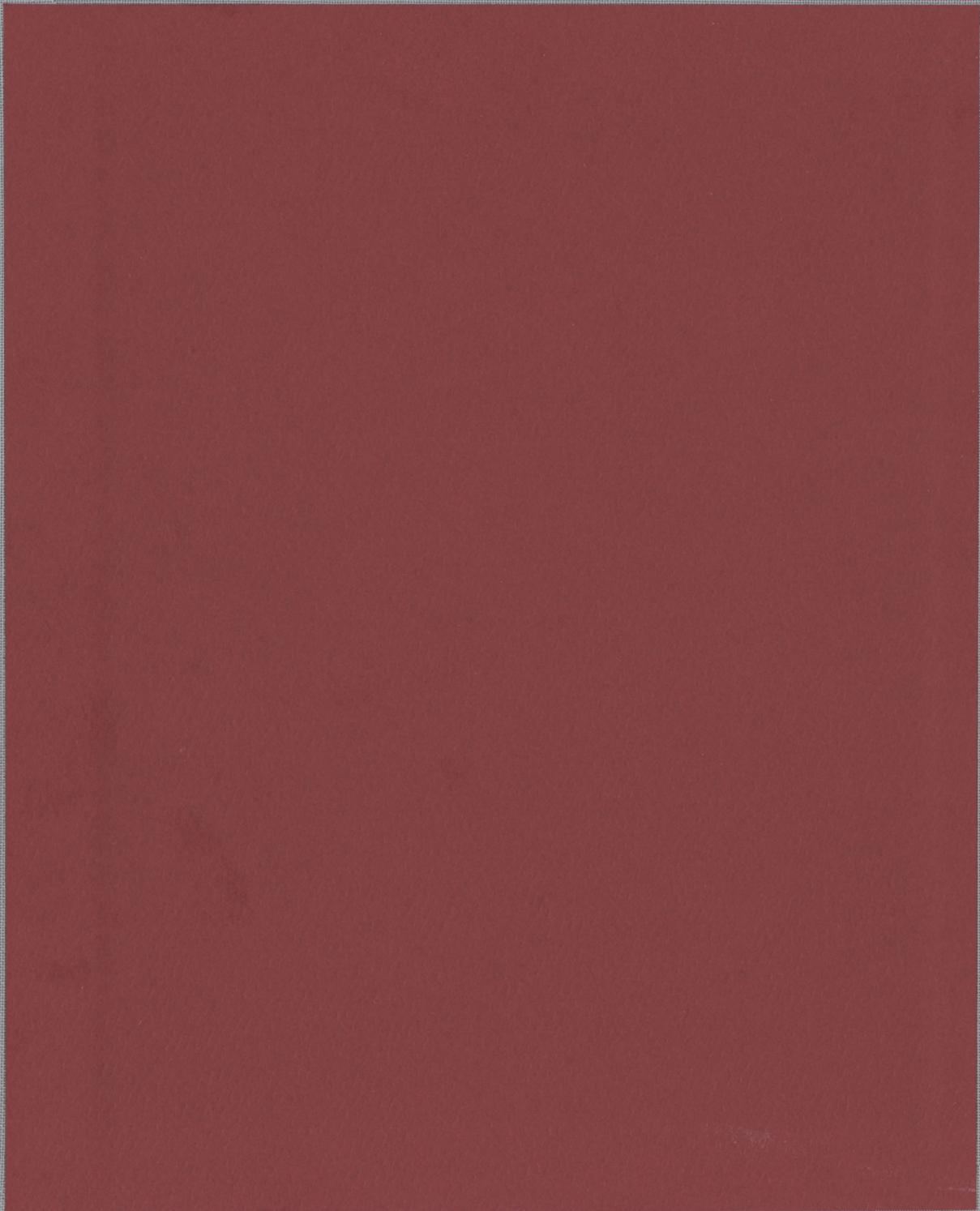




SOUND PORTRAITS







# SOUNDPORTRAITS

STORIES OF NEWHAVEN ON THE RIVER



IN CONVERSATION WITH

*Lapson*



A SOUNDTRIBUTE  
Celebrating Newhaven on the River

For many years the guests of Newhaven have asked for, and encouraged me to share, the stories of my youth, as the Stratford Festival emerged from our neighbour Tom Patterson's vision, to the amazing world-recognized theatre it has become today. Through the admirable skill and expertise of Judy Maddren, my stories have been lifted from Newhaven's breakfast table and presented here in pictures and in my voice for all to enjoy.

I am grateful to my parents Edward and Haidee Smith, who came to Stratford in 1939, and remained to raise their family. But they also immersed themselves in offering hospitality, by opening their home in 1953 to the many guests – artists and theatre-fans – who arrived in Stratford. My life has been greatly enriched by not only my parents' involvement, but in carrying the tradition forward after I took ownership of 344 William Street in 1988. Guests from many parts of the world have consistently brought their stories and appreciation of the theatre to Newhaven. And my volunteer work since 1984 with the theatre actors, staff and patrons has also enriched my experiences. I am grateful to the Stratford Festival for the impact it has had on my life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lagon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the main text.

