THE HISTORY OF THE GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE:
1886-1978

THESIS

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By

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This study of the history of the Granbury Opera House in Granbury, Texas, includes three divisions. The first division is the compilation of the early history of the Opera House, 1886 to 1911. The second division is the renovation of the Granbury Opera House, 1970 to 1975. The final division treats the production methods of the Granbury Opera House Stock Company, including choice of seasons and personnel involved.

This study was drawn from newspaper clippings, histories, memoirs of the period, a traveling Shakespearean actor's diary of the period, Granbury's application for a Texas historical marker, interviews, releases, and theatre annual reports.

A projection into the future is offered as a conclusion of the study.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The history of the Granbury, Texas, Opera House marks the close of one chapter and the continuation of yet another in the fascinating record of the state's theatre archives. At the turn of the century, the opera house was considered the mark of civilization for small-town Texas. Every town of any size had its seat of culture that accommodated traveling troupes with stars, sword-swallowing acts, ventriloquists, and sometimes, its own resident stock company.

Yet, as Texas grew and movies came, these same culture centers fell into disrepute and were used as offices, as feed stores, and finally, as targets for vandalism. Very few of the reminders of an early heritage of Joseph Jefferson, Helena Modjeska, and Lily Langtry remained to revive memories of the traveling star system and acts "straight from New York." One after another the small towns died as their young people moved away to the city. In this respect, Granbury was spared the total destruction of its square with the beautiful native stone buildings. For decades the Hood County seat southwest of Fort Worth slept on until the big dam project on the Brazos galvanized the townspeople into action. Suddenly Granbury had become a land developer's paradise with its
beautiful lake countryside and its storehouse of history. Energetic citizens seized the opportunity to renovate the square (now a designated state historic site in itself) and rejuvenate the town through a tourist economy thriving on antique shops, old-fashioned cooking, majestic houses, and a restored opera house haunted by legends of John Wilkes Booth and Carrie A. Nation.

Through the aid of trained professionals such as architects James Hull Miller and Ed Beran, artist Cynthia Brants, director Mary Jane Mingus, and producer Jo Ann Miller; through determination and hard work; and through painstaking research, the Opera House has once more come to life with its summer musical companies, its permanent winter companies, and assorted cultural attractions.

A thesis including study of the history of a theatre is valuable as a key to a deeper appreciation of our heritage and may possibly serve others in similar pursuits. This study of the Granbury Opera House has had a three-fold purpose: A) the study of the past—Chapter One will cover the early history of the area and of the Opera House in regard to attractions, legends, and later use; B) the development and restoration plans and goals—Chapter Two will explore the renovation of the Opera House from 1970 to 1975; and C) the examination of the evolution of the restored theatre—Chapter Three will examine and record the production methods, personnel, and audience reaction to the productions through
August, 1978. The Conclusion will deal with the possible future of the Opera House. The Appendix will include budgets, the list of shows presented and the names of the people responsible, the biographies of the producer and the directors, and charts dealing with the physical layout of the building itself.
Texas independence had not long been won when formal theatre began establishing a toehold in the new republic. Earlier accounts are documented of theatrical activities among the Mexicans and in the war camps of both sides, but organized theatre first appeared in the spring of 1837, when G. L. Lyons attempted to bring a dramatic company to Houston, Texas. At that time he was playing the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans and had had wide experience in the theatres of the United States. However, nothing came of the proposal, and the project was dropped (29, p. 116).

The next year the project was revived and Houstonians eagerly looked forward to the introduction of the drama. On May 26, the Telegraph and Texas Register announced that a company from the states was on its way to Texas to occupy the theatre newly-built by John Carlos. On June 11, 1838, the new theatre formally opened with a presentation of Sheridan Knowles' celebrated comedy "The Hunchback," followed by the farce "The Dumb Belle." This was the heyday of the traveling stock company, and many different companies made Houston a regular stopping place, for by 1839 it had become the principal theatre center of Texas (29, p. 119).
In 1845 Joseph Jefferson, appearing with his parents, became one of the first of many famous actors to find his way to Texas. When the railroad made overland travel relatively simple, professional theatre followed close behind. In Dallas, the Opera House opened six months after the railroad came to town (20, p. 134). These companies, as well as the rise in amateur performances, created a need for opera houses, many built for touring companies that made one-night stands. Such famous stars as Edwin Booth, Edwin Forrest, Helena Modjeska, Sarah Bernhardt, and Lily Langtry regularly included Texas in their tours. Professional road shows were plentiful. Some carried their own tents; others played in the opera houses. Their programs were a type of vaudeville, consisting of humorous sketches, songs, dances, and instrumental specialties. Any kind of mind reader was always a good drawing card, as were the particularly popular elocutionists. At rare intervals a theatrical troupe came through, touring Shakespeare or one of the popular shows of the day. In 1898 a grand opera company toured the country, attempting a part of the opera Martha (21, p. 184).

In addition to the professionals, there were many amateur dramatists as well. James N. Smith, who taught school in a log house in Gonzales County in 1840, told how amateur theatricals sometimes came into existence. The young people customarily assembled every Saturday evening to sing, and the idea was suggested that they do some theatre. One of
the doctors composed a piece, and once every two weeks they met to act (29, p. 121). The town of Matagorda had an amateur company--known as the Thespian Company of Matagorda--and a distinct little theatre building (29, p. 121). In addition to group entertainment, single entertainers would often tour the countryside and stop at the various towns. The Northern Standard of September 17, 1842, announced the appearance of the "well-known and unrivalled" ventriloquist E. L. Harvey in Clarksville. Tickets were fifty cents each (29, p. 122).

A little theatre movement swept over the country from 1875-1890. By 1885, nearly every town in West Texas had an opera house, which was decidedly the largest and most imposing structure in the community. Interest in both amateur and professional dramatics was intense. Those towns with theatre club members took their work seriously, rehearsing parts for weeks and often months. When time for the public performance arrived, the opera house would be filled and even standing room occupied. Regardless of the true quality of their work, the performers were lauded and extolled for weeks with compliments (21, pp. 182-183). In 1877 a local Fort Worth drama club toured a show to Weatherford, Palo Pinto, Graham City, Brownwood, Stephenville, Comanche, Fort Griffin, and Belknap, places usually bypassed by touring companies (26).
One man built a music hall at Fort Griffin in 1876 and employed ten to twelve so-called musicians to give nightly performances to crowded houses for months. The same year a sleight-of-hand magician rented the district court room at Jacksboro and entertained every evening for weeks before approximately the same crowd (21, p. 184). In Weatherford, an occasional comedy or black-face minstrel found his way to the Haynes Opera House, although the majority of the plays were of the ilk of East Lynn and Ten Nights in a Bar-room (21, p. 184).

The opera house was the mark of civilization in Small Town, Texas, in the Nineteenth Century. Everyone with the slightest veneer of culture attended the performances and discussed the merits of the performers for weeks afterward (12). When movies began to invade the small towns, the opera houses faded. One of the few surviving today is the beautiful old building on the southeast corner of the square in Granbury, Texas.

Granbury was in an area of Texas still considered the frontier, an area where even in Fort Worth only the hardier troupes made their way. An opera house was built and drama was flourishing in Fort Worth by 1876, a decade before culture reached the smaller settlement of Granbury. An article in the Fort Worth Daily Standard of September 21, 1876, reported that the Theatre Comique was crowded to its utmost capacity at Harry Dovere’s benefit. The next night was to
be the premiere of *Cuba*, written by the Comique's actor/manager Will C. Burton. The *Daily Standard* went on to report that Howe's London Circus and Menagerie was preparing to exhibit in the town October 9. During the same time period, a Centennial Theatre was in operation and had commenced publication of a printed program called "The Footlight" (10). The first recognized theatrical troupe was the Adelphi Company, established in 1876, which lasted for three months and then skipped town with everything except the "chairs, benches, curtains, and about 50 glasses" (8).

References to the arts before 1876 in Fort Worth refer to all attractions having been presented in the courthouse for a $7.50 a night rental fee (9). In that pivotal year Evans Hall was built over a store on the corner of First and Houston, and it was here that the first recorded opera and drama were seen. Adah Richmond's English Opera Troupe boasting "40 stars, chorus, and orchestra" appears to have been the first operetta brought to the city. This was the wildly successful *The Chimes of Normandie* by Robert Planquette. The next evening the company presented Offenbach's *La Perichole* (11).

The arrival of grand opera in 1880 was not very successful. The Italian Grand Opera Company presented *Il Trovatore* and *Martha*, both meeting with either mixed or adverse opinion. Touring drama companies fared better (11).
By 1883 a group of civic leaders formed a syndicate to build a theatre with a seating capacity of twelve hundred at the corner of Third and Commerce. Richard III, MacBeth, and Damon and Pythias were all presented during the inaugural season. Other major attractions included a fight between heavyweight boxing champion John L. Sullivan and ex-heavyweight champion Steve Taylor; James O'Neill in the Count of Monte Cristo; and Jules Verne's Around the World in Eighty Days. The syndicate operated the house until 1888, during which time more than 270 dramas and operas were presented. That year also saw the performances of Lily Langtry in A Wife's Peril and In a Looking Glass, Edwin Booth in Hamlet, and Lawrence Barret in Julius Caesar.

In 1890 the opera house was sold to Henry and Phil Greenwall, who renamed the building the Greenwall Opera House and allied themselves with a national touring circuit. During the 1890's the Greenwalls brought Sarah Bernhardt, Lillian Russell, Harry Fiske, and Richard Mansfield to Fort Worth. The house remained in operation until 1905, when the stage collapsed during a performance of Ben Hur.

