building was used as a high school until 1928. From 1929-1963, it was used for the teaching of five elementary grades and was closed because of the dwindling school population in the downtown area. It was named after Charles Broughton Bowman, an early Lethbridge businessman and town official. The School Board announcement concluded by saying that the Minister of Education had approved disposal of the property

after 30 June.

On 9 October, Mayor Frank Sherring was able to report that the School Board had agreed to sell Bowman School to the city for \$75,000. Possession was obtained early in November and the Historical Society began discussions with Mayor Sherring about the possibility of using certain rooms in the old school for a museum. (The Historical Society had decided to start a museum, a need that had been discussed since the 1920s.) On 20 January 1964, City Council approved the establishment of a civic museum in two (later three) rooms of the former Bowman School. On 22 February 1964, as part of the program of the annual meeting of the Historical Society of Alberta, the City of Lethbridge's museum and archives were informally opened.

From the time the sale of the school was ratified in November 1963, plans were going ahead for what was to be the Bowman Arts Centre. On 17 February 1964, City Council established the Lethbridge Foundation and hired Archie Key to advise on policies for the Bowman Centre. In April, Key recommended immediate occupancy of the building and suggested space allocations. However, it was not until June that a rental agreement was worked out with the city and the various groups were able to move in. By July, new sidewalks had been laid, repairs to the front steps were underway, and men were tidying up the front area. About mid-July, the Allied Arts Council agreed to accept responsibility of managing and operating the Bowman Arts Centre. An agreement was drawn up between the Arts Council and the City of Lethbridge whereby the city provided grants of \$2,400 per year to pay for janitorial services and utilities. The Arts

Council was to report annually on operation and budget, allocate space, establish rentals, and generally encourage arts groups in the city to use the centre.

Mrs. W. A. Nelson formed the Womens' Committee of the Allied Arts Council on 21 October 1964, specifically to foster interest in the Bowman Centre. In November, the Allied Arts Council was incorporated as a society.

The Bowman Arts Centre was officially opened on 9 January 1965. (First called the Bowman Centre, it became known as the Bowman Arts Centre on motion of Chris Gibson. The sign over the front door, still there in 1982, was made by Heino Deeken in 1964 and was paid for by Cliff Black.) Some 300 persons were present at the opening and, guided by Arts Council president Clare Malmberg and Mayor Frank Sherring, toured the Lethbridge Museum. Also, they visited rooms occupied by the Lethbridge Sketch Club, Jolliffe Academy of Dancing, Oldman River Potter's Guild, Lethbridge Camera Club, Lethbridge Handicraft Guild, and Playgoers of Lethbridge. A painting of Charles B. Bowman was unveiled by his son and daughter, R. F. P. (Paddy) Bowman of Lethbridge and Mrs. Nigel (Gwendolyn) Lawrence of Red Deer. A painting by Mr. E. E. Reithman was presented by his family. Both paintings now hang in the Board Room of the Bowman Arts Centre.

Activities at Bowman had expanded greatly by the end of 1965. There had been numerous one-man shows, including a fine showing by Philip J. Collins, well-known local artist. Commenting editorially on the Bowman Arts Centre's first anniversary, the Lethbridge Herald said, "It was an exciting community experience, the best thing of this kind to occur in

Lethbridge over the last 12 months. This is a positive contribution which prevents those things that damage a community."

Lack of space proved to be a problem from the beginning. As early as January 1965, Mayor Frank Sherring referred in a speech to the possibility of moving the Museum into the Galt Building. The Galt Building had been used from 1910-1955 as a general hospital and from 1956-1965 as a rehabilitation centre and nursing home. Patients were moved from the Galt Rehabilitation Centre to the new Auxiliary Hospital in December 1964 and from the Galt Nursing Home to the new Devon Nursing Home in September 1965. There was some pressure to demolish the old building but it was decided instead to give the second floor and basement to the Historical Society to house its expanding Museum collection. The first floor was renovated and turned over to the City of Lethbridge Health Unit. The Society moved its collection from the Bowman Centre to the Galt Building in March 1966 and renamed the new Facility the Sir Alexander Galt Museum, a name change suggested by George Watson Sr. Since 1971, the Museum has been operated by the City of Lethbridge as part of its Community Services Directorate. The move of the Museum to the Galt Building proved to be a considerable relief to the Bowman Centre Management Committee of the Allied Arts Council, and its Chairman, Heino Deeken, as its member organizations were clamouring for space.

In 1965, Cathy Evins began work as a part-time volunteer office manager at Bowman; by 1967 she worked full-time but was paid on a part-time basis. In 1968, Cathy Evins was named Artistic Director and was part-time while Joan Waterfield was named Business Manager, also on a part-time

basis, although both continued to work on a full-time basis. Unfortunately, the position of Artistic Director had to be terminated at the end of the year due to lack of money and the office operated only from 2-5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Carol Watkinson, a part-time volunteer who soon became full-time, was named Executive Secretary, a position she occupied until 1975. By 20 November 1968, according to a report by George Dew, president, "The Arts Council has, in the past 12 months, changed in character and outlook. We have found ourselves no longer to be a small, informal group. An indication of this is in the 31 July 1968 Executive Committee minutes where questions regarding Workman's Compensation, sick leave, etc., were discussed."

In 1982, the Bowman Arts Centre had a full-time administrator (Joan Waterfield), a full-time office manager (Hazel Skaronski) and a custodian. Funding had grown in 24 years from a small city grant to inclusion in the City of Lethbridge budget. Grants from Alberta Culture, increased membership fees, revenue from the performing arts, and various bequests and other support provided additional funds. The two full-time employees were paid by the city but their duties related to both the ongoing work of the Allied Arts Council and the administration of the Bowman Arts Centre. Thirty-five percent of operational costs were recovered from rentals, programming, and office services.

The Bowman Arts Centre building was declared a Provincial Historic Resource in 1982.

The Genevieve E. Yates Memorial Centre

The idea of a cultural centre and a civic auditorium for

Lethbridge traced back at least to 1944 when the end of the Second World War was in sight, surpluses had been generated through high wartime taxation, and authorities were thinking in terms of post-war, make-work projects to provide employment for returning veterans. Thus, as described elsewhere, City Manager Watson arranged for plans to be drawn up for a \$300,000 development of the area known since 1886 as the Mounted Police Barracks Square. Although the expected depression failed to materialize, the planned Civic Center was built in the next few years except for the Library-Museum-Art Gallery and civic auditorium parts of it.