## 344 William Street



*Laura's parents Edward and Haidee Smith sitting in the garden at the back of the house in the 1950's. "My parents seemed to delight in having people in our home."*

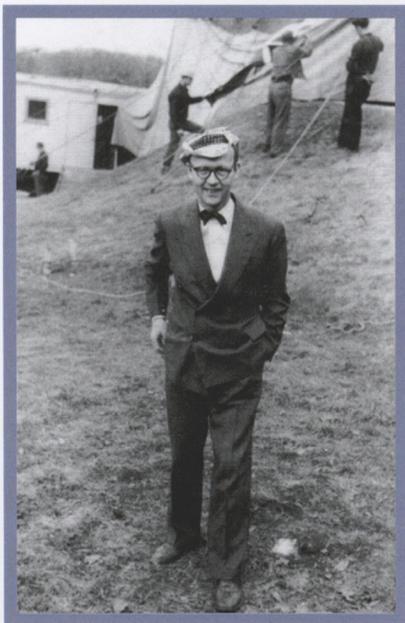
The Smiths began welcoming theatre guests from the Stratford Shakespearean Festival to their home in 1953. In 1988, their daughter Laura Pogson continued their hospitality in the newly-christened Newhaven on the River.

“It came naturally to me to take over 344 William Street. My mother taught me the gift of hospitality. My father taught me how to be wise, how to think things through, and how to be a problem-solver. When I started looking after Newhaven, it wasn't work, or a job. It was going to be a lifestyle. It is a true privilege to live in my childhood home, open it to guests, and be a part of the whole Stratford scene.”

Laura Pogson was interviewed by Judy Maddren for this Soundtribute, in the living room of Newhaven, in January, February and March, 2017.



*The Smith family dressed for church on Easter Sunday, circa 1950. From L to R: Paul, Brant, Laura, Haidee, Harley and Edward.*



*Tom Patterson brought the festival to reality in 1953, and with it, an economic revival after the rail industry left the city. "Nothing would have stopped Tom."*

“ Opening night was exciting – my brothers were ushers, and they sneaked me in under a flap of the tent. I sat on the steps of Aisle 6 and watched Alec Guinness come out in Richard the III. I remember the lines, ‘Now is the winter of our discontent, Made glorious by this son of York.’ At ten years of age, I did not understand the play, but what I remember was the uproar of the audience, and I knew something very special had happened in Stratford. ”

# The Stratford Shakespearean Festival



*From the beginning, Laura did her part to make the Festival a success, helping to serve meals to theatre-goers at Knox Presbyterian Church. At right, eleven-year-old Laura stands behind bouquets of flowers from her father's garden. He regularly delivered gorgeous blooms to decorate the hall and the dining tables, and her mother prepared roast beef every day.*

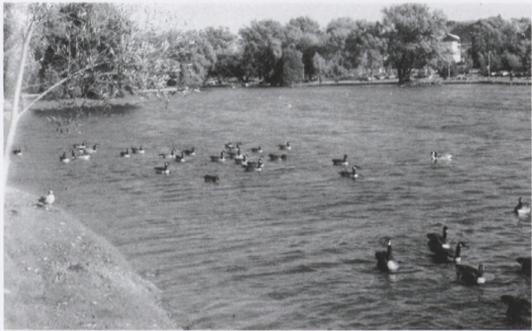


*Guests enjoying the sun in the terraced front garden of the house in 1959. "My mother always served tea in the afternoon. The guests would sit there by the Avon, with the swans paddling by, drinking tea in china cups – they felt they were in England!"*



“ I remember Tyrone Guthrie that first year, advising my mother never to refer to the people who came, as tourists. ‘They are always theatre guests! We will not be having any ye olde souvenir shops here!’ What I think is significant about the Stratford stage is that right from the very beginning, we were bringing in renowned actors.

”



*The seasons of the Avon.*

Top: A winter scene across from Newhaven. Middle: Mallards and Canada Geese enjoy the river. Bottom: HMS Razzamajazz – Jack Hayter playing his saxophone with musical friends on the barge cruising the Avon.

## Newhaven – Friends and Guests



*Mary Savidge as Mistress Quickly, reacts to Falstaff (Tony van Bridge) and Doll (Frances Hyland), in this scene from Falstaff in 1965. Also in the production was Douglas Campbell, one of the original actors at the Festival. Laura once asked him for an audition, which never happened, but they enjoyed the shared joke for many years.*

“ I watched Louis Applebaum dance, in this living room, while composing music to A Midsummer Night’s Dream. ”



*Laura on the front step in 2001 with Musia and Leon Schwartz, long-time guests at Newhaven. “Musia and Leon were well-versed in every play. And they were friends of Leonard Cohen and Irving Layton, so I always felt connected.”*



*Laura and Frances Allee in 2010.* Frances is an author and professor, who has only missed one season since 1976. She drives on her own, from Albany, New York to Stratford.