Around the closing years of the century, many small opera companies came to Fort Worth, such as the Emma Abbott Opera Company starring Emma Abbott, and the Gordon-Shay Company. In 1902 Lillian Nordica and Emma Eames gave solo recitals.
In 1898 Fort Worth's first vaudeville theatre, the Standard, opened at Twelfth and Commerce. The late Bert Swor, one of the greatest of the blackface comedians, started there. A youngster named Buster Keaton appeared in an acrobatic act (9).

This was the big city atmosphere under whose shadow the Granbury Opera House lay. The decade from 1870 to 1880 was perhaps more important in the history of Hood County than any other. The first three courthouses were built there. The county's first newspaper Vidette began publication.

After the Civil War many ex-soldiers and their families drifted out to the frontier and settled the Hood County valleys. During the early seventies, Granbury was a wide-open little frontier town with four or five saloons and many more tenpin alleys. At least one saloon overflowed into the backyard, where games were played on deer hides spread on the ground. From the middle seventies on the scene changed swiftly from large ranches to small farms. By the time the railroads entered the county in the late eighties, even the long cattle drives to Kansas had ceased (6).

In the stress of forging a new community, still subject to Indian attack and not yet having acquired that settled feeling, culture was not forgotten. It was no accident that in Granbury, as in the other West Texas towns of the era, the most splendid building on the square was the opera house. When the doors opened to the public in 1886, it was called
Kerr's Hall after its owner, Henry Kerr (22). A former city official in 1885, Kerr was the son of South Carolinian David Kerr, who married a Kentucky woman in Mississippi and then moved to Newton County, Texas, in 1843 (6, 22). Ten years later the family moved to the Clear Fork of the Trinity River in Tarrant County, and in 1856 relocated on the Kerr Branch of the North Paluxy. Erath County Indian hostilities forced withdrawal of the family to Bee County in 1860, although they later returned (6). In the new opera house, gas lights flickered across the gorgeous red plush (probably red velvet) and gentlemen were asked to remove their spurs for fear of spoiling the decor (1). In the exuberant decades following the Civil War, traveling vaudeville acts, minstrel shows, acrobats, magicians, sword-swallowing feats, and even works of the great bard himself graced the boards of the second-story theatre on the south side of the square. Around the turn of the century, the Opera House was the center of activity in the Granbury area with traveling shows, plays, and entertainment for the farmers, ranchers, and early businessmen (1).

However, to many people the beautiful theatre was the devil's own handiwork. Established as it was during the Victorian era, when ladies blushed over Hamlet's vulgar remarks, the theatre was a place of evil and disgrace because of the recreation of famous novels of the era, which were mostly love stories. The thought of two people kissing
on stage kept many young people at home; indeed, in many instances they were not even allowed to walk on the south side of the square. In addition, the reputation of the hall was not enhanced by its proximity to saloons and the reputations of its performers (18).

The opera house building was erected in 1886, but the theatre did not officially book acts until 1891. Kerr's Hall occupied the second story of the building, above a saloon and saddle shop. There a small stage occupied one end of the floor (22). Due to the length of time that has passed since the opera house was in operation, few people remember the shows. Lola Sargent recalls that it was the most gorgeous thing ever seen, while Blanche Gordon, who sang in the opera house for a recital, remembers the beautiful dances with six-piece orchestras from Fort Worth. Lola Sargent also remembers seeing three plays at the famous theatre:

I can remember two men and two ladies riding across the prairie in a surrey who later performed a famous love story, Lorna Doone. They did all of the parts, including the dancing, singing, and acting (18).

Unfortunately, files of old Granbury newspapers dating from this period were destroyed by a radio man-turned-editor who did not realize their historical value, but copies of the Granbury News residing in the Amon Carter Museum archives give an interesting peek at the nature of the opera house. On January 7, 1892, not long after the theatre had opened in 1891, the News reported that they had just turned out an
assortment of tickets for Kerr's Opera House, and they expected that by the next season Kerr would have things in shape to engage some first-class artists (16).

On January 14, the News noted that Henry Kerr had enlarged the stage and installed a complete set of artistically painted scenery, including four drop curtains. They praised the additions to the appearance and convenience of the building (17).

Earlier, on December 10, 1891, Henry Kerr promised to investigate more closely the character of the troupes occupying his hall and said he would try not to allow the citizenry to be imposed upon if he could avoid it. That promise was evidently made in regard to the morals of some of his lady performers. Unfortunately, Kerr said, "every now and then a tough concern would slip in" (15).

Another old newspaper told of a band concert in the hall in 1891 and a traveling troupe of thirty-four called Newcomb's American Comedy Company (7).

In the same time period, the News reported that the Billy Kersands troupe of colored minstrels played to a full house at Kerr's Hall on Monday night. The paper declared it the best show of its kind on the road, but sadly reported that most of the townspeople "kicked against paying a dollar to see it" (16). Billy Kersands was probably the same Billy Kersands known as one of the most famous Negro minstrels of the period. Richards and Pringle's Georgia Minstrels were
a popular colored troupe that had toured for years. They boasted in their membership Billy Kersands, a man supposedly able to hide a billiard ball in one cheek and continue his monologue without the slightest inconvenience (28, p. 173). Earlier history recounts that Kersands, a noted dancer, had belonged to an all-Negro company named The Georgia Minstrels, begun by a Negro named Charles Hicks in 1865. Charles Callender had taken over the company and had in turn been bought out by Jack Haverly. They toured Europe as Haverly's European Minstrels, headed by Billy Kersands and Sam Lucas (25, p. 26). Frederick Bond cites a William Kersands as one of the Negroes unsurpassed in the art of creating jazz tunes, jigs, and unusual steps and dances (3, p. 19).

On a more elegant note, the diary of a traveling Shakespearean actor came into the possession of the Granbury Opera House Association through the courtesy of Collette (Bird) Thomas. This handwritten diary, displayed in the lobby of the restored opera house, had belonged to Arminedale Cheek or Sleek (the name is difficult to determine due to the faded and smudged writing), who acted in a traveling Shakespearean company under the management of Mr. Boog (or Boag) Senior and Junior, and Mr. Ryan Senior and Junior. During a period from September 15 to December 30, 1887, the company gave one-night stands in towns from Boerne in Kendall County to Trinity in Rusk County, encompassing towns in the counties of Mason, Llano, Brown, Coleman, Tom Green, Callahan, Taylor, Collin,
Eastland, Erath, Bosque, Hood, Tarrant, Dallas, and Gregg. On October 24, Cheek played in Granbury and recorded these impressions:

We came here (Granbury) on Saturday from Walnut Springs. We played there a second night to a small house. Came over here by hack driven by Mr. Resterfield. We came through a very pretty town called Glenrose. We stopped here for dinner. We billed to play here tonight but we postponed on account of rain. We all received letters from Ma today. I answered mine, she to answer at Fort Worth.

Fort Worth, October 29th—We came here from Granbury yesterday. We played Granbury on the 25th and 27th. . . . We came back on the 26th and played a second night at Granbury but we had a very small house. We had a little disturbance here on the first night between the Marshal and one of the citizens, but it did not come to much. We put up at the Farr Hotel and I wish it had been a little farther as it was a very poor place to stop at (2).

Other memories of the old opera house are those of Dora Hancock, who was living in Granbury when the Opera House was built. She does not remember any plays or programs in the Opera House, but she does remember her older brother going to dances there on Saturday nights, where a band played. All activities were on the second floor (19).

One of the most intriguing stories emanating from the Opera House concerns one John St. Helen, a bit actor at the old theatre who poured drinks in the bar next door between stints on the boards. Although a bartender, St. Helen never drank—except on April 14. Then he would drink himself into oblivion. That in itself was peculiar, but residents of the little frontier town grew even more curious when it developed
that St. Helen's cousin lived in the vicinity. Her maiden name, which St. Helen had begged her not to reveal, had been Fannie Booth (13).

The most startling evidence that John St. Helen was not who he claimed came when he believed he was on his deathbed. There, in the presence of a priest and a few close friends, including saloon owner F. J. Gordon, he confessed that he was really John Wilkes Booth, President Lincoln's assassin, and that they would find the murder weapon wrapped in newspaper and hidden behind a certain board in a particular house. A few days later he recovered, and fearing his secret was now disclosed, he fled town as quickly and quietly as he had come (13). When the house was razed in 1938 (or when Gordon investigated the story, depending on the version), the gun was found where St. Helen told them it was, wrapped in a yellowing newspaper headlining the Lincoln assassination. A woman in Goldthwaite now owns the weapon (5).

There are certainly elements of truth about the legend that lend credence to the belief. On several occasions, St. Helen was supposed to have performed scenes from Hamlet and other plays, and in fits of drunkenness was said to have recited long passages from Shakespeare. Historians investigating the Lincoln assassination have never been fully convinced that the Booth shouting "Sic semper tyrannis!" was the one who died in a barn fire twelve days after the murder, nor that he acted alone. How coincidental that Secretary of War
Edwin Stanton, who violently opposed Lincoln's war policies, had resigned that very day. Even stranger is the fact that he directed Federal troops north toward Canada rather than south to search for Booth. The body of "Booth" was never officially identified and was hauled into a federal prison under cover of darkness and secretly buried. Doubts persisted that identification was positive even after the body was exhumed several years later (13).

