
Gary Buttrey, University of Tennessee - Knoxville

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Master of Arts

Major
Theatre

Major Professor
Fred Fields

Committee Members
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Abstract
The purpose of this study was to investigate the history of the Hunter Hills Theatre in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and to provide an accurate account of the theatre operation from 1956 to 1977. Hunter Hills Theatre is an outdoor theatre located in an increasingly popular resort area. It is one of the most beautiful amphitheatres in the Southeastern United States.

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I includes an introduction with pertinent information about the site selection and the construction of the amphitheatre. Chapter II deals chronologically with the first years the theatre operated, 1956-1959. Historical facts concerning the production of the outdoor drama Chucky Jack are detailed in Chapter II. In the third chapter, the intermediate years, 1960-1965, are presented. The third chapter offers historical fact about the productions at Hunter Hills sponsored by the Washington Ballet, the "Music Under the Stars" concert series, and the Union college Summer Music Festival. Chapter IV offers a chronological look at the operation of Hunter Hills from 1966 to 1977. The first twelve years of summer repertory productions by the University of Tennessee are detailed in Chapter IV. The final chapter, Chapter V, offers conclusions about the study.

The primary means and procedures used in data assembly for this study have been newspaper accounts, magazine articles, special theatre collections, producing organization's records files, programs, and personal interviews with individuals associated with the theatre over the years.

During the course of the study, materials were collected relative to the twelve years that the University of Tennessee has operated the theatre. These items of theatre memorabilia include pictures, letters, programs, and so on. The material was placed in chronologically dated file folders, with indexing and labeling of information--including pictures--properly affixed. The collection was then presented to the University of Tennessee Special Collections Library to be contained as a permanent record in the Hunter Hills Theatre Special Collection. A listing of the items in the collection appears in Appendix I.

This study should help further the resolve that Hunter Hills Theatre has given a great deal to those who have been associated with it over the years; to the community, to the development of Gatlinburg, to the student of the drama, to the University of Tennessee, to many individuals who have worked in the operation of the theatre in various
It is hoped that this chronological history of the theatre will help illustrate the artistic achievements which have been so enriching and which are sometimes overlooked when concern for the theatre's financial stability are considered.

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