Library expansion in Lethbridge had been postponed because of the Second World War and, by 1945, the existing facility in Galt Gardens was crowded and inadequate. City Council set aside \$125,000 of its wartime savings for library construction, the funds to be made available whenever City Council or the electorate decided on whether to approve expansion of the existing building in Galt Gardens or to build a new structure in the Civic Centre. A plebiscite was held in 1949 and, in light voting, a program of expansion of the Galt Gardens Library building at a cost of \$88,000 was decided upon. This expansion was not completed until January 1952, owing mainly to delays caused by a procrastinating Library Board. Requests for additional space started almost immediately, most suggestions being for a combined library-cultural building in the Civic Centre or in Galt Gardens.

By 1956, the library-cultural centre discussions had reached the stage of architectural drawings. In March, for example, Architect S. Lurie submitted conceptual drawings of a proposed auditorium, museum, and library

extension, plans that incorporated the existing library and the Galt Gardens site. About all these proposals seemed to do was to raise the ire of all those interested in the preservation of the integrity of the downtown park.

Then, in 1957-1958, came the bombshell of the Yates' will and the prospect of a few hundreds of thousands of dollars becoming available to be used for the construction of a cultural centre. (The initial amount of the Yates bequest was \$200,347 but it grew to \$266,896 by the time construction of the Yates Centre, which cost \$546,151, began in 1965.)

One of the first moves of City Council in reaction to the Yates will was to appoint an Auditorium Committee consisting of Mayor A. W. Shackelford and Alderman G. S. Lakie, Cliff Black, and Reg Turner. On 16 June 1959, this committee brought in a report recommending an auditorium with a seating capacity of about 500. Also, the report suggested five locations for the new facility. In order of preference these were: the Civic Centre site; present site of the Gurney Museum in Galt Gardens; on the east side of 19th Street South on 5th Avenue, facing west (the committee assumed Bowman School would eventually be demolished); on 4th Avenue South at 3rd Street, facing east; and Henderson Park, to the northeast of Mayor Magrath Drive and 7th Avenue (the softball park). City Council made two firm decisions on the basis of the report: first, members of Council agreed to the 500-seat capacity auditorium and, second, they endorsed the Civic Centre site.

These decisions by City Council did not make a particle of difference to those organizations busily expounding their points of view.

In 1960, for example, the Allied Arts Council submitted a brief to City Council on a proposed arts centre for Lethbridge. It was only one of dozens of briefs, statements, press releases, letters to the editor, and whatnot put out by the Allied Arts Council and its member organizations during 1958-1965. Thus, it is summarized below to serve as an example of all the others.

The brief began with a discussion of the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge, the nature of the organization, its objectives, its composition, its association with other groups, and its history and activities to date. Then the brief went on to tell of the needs of its member organizations, specifically of the Lethbridge Music Club, the Ballet Auxiliary, the Photography Clubs, the Playgoers, the Sketch Club, the 58 Art Group, the Writers' Workshop, and the Handicraft Guild. The Allied Arts Council viewed the functions of a Cultural Centre as encouraging cultural expression and appreciation, providing opportunities for cooperation by member groups, providing facilities for a suitable auditorium and permanent art gallery, making a contribution to the social welfare of the community, and cooperating with other cultural and education institutions. Recommendations of The Allied Arts Council were for a cultural centre building to contain a 500-seat auditorium, a large lobby, art galleries, kitchen, reception room, dressing rooms, studios and workshops, and meeting and projection rooms. Activities of the Arts Council over the previous two years were outlined. These included sponsorship of the National Ballet twice, sponsorship of the Banff School of Fine Arts Opera twice, sponsorship of several art shows and promotion

of another, assistance in the formation of the Overture Concert Association, negotiations with the Jeunesse Musicale, sponsorship of an art class for children, sponsorship of extra-curricular courses for gifted children, and sponsorship of a music appreciation course for young people. A short section in the brief discussed the subject, "Cultural activities a vital part of our lives," and suggested that reasons for this were a lower retirement age in the future, increased life expectancy, fewer working hours, more stressful life in the future than in the past, and, a need for activities to counter a preoccupation with material progress.

In September 1961, in spite of all the conflicting advice, City Council again arrived at a consensus. Council decided that those facilities designed to provide space for cultural activities (the Cultural Centre) should be grouped separately from those facilities intended to house collections of objects (Museum, Archives, Art Gallery). The latter should come under the Library Board, Council decided. In spite of its 1959 decision to locate the Cultural Centre in the Civic Centre, there was still much talk in Council about the Galt Gardens site. A significant groundswell of opposition to further encroachment onto Galt Gardens had developed. Council again accepted a report from its Auditorium Committee suggesting that a 500-seat auditorium in a Cultural Centre be built immediately. A cause for concern was the \$25,000 Buchanan collection of paintings, which had been presented to the city by Donald and Hugh Buchanan, sons of Senator W. A. Buchanan of the Lethbridge Herald, on the condition that display space be provided by 31 December 1961.

Nothing was done. Donald Buchanan carried out his threat to

reclaim the collection of paintings although he simply deposited them with the Junior College instead. Later the paintings ended up in the Yates Centre and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery while some remained at the Lethbridge Community College.

On 23 November 1962, a meeting of a special Mayor's committee, called the Cultural Committee, was held to consider a multi-purpose Cultural Centre. The minutes of this meeting indicated that a City Manager's Committee and a Parks and Recreation Committee also were considering this matter on a continuing basis. Allied Arts Council representatives were Dr. Van Christou and Doris Balcovske. The Allied Arts Council apparently had submitted a plan which Mayor Frank Sherring, at least, found impressive. There was considerable discussion about locating the proposed Cultural Centre at the Junior College. A City Manager's Committee recommendation that it was not practical to combine the facilities of the culture centre with the facilities of the Civic Sports Centre was endorsed. The Cultural Committee decided to meet with Archie Key and Calgary architects to try and decide how a civic theatre of small size (500-seat maximum), an art gallery, clubrooms, and ancillary facilities might be combined to best serve the needs of Lethbridge. At this and subsequent meetings (at least two more were held), the Allied Arts Council representatives hammered away at the need to place the new cultural centre in Galt Gardens. Mr. A. P. (Al) Baines, representing the Pemmican Club, was just as adamant that it go somewhere--anywhere--else!

By March 1963, City Council had decided to go ahead with a 500-seat auditorium in a cultural centre to be located in the Civic Centre.

Then Council wavered and decided to put the issue before the electorate in a plebiscite on 13 October. All of this led Mary Louise Perkins, secretary of the Allied Arts Council, to lament, "Decisions pertaining to cultural activities in this city change rapidly and where one week it seemed a cultural centre with auditorium was on the way, another week proved the contrary."