After Booth—or St. Helen—fled Granbury, legends sprang up that a cultured, dark-haired gentleman was teaching school in Bandera County, in a curriculum heavily laced with drama and the classics. He was engaged to be married to a local rancher's daughter when he disappeared a few days before the wedding. Residents whispered that he was a fugitive from justice (30, p. 192).

In A Tale of Two Schools and Springtown, Parker County, Joe McCracken tells of a stranger who walked into the clearing around their home and asked for board. This man, known to the McCrackens as Colonel J. W. Merrick, lived with them and taught at several schools. Later he became ill at a home in White Settlement and died before the McCracken boys could arrive and bring him to their home. In later years, the McCrackens had reason to believe that this wonderful friend was John Wilkes Booth. He walked with a limp due to a crippled ankle and often wept when discussing Lincoln's assassination, declaring
innocent people had been punished. Once when slightly in

toxicated, he sprang from his bed and repeated several of his

famous stage lines. Hearing him, one of the boys became ex-
cited and told a Mr. Goforth, who had heard Booth on the

stage. After much persuasion, the boy managed to have Merrick

repeat the performance, which convinced the hidden Mr. Goforth

that the man was indeed Booth. On another occasion, Merrick

and a Mr. Matlock were in Dallas, and while intoxicated, he

read the well-known lines from a stage setting. When cries of

"Booth!" rang through the audience, he hurried out and left

Dallas at once. He traveled to Hill County, where he oblit-
erated a carefully-concealed tattoo from his arm (27, pp. 67-

68).

St. Helen's "deathbed" confession led to another in 1913

when a house painter in Enid, Oklahoma, claimed to be Lincoln's

assassin immediately prior to committing suicide. A Memphis

lawyer and promoter named Finis Bates had the body mummified

and toured the country with it. When he stopped in Granbury,

the residents there and friends of St. Helen did not know

whether the mummy was Lincoln's assassin or not, but they did

know one thing. The body was not St. Helen (13).

Although St. Helen helped the Opera House by providing

entertainment on the stage and serving liquid refreshment

afterward (and lent his name to the present-day antique shop

in the same building), that same liquid refreshment supposedly

led to the downfall of the town's theatrical center. Temperance
crusader Carrie A. Nation brought her campaign and her hatchet to town and chopped up seven saloons on the square. After that, the theatre "wasn't fun anymore." Another version says Carrie really was not at fault because she had already chopped up the saloons six years earlier, in 1905 (4).

After the final curtain fell on the Opera House in 1911 due to Carrie's hatchet, former Fall Creek schoolteacher J. B. Wilson operated a grocery store in the building (1). Earlier the location had housed John Reichstetter's Dallas Bankrupt Store and the South Side Saloon, operated by D. L. Ensminger (1). Reichstetter had been connected with the firm of Perkins and Sons. After it ceased business, he headed a large drug and grocery store, where he met with reverses and went out of business (6, pp. 30-31). His bankrupt store was advertised as the "headquarters for low prices on Boots, Shoes, Hats, and Clothing" (14). The South Side Saloon was probably the same one located on the first floor during the time that the Opera House conducted business on the second. In 1935 various concerns were housed in the eastern and western halves of the building. Milt Kennon, a lifetime Granbury native, recalls that the town's first bowling alley was housed in the edifice during this time (24). In 1937 a concrete floor covered the western half, while the eastern half retained the original wood flooring. In 1940 Joseph Carmichael ran a grocery store on the west side, but during his term of military service, part of the building was leased to T. H. Dabney for
$15 monthly and part of it to Doyle Insurance Agency for the same amount. The occupancy listing assumes that since these men were local businessmen, they used the building for related business purposes (1). Sunny Allen of the Hood County Abstract Company said that during the 1950's Margaret Carmichael ran an abstract company from inside the building, which had deteriorated to the point that the woman had to cover her desk with a plastic cover lest it rain during the night (23). Other residents remember the building being used for harvest festivals. Later, due to financial difficulties, Carmichael borrowed money from a relative, Karl Weiser, and the property was deeded to Weiser and recorded on January 14, 1965. On September 29, 1972, Weiser deeded the property to Joe L. Nutt, a retired businessman whose ancestors were fundamental in establishing Granbury as the county seat. After the Opera House Association was formed, local businessmen borrowed $16,000 to buy the building from Nutt at his cost. He then deeded the now historic site to the Granbury Opera Association on August 28, 1974 (1).
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


2. Diary of Arminedale Cheek or Sleek, actor, Granbury, Texas, 1887, now in possession of Granbury Opera House, Granbury, Texas.


17. Granbury, Texas, Granbury News, January 14, 1892.


22. Interview with Jo Ann Miller, producer, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.


27. Nix, John W., compiler, A Tale of Two Schools and Springtown, Parker County, Fort Worth, Thomason and Morrow, 1945.


CHAPTER III


For nearly sixty years the beautiful old building that had occupied such a vital place in the town—and indeed, a continuing chapter in the theatrical history of the state and nation—continued to deteriorate as weather, time, vandalism, and neglect took their toll. It became a mute testimony to what industrial progress could inflict on small Texas towns. Like scores of other once-thriving settlements, Granbury lost its young people to the industrialized big cities and their more numerous opportunities in education, entertainment, and employment. The frontier town that had witnessed Carrie A. Nation, Indian raids, and saloon brawls sprawled sleepily in the hot West Texas sun, dying a little more surely with each passing year, its heritage remembered only fondly by the older residents and an occasional visitor interested in the John Wilkes Booth legend or merely seeking a little peace and quiet.

But in 1960 times began to pick up for the Hood County seat named after a Civil War hero. Located as it is only thirty-five miles southwest of Fort Worth, at the crossroads of U. S. Highway 377 and Texas State Highway 144, Granbury and its river offered distinct possibilities to a metroplex.
clamoring for reservoirs of water for utility and recreation. In 1969 De Cordova Dam was completed fifteen miles below Granbury on the Brazos River, forming Lake Granbury, which then extended another fifteen miles north of the city (2). Along these shorelines came the inevitable people seeking a quieter, less hectic life than the big city had to offer, and the results were numerous housing developments that pumped additional people, children, and money into a sagging economy.

Concurrent with the boom produced by newly-built lakes and dams was the wave of nostalgia sweeping the country, a renewed interest in the historical significance of local surroundings. In 1970, Joe Nutt and his wife Lou moved back to Granbury, to the town where his grandfather and great-uncle, Jesse and Jacob Nutt, started a wagon yard in 1866. The Nutts, who had lived in Denver and had often enjoyed the revived town of Central City, saw similar possibilities in Granbury. They had moved back here after Nutt had retired as senior vice-president of Elba Systems Corporation, a firm which sells motivations films. When his wife fell in love with the ruins of the old Kerr theatre, they purchased the property from Karl Weiser on September 29, 1972, an investment in what appeared to be an unattainable dream (5).

Soon after the building was bought, the Nutts formed the non-profit Granbury Opera Association and began raising money for a projected interior budget of $200,000. Their efforts took an upswing when singer-actress Jo Ann Miller
came down to Granbury to play golf with a friend and was introduced to the Nutts. Jo Ann, a native Texan who had been pursuing a graduate degree in archaeology when she became involved with a theatrical career, was currently managing a playhouse in Cooperstown, New York. Fascinated by the Nutts' desire to renovate the dilapidated structure as a functioning theatre, a fascination backed by her own love and work in the fields of archaeology and theatre, Jo Ann was convinced to take the job as managing director and producer of the Opera House (5).

Realizing the awesome amount of work that faced the association, Jo Ann immediately moved to Granbury and began the formidable task of raising funds by asking both foundations and individuals for assistance. Success soon came her way when both the Amon Carter and the Moody Foundations agreed to donate $25,000 each to the historic preservation of a theatre initially conceived as a place housing a few traveling shows and some educational productions (13). The Black Family estate of Dallas and Hood counties gave $18,000 for heating and air conditioning (13).

Some $7,000-$8,000 was spent on theatre architects who drew up blueprints for the final result. Unfortunately, most of that work was impractical for a town interested in retaining its unique nineteenth-century appearance. The architects were too modern, too unsuited to the demands of a physical theatre, and too expensive (9). But the same love of the
past that had brought the Nutts and Jo Ann Miller together in partnership with others of a similar ilk now induced Dallas architect Ed Beran of the Dallas-based firm of Beran and Shelmire to offer his services free of charge to the association, although he is now receiving periodic remuneration for his work. Beran, who designed the World Trade Center in Dallas, had purchased an old home in Granbury and was restoring it when he heard about the Opera House (5). Earlier the town had petitioned the Texas Historical Committee for professional advice, and three architectural advisers--Gary Hume, Steve Smith, and Chip Kaufman--had been sent to help. Their advice followed closely on that of Ed Hunt and Bob Reynolds, two young Dallas architects who had offered free time and advice in the planning stages until they received paying jobs elsewhere (16, p. 33). These men and Beran had been impressed by that same enigma that had caused O'Neill Ford, a San Antonio architect who had visited Granbury some years earlier, to remark,

It is incredible to me that the buildings on the square were not built at the same time—or at least by the same man. They have well-related dimensions, a good contrast of materials, but a unity of concept—well, just try to keep it whole. It was built a business community, keep it that way—viable and self-supporting. We can't afford any more museums (16, p. 33).