“ I always say that the world comes to my door. It’s so interesting to welcome guests who tell me about their world. And it enriches my life to hear how other people view the plays they see. ”



*Laura (second from right, at the table) also enjoys the visits of Terry O’Donnell (top left), a retired professor of music and theatre from San Diego State U. He has been coming to Stratford for twenty years or more, and is an admirer of Glenn Gould, who was also a guest, in the 1950’s.*

# The Pleasures of Newhaven



“ I liked gardening, but had no time and no knowledge. Harry Jongerden, who was the head gardener at the Festival, taught me a lot. He mentions in his book, *This Other Eden*, that I encouraged him to write it and share his knowledge. ”

*Laura says it was a proud moment when her climbing roses bloomed in abundance on an arbour in the front garden!*



*The view from the front porch of Newhaven.*



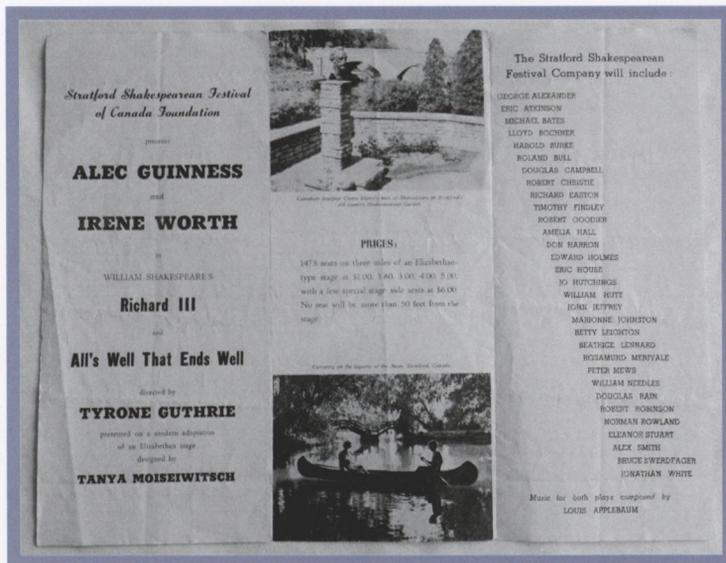
*Above: Laura in a skating carnival costume, practicing on the Avon, in the early 1950's.*



“It is a true privilege to live in my family home, to open it to guests, and be a part of the whole Stratford scene. And what I really cherish about the B&B is that I learn so much about the world on my doorstep.”

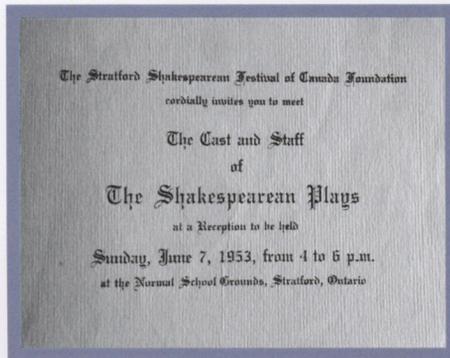
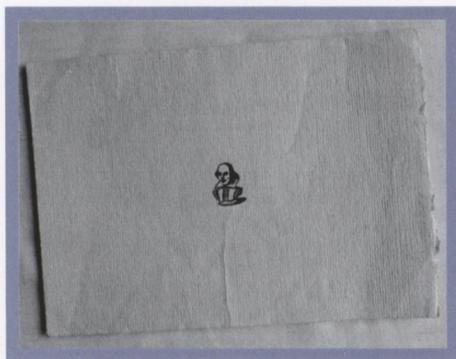
*Laura dons her skates as a grownup, and enjoys a sunny winter day on the Avon. “I began figure-skating as a youngster, and later I went into coaching for twenty years!”*

# Memorabilia – Stratford Shakespearean Festival



*The first brochure for the Festival in the summer of 1953 – two plays and concerts in a four week season that was extended to six!*

*An elegant invitation to the garden party in the grounds of the Normal School, several weeks before opening night, July 13. Townspeople were invited to meet the cast and others working at the Festival.*