For some reason the money by-law relating to the Yates Centre (and the Public Library) was not held on 13 October 1963, as previously announced, but rather on 13 May 1964. The overall vote was 24 percent for, 76 percent opposed. Thus, voters emphatically said "No" to the Yates Centre proposal, which was to cost about \$400,000, and "No" to a Library adjacent to the Yates Centre, which was to cost about \$200,000.

The Allied Arts Council petitioned City Council to accept the defeat of the Library By-law and the failure to obtain permission from the electorate to borrow \$450,000. Then, urged the Allied Arts Council, City Council should proceed with the original proposal of a Yates Memorial Centre.

There was no immediate reaction from City Council but the idea remained in the minds of its members. Finally, on 13 July 1965, Council authorized a start on the Genevieve E. Yates Memorial Centre, thus ending a decade of controversy. The architectural firm of Lurie and Neufeld was authorized to prepare the plans. Sod turning ceremonies were held on 13 August 1965. Opening ceremonies were to be held in May 1966 if all went well.

On 30 March 1966, The Allied Arts Council received a letter from

R. C. (Dick) Mells, Administrator, Genevieve E. Yates Memorial Centre, Parks and Recreation Branch, asking for a list of the performances to be presented in the coming year. The Centre was expected to open on 1 May and bookings were being accepted for 1966 and 1967. A meeting of representatives of interested organizations was proposed so that a schedule of rates and conditions could be discussed.

The Genevieve E. Yates Memorial Centre was, as Deane R. Yates had hoped, a credit to Lethbridge. It was officially opened on 1 May 1966 and quickly became the hub of the performing arts in Lethbridge and Southern Alberta. Located in the Civic Centre block, as suggested by Mr. Yates in 1957 and by the Auditorium Committee in 1959, it consisted of a large lobby for receptions, some gallery space, a 500-seat auditorium, a remarkably versatile stage, excellent acoustics and dressing room space, plus all the other accoutrements of a small theatre.

A Yates Centre brochure, put out about 1970, discussed the state of the arts in Lethbridge at that time: "The Yates Centre provides a base for the performing arts groups of the city and district. There are three local drama groups, a ballet school, a musical theatre company, a symphony orchestra and chorus, and several organizations sponsoring concert series. ... The visual arts are served by the Bowman Arts Centre, a converted school building, housing display areas and facilities for painting, pottery and ceramics, weaving, and all types of handicrafts. ... The Sir Alexander Galt Museum houses many mementoes connected with the history of Lethbridge and district. ... The Lethbridge Allied Arts Council maintains voluntary assistance in coordinating cultural activities and the city administers

facilities through the Cultural Development Department under a full-time Superintendent of Cultural Development. ... The Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce provides a Cultural Affairs Committee to assist local art groups, and the Tourist and Convention Bureau and the Economic Development Commission are fully cognizant of the importance of the arts in the community."

From 1968 Onwards

For a year or two prior to 1967, Canada's centennial year, the Allied Arts Council worked closely with Kurt Steiner, the irascible Director of the Tourist and Convention Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce. (Steiner and the Rev. Yutetsu Kawamura, Raymond, conceived the idea of a Japanese Garden as a centennial project. They looked at two sites, Indian Battle Park and Henderson Lake Park, finally deciding upon a location at the west end of the latter. In 1982, activities associated with the Japanese Garden (Nikka Yuko Centennial Garden) comprised a significant part of the Lethbridge cultural mosaic.) Steiner was anxious to ensure that events organized in Lethbridge to celebrate Canada's centennial were well planned and did not conflict. He enlisted the aid of the Allied Arts Council in this task, as well as the cooperation of local service clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, and other like organizations.

A number of events were sponsored by the Allied Arts Council in 1967, among them being the pantomime "Cinderella", written and directed by Muriel Jolliffe; the musical comedy, "The Pyjama Game," directed by R. C. (Dick) Mells; a performance by the Edmonton Symphony; a performance by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra; an exhibit of water-colours by Martha I.

Houston, Brooks; and a Drama Festival.

The next year saw the Allied Arts Council assist the Western Canada Arts Festival Society in launching the first Western Canada Arts Festival. It proved to be a success and organizers decided to make it an annual event.

Several resignations were submitted at the 20 November 1968 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Allied Arts Council. These included the resignation of the president, W. F. (Ted) Scheurkogel, and the treasurer, Chris Gibson, as well as those of one director and Mrs. Cathy Evins. This cluster of resignations seemed to be coincidental with no single underlying reason for them. Mr. Scheurkogel was attending university part-time and simply found his duties with the Arts Council too time-consuming. Mr. Gibson had recently had an eye operation and resigned for health reasons.

The Allied Arts Council again cooperated with the second Western Canada Arts Festival in 1969, by offering exhibitions of visual arts and a special showing of native arts and crafts. This Festival turned out to be a disaster because Ottawa impersonator Rich Little could not draw a crowd. This single event caused most of the \$3,000 deficit encountered by the Festival organizers. There was a barrage of criticism. Festival organizers had not coordinated their activities with a University of Lethbridge Arts Festival and the two events conflicted. A provincial grant available in 1968 was not forthcoming in 1969 and, hence, the Economic Development Council made available \$2,000 to Festival organizers. City Council took a particularly dim view of this action. Also, City Council

was very critical when an unaudited statement of Festival finances was submitted to it by the Western Canada Arts Festival Committee along with an after-the-fact request that City Council bail organizers out of their troubles. Others claimed that the festival was neither "Western Canada" as most of the prairies were not represented, nor an "Arts Festival," since music and drama made up the bulk of the program.

The upshot was that the third Western Canada Arts Festival, scheduled for spring 1970, was cancelled. Some felt that this was regrettable because, in 1969, the Allied Arts Council had initiated an Indian crafts show during the festival. These crafts were to have comprised an important local attraction in the 1970 Arts Festival.

On 2 June 1970, the Allied Arts Council submitted a brief to the Worth Commission on Educational Planning. The brief stressed the difficulty in long-term planning when the financial picture was so often obscure. It asked that organizations such as the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge be kept informed of policy decisions by the Alberta Government, as well as when such policies might be implemented. It pointed out that excellent support had been received by the Arts Council from the City of Lethbridge and suggested that an equal level of support should be available from the province. As an example, the brief pointed out that use of the Bowman Arts Centre averaged about 600 persons per week or about 31,200 persons per year. The Provincial grant received by the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge was \$2,000 per year, or 6.4 cents per person. The City of Lethbridge grant to the Allied Arts Council was \$8,000 per year, or 26.0 cents per person. The Arts Council thought this was unfair.