The people of Granbury banded together to provide their own services in restoring the theatre, giving of time and money and labor. The old roof had partially caved in and
needed to be removed, but the first bid was a prohibitive $7,000. Consecutive bids dropped to $5,000 and $3,000 before a local citizen agreed to do the job for $500. This man, Odel Scarberry of Acton, tore down the old roof to the second floor with all labor except the $500 as a donation. Albert Stroud, an employee of Joe Nutt, and his helpers hauled away twenty loads of the old roof and burned them. Some of the old doors and windows were left, but many had rotted away during the years. A retired cabinetmaker, T. G. McElroy (now deceased), copied the new ones after the original design and only charged straight time. Mr. Mac, as he was known, was an old-time woodworker, and he even located the specific brass work to match. All of the work was hand-done to match the still-intact original. Jess Brooks, a local builder and plasterer, donated the labor for the plastering and rebuilding of the proscenium arch. Another local builder and rock mason, Donald Bird, poured cement for the floor, installed the steel beams for the roof, and repaired the beautiful old native stone walls. Ken George, a local electrician, and Jack Stout, a retired plumber now living in Hood County, did the wiring and plumbing respectively for their donations. When it came time to decorate the completed building in period style, board member and former Hood County News Tablet publisher Norma Crawford gave a shower for people to donate period gifts (15).

The Opera House restoration committee involved the community by keeping the town informed on every aspect of
the project. This committee was headed by community leaders: Jack Langdon, Joe and Lou Nutt, Robert and Gerry Rawls, Dee Carpenter, Norma Crawford, J. V. Durant, Ken Hill, Harold Hughes, Billie Brock Kemplin, Doris Luton, Arch Myrick, H. T. Priddy, James Wann, Clyde Wells, and the presidents of the following Granbury civic organizations: Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Wednesday Women's Club, Sigma Kappa, and the Hood County Historical Society. All were residents with family and business interests in Granbury. All had invested at least $1,000 in cash or services in the project. These people and others listed in memoriam were the charter donors whose names are inscribed on a plaque hanging in the theatre lobby and are longtime backers of the city and its restoration projects. From 1971 to 1975, Jack Langdon served as the chairman of the association; Joe Nutt as the president, Lou Nutt as the first vice-president, and Gerry Rawls as the second vice-president (14). In 1976 and 1977, R. N. Rawls was chairman and Clyde Wells, who is also chairman of the board of the A&M system, was president (9). In 1978, Langdon and Nutt are again serving as chairman and president, respectively (14).

The finished theatre resembles the Ford Theatre in Washington, D. C. It is 5,000 square feet and seats 327. The thirty-seven-foot ceiling has been lowered seven feet, ten inches, to make room for the heating and air conditioning equipment. Wooden flooring, similar to that in the original
building, was installed along with a pressed metal ceiling. The old Palace Theatre in Dallas found a home for its footlights and the rust velour grand drapery in the Opera House. When the grand drapery is opened, as it is prior to each show, a canvas curtain can be seen. This curtain, known as the olio, is covered by colorful painted ads, paid for by advertisements sold each spring to town merchants. The Victorian metal grate for the ticket window came from the old Granbury post office. Wired gas lanterns light the front of the building, and a chandelier lights the interior. The balcony boxes were furnished with straightback chairs to resemble a Gay Nineties theatre (4). The lobby walls are painted salmon color and the woodwork is white. A yellow and rust carpet, woven like the old-fashioned Axminster, was special-ordered to cover the stairway, aisles, and mezzanine (14).

As a further testimony to the dedication of the citizens of Granbury, the theatre seats are being covered with needlepoint designs featuring the Opera House pediment and the tragedy-comedy masks designed by Pauline Pritchett. The needlepoint, the brainchild of Lou Nutt and Connie Lee, is made up in kits and sold to willing workers. People from Granbury as well as all fifty states have done seats for the Opera House. Local businessman John Sanders personally bought and completed twenty-two seat covers for the entire front row (12).
An even more ambitious individual project has been undertaken by Stephenville artist Pat Taylor. She is in the process of painting an original portrait in pastels of each member of the 1975 Opera House company (the company will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four), portrayed in his or her most beautiful or most amusing costume from that first summer. These paintings are displayed in the upstairs lobby of the Opera House (11).

The theatre today is a far cry from the conditions that existed when architect Beran first saw it. When the Association prepared to make application to the Texas Historical Commission for a marker, they requested Beran to describe the conditions he found when his services were first donated. He responded in the following manner:

In late 1974 we were asked to design the interior of the building as a working theatre in the style of an Opera House of the 1880-1890 style.

The building, when I first saw it, had its original stone walls; rotted doors and windows had been replaced, the new parts being exact copies of parts removed. A new built-up roof set on steel bar joists was already in place.

A stage with a large proscenium arch and a theater seating 300 persons was designed, working off a lobby at the front of the building. Seating on risers on both the main floor and balcony was designed to allow good sight lines.

Old theater seats were found and installed. A new pressed tin ceiling, complete with tin cornice in authentic designs was ordered and set in place concealing air conditioning ductwork.

Lighting throughout is of the period, being primarily "kerosene" lamps, wired for electricity. A large chandelier, circa 1880, was located and installed. Materials and finishes throughout are of the type found throughout Granbury--stained
pine, simple railing, tin ceilings, victorian moldings, etc. Finally a carpet was located for runners in the theater and balcony floor which is reminiscent of the early 1900's.

The overall effect is compatible with other buildings on the square—nothing pretentious; a solid, well-designed building which works as a theater and recalls a wonderful period of our recent past (10).

The application for the marker was subsequently approved on February 4, 1977, and an official Texas Historical Building Marker was attached to the outside of the theatre. The designation reads as follows:

GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE


In an age of governmental assistance, Granbury made headlines in Texas Monthly (3) and in Paul Harvey's national radio broadcast (8) by refusing a matching funds program on both the state and national levels. After having been told that they must first raise a certain amount for restoration purposes, and having completed that assignment, the Association was then informed that the theatre must be restored exactly as it was before, as a small second-story theatre over a shop. Her citizens knew that what Granbury did not need was another shop—and the decision was made to raise
all money through private donations and from foundations (16, p. 33). Tribute to their restoration activities both in the Opera House and in other projects was bestowed in 1976 when the citizens of Granbury were awarded the Ruth Lester Award for Meritorious Service in Historical Preservation (7). A large silver trophy now residing in the Opera House is testimony of further recognition. In 1977 the town was awarded the West Texas Chamber of Commerce Award for Historic Restoration in Cultural Achievement (15).

Today, the Opera House-on-the-Square in Granbury, Texas, is one of a few of its kind left in the United States. Unfortunately, the unique period of American history that it represents is not well documented. Those theatres, which were actually small recital halls found above saloons, met their demise with the advent of moving pictures. With the onslaught of increasing industrialization, the opera houses crumbled into disuse. When restoration at Granbury was being researched to authenticate the final product, the committee checked all available information, even going into the seacoast states to gather exact facts (6). However, those opera houses had not survived time very well, either, and the committee was forced to gather its few pieces of information from old newspaper clippings, memories, and dusty photographs. It is an interesting quirk of history that an area which boasts the metroplex' first nuclear power plant at Comanche Peak has also restored one of the few opera houses in the
nation to the status of a working theatre. The final result is a tribute to the hard work and ingenuity of the Granbury people—people who can appreciate and venerate the past while looking forward to the future.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

THE PRODUCTION METHODS OF
THE GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE STOCK COMPANY

The Granbury Opera House Company is a unique return to the old stock company system of training and acting that the acting unions have largely squelched in the twentieth century. It is a system that trains actors by having them perform different types of work in theatrical specialization that know no boundaries to time.

It was this system that caused educators from area colleges to evince an interest in the theatre as a future performing place even when the Opera House was still in the planning stages. Excerpts from their letters demonstrate the importance local educators placed on the Granbury venture:

"...The building will be a vital source to area theatre students, actors, directors, historians, and potential audiences for study, performance, and greater appreciation of the historical development of the theatre in this region and nation. The restoration will focus upon a community that appreciates its heritage and traditions and has assumed the responsibility of contributing in a large measure its worth to a vast number of present-day citizens. ..." (George Sorenson, Texas Christian University) (15)

"...We can see the opportunity to use this facility in our music and drama departments. ..." (C. A. Roberson, Tarrant County Junior College) (11)
Your project for renovating the Granbury Opera House is a fascinating one, and I am sure that having such a theater available will add greatly to the cultural life of the entire area. (Donald W. Bellah, Texas Wesleyan College) (12)

I am delighted to hear of an undertaking designed to maintain a vivid reminder of our architectural and social past in an eminently usable facility. (Allan B. Karstetter, Texas Woman's University) (10).

Even the local school system saw the chance to produce some of its shows in the renovated auditorium (13), and later both the high school and junior high produced University Interscholastic League plays there. In addition to the obvious historical and cultural benefits, theatre professors were quick to realize the advantages of an actual training program, a program that forced a performer to refine his performance when box office receipts depended on it.

The honor of becoming the first resident company went to a college noted more for its agricultural pursuits than for its love of the fine arts. In a metropolitan area noted for several fine theatre programs, Granbury selected Tarleton State University of Stephenville to provide the core company for that initial summer in 1975. Tarleton State had been fortunate enough to garner the talents of Mary Jane Mingus some years earlier, talents that had been nurtured in Pennsylvania and Ohio stock companies as well as in speech/drama/English teaching experiences in high schools and colleges in Georgia and Ohio (4). The quality that she brought to
her productions caused producer Jo Ann Miller to ask Tarleton to gamble on that first summer—a summer that none of those involved would ever forget.

