



# The Downtowner

City Center Camrose

May/June 2008

## Summer Events

**Show n Shine** kicks off the list of events that will be happening Downtown this summer. Antique cars and enthusiasts take over the north two blocks of 50th Street on Saturday, May 29th.

City Center is again an Emerald Sponsor of the three days of activities which begin at the Camrose Regional Exhibition with the popular 100-foot drags.

At 6:00PM on Saturday Show n Shine wraps up and the annual Cruise up and down 50th Street gets underway.

The following weekend it's the 51st edition of **Jaywalkers Jamboree**. The event hosted by the Camrose Chamber of Commerce is the longest running outdoor retail event in Alberta. Everybody heads Downtown for two days of bargains, midway rides and to support local charities.

The **Camrose Chamber Big Valley Parade** will again make its way through the Downtown on Thursday, July 31st as the kickoff to the Big Valley Jamboree.

**Camrose Founder Days** gets underway on August 15th and runs to the 17th. For more about Founders Days see "Founders Days" on page 3.

Other events that will be bringing people to Camrose include the **District Rotary International Convention** hosted by the Camrose Rotary Clubs. The 350 club members are in Camrose from May 22nd to 25th.

**City Center has developed a special Stamp Around contest for delegates and family attending the convention. See the Rotary story below for details.**

People will be cycling into town Saturday, June 7th on the **RONA MS Bike Tour**. They peddle on back to Leduc on Sunday morning.

And every weekend over the summer there are tournaments at ball diamonds and soccer pitches throughout the city.

We're in for more exciting events this year in Camrose with the **2008 World Junior Hockey Challenge**, and the **Continental Cup of Curling**.

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## Rotary Club

About 350 Rotarians from parts of Alberta and British Columbia will descend upon Camrose later this month for their annual district convention.

In their registration packages they will each receive a special Stamp Around Downtown entry form. They must get six business stamps on the form to enter a draw for \$200 worth of Downtown Dollars which can be spent at any Downtown Camrose business.

No purchase is necessary for Rotarians or their spouses to take part in this special Stamp Around promotion.

**Watch for the Rotarians who will be in Camrose from May 22nd to the 25th.**

## Planter Policy

For nearly two decades City Center Camrose has taken care of more than 80 planters in the Downtown in support of the organization's mandate to beautify the Downtown.

The City Center board has passed a new policy to help businesses do their part to add some colour to the Downtown.

City Center will subsidize the cost for businesses to buy plants for outside their business location.

**Business owners can receive up to \$50 to purchase plants for private planters in front of their**

### business.

Bring a copy of your receipt to the City Center office and arrangements will be made to reimburse you.

This year City Center has \$500 in the budget for this new program. It will be reviewed at the end of the year to see if there is demand to increase the amount of money.

In order to take part in the program this year, you must contact the City Center office at 672-5191 by May 26th. Money will be available on a first come first serve basis.



# Camrose Main Street Project

By Robert Earley

*The League of Historic American Theatres has a membership of 300 historic theatre operators across North America. Recently LHAT held a forum on the economic impact from the restoration of historic theatres in downtowns. Newberry, South Carolina was selected by LHAT as the best example of what a restored historic theater can mean to a community. I've been a member for the past year and attended the forum.*

Downtown Newberry in the 1980s was a desolate place to be in business. Two out of three area cotton mills had closed, and no one could be enticed to open a business in a community where the Main Street was mainly boarded up buildings.

In the 1980s there was talk of restoring the old opera house on the second floor of the building where the city hall was located. The auditorium had been closed up since they stopped showing movies in 1952. The city moved its offices out in 1991.

In 1991 discussions became more serious and a foundation was formed with a 15-member board. Fundraising started a year later. By 1994 they were able to hire a director, and restoration started in 1996. The restored 427 seat Newberry Opera House opened in 1998.

In the mid-1990s Downtown businesses consisted of a beauty salon, beauty supply store and a sandwich shop.

The foundation chair convinced the owners of two blocks of run down buildings to donate the buildings to the foundation for tax receipts. The added bonus for the building owners was they no longer had to pay insurance and property taxes.

In turn the opera house foundation gave the buildings to two contractors on the conditions that the buildings be restored as street level for retail/commercial use and that the upper levels be developed as apartments.