In July 1970, a threat to the Bowman Arts Centre arose when it appeared that the site would be needed as part of a land assembly project of the City of Lethbridge. Mayor A. C. (Andy) Anderson said City Council would have a moral obligation to provide other quarters for the Allied Arts Council should the property be sold. The land assembly involved Central School, Bowman Centre, Pemmican Club, and five residences; two major concerns were said to be interested. (The Central School site, with encouragement and input from the Allied Arts Council, was used in 1974 as the site for the new Public Library.)

The Lethbridge Youth Theatre, created and directed by Joan Waterfield, started in 1970 and was particularly successful by 1972. In that year the Youth Theatre involved 42 people, who put on three plays. Sandi Balcovske, whose mother (Doris V. Balcovske) and grandfather (Chris Gibson) were Honourary Life Members of the Allied Arts Council, taught in the summer program that year.

Earlier in 1970, a "Report on Cultural Development in the City of Lethbridge" by R. C. Mells and Max Gibb had been submitted. It was not well received by the Allied Arts Council, whose president, Dr. Keith Lowings, called it "presumptuous, ill-informed, and non-factual."

A meeting was held on 10 November 1970 to discuss the report and related matters. First, Dr. Lowings pointed out that the Yates Centre was not a community centre, as the report indicated, but was a performing arts centre. There was no uniform rental rate at the Yates Centre, thus posing problems for users, and management of the facility was inadequate. A particularly sore point with Allied Arts Council representatives was the

suggestion throughout the report that cultural pursuits were simply another form of recreation; the report's authors did not distinguish between, for example, painting a picture (a creative act) and enjoying a game of handball (a physical act). The 1969 Arts Festival "disaster" came back to haunt, unfairly, the Allied Arts group with Dr. Lowings insisting that he be given an opportunity to "lay the ghost of the Western Canada Arts Festival" once and for all. A purpose of the meeting, which Aldermen Charles W. Chichester and L. C. (Camm) Barnes attended, was to try and form a Cultural Committee and to bring some order and method to the giving of grants to cultural organizations and events. The meeting concluded on the note that: one, a Cultural Commission was necessary and the Allied Arts Council should become this commission; and, two, the Parks and Recreation Department of the city administration be separated into (1) Parks, and (2) Recreation and Cultural Development with a Recreational Officer and a Cultural Development Officer, the latter to be responsible to the Cultural Commission.

On 6 January 1971, disaster was narrowly averted when a small fire was found under the floorboards in the kitchen of the Bowman Arts Centre. It was caused by a workman, engaged to repair the piping under the floor, carelessly discarding a lighted cigarette. The fire smouldered through the day and was discovered just as staff were leaving at about 5:00 p.m. Firemen soon had it out. But had the fire not broken out until later, it is likely that considerable damage would have been done to the building and its contents.

On 15 May, the Allied Arts Council wrote to City Council to

protest further inaccuracies in the Cultural Development Study Committee Report. One interesting paragraph in the letter read, "University of Lethbridge: The feeling of the Allied Arts Council is that to expect cooperation from the university is unrealistic, but to expect leadership is an illusion. This Council has excellent relations with the university but realizes that university personnel owe their first loyalty to their students." The Allied Arts Council letter went on to say that it did not question the need for a Cultural Director (called a Cultural Development Officer in earlier correspondence) but complained that the job description drawn up by the Recreation Department was totally unrealistic. (The Community Services Department was created on 1 September 1971 and some re-organization of Parks, Recreation, and Culture took place.)

A feature article on the Allied Arts Council was carried in the Lethbridge Herald of 13 October 1971. At the time, the Arts Council had 33 member organizations. Dr. Lowings, president, said the basic function of the Arts Council was to serve as "a pool of expertise" in the cultural field. It was based in the Bowman Arts Centre. The Bowman, in turn, was the focal point for much of the cultural activity in Lethbridge. Dr. Lowings pointed out that one reason for the success of the Allied Arts Council was that it had grown with the community rather than through trying to find programs to fill "chromium-plated buildings filled with janitors who worried about carpets." And the Arts Council was a success, Dr. Lowings went on to say. Unlike others in the province that had folded or become mere booking agents, the local organization was deeply rooted in community affairs and was the only Allied Arts Council in Alberta

consistently to receive a provincial grant. Grants and membership fees, plus untold hours of work by dedicated volunteers, executive members, and staff kept the Arts Council going. A primary function of the Arts Council was to try and get young people interested in a variety of activities in the cultural field. The Bowman Arts Centre, with its emphasis on many uses by many different groups, acted as a catalyst in broadening a youngster's outlook.

About 1971, the field of adult education began increasingly to concern citizens. The Allied Arts Council, which had been involved in adult education since 1964, met informally with representatives of other groups to try and improve adult education programs. The Lethbridge Lifelong Learning Association grew out of this meeting. The Association gained momentum in 1974 when the Department of Continuing Education agreed to offer financial assistance with things such as travel costs and lecture fees to member groups. The Association then formulated objectives, drew up by-laws, obtained a charter, and became operational in 1976. Objectives were to provide the best possible lifelong learning experience to interested Lethbridge citizens; to promote communication, cooperation, and coordination among members; to provide a forum for discussion of needs; and to speak on issues and concerns of importance to the development of lifelong learning. The long-time Allied Arts Council representatives on the Lifelong Learning Association were Carol Watkinson and Joan Waterfield who served terms as Vice-President and President of the association. In 1982, the Association had 22 member agencies; it required a 44-page Lethbridge Herald supplement to list and provide information on the 1982-83

programs.

In 1972, although Lethbridge cultural organizations did not seem to be directly involved, the Alberta Art Foundation was established by act of the provincial legislature. Those who were directly involved (Minister of Culture Horst Schmid, MLA Dave Russell, a cadre of art enthusiasts) wanted to encourage Alberta artists through purchase of their works and public display. Also, because of the great areal extent of Alberta, it was necessary to introduce artist to artist and artist to the public. From 1972-1982, the Alberta Art Foundation acquired more than 2,600 pieces of art through purchase and donation; spending on such acquisitions increased from \$9,390 in 1973 to \$130,000 in 1982. The local review committee consisted of Dr. Van Christou, Prof. Larry Weaver and Doris Balcovske. In recent years, the Art Foundation seems to have been captured by an Edmonton-minded group. The idea of taking art to the people of Alberta seems to have been forgotten. The collection is now housed in the Beaver House Gallery, 10158 - 103 Street, Edmonton, and exhibits are mostly held there. (Works of art by a number of local artists such as Herb Hicks, B. J. McCarroll, Karen Heninger of Cardston, and Irene McCaugherty, Fort Macleod, have been purchased by the Alberta Art Foundation; an exhibit of Irene's paintings was held in Beaver House Gallery in November-December 1982.)