When the idea of the renovation of the Opera House had first been conceived by the Nutts and sold to their friends, no one expected the theatre to be more than a showplace that would occasionally house a traveling show or perhaps an infrequent high school production. When the decision was made to try a summer stock theatre, there was no one willing to bet that even a town that could produce the rejuvenation miracle that Granbury had experienced could extend its luck to a summer theatre—especially when the theatre was not yet completed. After all, Dallas and Fort Worth were within an hour's easy access with name shows and big stars—how could Tarleton State hope to compete?

Unbelievably, Tarleton could and did compete. In a fifteen-day rehearsal period, the actors rehearsed the lines and built the set for the opening melodrama of Gold in the Hills as the roof was put on, the heating and air conditioning units were lowered into place, and final touches were added. For the last few incredible days and nights, meals and sleep were snatched on the run as opening day drew closer.

The opening came and went—and the summer players were a hit! Since June 19, 1975, the seven weekly summer shows have continued to be sellouts that draw crowds from across the state, from other states, and from foreign countries—some
groups in busloads. Consistently the students have played to sellout crowds that pay to sit on folding chairs in the aisles and on stairsteps after the regular seating has sold. Prices began that summer at $2, $2.50, and $3 for the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 2 p.m. matinees; at $2.50, $3, and $3.50 for the Thursday, Friday, and Sunday twilight performances at 8 p.m. on week nights and 5:30 p.m. on Sunday; and at $3, $3.50, and $4 for the Saturday twilight performance at 8 p.m. Patrons under sixteen and over sixty-five were admitted to matinee performances for $1.50. In 1977, prices were increased by fifty cents (6). Group discounts for twenty or more are available, and the box office personnel will sell the entire house to an organization as a money-making venture (14).

For the first two summers, Tarleton actors formed the core of the acting/producing group, with additional actors from Granbury and other colleges. During the summer of 1975, they lived in the old Shanley house a few blocks northwest of the square, a Granbury landmark in itself. At one time an old grist mill, the Shanley home was also an opera house in its own right for a few years early in this century (3). By the next summer, with success and a following assured, the Opera House Association purchased the old Hood County Hospital less than a block southwest of the Opera House and turned its labor room, nursery, surgery, offices, and patient
rooms into a dormitory for actors, a purchase which the company fondly named the Opera House Hilton.

With the entrance of the Tarleton Players into the productions of the Opera House, the commercial and academic worlds of theatre found a satisfactory mix. Through Tarleton, morning classes on both the graduate and undergraduate levels were taught for two summer sessions in acting, management, and related areas for credit (18). These sessions generally began at ten and lasted until twelve, when there was an hour break for lunch. High school credit was also given to younger company members for work in the Opera House. At one, the actors broke into groups for rehearsal, box office work, or technical production. In theory, the actors are to learn all areas of theatre, gaining experience in acting, costuming, lighting, publicity, and set-building. However, with a new show opening every three weeks, necessity rapidly dictates that members work hardest at what they do best.

This same system applies in the area of casting. Again in theory everyone is considered equally for roles, but time and experience repeatedly mandate that stock types, those with audience appeal, and those who learn most quickly are chosen for the better roles.

After two summers of solid success, Jo Ann and the Opera House Board felt confident that a permanent winter company would do well. During the first winter a series of small
concerts and traveling shows demonstrated that the audience was there, but that they preferred "their own kids." Consequently, during the winter of 1976 a permanent company enhanced by players from Tarleton and from local talent prepared a steady series of plays, leaving only the month of January dark. The weather and the time of year simply do not make January a hospitable month for theatre-goers (6).

During the summer of 1977 the next major change occurred in that the decision was made to rotate the summer company to other area schools, the next being Texas Christian University of Fort Worth under the guidance of Kent Gallagher. Additionally, the official press release from the President's Office at Tarleton State declared that the time had come for the Opera House to become somewhat more professional, and the feeling was that Texas Christian could provide a measure of that where Tarleton State could not (17).

In maintaining their stock company, only the permanent members, the staff, a certified public accountant, and a bookkeeper are paid. The permanent company members earn their room and board, and are paid an additional fifty dollars per week. Other student helpers are on small stipends for working on technical crew or serving as assistants to the various crew heads, more of an assistance than an actual payment. Ushers are volunteers from the town and from local organizations (6).
The technical crew was first headed by David Perez, a young Fort Worthian who graduated from Tarleton State. Perez was multitalented to the extent that he also worked lights, choreographed some of the shows, and acted. His main headquarters were located in the quonset hut directly south a few feet from the back of the Opera House. The large metal building is currently rented, but long-range plans call for it to be added to the Opera House holdings at a future date (6). Although the hut is cooled only by fans, the heat does not prevent the crew from turning out the scenery and properties that each show necessitates. When Perez left after three years to enter private business, Will Hladik of Omaha, Nebraska, became technical director.

For the first two years, the costume department was guided by Jeanine Caraway, who is also a graduate of Tarleton State and holds a master's degree from Kansas State. During the summer of 1975, all of the sewing was completed in the Shanley house, but since the acquisition of the hospital, the costume room has overflowed to occupy the former surgical room, operating room, lab, and two adjoining areas. An assistant costume mistress answers to the costume mistress in seeing that costumes are clean and pressed for each performance. During the summer of 1977 when the affiliation with Texas Christian was completed, Jeanine was replaced by Suzanne Burrows, a graduate of North Texas State University
in Denton. After Suzanne's departure, the costume department was placed under Carole Wheeldon, who holds a B.F.A. from the University of Nebraska.

After the director and the crews have completed their work, the smooth performance of the show then depends upon the stage manager. During the first summer, Rosa Cueller filled that position. After she left to pursue a master's degree at the University of Texas, Tarleton biology graduate Cathy Flint stage-managed for two years. When she left to assist the Four Doors Down Club, she was replaced by Mary Jo Goss. Mary Jo had begun her career at the Scott Theatre in Fort Worth and had then worked most of the dinner theatre circuit in Texas as assistant stage manager and properties mistress.

Crew call is usually from 10 a.m. until noon, although crew heads set their own call depending upon need. After an hour break for lunch, the company divides into either chorus or play rehearsal sections or returns to technical work. From 5 until 6 p.m. is suppertime. On a show night, remaining time until 7:30 p.m. is free, and members are encouraged to rest for the coming show. At that time all cast and crew must have reported in backstage by flipping a small ring on the call board that has each person's name on it. On non-show nights, crew call generally begins again around 6:30 p.m. and ends at 10 p.m. The crew is usually given the Monday off following the opening of a new play.
Play rehearsal follows a general pattern of audition/readthrough/block/runthrough. Because Jo Ann was an archaeology major, she has never studied methods of acting and producing as such. She uses what she knows from experience will work (6). Each cast member learns his lines on his off time, and a cast member playing a minor role will be assigned to assist one of the actors playing a major role in mastering his lines. An act is blocked, with an immediate runthrough; then another act is blocked with a runthrough, and the two acts are then put together. If the acts are not unduly long or difficult, at least two and sometimes all three can be blocked successfully from 1 p.m. until 10 p.m. Separate rehearsals are called for chorus and for major leads, with chorus sometimes meeting at 7:30 a.m. with the chorus director and choreographer to polish difficult selections. The first week is spent with initial blocking and memorization, with the second week for refinement, and the last few days for polishing. For shows with considerable choreography or weak spots, spot rehearsals may be called prior to performance or after a show. The constant pressure and the time limits present during the middle of a season are enormous, with rehearsing one show, performing another, and forgetting the earlier one. Often both physical and vocal warm-ups are included as standard pre-show tactics.
As important as the crew heads and the cast may be, however, no show would be quite as successful without the efficient work of the box office and public relations departments. Reservations and tickets are handled by Mary Kate Durham, Dodie Stokes, and Carol Reeves. Mary Kate, a former Granbury schoolteacher and insurance agent, is a longtime Granbury native. She and her late husband, R. L. Durham, converted the old log cabin post office into a small museum of local history. A fourth-generation Hood Countian who has never missed a show at the Opera House, Mary Kate also serves as a tour guide for tourists visiting the town (8).

Dodie Stokes is a native of Granbury with a psychology degree from Texas Technological University in Lubbock. After working as a registered medical technologist at the Terrell Lab and at All Saints Hospital in Fort Worth, she worked in Cambodia, Nepal, and Laos with the Dooley Foundation. Brief teaching stints both preceded and followed her stay in Cambodia. Besides her box office duties, Dodie co-wrote That Was No Lady, That Was My Husband with Jo Ann and wrote special lyrics for the Opera House productions of The Rivals and Hats Off to Broadway (5). She and Mary Kate are aided in their work by Carol Reeves, a graduate of Granbury High School who has also appeared in some of the Opera House shows.