There are still some vacant store fronts on Main Street, but there are now a variety of businesses including eight restaurants and two pubs. One of the antique stores was recently recognized as the best retailer in rural South Carolina. Two of the restaurants are recognized as two of the top restaurants in the state.

It was the potential of the Downtown because of the Opera House that lured the chefs to Newberry and low interest loans arranged by the City also was a factor. The city also helped the owner of a Hampton Inn get a low interest loan. The hotel was built across the street from the Opera House. The 72-unit hotel has a 93-percent occupancy rate, and donates rooms to the Opera House for performers.

Along with the restorations of the buildings the city made improvements to the square in front of the Opera House and streetscaped several blocks with planters and antique pedestrian friendly street lighting.



**Newberry Opera House, Newberry, South Carolina**

Another impact in the Downtown of the opera house and of improvements to other buildings was on property assessment and taxes raised by the city. In the ten years since the restoration took place, assessment has increased by a factor of 100. The amount of property taxes collected has gone from virtually nothing to over \$300,000 a year.

How to program an historic theatre was another part of the forum.

Newberry has 17,000 people living in the city and surrounding county. Sixty-percent of the opera house attendance comes from the state capital, Columbia, just under an hour's drive away. (Kind of like Edmonton to Camrose.)

Last year the opera house paid out about \$1.1-million in artist fees and drew 65,000 people to 250 performances.

**You can learn more about LHAT at [www.lhat.org](http://www.lhat.org). The Newberry Opera House website is [www.newberryoperahouse.com/](http://www.newberryoperahouse.com/)**

**“The amount of property taxes collected has gone from virtually nothing to over \$300,000 a year.”**

## City Center Website Update

Work continues on the development of a new website for City Center.

The focus has been on updating the database of businesses in the Downtown for listing on the website. The website will list all of the businesses Downtown, along with contact information, including email addresses and websites.

Many Downtown businesses have more than one product or service that they offer. For the online business directory we are initially allowing for each business to have only one listing in the directory.

Once the site is up and running you may want to check how your business is listed to make sure that you are in the right category for the primary product or service provided by your business.

You should also check to ensure the contact information is correct. You can either call the office at 672-5191 or send any corrections to [camroses@telusplanet.net](mailto:camroses@telusplanet.net).

The purpose of the City Center website is to provide information to people inside and outside the community about business in Downtown Camrose.

The site will be a means for your existing customers and potential customers to find your business and what you have to offer.

Through website inks with other community groups such as the Camrose Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Camrose we hope to give people another reason to visit our city.

## Kiosks Being Repaired

The three blue metal kiosks on pedestrian crosswalks on 50th Street have been removed for cleaning, repainting and replacement of damaged panels.

The kiosks were erected several years ago as a City Center project with matching money from the Community Lottery Board. The metal frames have become rusty and some of the panels have faded in the sun and cracked from the winter cold.

The panels have historic photos and stories of early Camrose including the hotels, banks, and the Bailey Theatre. There are also panels on the events such as Jaywalkers Jamboree, the car cruise and the ski jump.

The repairs are coming from asset maintenance portion of the City Center budget.

Centra Cam has been hired to refurbish the frames and Windwood Group is replacing some of the damaged panels. Windwood produced the original panels and they have copies of the original artwork.

The kiosks should be back in place before summer visitors start arriving in Camrose.

## Founders Days

Celebrations at **Camrose Founders Days** August 15th to 17th will mark 100 year milestones for many Camrose organizations.

Activities take place Downtown At Founders Square, at the Camrose Centennial Museum and the Camrose Railway Museum.

At Founder Square two Founders will be honoured with plaques added to the walls of the fountain.

Founders this year are Rosalind area rancher **Camille David** who was a partner in the first Windsor Hotel, owned a wine and cigar store in Camrose, and had The Bailey (the David) Theatre built.

Also being honoured is photographer **Chris Langbell** who also operated a low power radio station in Camrose.

To see the complete Founders Days schedule go to [www.camrosefoundersdays.com](http://www.camrosefoundersdays.com).

## Bailey Theatre Restoration Update

Construction crews have started on the restoration of the front of the Bailey Theatre. The Bailey Theatre Society hired Reed Contracting as the project manager for the restoration which has been undertaken as a part of the **Camrose Main Street Project**. The initial part of the work was to remove brick that was installed in the 1900s and also to get old loose stucco off the front wall. The new front of the building will be black panels similar to ones that were on the front from the 1930s until the brick replaced the panels.