A copy of the 1973 Allied Arts Council summer program at the Bowman Arts Centre listed both youth and evening adult courses. The youth program included all ages from 6 through 18 and outlined courses in pottery, print making, creative crafts, sculpture, photography, painting,

and drawing. Adult evening courses included silversmithing, photography, batik and macrame, sculpture, figure drawing, painting, print making, and group guitar. The summer of 1973 also saw the production of the summer musical "West Side Story" under director Dick Mells, choreographer Muriel Jolliffee and musical director Ellyn Mells. The tradition of Arts Council summer musicals had begun in 1966 as a vehicle to provide training and opportunity for talented young people of the area. Also, the Sunshine Players (an Opportunity for Youth Project) operated a drama workshop for those aged 12 to 15. The program included puppets, masks, movement, design, creative drama, and theatrical concepts. Fees were a nominal \$5 per entrant and materials were supplied.

By 1974, the University of Lethbridge Drama Department had begun to hit its stride. Up to December 1974, the department expected to put on 16 plays in ten sessions, four of the ten sessions being staged in the Lethbridge Public Library. Someone pointed out at the time that the university drama department had a big advantage over the Allied Arts Council in that the former did not have to worry about earning money to pay expenses.

In March 1974, assisted by the Allied Arts Council, groups in the city began to promote the conversion of the old Public Library building in Galt Gardens into an Art Gallery. (The new Public Library on the former Central School grounds at 5th Avenue and 9th Street South opened on 4 April 1974.) Others wanted the old building to be retained but to be renovated and used as offices for the Community Services Directorate, then badly scattered. Proponents of the Art Gallery were able in less than a week to

get 2,203 signatures on a petition of support. (Art students from the University of Lethbridge played an important part in obtaining these signatures.) City Council vacillated, as was its wont, first giving permission to Community Services to renovate the building and move in, then changing its collective mind and approving use of the building as an Art Gallery. By 9 August 1975, Allan MacKay had been hired as director-curator and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery was in operation, going public in 1976.

Thus in 1976, there were in operation in Lethbridge the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, the Lethbridge Public Library Art Gallery, and the Bowman Gallery. (There was some gallery space in the Yates Centre and in the Sir Alexander Galt Museum.) The Bowman Gallery, operated by the Allied Arts Council as part of the Bowman Arts Centre, was presided over by a Visual Arts Officer (Carol Watkinson), a position that had started as an Artistic Director (Cathy Evins) in 1968. The Visual Arts Officer, in addition to being in charge of the Bowman Gallery and teaching visual arts classes in the Centre, attempted to liaise with other Lethbridge galleries and, hence, to ensure complementary exhibits and cooperation among them.

In 1979, City Council discussed in closed session the future of the Allan Watson school, expected to close in 1981 because of declining attendance. Also before City Council at the time was a request from the Allied Arts Council for expansion of the Bowman Arts Centre. City Council decided that the Allan Watson School should be used as an arts centre and that groups using the Bowman should move into the new facility.

Unfortunately, no one told the Allied Arts Council of the decision although it managed the Bowman on behalf of the city. On 6 February, and again on 3 March, the president of the Allied Arts Council appeared before City Council to inform the body that the organizations using the Bowman were unanimously opposed to moving the Centre's activities to the Allan Watson School. Many reasons were given, among them the Bowman's central location and its proximity to other facilities such as the library, the museum, the Yates centre and the art gallery. Further, the Allied Arts Council felt it could not afford to maintain the Allan Watson school building under the existing circumstances. In the end the wishes of Allied Arts member organizations prevailed.

The Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge owed much of its success to the stable base represented by the Bowman Arts Centre. But while the effect of that base cannot be argued, it was often threatened. In 1970, the Allied Arts Council took up arms against the proposal that the Central School and Bowman properties be used for commercial development.

Allied Arts fought successfully to retain the Bowman and to have the Public Library located on the Central School property, arguing that this move would reinforce what was unique to the City of Lethbridge: many of its cultural-recreational facilities were located in the hub of the city and were readily accessible by its citizens.

The Allan Watson school proposal of 1979 was yet another skirmish that was won by the Allied Arts Council. More such skirmishes were to come with the 1982 presentation of the Town Square Concept by the City Hall Study Committee. This concept anticipated a move of the Bowman operation,

but it was not this alone that aroused the Allied Arts Council.

While supportive of the building of a new Southern Alberta Art Gallery, as suggested in the Town Square Concept, Allied Arts took strong exception to the suggestion that Sir Alexander Galt Museum, which was ideally suited and should have been developed in situ, would be incorporated in the Town Square plan.

Yet while recognizing the Bowman Arts Centre as the stable base of operations of the Allied Arts Council, it was surprising that the spirits of the Arts Council executive, staff and volunteers did not, at times, flag. In her report to the Directorate in 1974, Doris Balcovske, president, reflected on the Bowman as a case of "too little (space) for too many (people)" and expressed the hope that expansion of the Bowman eventually would come about.

She went on to say, ". . . because of our past successes and the fact that we do so much on so little, we are continually called upon to explain, to argue, and to beg for assistance. . . . In today's world, the volunteer has become almost suspect--why would anyone work for nothing?" The answer was given, "For the sheer love of it."

But the years have seen growing acknowledgement of the work of the Allied Arts Council and ever-increasing support from the City of Lethbridge. At the provincial level, the reorganization of the Cultural Development Branch (created in 1947) into Alberta Culture and the advent of the Hon. Horst A. Schmid as its minister gave tremendous impetus to the arts. A gratefully-received \$2,000 grant in 1968 grew into a \$5,000 grant in 1974 after a delegation from the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge met

with Mr. Schmid.

Better things were in store with the implementation of a Performing Arts policy, which returned to sponsors like the Allied Arts Council a portion of the artist's fees to serve as seed money for future sponsorships. No like policy has yet been developed for the Visual Arts. In 1983, a substantial grant was received from Mary LeMessurier, Minister of Culture, to provide aid toward the development of programs for the Bowman Gallery, the first art gallery in the City of Lethbridge. All of this augured well for the future.

In 1976 Robert Baunton and Joan Waterfield were called upon to refute an accusation of ". . . Art Councils forming a barrier between the Department (the Cultural Development Branch) and the people." Later, they were called upon to address the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association Conference on the "Benefits of an Allied Arts Council in the Community Development Process," and used Lethbridge as a successful example.