In the public relations department, the first person responsible for publicity releases and advance show notices
was Bob Hill, a University of Texas at Arlington graduate. He was replaced by Steve Monroe, a Granbury native who attended Texas Christian University with a double major in journalism and advertising art. His experiences with printing companies as well as his work with the local newspapers eminently qualified him for his position. Additionally, Monroe was responsible for designing the program covers for each show (9). When he resigned, he was followed by Jack Dyville, who also serves as company choreographer. Dyville is a graduate of Texas Wesleyan College with over nine years of professional experience in New York and throughout the United States. The public relations manager’s work is supplemented by that of internationally known artist Cynthia Brants, a former Sarah Lawrence art professor who donates her time and talents to the scenery of the Opera House and was herself involved with the restoration of a native stone building into the Four Doors Down private club. Cynthia also designed the logogram featuring the outline of the Opera House façade that adorns the letterheads, season bro- chures, and all releases for the company (16). One of the most popular production activities has been the addition of the pit band that plays prior to each show. Added as an old-fashioned twist to the first melodrama played in the Opera House, the pit band and sing-a-long, featuring such old-fashioned songs as "Shine On, Harvest
Moon (19)" and "The Darktown Strutter's Ball (1)," proved so popular that it was made a permanent feature of each show. Beginning thirty minutes before the curtain rises, the three-man band plays popular songs and encourages the audience to sing with them, using the words printed in the season brochure. Blanche Morgan Todd, known affectionately as "Little Mo," plays the piano, accompanied by former nuclear physicist Nat Godbold on the banjo and company member Drenda Lewis of Granbury on the clarinet. After Godbold joined the musicians' union, local businessman Tom Hafford became a member of the trio. They further involve the audience by asking who is attending from out of state or out of the country, and who is celebrating a birthday or anniversary, questions to which the audience never fails to respond with cheers and clapping. The pre-show program is then concluded with the traditional song of "Deep in the Heart of Texas (2)," when cast, crew, and audience alike stomp at the designated place. Another old-fashioned touch is the apple cider sold in the lobby during intermission.

The Granbury Opera House stands as a tribute to theatre. While there are no fixed indicators of its success, there is evidence. One such indicator is the list of revenue-sharing profits for the past six years. In 1973, the city received $17,750 and in 1974, $18,398 in revenue-sharing profits. The year the Opera House opened for business, the city netted $28,193, an increase of $10,000 that continued
to hold true each year. By 1976, the city office was reporting a gain of $39,891; in 1977, they received a return of $46,210; during the first quarter of 1978, $10,940 had had already been accumulated (20). Granted, the Opera House alone is not responsible for these figures, but it is responsible for attracting large numbers of people into the town who are willing to spend money for food and souvenirs. Other evidence of the expanding success consists of the fact that all 327 seats, extra folding chairs, and stairsteps are sold out for the majority of performances. Audiences have been known to wait for two or three hours to see a show when the town's electrical circuits overload and shut down electricity to the playhouse. The shops gear their hours to the days and hours of the Opera House, realizing the monetary benefits of the tourists/theatre patrons. The shopkeepers have even been known to telephone Jo Ann and inquire how a show is selling for a particular weekend (6). As bank president John Luton remarked, there is no estimate of the dollar and cents value of the Opera House to Granbury, but the entire downtown area has enjoyed a resurrection created at least in part by the Opera House. The students who participate in the shows also have the advantage of exploring career options (7).

While the theatre is young and cannot boast any successes in commercial theatre from its young proteges, it has proved
to be an invaluable training ground for young people seriously interested in working in the theatre. When asked the secret to the financial success that has allowed the Opera House to pay off its original debt, acquire further property, and operate in the black, Jo Ann says half-jestingly, half-seriously, "No one else has me and the kids." While some may consider this a conceited remark, no one is going to argue with a multiple success like the Granbury Opera House-on-the-Square in Granbury, Texas.
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10. Letter from Allan B. Karstetter, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas, to Mr. Joe Nutt, Granbury Opera Association, Granbury, Texas, December 17, 1971.


14. *Letter from Jo Ann Miller, producer, to the Chamber of Commerce, Granbury, Texas, no date.*

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17. *Press release from Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, March 24, 1977.*


CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The history of the Granbury Opera House has been a long and colorful one, embracing many of the major social and economic changes in Texas history. It is unfortunate that more of the information concerning the earlier period from 1886 until 1911 is not available. That information which is recorded here gives an interesting and often exciting insight into the cultural and social aspects of both rural Texas and turn-of-the-century theatre.

It is evident from the revenue-sharing figures, the budgets, and the obvious success with the audiences that the more recent history of the Opera House is demonstrative of an unqualified success—a success that continues to increase yearly. Several reasons for this success have been explored in the body of this paper. Local people have been willing to donate both money and labor; students have been willing to sacrifice time and pleasure for the sake of the show; and tourists have been willing to spend money and time for the sake of entertainment in a nostalgic setting.

Those students of theatre and others interested in the outcome of the Opera House experiment may well be inclined to believe that Granbury has merely produced a temporary
phenomenon—and that may prove to be the case. However, there are indications that the theatre will continue to prosper. One such indication is the fact that debts have been paid off quickly, and that the dormitory which was acquired during the second year of operation continues to function well in the scheme of production. Both the quality and the quantity of the actors and workers have steadily increased yearly as the fame of the theatre spreads and Jo Ann can afford to choose more exacting and difficult dramas. The company has expanded to include year-round offerings with a permanent core company. The plays have increasingly encompassed some drama, as well as bringing back popular acts, such as jazz concerts. The Granbury theatre seems to be one that is geared to the wants and needs of its patrons.

The prognostication for the Opera House includes a steady increase in quality in performers, choice of plays, and technical aspects. Quality begets quality in such cases. A definite following has already been established that should increase as word of the quality of the productions continues to spread. As debts are paid off, the profits should be returned to make improvements and additions to the theatre plant. As the theatre audience becomes more sophisticated, the plays will be chosen from a more balanced selection. Also, Granbury has the beginnings and the hopes for a permanent art colony that would gradually embrace all of the arts. In such an atmosphere, a theatre will surely thrive.
As leisure time increases for modern families, people long for a nostalgic look at their past, especially when such a small investment reaps such a large return. Future scholars would be well-advised to follow the progress of this phenomenon employing modern methods with an old-fashioned touch. In Granbury, where the ghosts of John Wilkes Booth and Carrie A. Nation mingle with the dawn of the nuclear age, such nostalgia has carved a successful niche in the continuing saga of theatre in Texas.
APPENDIX
This exterior view of the Opera House was taken from the courthouse lawn and clearly shows the restored façade. To the viewer's left is the antique shop named after John St. Helen, who is thought to have been John Wilkes Booth. (Photograph by Don Swenson)
The old-fashioned lamps, restored arched windows and doors, and the lettering on the windows are reminiscent of the Granbury of the late 1800's. (Photograph by Don Swenson)
This interior view of the Opera House was taken from the balcony. The straightback chairs in the box seat section are visible to the viewer's left. The chandelier was found in a neighboring town, while the rust velour grand drape came from the old Palace Theatre in Dallas. The pit band plays from the small area to the left of the stage below the white door. (Photograph by Don Swenson)
Performances at the Granbury Opera House run Thursday through Sunday year around with a break during the holiday season and the month of January. In this picture, producer Jo Ann Miller (sixth from the left) and members of the Opera House Company perform a scene from Hats Off to Broadway. (Photograph by Don Swenson)
On the next page is one of the architect's scale drawings for the interior of the Granbury Opera House in Granbury, Texas.
BIOGRAPHY OF JO ANN MILLER

Jo Ann Miller, a native of Arp, Texas, earned two bachelor's degrees—one in literature and one in the history of art—from Texas Woman's University in Denton and then entered Columbia University in New York to study for a master's in archaeology. While she was there, two friends invited her to perform a singing role in a summer stock production of *Irene*. After hearing Jo Ann sing in one of the performances, Tommy Dorsey went backstástage and asked her to join his band.

After a series of tours with the band, Jo Ann divided her time between acting in summer stock and singing in the band. As a result of the acting, she bought the Cooperstown Playhouse in Cooperstown, New York, where she produced and performed in well-known plays and musicals for fifteen years.

Jo Ann divided her time between theatre activities and appearances in some of the world's most exclusive hotels and nightclubs from San Francisco to London, England. The Hilton hotels, the St. Regis in New York, the Palmer House in Chicago, and the Americana Hotel in Miami Beach were some of her favorites. She played in the Broadway show *Oh, Captain* opposite Darren McGavin, as well as performing radio and television commercials.
In Texas, Jo Ann has made nightclub appearances in dinner theatre in the Metroplex, starring opposite Bob Cummings in *Never Too Late* at Granny's in Dallas, and with Giselle McKensie in Casa Manana's production of *Gypsy*. She is the author of a play that premiered in Granbury in the fall of 1976 entitled *That Was No Lady, That Was My Husband*. In addition to serving as producer of the Opera House, Jo Ann has appeared in several of the shows and concerts.
BIOGRAPHY OF MARY JANE MINGUS

Mary Jane Mingus began her acting career under the directorship of Anthony Perkins in a community theatre in Sanford, Florida. She was leading actress in the resident company of the Perry Players of Erie, Pennsylvania, for early stock experience, and then went on to perform stock with the Kenley Players in Warren, Ohio. There she worked with Peggy Cass, Mark Miller, Dick Shawn, Robert Horton, Robert Goulet, Howard Keel, Virginia Mayo, and others. Her numerous roles include Kate in Taming of the Shrew and the lead in Medea, as well as roles in productions at the Opera House in Granbury.

Born in Youngstown, Ohio, Mary Jane received her master's degree from Baylor University through the Dallas Theatre Center and is presently finishing her Ph.D. at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Her dissertation concerns Paul Baker, innovative director of the Dallas Theatre Center.

Mary Jane is currently serving as instructor of speech and drama at Tarleton State University in Stephenville. Before Tarleton, she had been speech and drama instructor at Kent State University in Ohio, having previously taught English at Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia, and art at Ashland High School in Ashland, Ohio.
Throughout her career Mary Jane has been involved in pioneering projects, from designing a new art department at Ashland High School to designing and guiding the building of Tarleton State University's studio theatre. The quality she brought to her productions caused Jo Ann Miller to ask Mary Jane to be the first director of the resident company at the Opera House.

