

## Special Edition Newsletter in Honor of Hap Haberman



BHP *Gulch* entry in Custer parade with Gladys Carlson and Hap (1949); portrait of Hap (1988); Ellie and Hap in front of BHP home (1950)

Supporting the Black Hills Playhouse in South Dakota's Scenic Custer State Park • Founded by Warren M. "Doc" Lee in 1946 and Associated with the College of Fine Arts at the University of South Dakota

# Black Hills Playhouse

## Alumni Association

## Newsletter

Winter 2018



## BHPAA President's Message

Happy New Year BHP Alums! I hope your holidays were joyous and the New Year has started off well. Surprise, it's a tad cold and snowy here in South Dakota, but we are so happy to be living here in the majesty of the hills.

BHPAA Board Members, BHP Board Members, BHP Alumni, and the entire BHP family were saddened by the loss 2 BHP artistic legends with the passing of Hap Haberman in the late summer and Ron Moyer just recently. Their impact on the BHP and theatre artists lives has been profound, and their dedication and support to the BHP was unsurpassed. Their theatrical legacy will never be forgotten and they will live forever in our memories. This issue of the newsletter honors their lives and legacy.

At the last July BHP Board meeting, I was asked why I am a BHP board member. My answer was, "When an organization gives you your life, you will do anything to support it". My unwavering function as the BHPAA President is simply to fully support the BHP and to promote and preserve its impact on future young artists and professionals. The effect it had on my future life directly relates to all my experiences at the BHP beginning with family, my wife Meredith and our two wonderful sons. In addition to family, I created lifelong friendships. The professional training and expertise I received during my summers at the BHP begat professional success. For me everything stems from my time at the BHP and I hope that the BHP has left a positive mark on your lives as well.

As I stated in the last newsletter, the current board and its new members are an energetic bunch and are working on a number of interesting and exciting ideas, many contained in a forthcoming strategic plan we expect to approve and distribute this summer. Stay tuned. It will highlight three dominant goals or responsibilities of the BHPAA – 1) To support the BHP, 2)

To connect and support BHP Alums and, 3) To collect and preserve BHP history.

To enable these three goals, I am proud to debut a new BHPAA website designed to facilitate this three-pronged mission of the BHPAA. Please visit our website [bhpaa.org](http://bhpaa.org) and include logging into the BuffNet Forum. To manage everyone's expectations as well as requesting your help and support, know that it is very much a work in progress with some parts of it more developed than others. Your feedback and your input are needed to ensure that it reflects the needs of the BHPAA and meets the three goals of supporting the BHP. Send your thoughts and ideas to [markmeersman@aol.com](mailto:markmeersman@aol.com) and thank you in advance!

The BHPAA is gearing up to support the BHP's fundraising drive this year to recondition the Dining Hall via the Dining Hall 2.0 project. The goal is to expand seating capability via a covered wrap-around porch, and to upgrade the kitchen's food preparation equipment. Jeff Kingsbury's information on the fundraising effort in the newsletter goes into much more detail and I appreciate the knowledge and enthusiasm he brings to this part of the BHPAA mission. Thank you Jeff!

Finally, an enormous thank you goes out to the BHPAA and the BHP board members. It is an honor and privilege to serve with fellow Alums and BHP supporters who are so dedicated to the current and future success of an organization that is vitally important to South Dakota and the professional theatre community.

Many thanks for your support of the BHP and BHPAA!

Mark Meersman

BHPAA President (BHP 1987-1993)

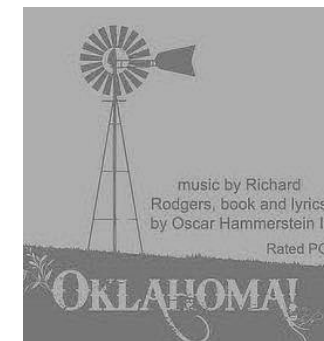
## 2018 BHP SEASON



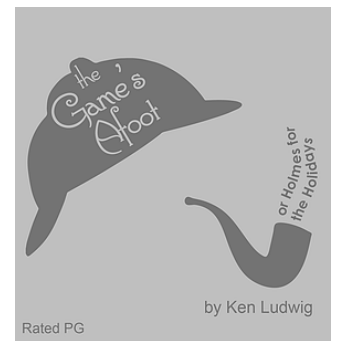
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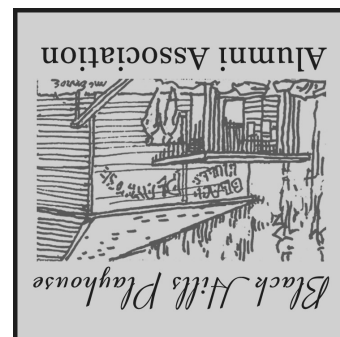
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## 2017 BHP Season Extra Mile Awards