But to assume that grants and even the Bowman Arts Centre itself, important as they were in the development and encouragement of the arts in the community, formed the central factors in the success of the Allied Arts Council was to deny the philosophy of the Council and the roster of those who have worked for it. The essence of the Allied Arts Council and its value to the community was in the citizens who allied themselves to its cause. From the beginning, its executive was chosen from the whole community, thus ensuring the services not only of aficionados of the arts but also of a corporate expertise. None typified this wide experience more than the members of the Life Membership Roll: the late Chris Gibson, his

daughter Doris Balcovske, Clare Malmberg, and Carol Watkinson.

The \$100,000 received by the City of Lethbridge in 1980 as part of the province's 75th anniversary celebration was put to fine use in upgrading the Bowman Arts Centre facility. Also, the designation of the Bowman as a Provincial Historic Resource in 1982 helped to ensure the future of the building in the community and its preservation for future generations.

One must look at what the Allied Arts Council has accomplished, at how belief in its objectives has surmounted many problems and has overcome a lack of financial support. One must look at its staff, beginning with Cathy and Albert Evins in 1965 and continuing on to those individuals still fully committed in 1984.

One must look at the performing arts, at those artists and companies brought to Southern Alberta by the Allied Arts Council. The roster began with the National Ballet Company and included: the Hogarth Puppets; the Royal Winnipeg Ballet; Ballet Ys; the Anna Wyman Dancers; Entre-Six; the Alberta Ballet Company; the Paul Gaulin Mime Company; Toronto Dance Theatre; Jose Greco and Nana Lorca; Theatre Beyond Words; Maxim Muzumdar and John Neville; the Canada Council's Little Big Show; Citadel Theatre; Toronto Workshop Theatre; Charlottetown Festival Theatre; the Moscow Chamber Choir; the Greystone Singers; David Lui's Dance, Dance, Dance; Ken Fruit and the Fool's Workshop; Ron East; the Little Angels of Korea; Constance Channon-Douglas; Marek Jablonski; Palisade Arts production of Oh Coward!; Alberta Theatre Projects; Northern Lights Theatre; Gordon Lightfoot; Fialka and the Theatre of the Balustrade, Prague; the Mimura Harp Ensemble; the Calgary Philharmonic; the Edmonton Symphony, and, from

1959 to 1970, the annual Banff School Opera.

Recitals by local artists were encouraged, Theatre in the Community and Music in the Community meetings were organized, Lethbridge Youth Theatre was supported, and a High School Drama Festival was started. A Theatre in the Community Festival led to the reactivating of the regional One Act Festivals. The provincial One Act Festival was hosted, as was the provincial Three Act Festival before the demise of the Dominion Drama Festival. And, of course, every year for 15 years, the City of Lethbridge counted on the Summer Youth Musical and Christmas Pantomime, directed by Muriel Jolliffe, both sponsored by the Arts Council. In 1982 the Lethbridge Performing Arts Summer School began its operation in the Bowman Arts Centre, co-sponsored and administered by the Allied Arts Council, the school offers training in the theatre arts for young people aged 12 - 16.

At times there was a hiatus in sponsorship of the performing arts by the Allied Arts Council. This occurred when it was hoped that local groups would assume sponsorship of the events. Often this was too great a burden for the smaller organization and Allied Arts had to assume responsibility instead. The attitude of the Allied Arts Council to such sponsorship was and is that outlined by Dr. Keith Lowings in his 1972 President's Report: "It is our policy to keep admission prices as low as possible. . . . It is important to bring (these productions) at low cost to the younger generation to build our audiences for tomorrow."

Instruction in the Visual Arts reached out into the community and continued in the Bowman Arts Centre for adults and children. Various programs were offered by the Allied Arts Council in the Bowman without subsidy for many years. Since the 1960s, from the burlapping of gallery walls by Doris Balcovske and Herb Hicks through the organization of local,

provincial and national exhibitions by Carol Watkinson, the Bowman Gallery has flourished.

Close liaison was maintained with the Alberta Art Foundation. Several regional artists, whose works were exhibited first at the Bowman, were honoured by the purchase of representative pieces of their work by the Foundation. Many local and regional artists gained first exhibition exposure through Foundation programs.

Additional exposure was given to area artists and craftsmen in the creation, in 1976, of the Southern Alberta Visual Arts and Crafts Festival. As a co-sponsor, with Alberta Culture and the City of Lethbridge, the Allied Arts Council and the Bowman Arts Centre played an important role in the early success of the Festival.

The School Art Exhibition, which grew into the annual Arts Alive and Well in the Schools show (now held in the Southern Alberta Art Gallery), began at the Bowman in 1969.