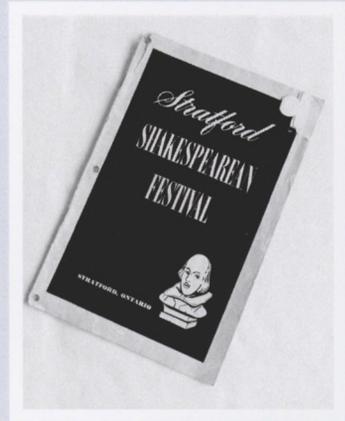
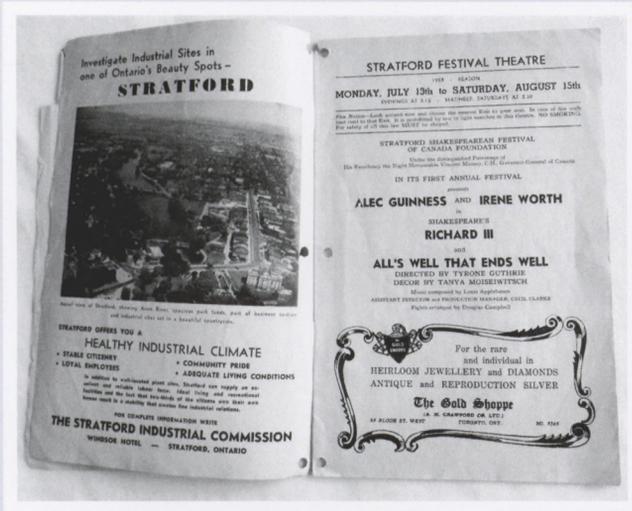


“ Raising the tent was such an excitement for us children, to learn about when they were going to be raising the tent and to be able to watch the men yelling back and forth – because of course, there had to be a balanced team on each side pulling on the ropes. ”

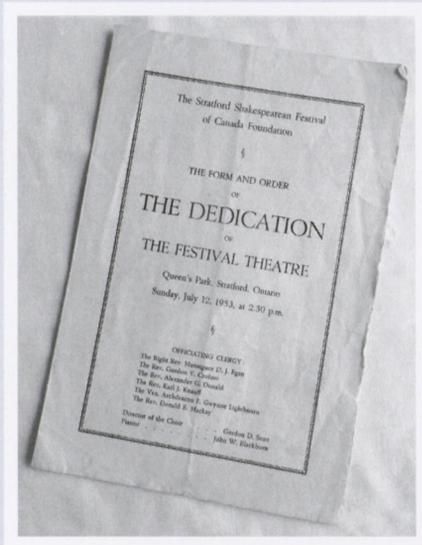


*Postcards of the theatre entrance to the Festival tent.* Tyrone Guthrie had gardens planted all around so no-one thought it was a circus tent. The Meighen family donated and maintained the gardens.

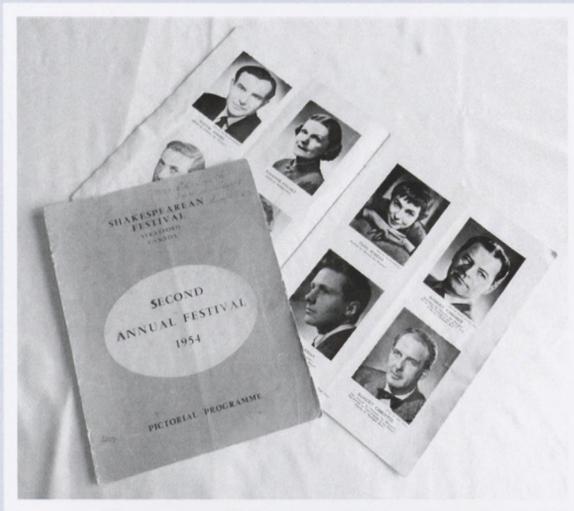
# Stratford Festival Memorabilia 1953/54



*The first program, with much local advertising support.*

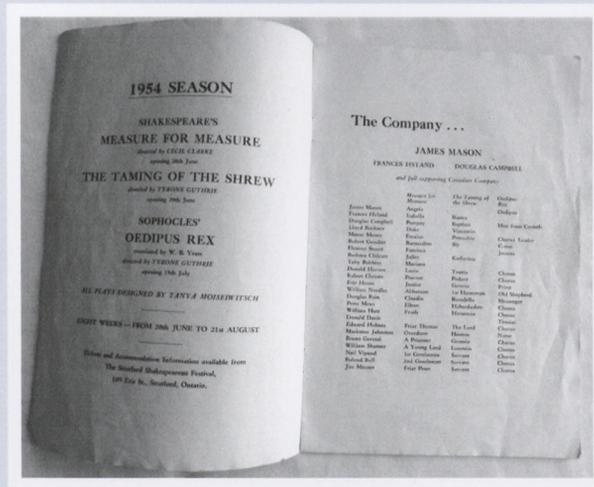


*A dedication ceremony was held that first year in Queen's Park, the Sunday before opening night – a tradition that was continued through the years.*



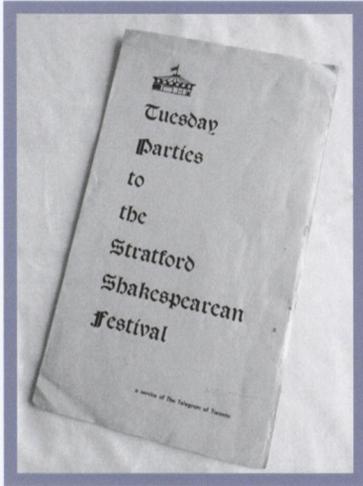
“The original stage was designed by Tanya Moiseiwitsch. Now called the Tanya Stage, it has had adaptations over the years, but the core remains intact and it’s a very sacred place for the actors.”

