

From: [Michael O'Malley](#)
To: [Mayor](#); [Councillor Everitt, Frank](#); [Councillor Frizzell, Garth](#); garthfrizzell@gmail.com; [Murry Krause](#); [Councillor Krause, Murry](#); terri.mcconachie@princegeorge.ca; [Councillor Ramsay, Cori](#); [Councillor Sampson, Kyle](#); [Councillor Scott, Susan](#); [Councillor Skakun, Brian](#); [Councillor Skakun, Brian](#)
Subject: Re: Playhouse Importance to our community
Date: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 7:57:59 PM

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Dear Mayor Hall and Councillors Everitt; Frizell;Krause;McConnachie;Ramsay;Sampson; Scott and Skakun

I understand that all of you are aware of the damage to the PG Playhouse and that this delightful landmark in our city may need significant support from the City to re-establish it's very,very important role in our community.

I wish to acquaint you all with some personal experiences this establishment played in my life and my family's life in Prince George. I also believe that there are many other benefits to our community.Please grant me the time to elaborate.

I arrived in Prince George in the spring of 1978 fresh from completing a Family Physician Residency in Belfast Ireland. I was here to take over a full service family physician's practice who was moving to Vancouver. At that time Prince George had an estimated average age of 25 for the 70,000 residents. It was calculated from the hospital birth records to have the highest birth rate in North America. Nancy and I did our bit by adding another 4 towards the end of 1984!

As a 14 year old schoolboy in Ireland I had attempted to take a small part in a school play directed by my English teacher. This experience resulted in what was then called "stage fright".

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From age 14 onwards I was never able to speak in public.I somehow got through medical school by developing a system of hiding my disability.

Around 1988, the drama teacher at my children's school in Prince George got me and other parents to do a fundraiser for some handicapped children in our community. The project was a production of the play "Charlie's Aunt". I was cast in one of the lead roles.The Playhouse, of course, was the venue.The fundraiser was successful.I believe, back then, we collected close to \$8000.00 which was not an insignificant sum in 1986.

However, personally for me the ability to get on stage and perform was like a new lease on life. This invigorating personal experience was followed up by many other significant events at the Playhouse. One of these was the 1993 success of the Prince George Theatre Workshop's play "The Field" which I was asked to direct. This production involved a team of over 40 cast and crew members winning the privilege of bringing the production to BC 's Mainstage Theatre Festival in Vancouver.That year's festival judge was Jackie Maxwell - the artistic director of the famous Canada's Shaw Festival in Ontario. "The Field "brought much credit to our community as it won 4 of the 10 categories including the coveted Best Production category.

Over the years I've joined hundreds of my fellow citizens in the Playhouse to enjoy performances by the likes of the PGSO, Judy Russell, city choirs, and both touring and local musicians. Such evenings are part of the pleasure of living in a city like ours. It is important that the community be able to look forward to more of the same.

During the last renovation I and a significant number of other members of the community of Prince George both donated and helped raise funds to assist the city with rebuilding the Playhouse. I believe there is a growing number of people again interested in what is happening to their beloved Playhouse. I just need you to know that all of you have my support in helping to do what the City needs to do to so as not to lose this historic landmark that holds so many memories. It also, more importantly, has the ability to bring such pleasure to and even in some cases launch the careers of many of PG's children in all forms of the performing arts.

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Michael O'Malley

MB;BCh;BAO. CCFP[AM]. FCFP