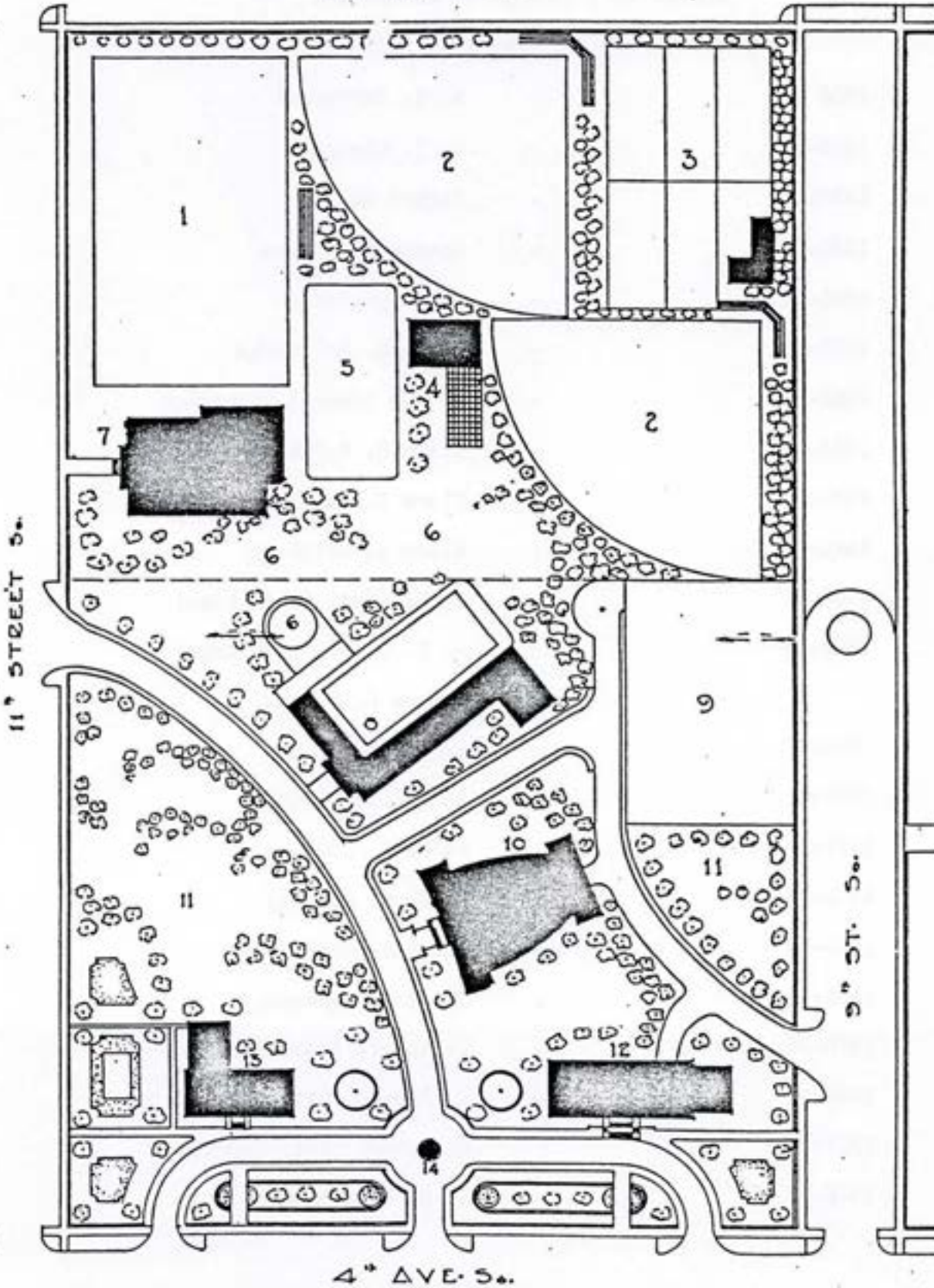
Exhibitors at the Bowman over the years included: Roloff Beny, P. J. Collins, Martha Houston, Jessie Reed Ursenbach, Elva Bussard, Illingworth Kerr, Edward G. (Ted) Godwin, Bryan Wilson, Harold Pfeiffer, George Buytendorp, Herbert Hicks, Mirek Fiala, William (Bill) Pratt, Cornelius (Corne) Martens, Karen Heninger, Karen Brownlee, Annette Nieukirk, Richard Rayner, Hazel Schwass, Carol Mallinson, Steve Burger, Ethel Dunn, Shirley Hamilton, Elaine Harrison, Otto Rapp, Lynne Hunter-Johnson, David Manz, Richard Lonsdale, Dorothy Peterson, Robert (Bob) Hicks, Genevieve (Gen) Stafford, Elizabeth (Beth) Jantzie, and Patricia (Pat) Holland.

On 20 March 1983, the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge celebrated 25 years of service to the community and region. As the organization headed into its second quarter-century of service, it seemed safe to make two observations: one, that the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge was the most successful such organization in the Province of Alberta and, two, that the spirit of the last 25 years would stand the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge in good stead in the future.

APPENDIX A

From 1944 Report of the Lethbridge Board of Trade, Pages 30-31

6th AVE. S.



Shown above is the latest plot plan of the proposed \$300,000 Civic Centre Lethbridge plans to build in the Mounted Police Barracks Square. Designation of the fig-
ures in the plan follows: 1, soccer and rugby field; 2, fastball diamonds; 3, tennis courts; 4, playground shelter; 5, outdoor skating rink; 6, children's playground
riding pool; 7, sports auditorium; 8, Sick Memorial swimming pool; 9, Royal Canadian Mounted Police premises; 10, civic auditorium; 11, park; 12, city hall; 13,
museum, art gallery; 14, war memorial.

APPENDIX B

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

Presidents

1958	-	V. E. Christou ¹
1958-59	-	V. E. Christou
1959-60	-	Martin Hoyt
1960-61	-	George M. Watson
1961-62	-	V. E. Christou
1962-63	-	Doris V. Balcovske
1963-64	-	Jerome (Jerry) Weintraub
1964-65	-	Clare S. Malmberg
1965-66	-	Clare S. Malmberg
1966-67	-	Clare S. Malmberg
1967-68	-	W. F. (Ted) Scheurkogel
1968-69	-	W. F. (Ted) Scheurkogel ²
	-	George F. R. Dew
1969-70	-	George F. R. Dew
1970-71 ³	-	Keith L. Lowings
1971-72	-	Keith L. Lowings
1972-73	-	Keith L. Lowings
1973-74	-	Doris V. Balcovske
1974-75	-	Doris V. Balcovske
1975-76	-	C. Robert (Bob) Baunton
1976-77	-	C. Robert (Bob) Baunton
1977-78	-	C. Robert (Bob) Baunton
1978-79	-	T. G. (Terry) Morris

1979-80	-	T. G. (Terry) Morris
1980-81	-	David Manz
1981-82	-	Karen J. Kay
1982-83	-	Karen J. Kay
1983-84	-	Shirley Hamilton

¹ Dr. V. E. Christou was elected president pro tem at the founding meeting and served from 20 March 1958 to 9 June 1958, when the first Annual meeting was held.

² W. F. Scheurkogel resigned on 20 November 1968; George Dew, vice-president, served the remainder of the term.

³ In 1971, date of the annual meeting was changed from the second week in June to the last week in February.

APPENDIX C

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

Secretaries

1958	-	Jessie Baalim ¹
1958-59	-	Jessie Baalim
1959-60	-	P. J. Collins
1960-61	-	P. J. Collins
1961-62	-	Mary Louise Perkins ²
1962-63	-	Mary Louise Perkins ³
1963-64	-	Beverly Holmes
1964-65	-	Mary L. Heinitz
1965-66	-	Catherine (Cathy) Evins
1966-67	-	Catherine (Cathy) Evins
1967-68	-	Catherine (Cathy) Evins
1968-69	-	Carol Watkinson
1969-70	-	Carol Watkinson
1970-71	-	Carol Watkinson
1971-72	-	Carol Watkinson
1972-73	-	Carol Watkinson
1973-74	-	Carol Watkinson
1974-75	-	Carol Watkinson
1975-76	-	Karen J. Kay
1976-77	-	Karen J. Kay
1977-78	-	Karen J. Kay
1978-79	-	Karen J. Kay

1979-80	-	Karen J. Kay
1980-81	-	No nomination ⁴
1981-82	-	Sonja Batty
1982-83	-	Sonja Batty
1983-84	-	Sonja Batty

¹ Jessie Baalim was appointed secretary shortly after the 20 March 1958 founding Meeting of the Lethbridge Allied Arts Council.

² Mrs. H. J. (Mary Louise) Perkins was listed as Recording Secretary, Doris Balcovske as Corresponding Secretary, in 1961-62 and 1962-63.