*The 1954 Souvenir Program*, which included biographies of James Mason and Francis Hyland, as well as an article by Robertson Davies on the future of the theatre.



*The first year sold out!* In 1954, the season was expanded to eight weeks, and the number of plays presented was expanded to three.

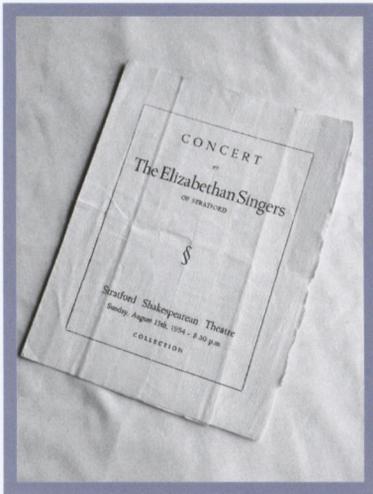
# Stratford Festival Memorabilia 1954–57



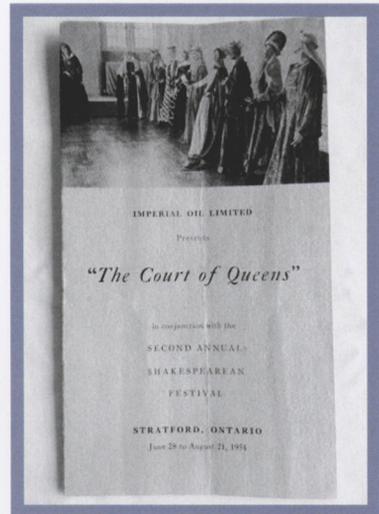
*The Telegram sponsored a train trip to Stratford for Tuesday matinées.*



*The famous mime made his North American debut in Stratford in 1955.*



*The Elizabethan Singers gave recitals in the Festival Theatre, and in broadcasts from 1953 to 1959.*

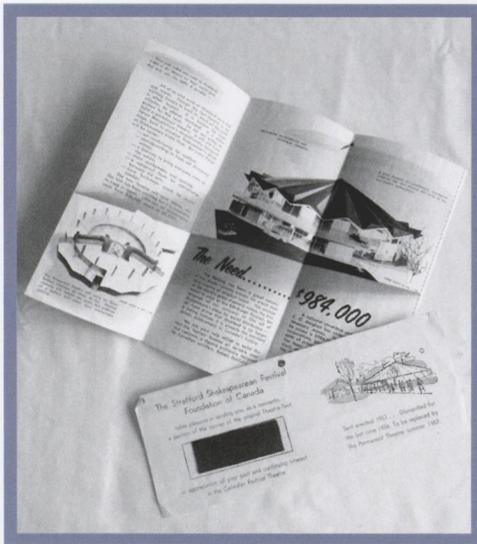


*A 1954 exhibit of costumes and biographies about the current season.*

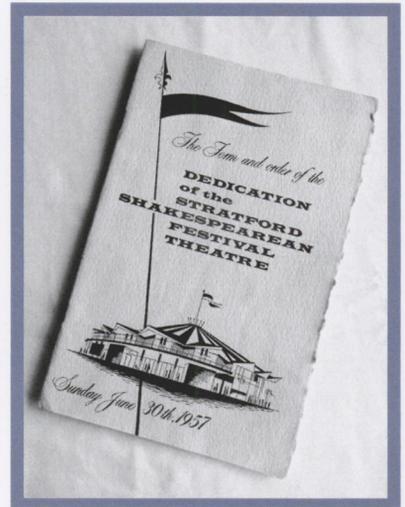


*You could purchase a fan to ease the warm and stuffy air in the tent.*

“ The money needed to build the new theatre was \$984,000. If you transposed that back in the 1950s, that would have been an astronomical amount of money for people then. It was a very risky thing to do. ”

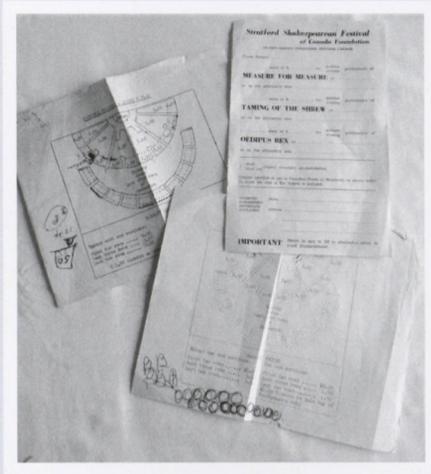


*To raise the funds needed to build a permanent theatre, small pieces of the tent were attached to cards and sold to supporters.*

