

Clarkson Music Theatre History
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60 YEARS AGO.....In 1950...

For the second time since the group's inception, PIRATES OF PENZANCE was the Clarkson Community Choir's musical presentation. Once again the Clarkson Community Hall was the location, Frank B. Houston was at the helm and Choir Director Beth Jones opted for a week-long run from September 25-30. The Clarkson Community Hall was constructed in 1924 to the rear of The Clarkson Community Church which was located at 1764 Lakeshore Road West. In 1956, having outgrown the original structure, a new edifice was built at 1700 Mazo Crescent which CMT uses as rehearsal space to this day.

50 YEARS AGO.....In 1960...

Now known as the Christ Church Opera Group, THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD was the G&S selection for the year. Frank Houston directed 'assisting artists' Geoffrey Hatton, Olive Rankin and Roy Schatz for the September 28-October 1 run. Edith (now) Bradshaw played Dame Carruthers. The programme lists 'Adams Costume Rental' (up until now it had been 'Malabar') and noticeably missing was the B-A advertisement.

40 YEARS AGO.....In 1970...

Our 25th Season offered audiences a return (for the 4th time) to Titipu (actually Port Credit Secondary School) for THE MIKADO. This Clarkson Opera Group (name changed in 1963) favourite ran for six shows over two November weekends and was dedicated to the recently departed Frank Houston. No fewer than sixty-one Titipitian cast members (plus 26 in the Orchestra) followed Jack Thomson's baton and Jan Tingle's blocking. We first performed at Port Credit in 1964 because it was a larger facility and we had outgrown the Christ Church auditorium.

30 YEARS AGO.....In 1980...

By the onset of the '80's our name was Clarkson Music Theatre and our performance venue of choice was Cawthra Secondary School. Directed by Betty Smith, OLIVER! opened in April and ran until May (for 2 weekends). Executive minutes indicate the show could have been South Pacific but the powers that be opted instead for the Lionel Bart classic. We have not undertaken South Pacific to this day. As rarely performed Gilbert and Sullivan shows go, RUDDIGORE usually ranks at the top of the list. From October 24 through November 1 (with a few days off for good behavior) this Gerald Lake directed opus entertained audiences in our 35th season. Tickets were an outlandish \$4! We brought the house down.

20 YEARS AGO.....In 1990...

This busy year started off with VILLAINS, VAMPS and RASCALS, a Cabaret-style show which we performed for three January weekends at the Mississauga Seniors Centre. The original concept focused on the bad guys and gals from music theatre. In May, just in time for baseball season, we premiered DAMN YANKEES! at Meadowvale Theatre.

Direction was by Jim Smith with musical direction by John Hood. By the way: The Jays finished 2nd to the Red Sox with 86 wins that year (The Yankees were 7th). Our Fall show was PIRATES of PENZANCE with Jean Minielly and John Lukianchuk directing the music and stage respectively. Bob Ridell ably handled the choreography.

10 YEARS AGO.....In 2000...

With everyone surviving Y2K, our first offering for the new millennium was PUTTIN' IT TOGETHER a 'Cabaret Evening of Song and Dance' at the Erindale Studio Theatre. The 'small in numbers' but 'great in ability' cast was lead through their paces by Artistic Director-Lori Hall and Music Director-Sue Wilby. Then, in November, we traveled to Paris, France to meet THE MERRY WIDOW for the third time in our history. Hayden Heathcock and Eleanor Crisell shared the Music Direction duties while Artistic Director, Rob Gorican ensured on-stage bumping was kept to a minimum (unless scripted)