³ "Mrs. Perkinson" was nominated as Secretary in 1962-63 but Mary Louise Perkins was meant.

⁴ No one was nominated as Secretary at the February 1980 annual meeting. A notice a few weeks after the meeting was initialled "S. H.," probably Shirley Hamilton, who must have acted as Secretary in 1980-81.

APPENDIX D

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

Treasurers

1958	-	David Howell
1958-59	-	David Howell
1959-60	-	Ward Ingoldsby
1960-61	-	Angelo J. Murphy
1961-62	-	Angelo J. Murphy
1962-63	-	M. R. Hanna
		Janet (Jan) Tait
1963-64	-	Janet (Jan) Tait
1964-65	-	Chris Gibson
1965-66	-	Chris Gibson
1966-67	-	Chris Gibson
1967-68	-	Chris Gibson
1968-69	-	Chris Gibson
		Heino Deeken
1969-70	-	Bruce B. (Buck) Rodgers
1970-71	-	Margaret L. (Marg) Kokott
1971-72	-	Margaret L. (Marg) Kokott
1972-73	-	Winnifred (Win) Dufty
1973-74	-	Winnifred (Win) Dufty
1974-75	-	Winnifred (Win) Dufty
1975-76	-	Leonard H. (Len) Watkinson
1976-77	-	Leonard H. (Len) Watkinson

1977-78	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1978-79	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1979-80	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1980-81	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1981-82	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1982-83	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman
1983-84	-	Gregory (Greg) Goodman

¹ David Howell was appointed Treasurer shortly after the 20 March 1958 founding meeting of the Lethbridge Allied Arts Council.

² According to a report, Jan Tait acted as Treasurer in 1963. However, the name of the Dr. M. R. Hanna was proposed by the Nominations Committee at the June 1962 annual meeting.

³ Heino Deeken was named Treasurer to replace Chris Gibson when the latter resigned on 20 November 1968 due to after-effects of an eye operation.

APPENDIX E

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

H o n o u r s

Life Membership Roll

Christian (Chris) Gibson
Doris Vivian Balcovske¹
Clare St. Clair Malmberg
Carol Patricia Germaine Watkinson

Memorial Honour Roll

Philip J. Collins
Christian (Chris) Gibson
William Fairbairn
Charles R. Matthews
Arthur K. Putland
Mabelle Bryans
Elva Bussard
Annie Lundy
Horace Barrett
Aileen Jones
Ralph B. McKenzie
Anna Gangur
Leslie T. Allen
George Watson Sr.
George Bremner McKillop
Harold (Harry) Turner
Albert (Bert) C. Evins

¹ Doris Balcovske was the daughter of Chris Gibson.

APPENDIX F

ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE

BOWMAN ARTS CENTRE

Staff

Artistic Director - Catherine A. Evins - 1965-68
Administrator - Joan S. Waterfield - 1967 -
Executive Secretary - Carol P. G. Watkinosn - 1968-1975
Bookkeeper - Winnifred (Win) Dufty - 1972-1975
Office Manager - Hazel Skaronski - 1975-
Custodial Staff - Albert W. Evins - 1965-1974
 Harold (Harry) Turner - Security - 1972-1974
 Custodian - 1974-1976
 Gerald Tobin - 1976-1978
 Albert W. Evins - 1978-1982
 Manley Bourne - 1982-
Performing Arts Officer - Joan S. Waterfield - 1974-
Visual Arts Officer - Carol P. G. Watkinson - 1974-1979
 Shirley Hamilton - 1979-
Gallery and Programme Staff - Helen White - 1974-1975
 Catherine A. Evins - 1975
 William Pratt - 1975-1976
 Patricia Holland - 1977-1978
 Anne Reid - 1978-1980
 Donna Gallant - 1981-
House Management Chairman - Heino Deeken - 1965-1967
 Clare S. Malmberg - 1968-

APPENDIX G
ALLIED ARTS COUNCIL OF LETHBRIDGE
PAST AND PRESENT MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alberta Architects Association - Lethbridge Branch
Alberta Dance Festival Association
Alberta Highland Dance Association - Lethbridge Branch
Alberta Potters Association - Area 8
Alberta Teachers Association - Lethbridge Branch
Alberta Writers Workshop
Sir Alexander Galt Museum
Anne Campbell Singers Parents Association
Art Groups '58, '59, '60
Attic Theatre

Beta Sigma Phi City Council
Black & White Photography
Bridge City Toastmistress Club

Canadian Bureau for the Advancement of Music
Canadian Handicrafts Guild (1959)
Classic Record Club
Coaldale Little Theatre
Colour Photography Club
Copper Enamelling Club
Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta

Handweavers Spinners & Dyers of Alberta - Lethbridge Branch
Hungarian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta

Interweave
Irish Canadian Club

The Jazz Scene
Jolliffe Academy of Dancing

K. E. T. Theatre
Kiwanis Music Festival Committee

Lethbridge Ballet Auxillary
Lethbridge Band
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
Lethbridge Chamber Orchestra
Lethbridge Chapter, Sweet Adelines
Lethbridge Chilean Community Group
Lethbridge Cine Club
Lethbridge Colour Camera Club
Lethbridge Community College - Art Department
Lethbridge Community College - Drama Department
Lethbridge & District Historical Society - Whoop-Up Country Chapter
Lethbridge Fencing Club
Lethbridge Film Society
Lethbridge Folk Club
Lethbridge 4-H Light Horse Club
Lethbridge Handicraft Guild
Lethbridge Jazz Society
Lethbridge Kinsmen Club
Lethbridge Music Club
Lethbridge Musical Theatre
Lethbridge Naturalists Society
Lethbridge Philosophical Society
Lethbridge Public Library Board
Lethbridge Registered Music Teachers Association
Lethbridge Sketch Club
Lethbridge Strings Youth & Parent Association
Lethbridge Symphony Association
Lethbridge University Womens Club
Lethbridge Youth Theatre

Mathesis Club of Lethbridge
Metis Association of Alberta - Local 95
Milk River Art Club

Oldman River Potters Guild
Our Town Workshop
Overture Concert Association

Playgoers of Lethbridge

Quota Club

Society for the Preservation of Barbershop Singing - Lethbridge Branch
Southern Alberta Amateur Radio Club
Southern Alberta Art Gallery Association
Southern Alberta Ethnic Association
Southern Alberta Visual Arts and Crafts Festival
Southminster Church Junior Girls Choir
Speech Arts

Textile Workshop

University of Lethbridge - Art Department
University of Lethbridge - Drama Department
University of Lethbridge - Music Department

Wednesday People

Y.M.C.A.
Y.W.C.A. ———























































































