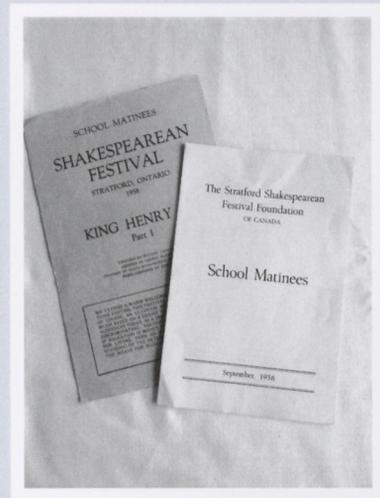


*The new theatre was dedicated on June 30th. A day after the close of the 1956 season, the tent came down and the new building was raised, ready for the next season, with seating for more than 1800.*

# Stratford Festival Memorabilia 1957 and on

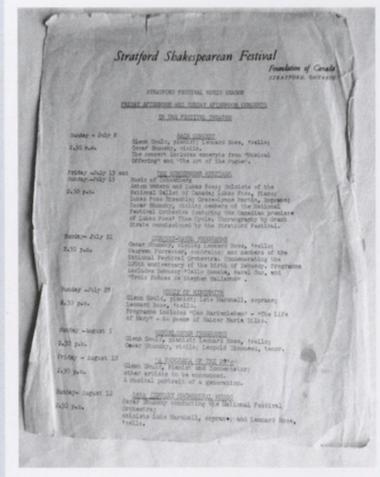


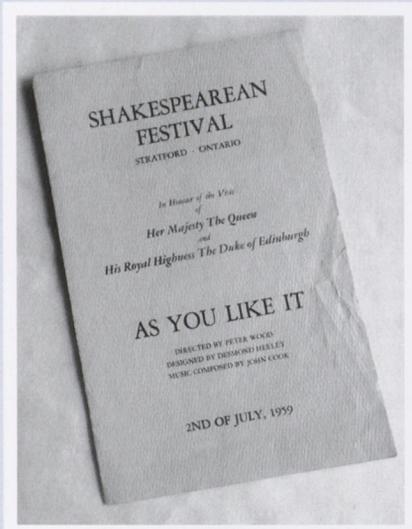
*Ticket prices and the seating design for the new theatre. \$5 for an orchestra seat, and \$1 for the outside edges and rush seats.*



*Above: "The school matinees began because I think the Festival realized – that's our future audience." Below: A program featuring Maureen Forrester, Lois Marshall, Oscar Shumsky and Glenn Gould. "No applause please!"*

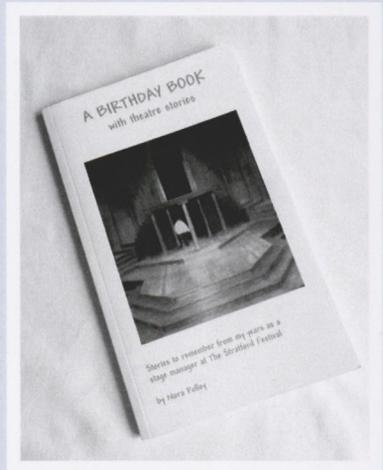
*James Roehl and Irving Scherke. The piano duo played a concert on the new theatre stage, and later presented this signed postcard to Laura.*





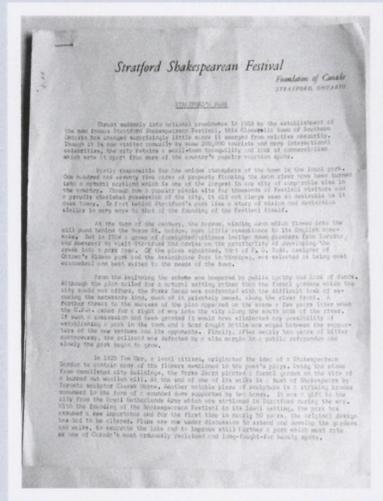
*Queen Elizabeth II visited in 1959 and saw "As You Like It".*

*Laura's parents used this Christmas card by David Lowe for many years, featuring a sketch of the new theatre on the cover and a sketch of the tent on the inside.*