Her directing career, which began in 1964, was enlarged to include productions during the 1975 and 1976 summer season at Granbury. During this time she also taught the classes offered by Tarleton through the Opera House, as well as appearing in some of the productions herself.

Mary Jane Mingus is now married to George Mingus and they reside in Stephenville, Texas, with their daughter, Samantha Justin.
BIOGRAPHY OF KENT GALLAGHER

In early 1977, the decision to rotate the directorship of the summer companies to other area universities removed Tarleton State and replaced it with Texas Christian University. The directorship of the company then devolved upon Kent Gallagher, chairman of the department of drama at Texas Christian.

Gallagher received his B.A. from Carleton College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Indiana University. Before he came to Texas Christian, he headed the theatre program at Washington State University, and prior to that he was in charge of theatre at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

He has had experience in all phases of the theatre. Beginning in community theatre in 1950, he has acted, stage-managed, crewed, constructed, costumed, and directed in children's theatre, touring theatre, college theatre, and summer theatre.
BIOGRAPHY OF SHARON BENGE

Sharon Benge, a member of the faculty at Texas Christian University, received her B.F.A. in acting from the University of Texas, an M.F.A. in Arts Management from Texas Christian, and is currently working on a Ph.D. in Humanities from the University of Texas at Dallas. She received her training in dance from such companies as the Dance School of Harlem and the noted Martha Graham Dance School in New York.

In addition to directing shows at Granbury, Sharon has produced over 130 shows ranging from Romeo and Juliet to a musical Little Red Riding Hood. A specialist in creative dramatics for children, Sharon was instructor and curriculum planner for Casa Manana's Children's Theatre for sixteen years and now teaches creative dramatics for elementary education majors at Texas Christian.

Sharon has been involved in specially commissioned works such as the CBS production of Revolutionary Ideas with Beryl Red and Abe Lincoln Awards for the Baptist Radio and Television Commission.
OFFICERS AND DONORS
OF THE GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION

Officers of the Association
1971-1975

Chairman,
Jack Langdon
President,
Joe Nutt
First Vice-President,
Lou Nutt
Second Vice-President,
Gerry Rawls

Directors:
J. Harold Hughes
R. N. Rawls
James Wann
Norma Crawford
J. V. Durant
Ken Hill
Billie Kemplin
Dee T. Carpenter
H. T. Priddy
Doris Luton
A. L. Myrick
Clyde Wells

Charter Donors

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Nutt
Hon. and Mrs. Jack M. Langdon
Mr. and Mrs. J. Harold Hughes
Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Priddy, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Dee T. Carpenter
Mr. and Mrs. J. V. Durant
Dr. and Mrs. L. G. Ballard
Dr. and Mrs. A. M. Pate, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Myrick
Mr. and Mrs. Collie W. Oliver
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watkins
Mr. and Mrs. Ben H. Macon
Granbury Junior Woman's Club
Granbury Woman's Wednesday Club
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Smedley
Kappa Sigma Chapter of ESA
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Clemmons
Leonards' Enterprises
Mr. and Mrs. George Liser
Mr. and Mrs. Leo Potishman
Mr. and Mrs. Joe DeGrozier
Mrs. Claudine Hemstraught
Mr. Jack Stout
Mrs. Ellen Roesser Brandts
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Sparks
Dr. and Mrs. R. N. Rawls
Jo Ann Miller
Amon Carter Foundation
Black Estate
Moody Foundation
Cynthia Brants
Mr. and Mrs. Ed Beran
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Rimby
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Wells
Mr. and Mrs. Floyd West
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hewlett
Mr. and Mrs. Jess Brooks
Mr. Winfred Hooper, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Milton Kennon
Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Barrett
Dallas Stage Scenery
Dr. and Mrs. Merle Nutt
Stephenville Savings and Loan
First National Bank of Granbury
Granbury Plumbing and Electric
Mr. and Mrs. Norwood Dixon
Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn H. Brown
Fort Worth Lumber Company
Victor Thornton Industries
Mr. A. E. Taylor, Jr.

In Memoriam

Dr. Roy L. Brock
Jack Wortham
Henry Zweifel
Henry L. Nutt
Euna B. Nutt
David H. Nutt
J. Newton Nutt
Jefferson N. Nutt
Milburn E. Nutt
Maggie Randle Cleveland
Charles Langdon
Mr. and Mrs. James T. Miller
CUMULATIVE LIST OF COMPANY MEMBERS, 1975-1978

Jerry Abbott
Russ Abbott
Christopher Arney
Connie Baker
Randall Barnes
Don C. Benton
Robbin Berry
Mike Bianchi
Lisa Brandenburg
Michael Bryan
Mary Anna Christian
Judith Ann Clayton
David Coffey
Bud Coleman
Terry Cook
William Corcoran
Charles Creasy
Bert Crossland
Rosa Cuellar
James Davis
Bobby Deeds
Rebecca Denton
Ken Dyess
Jack Dyville
Dena Farrell
Anson Farrar
Janet Ferree
Cathy Flint
Robert O. Galey
Sharon K. Garner
Lu Ann Gideon
Lhyn Gordon
Mary Jo Goss
Wesley Harris
Ron Hicks
Kenny Hightower
Bob Hill
Will Hladik
Vivian Hoffman
DeAaon Hoggins
Dixie Howeth
Connie Hutchinson
Joan Jenkins
Gary Johnson
Dub Jordan
Steve Kechel
Carolyn Kemplin
George Kiernan
Paula Kline
Kathy Knox
Lois Leftwich
Drenda Lewis
Chapman Locke
Doris Luton
Ken Martin
Vivian Maxwell
Ida McGaffey
Quentin McGown IV
Michelle McSpadden
Leslie Miller
Nancy Neal
Enar Olsen
Vickie Pack
Audie Perez
David Perez
Otis Pillow
Rickie Pratt
Lisanne Purvis
Jamai Pybas
Marilyn Pyeatt
Woody Pyeatt, Jr.
Jim Rankin
Carol Reeves
David Riggins
Lee Ritchey
Ralph Robertson
Karen Sharratt
Linda Snelson
Connie Speer
Terri Spurgin
Glenn Todd, Jr.
Steve Trogdon
Nancy Uffner
Marty Van Kleek
Scott Ware
Harlin Wells
Carole Wheeldon
Judi Williams
Wally Williams
David Wilson
Shannon Wilson
Pete Wylie

LIST OF CHILDREN IN THE PRODUCTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yong Jun An</th>
<th>Roseanne Gann</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>De Anna Brown</td>
<td>Adam Gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry Campbell</td>
<td>Keith Gunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Collins</td>
<td>Lu Ann McClellan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. C. Darnell</td>
<td>Cavin Swaim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Darnell</td>
<td>Alicia Surley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Durant</td>
<td>Paige Wallace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ATTRACTIONS, 1975-1978

First Grand Opening, June 19, 1975

Gold in the Hills--June 19-July 6
Charlie's Aunt--July 10-July 27
Pursuit of Happiness--July 31-August 17
Once Upon a Mattress--August 21-September 7
Levee Singers--September 20
Dale McBride Country Show--September 26-27
Concert with Jo Ann and the Jerry Hitt Trio--September 28
Dallas Civic Ballet Touring Ensemble--October 3-4
Mary Allen One-Woman Show--October 18
The Fantasticks--October 24, 31; November 1-2, 7-9, 14-16, 21-23
Clay Faulkenberry Benefit Show--November 10
The Shoppe (singing group)--November 29-30
The Broken Ornament (original Christmas show)--December 5-6, 12-13
First Baptist Church of Dallas--Amahl and the Night Visitors--December 20-23
Bicentennial Show--February 21, 1976
The Miracle Worker--February 27-March 14, 1976
See How They Run--March 26-April 18, 1976
Gayle Corkery Youth Dancers--May 8-9, 1976
Dixieland Concert--May 15, 1976

Second Grand Opening, June 10, 1976

Carnival--June 10-27
Dirty Work at the Crossroads--July 1-18
Ladies' Night in a Turkish Bath--July 22-August 8
Annie Get Your Gun--August 12-September 6
Dixieland Concert--September 11-12, 18-19
You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown--September 24-October 11
Not Ready for the Metroplex County Seat Concert--October 16
The Girls in 509--October 22-November 7
That Was No Lady, That Was My Husband (original play by Jo Ann Miller)--November 12-28
Children's Christmas Show (original)--December 3-19
Dixieland Musical Revue--February 5-20, 1977
Count Dracula--February 25-March 13, 1977
Godspell--March 19-April 3, 1977
Harvey--April 8-24, 1977
Peg O' My Heart--April 29-May 19, 1977
No Sex, Please, We're British--May 20-June 5, 1977

Third Grand Opening, June 9, 1977

Pal Joey--June 9-26
The Wayward Way--June 30-July 17
The Rivals--July 21-August 7
Little Mary Sunshine--August 11-September 5
Dixieland Concert--September 10-18
I Do, I Do--September 23-October 16
'Til Death Do Us Part--October 21-November 6
Pajama Tops--November 11-December 4, and evenings December 10
and 17
Children's Christmas Show (original)--December 6-18
The Silver Whistle--February 3-19, 1978
Hats Off to Broadway--February 24-March 19, 1978
Jenny Kissed Me--April 21-May 7, 1978
Natalie Needs a Nightie--May 12-June 4