### Billy Nagel Award

Recipients: Meghan Cameron, Josie Kasik

### Warren M. Lee scholarship

Recipients: Alex Newcomb-Weiland, Jackson Whitaker

### Bill Brady Award

Recipients: Lukas Ptacek, Terra Writz

### Margaret Lee Award

Recipients: John Utter, Rainie Jang

### Bill Anderson Award

Recipients: Shelby Marsh, Sergey Vitlin

### Harriet Redden Award

Recipients: James Powers, AJ Lowery

### Perry and Lila Van Wie Award

Recipients: Jason Coppenbarger, Sarah Randall

### Barbara Clement Award

Recipients: Kristal Georgopolis, Xurui Wang, Kat Kreutz

### Stephen Landon award

Recipients: Matthew Kauzlarich, Dayne Sundman

### The Bill and Carolyn McEnroe Awards

Recipients: Christina Olson, Alex Meyer

## Dining Hall 2.0

The BHPAA has been at the forefront of fund raising for projects on the BHP campus. Alums will remember fondly our successful effort to build Haberman Hall in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year/reunion (60,000). We’ve also provided critical funding for new drapes in 2012 (25,000), the Limelight fund in 2015 (70,000 supporting new lighting and sound equipment), new shop equipment in 2005 (5,000), and our efforts towards getting back in the park in 2011 netted nearly 90,000!

The dining hall, built in 2011 was critical to our efforts to “get back in the park.” However, keeping company numbers as small as possible stresses the building to its absolute limit during the peak of the season. **WE NEED MORE ROOM!!** Plus, when the new dining hall was finished, we had to utilize the equipment from the old kitchen, as a cost saving measure. The **maintenance costs each summer make it more cost effective to replace this antiquated equipment.**

**The BHPAA has stepped up** to do the heavy lifting for the fundraising efforts. The Physical Plant Committee of the BHP Board has already lined up the National Guard to DONATE the construction component. And, due to the largess of Alumnus Gene Fennell, the design for the addition of a covered porch has been DONATED as well. We need to raise funds for the construction materials, updated equipment, and cafeteria style folding tables.

Additionally, the FCC has forced our hand to replace our wireless microphones (we’re still using the mics we’ve kept patched together for many years...thanks John Ryan!). The frequencies are being permanently retired and it will be illegal to use them after this summer. We need 20 mics.

All told, we’re looking at a fund-raising total of **\$70,000 to** make these projects come to life this summer.

We know that you get a LOT of requests for funding. We appreciate your continued support as the BHPAA supports the BHP in maintaining its status as a premier arts organization in South Dakota. We want generations of young people to be able to “end the day with a play.” The BHPAA and BHP Boards have already raised \$15,000, leaving \$55,000! Please join us in making this vision a reality.

The Haberman family has selected **Dining Hall 2.0** as the project for any memorial donations in Hap’s name. The BHPAA and the BHP will be co-hosting a memorial celebration on Sunday, May 27 to celebrate Hap, but we need to get the bulk of the dollars into Linda’s hands so that we can break ground and load our new equipment into the kitchen by the start of the season (May 23!) If you’re planning to make a donation in Hap’s name, won’t you please consider doing so NOW, rather than wait? We’ll make sure the family is aware of your generosity.

Thank you for your kind assistance. The power of the BHPAA and BHP partnerships in fundraising has helped the BHP achieve stability and success over the past 7 years. We are so grateful for the generosity that helps us strengthen and preserve the BHP for future generations. Please indicate that your gift is from a BHP alum.

Tax deductible donations may be sent to:  
Black Hills Playhouse, PO Box 2513, Rapid City, SD 57709

Or made online at: [BlackHillsPlayhouse.com](http://BlackHillsPlayhouse.com)

Questions? Get in touch with Linda Anderson,  
[landerson@blackhillsplayhouse.com](mailto:landerson@blackhillsplayhouse.com) or by calling 605 255-4910.

## In the Spotlight

good foundation in the theatre, the opportunity to experience all aspects of theatre production, and the chance to make lifelong friends and maybe a mate for life (or at least part of it.)

### Marnie Gould



#### *How did you end up at the BHP your first summer?*

I began to attend BHP productions as a young girl growing up in Rapid City during the mid-1960s. That influenced my decision to enroll at USD, with the hope that someday, I too, could be part of the BHP magic.

#### *If you came back, why did you decide to come back?*

My first season at BHP was 1974. It was one of Doc Lee’s final years as founding director. In 1977 I leapt at the chance to be in the company once more as a dancer and chorus member in *Anything Goes*, and Leonard Anderson had stepped in to fill Doc’s shoes. In the 2000’s, I was privileged to be part of three more seasons, with Jan Swank guiding the organization. The BHP has a way of calling you back. I was lucky to have several summers that I could follow the Dream!

