Finding Aid to the
The Prairie Stage Records

The Prairie Stage
The Prairie Stage, Records, 1972-1991
.75 linear ft.

 Links: Finding Aid to the Connie C. West Papers 1933-1977
Finding Aid to the Don Larew Collection
Finding Aid to the Frederick G. Walsh Papers, 1944-1996
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HISTORY
From 1972-1976 NDSU had a summer touring company called the Prairie Stage. Dr. Fred Walsh, Theatre Chairman, at this time, explained the concept of the Prairie Stage in his unpublished autobiography: “That moment when for the first time I saw the Prairie Stage tent erected and fully equipped with stage, rows of platforms for the seating area supporting approximately 200 colorful contoured seats, all awaiting the arrival of an audience, was a proud one.”  “Why do something like the Prairie Stage which is a lot harder work than teaching a few summer school classes?  Well, first of all---and this is so very important---for the pure joy of doing it.  Secondly, it gave our student actors that much more experience.  Thirdly, it fulfilled two of the three functions of a land-grant institution, teaching and service.”  “After five seasons, I brought the tent show to a halt. Costs had risen to such a level that to have continued we would have been as the saying goes, ‘sending good money after bad.’ We would have lost money even playing to capacity crowds.”

SCOPE & CONTENT

The records consist of background information about the creation of the Prairie Stage, information about each of the five summer seasons (1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976), the Fall 1976 Tour and the attempted revival in 1990-1991.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1:

1/1  Finding Aid
1/2  Stationery, envelope, ticket envelope – n.d.
1/4  The Prairie Stage – 1st Season (Bartholomew Bone, The Fantasticks, Pinocchio) – Summer 1972 – Cast listing and cast bios for all plays; Drama workshop brochure; flyers for seminars
1/5  The Prairie Stage – 2nd Season (Carnival, Importance of Being Earnest, Rumpelstiltskin) – Summer 1973 – Cast listings for all plays; placard; Drama workshop brochure; clippings; set set-up for Carnival
1/6  The Prairie Stage – 3rd Season (You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown, The Amorous Flea, Annabelle Broom) – summer 1974 – Cast listings for all players; Drama workshop brochure; clippings (state-wide)
1/7  The Prairie Stage – 4th Season (I Do, I Do; Two by Two; Little Red Riding Hood) – Summer 1975; Cast listing for all players; clippings (state-wide)
1/8  The Prairie Stage – Spring Tour (The Fantasticks) 1976; Cast list; clippings – April/May 1976
1/9  The Prairie Stage – 5th Season (The Sunshine Boys, Born Yesterday, Hansel & Gretel) 1976 – Cast listing for all players; clippings (state-wide)
1/10  The Prairie Stage – Fall Tour (The America of Carl Sandburg) 1976; Cast list – October 1976
1/10a The Prairie Stage – Spring tour (The Fantasticks) 1976 - Program
1/11  The Prairie Stage – Tent sale – spring 1978
1/12  The Prairie Stage – Revival Tour (did not materialize) – 1990-1991

Box 2:
Promotional Video Tape - n.d.

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