The Main Street Project will pay for approximately half the cost of restoring the facade.

Over the summer months the drawings and specifications for the interior will be completed. This includes the architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical design work. Construction on the interior won't get underway until the fall.

Volunteers have hauled out more than four and a half tons of junk from the inside of the theatre and from the back alley.

A professional theatre consultant is working with the Bailey Society on the final design of the theatre interior. A technical consultant will work on lighting, audio and fly-gallery rigging designs.

The Citadel Theatre in Edmonton is developing a relationship with the Bailey Theatre. It added to last year's donation of 360 seats to the Bailey with a recent donation of 130 theatre lights in excellent working condition.

If you want to see what the Bailey will look like when restored, check the video on the theatre's website, [www.baileytheatre.com](http://www.baileytheatre.com).



City Center Camrose

## City Doin's

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Camrose AB  
T4V 1P9

Phone: 780-672-5191

Email: camroses@telusplanet.net

May 22-25 Rotary District Convention at CRE  
May 25 Fly in Breakfast at Camrose Airport  
May 31 Show n Shine on 50th Street  
June 6-7 51st Jaywalkers Jamboree  
June 6 RONA MS Bike Tour  
June 14 & 15 Relay For Life at High School

## Heart of the Rose City



## Downtown Tidbits

**Nana Saarah Ayisi-Boateng** has opened Camrose Caregiving Services at 4909C 48 Street.

**Steve and Teresa Gratrix** are providing appraisal services through their company The Benchmark Group upstairs at 4929 50 Street.

Balloons and party supplies can be found at Above the Rest Balloons & Weddings opened by **Lynn Shelia Johnson** at 5012 50 Street.

**Jodie Mitchell** has opened Mudd Motor Sports at 4904 50 Street with recreational vehicle and hobby sales.

## CCC Board Members

**President: Elaine Nixon**  
(The Shirt Off My Back Tailoring)

**Vice-President: Roger Forth** (4<sup>th</sup> Street Agencies)

**Treasurer: Paul Pedersen**  
(Pedersen Florists)

### Directors:

**Barb Hall** (Ezee Brew)

**Alana Hogstead** (Martha's Music)

**Don Jones** (Fine Framing & Such)

### Andrew Struthers

**Crystal Westergard** (Battle River Physical Therapy)

**Wayne Thronson**. (City Council representative)

**Robert Earley**, Manager

**Carole-May Coty**, Office Assistant

Custom 'n Classics has re-located from 49th Street to 5065 50 Street. The owner is **Carol Irvine**.

**Maureen Grundberg** has opened The Bali Shop at 5065 50 Street selling clothing and furniture with a South Pacific style.

Platinum Property Management operated by **Theresa Anne Scott-Friesen** has opened at 4825 51 Street.

**Kathryn Graff** is providing counseling and psychological services at 205, 4917 50 Avenue.

High Velocity Equipment Training has opened upstairs at 5016 50 Street with **Shayne Bonnoogh** providing heavy equipment training.

**Dawn Thirsk** has opened Havanatan—Body Bronzing Studio at 5203 51 Avenue.

**Bernice Rubliak** has opened the Infra-Red and Bio-Energy Clinic in suite 200 at 4910 51 Street.

## Historical Foundation Meets in Camrose

The board of the **Alberta Historical Resources Foundation** was in Camrose recently for its annual review of Main Street projects in Alberta.

This was the second time the **Camrose Main Street Project** has hosted this annual board meeting.

Coordinators with the four currently active Main Street projects in Lethbridge, Red Deer, Wainwright and Camrose presented their annual reports to the board.

There are 19 other communities which have taken part in the **Alberta Main Street Pro-**

**gram** since it started in 1988.

The meeting was held at the **Camrose Railway Museum** which is listed on both the provincial and national registries historic places.

After the meeting the board members went on a walking tour through the historic homes on College Lane and in the Olde Sparling District. Their walking tour of 50th Street included the buildings restored by the Main Street Project and concluded with a tour of The Bailey Theatre.

This is the final year for the Camrose Project.