Fourth Grand Opening, June 8, 1978

Call Me Madam--June 8-July 2
George M!---July 6-23
Wish You Were Here, or Irene--July 27-August 13
Can Can--August 17-September 4
The budgets on the following pages are representative of the financial condition of the Opera House in Granbury, Texas, from the beginning of the restoration project through 1978.
PROJECTED BUDGET FOR INTERIOR RESTORATION
OF THE GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE

Air conditioning and heating of theatre ....................... $ 15,500
Stage Sound System ........................................... 5,000
Stage equipment, including house curtain ....................... 19,800
Stage lighting system .......................................... 30,000

General construction, including seating, partitions, plumbing and powder room facilities, electrical fixtures, ceiling, flooring, shelving, painting, etc. ............... 129,700

RESTORATION, TOTAL ...................................... $200,000

It is anticipated that revenue from use of the Opera House by community and other projects will pay for its future maintenance.
GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS
From Inception to October 15, 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECEIPTS</th>
<th>$ 60,952.93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISBURSEMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Improvements (including interim fi-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nancing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal payment on note</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>445.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Fees</td>
<td>175.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>170.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>202.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>119.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>9.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</td>
<td>57,668.07</td>
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</table>

CASH IN FIRST NATIONAL BANK, GRANBURY,
OCTOBER 15, 1974  $ 3,284.86
GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended December 31, 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDS PROVIDED</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net operating revenues over expenditures</td>
<td>$95,561.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add: Depreciation</td>
<td>$2,907.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$98,468.21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDS APPLIED</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of long-term debt</td>
<td>$4,515.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of fixed assets</td>
<td>95,672.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit on dormitory building</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105,188.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DECREASE IN WORKING CAPITAL** $6,719.79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANGES IN COMPONENTS OF WORKING CAPITAL</th>
<th>DECEMBER 31, 1975</th>
<th>JANUARY 1, 1975</th>
<th>INCREASE (DECREASE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on hand in banks</td>
<td>$14,078.44</td>
<td>$18,537.75</td>
<td>$(4,459.31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>266.67</td>
<td>800.00</td>
<td>$(533.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,345.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,337.75</strong></td>
<td><strong>$(4,992.64)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$318.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$318.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll tax payable</td>
<td>7,600.56</td>
<td>7,600.56</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9,327.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,600.56</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,727.15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORKING CAPITAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,017.40</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,737.19</strong></td>
<td><strong>$(6,719.79)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaudited
GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND FUND BALANCE

For the year ended December 31, 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ticket Sales</td>
<td>$100,551.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Performance Expenses</td>
<td>$52,275.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and Grants</td>
<td>$48,276.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$84,957.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL REVENUE</td>
<td>$133,807.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$16,828.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll taxes</td>
<td>682.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>5,752.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3,118.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>2,384.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and Accounting</td>
<td>776.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>2,879.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>1,613.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repair &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>424.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations--Clay Faulkenberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit Show</td>
<td>462.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>417.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>2,907.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET OPERATING REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES</td>
<td>$95,561.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 1975   $20,828.43

FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 1975  $116,389.45
GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.

BALANCE SHEET

December 31, 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on hand and in banks</td>
<td>$14,078.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>266.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$14,345.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIXED ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Improvements</td>
<td>$141,698.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Fixtures</td>
<td>1,464.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less: Accumulated depreciation computed on a straight line method</strong></td>
<td>2,907.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land</strong></td>
<td>$140,255.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>144,255.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit on Dormitory Building</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$163,600.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$318.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll Tax payable</td>
<td>1,409.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of long-term debt</td>
<td>7,600.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td>$9,327.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LONG-TERM DEBT

Note payable--secured by building
Less: current portion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 45,484.33</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 7,600.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37,883.77</td>
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</tbody>
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FUND BALANCE

Granbury Opera Association--Fund Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 116,389.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 163,600.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaudited
GRANBURY OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND FUND BALANCE

For the year ended December 31, 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ticket Sales</td>
<td>$ 118,736.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Performance Expenses</td>
<td>61,922.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and Grants</td>
<td>$ 56,814.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>10,526.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1,164.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 85,991.50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$ 21,330.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll taxes</td>
<td>1,048.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>1,715.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3,578.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>3,410.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal and Accounting</td>
<td>1,187.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>6,500.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>3,133.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repair and Maintenance</td>
<td>1,792.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>110.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>616.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>7,520.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>8,123.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager Bonus</td>
<td>6,626.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>2,760.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>738.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>835.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Supplies</td>
<td>1,067.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorm Expenses</td>
<td>3,612.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET OPERATING REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 10,280.21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 1976

FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 1976

Unaudited
APPROVED BUDGET 1978

January 1, 1978 to December 31, 1978

INCOME $143,800.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Staff 47 Wks. $42,387.00
4 Dancers Summer Season 7,000.00
1 Costumer 1,427.00
Musicians Summer Season Contr. 3,150.00
Director 19,098.00
Scholarships 4,000.00

87,062.00 54%

PRODUCTION COSTS

Scripts, Royalties, & Music 7,864.00
Costumes, Personal Props 5,420.00
Lighting, Sets, & Props 8,000.00

21,284.00 15%

INTEREST 225.00

OPERATING EXPENSES

Telephone 4,050.00
Utilities, Water 9,720.00
Printing 6,400.00
Advertising, Promotion 5,000.00
Office Supplies 3,000.00
Repair, Maintenance 2,070.50
Insurance 1,929.50
Accounting fees 971.00
Box Office Cash 200.00
Rent 2,400.00
Hauling, Auto. Expenses 750.00

36,491.00 25%
### DISBURSEMENTS (CONTINUED)

#### DORMITORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$5,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Labor</td>
<td>$420.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies &amp; Equip.</td>
<td>$166.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$1,182.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,668.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### RENT INCOME @ $35.00 Per Mo.

- **2,100.00**

#### TOTAL DORM EXPENSE

- **6,568.00** (5%)

#### CONTINGENCY

- **2,170.00** (1%)

#### TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

- **143,800.00** (100%)

#### INCOME DISBURSEMENTS

- **143,800.00**
- **143,800.00**

**NOTE:**

Annual Payment on Dorm not included in disbursements.

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(On the 1978 budget, $5,000 will be contributed by donors $250 @ to go with the $4000 in the budget to provide $9000 in scholarship monies. The payment on the dorm is being raised by matching a $15,000 grant by the Sid Richardson Foundation.)
The brochure on the next page is a sample of the 1978 season brochure given to each audience member at the Opera House in Granbury, Texas. A similar brochure is compiled each summer and used throughout the year. It includes short biographies of the producer, directors, and cast members, as well as other information about the Opera House.
GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE
IN CO-OPERATION WITH
TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
PRESENTS ITS
1978 SUMMER SEASON
FOURTH GRAND OPENING SINCE 1886
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Nix, John W., compiler, *A Tale of Two Schools and Springtown, Parker County*, Fort Worth, Thomason and Morrow, 1945.


Articles


Durham, Mary Kate, "Hood County," *Bicentennial Showcase 1776-1976*, published by Hood-Somervell Board of Realtors (1976), no pagination.

Unpublished Materials


Diary of Arminedale Cheek or Sleek, actor, Granbury, Texas, 1887, now in possession of Granbury Opera House, Granbury, Texas.

Harvey, Paul, national radio broadcast, Spring, 1976.


Letter from Allan B. Karstetter, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas, to Mr. Joe Nutt, Granbury Opera Association, Granbury, Texas, December 17, 1971.

Letter from C. A. Roberson, Vice-Chancellor of Tarrant County Junior College, Fort Worth, Texas, to Mrs. Louise Nutt, Granbury Opera Association, Granbury, Texas, January 10, 1972.

Letter from Donald W. Bellah, Fine Arts Chairman of Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, Texas, to Mr. Joe Nutt, Granbury Opera Association, Granbury, Texas, December 15, 1971.


Letter from George Sorenson, Theatre Arts Chairman of Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, to Whom It May Concern, October 30, 1973.

Letter from James Wann, Superintendent of the Granbury Schools, to Mr. Joe Nutt, Granbury Opera Association, Granbury, Texas, November 22, 1971.

Letter from Jo Ann Miller, producer, to the Chamber of Commerce, Granbury, Texas, no date.

News Release courtesy Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, March 24, 1977.


Release to summer company from Mary Jane Mingus, director, Stephenville, Texas, May 10, 1976.

Report of Joe L. Nutt to the Historical Commission of the Hood County Historical Society, Granbury, Texas, no date.


Newspapers

Dallas Morning News, June 8, 1975.


Fort Worth Star Telegram, November 7, 1948.


Fort Worth Star Telegram, February 12, 1952.


Fort Worth Star Telegram, May 18, 1975.


Granbury, Texas, Granbury News, September 24, 1891.

Granbury, Texas, Granbury News, December 10, 1891.

Granbury, Texas, Granbury News, January 7, 1892.

Granbury, Texas, Granbury News, January 14, 1892.


**Interviews**

Interview with Dodie Stokes, Opera House box office, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.

Interview with Jo Ann Miller, producer, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.

Interview with John Luton, banker, Granbury, Texas, June 3, 1977.

Interview with Mary Kate Durham, box office, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.

Interview with Milt Kennon, Granbury, Texas, native, June 3, 1977.

Interview with Steve Monroe, public relations manager, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.

Interview with Sunny Allen, Hood County Abstract Company, Granbury, Texas, August 18, 1977.

Statement by Billie Brock Kemplin, board member, Fort Worth, Texas, March, 1978.


**Other Materials**


"Deep in the Heart of Texas," words by June Hershey, music by Don Swander, Melody Lane Publishers, Inc., 1941.