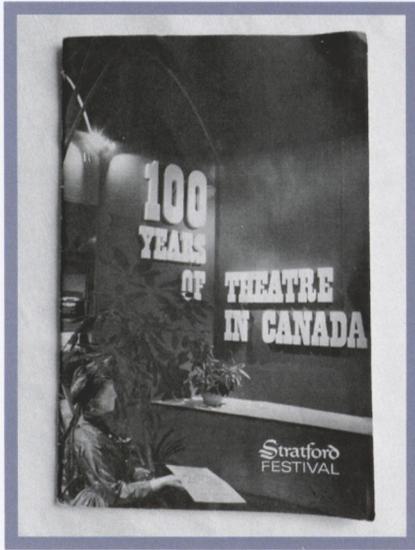


*Above: Nora Polley worked as a stage manager for many years, and in 2010 published this book of insider stories. A new edition was produced in 2017.*

*Below: Most people don't know that the first swans to enjoy the Avon were donated around 1918, long before the beginning of the Stratford Festival.*



# Stratford Festival Memorabilia



*The Festival put out a booklet tracing the history of theatre in Canada, as part of the country's Centennial celebrations in 1967. The Stratford Festival was only in its fifteenth season at the time, but live theatre had been taking place since the 1800s across Canada.*



*Early on, the refreshments available to theatre patrons were juice and ice cream.*

*"I worked on the juice cart and had to stay up late for the intermission. But it was worth the \$2 I made every week!" Anita Gaffney, the current Executive Director of the Festival, also looked after a juice cart.*



*This photo appeared on the cover of a section of the Toronto Star on June 2, 1971. Laura's parents, Edward and Haidee, and her toddler son Christopher, discuss the tulips! It accompanied an article about the people in Stratford who opened their homes to theatre-goers flocking to see music and theatre.*

“ Like everyone else in Stratford, the Smiths knew Tom Patterson had been talking about his dream of a Canadian Shakespearean Festival ever since high school. And when hundreds of people were going to attend the Festival, where would they stay? Haidee Smith got a frantic phone call. The Smiths opened their home in 1953, and like other families in the town, they never looked back. ~ Toronto Star ”

# Stratford Festival Memorabilia



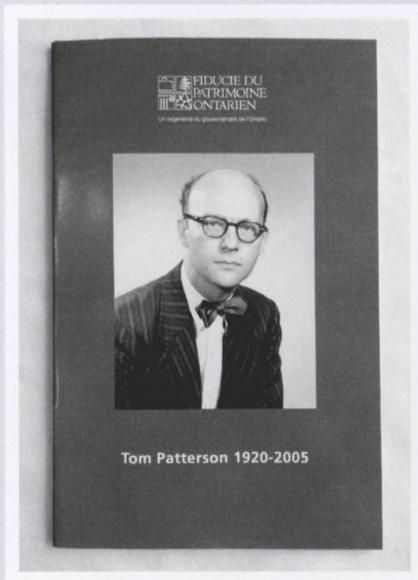
*Left: the Birmingham Conservatory was founded in 1998, to train young actors in classical theatre.*

*Right: In 2002, the 50th anniversary booklet title played on the season opener: All's Well That Ends Well.*



*In 2005, a memorial service marked the contribution of the great architect of the Stratford Festival: Tom Patterson.*

*Laura invited Fanfare Magazine to write an article about Frances Allee, her theatre guest who never missed a season.*



## A Forty-Year Love Affair

**FOR HER FORTIETH SEASON IN A ROW, FRANCES ALLEE WILL BE DRIVING TO STRATFORD FROM ALBANY, NY – AT THE AGE OF NINETY-SIX**

By Henry Ford

**T**he first time Frances Allee saw Stratford, it was the summer of 1965, on a detour between California and New York. She was an English professor, on the road with the daughter of a German colleague who was working in an au pair, and who Frances was determined to see "some of the coastline," that Connecticut.

On a when they drove north, said at Santa Frances said, "We're so close to Stratford, let's see what it's like." They found a room for the night, but when Frances went to the Festival Theatre, where Douglas Campbell was playing the role role in Henry VIII, she found "a nice little long [and] no hope of getting a ticket."

Later that year, David Gardner's "Ball Line" was now legendary production by the Canadian Players co-founded in Stratford by M. Campbell and Festival founder Tom Patterson to tour in that Festival's off-season, passed through Albany, where Frances taught. Recalling a young William Hall and the spine set, the dull fencing of scot and the cool beauty of scene and sets, she the first head slightly and notes Lee's line: "That's just a lady, if only to go some more gorgeous." Why, indeed, needs not what "this gorgeous wear", which scarcely keeps them warm."

She finally returned to Stratford in 1976, the year Nicholas Pennell and Richard Manette attempted as Harriet. What she saw that summer brought her back, thirty-five seasons in a row.

This season will be her fortieth at Stratford – and at the age of ninety-six, she still drives herself from Albany, often in a single shot. She learned early that standing her tip (even July and August allow her to "love the season," said in 2004 she she ten years in ten days, a "nightly moon returned" later "than and accompanied by A. Ruffalo's Minister, she has seen every Shakespeare play (except those ones) in Stratford and internationally – and has developed her own scale of completion, apart from which Stratford always shines.

Her assessment of the Festival comes from the national perspective of a Johns Hopkins University-trained academic, actor and was director, and, in the summer of 1964, she designed costumes for the Duke

University of New York's productions of The Tempest and Godon's Mistress of the Inn. She said a agent in 1967 for Spangberg and Chelaru. Her eye for quality design had led her to a fascination with the companies at Stratford, attending events where she could hear designers speak – and get close to the costumes.

"I enjoyed the resources and talent that went into the design," she says. "The accuracy and authenticity, it was supposed to be better. I was hooked." Of her own first she says, "I can improve."

Stratford has changed considerably in those thirty-nine years. When Frances first began walking, the Arden Park Hotel was the site of a furniture factory, and the state still rode between the gallery and the theatre. The way she engages with the city now is different, too; she no longer cruises downtown streets with kids, and those she loves and fewer conversations with whom to share the experience.

But despite the inevitable melancholy that comes with the passing of friends, her enthusiasm for the city and its festival remains as undimmed as her independent spirit. "Daddy enough," she says, "I'm finding that Stratford has not let its charm or its delight."



# Edward Allan Miller

344 William Street  
Built 1932



Edward Allan Miller, the son of Henry Miller and Mary Angeline Plyley, was born near Rodney in Aldborough Township, Elgin County, Ontario on January 28, 1895. His grandparents, Louis and Susana Miller emigrated from Germany in the early 1850s and settled into farming in Aldborough Township. Most of their sons including Henry followed suit.

Edward's mother died twelve days after he was born due to complications. His widowed father married Katherine Brown in October 1897.

The family grew to include four boys and three girls. By the 1911 census, sixteen year old Edward is listed as a farmer on the family farm.

He later left the farm to attend the London Normal School to become a teacher. After graduating, he taught school for a number of years and even ventured to Northern Ontario for a time. He furthered his education at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph where he graduated in 1924. He continued his specialist training for teaching high school at the Ontario College of Education in Toronto. From there he joined the staff of Chatham Collegiate and in 1927 married Blanche Wright.

In 1930, Edward Allan Wright was appointed a master at the Stratford Normal School. He was hired to teach science, agriculture and geography. He had a difficult start to his career in Stratford as in December of his first year here, he became extremely ill with a life threatening disease and was unable to resume his duties for six months.

In 1932, he and his wife Blanche rented the newly built house at 344 William Street across the river from the Stratford Normal School. He later bought the house and lived there until 1939. As well as his teaching duties, Mr. Miller helped with the installation of the school's radio station bringing an opportunity for the students to listen to current events and to classical music programs.

In 1939, Edward Allan Miller was appointed head of the science department of Toronto Normal School. In Toronto, he enjoyed being an elder in his church and was a member of the Masons as well as his teaching duties.

Edward Allan Miller died suddenly on October 27, 1946 in Toronto. He is buried in the Rodney cemetery near his childhood home.

Stratford-Perth County Branch  
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario

“ My goal is to have people come here and feel that they have a home to stay in here. I am a home host who is sharing my love for the theatre and my experience with guests from as far away as Australia, England, Scotland, Brazil, Japan and other faraway places.”

~ Laura Pogson, 2017

*344 William Street was sturdily built, and lovingly occupied by Edward and Haidee Smith and their family, and then opened up to guests in Stratford. When their daughter Laura assumed the reins of Newhaven on the River in 1988, the welcoming experience continued, providing a true home away from home for many who came – and still come! – to enjoy the Stratford Festival.*

A SOUNDTRIBUTE  
Celebrating Newhaven on the River

January, 2017

DISC ONE

- 1 Growing up in Stratford
- 2 A family legacy
- 3 Listening and watching
- 4 The Stratford Shakespearean Festival is born
- 5 The welcome of 344 William Street
- 6 Renowned actors and guests
- 7 “A most unusual man”



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A SOUNDTRIBUTE  
Celebrating Newhaven on the River

February and March, 2017

DISC TWO

- 1 Before Newhaven
- 2 Under the tent flap
- 3 An enthusiasm for Shakespeare
- 4 Taking over Newhaven on the River
- 5 Favourite guests and characters
- 6 Friends

DISC THREE

- 1 The first season
- 2 The second season
- 3 Fundraising for a permanent theatre
- 4 A distinguished visitor
- 5 History, training and celebrations
- 6 Tom Patterson, a dedicated fan, and home



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A SOUNDTRIBUTE  
Celebrating Newhaven on the River



*Laura Pogson*



IN CONVERSATION WITH  
**Laura Pogson**  
**Newhaven Disc One**

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Laura Pogson  
Newhaven Disc One



SOUNDPORTRAITS

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Laura Pogson  
Newhaven Disc Two



SOUNDPORTRAITS

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Laura Pogson  
Memorabilia Disc Three



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