#### *What do you remember most about your time at the BHP?*

Oh, the fun of every day, and the endless days of work with people who shared a passion for theatre. And curiously—I feel like I was on stage during two of the worst scenery calamities that have gone down in BHP history: the entire set of *Forum* collapsed during the opening number in 1973, and a huge bookcase set piece

toppled at the beginning of the second act in *King and I*. Thankfully, I can claim complete innocence in both incidents!

#### *Do you have a favorite memory?*

I loved the dance work we did in *Anything Goes* with choreographer Rod Kuyper. The feeling of mastering those time steps was life-affirming! But my most poignant memories are those of being on stage with my two daughters for three productions. Watching my girls, Kelsye and Aisling, (as Eliza and George) executing Justin Speck’s choreography in the Uncle Tom’s Cabin dramatization during *The King and I* made me very proud. A few years later, I was so emotional off-stage as I watched dear Aisling (playing Chava) dance behind Eric Johnson (his third time playing Tevya at BHP) while he sang “Little Bird” during the Chava ballet sequence. It broke my heart every time. And of course, I love the finale anthem to *The Gulch*. Actually, I believe it to be something of an anthem for my life!

#### *What impact has the BHP had on you/your life?*

I learned, both at USD and the Playhouse, that no challenge was too difficult if you applied yourself and that I was capable of far more than I realized. And I learned that doing work you enjoy never feels like work. What pleasure doing theatre has given me through the years.

#### *What would you say to young Alums?*

Feel the lights in your face! Learn your craft and share it with others! Be generous onstage! Remember your roots in the Black Hills!

#### *How would you answer this question: “Why BHPAA?”*

There are many generations of actors, directors, and theatre technicians who share the common experience of working at the Black Hills Playhouse. The BHPAA provides us with a forum to know one another and a network for us all to relish and rekindle our BHP friendships. In addition, the BHPAA has provided much needed strength and advocacy for the BHP through several difficult episodes in recent years, and that has helped the institution become a healthier organization. The BHPAA provides us all with the opportunity to give back to the theatre that gave us all the foundation and training to meet life’s challenges, whether our careers led us to life of work in the theatre, or to various others pursuits. Here’s to another seventy-some years!

## Keep It Going.

Your tax-deductible contributions—however large or small—keep the BHPAA solvent with ongoing financial costs such as newsletter mailings, eblasts, and BHPAA annual events. Checks may be sent to:

BHP Alumni Association, Attn: Jo Wohlenberg, Treasurer  
P.O. Box 74, Yankton, SD 57078

## BHP Couples Information Needed!

We are looking for the names of couples who MET at the BHP and subsequently got MARRIED. We are working on a future project! Post them to the BufNet on the [bhpa.org](http://bhpa.org) website. Thank you!

## New Address?

If your address has changed, or if you would like to sign up to receive occasional eblasts from the BHPAA, email to [markmeers-man@aol.com](mailto:markmeers-man@aol.com) or call 703-314-6836 with your updates.

## In the Spotlight

where he accompanied his father, Bob Pratt, who was the tech director. So we have a long history of Black Hills living, summer stock theatre friendships and colorful memories, all individually and as a family. The real impact for all of us are the relationships that were developed at BHP and remain strong 46 years later. For me, it's people like Jimmy Haberman, Daamen Krall, Snookie Stoddard, Rex Thompson, Marnie Gould, Mary Sue Siegel, Craig Volk, Margie Hasse, Anna Marie and Graham Thatcher and so many others. And I'd be remiss if I didn't add that BHP brought Hap and Ellie Haberman into my life who remained "second parents" (she hated that idea) to me for over 40 years. We were fortunate to have them with us at holidays, birthdays and just any old day in Rapid City and Deadwood. Their cabin became our cabin even when Daamen Krall and Donna Fjelstad owned it. My children were lucky enough to know them as grand patrons.

### *What would you say to young Alums?*

Follow your dreams and your passion. Make your own way but use all the connections you've got to get where you want to go. It's tough these days, lots of competition but also lots of opportunities. Let the collaborative spirit of the BHP be your motivation and guide your principles.

### *How would you answer this question: "Why BHPAA?"*

Because of the values that BHP instills in people about community, loyalty, quality, tradition, and respect for the past while making new paths for the future. And having fun while you're doing it!!

## Anna Marie Thatcher



### *How did you end up at the BHP your first summer?*

Since I was a music and theatre major, Bill Bigger, my voice prof at Dakota Wesleyan University, suggested that I apply. He had been the music director at the BHP the previous summer.

### *If you came back, why did you decide to come back?*

It provided a great "hands on" learning environment as well as a chance to perform and meet fellow "theaters"

from around the country – AND I could get college credit during the summers. So I wanted to return to get the summer credits in my major. Also, the setting in Custer State Park and fellow BHP folks helped to draw me back!

### *What do you remember most about your time at the BHP?*

I was there in the old days, so there are many experiences that are unfamiliar to alums of late: being one of two people (the other was Bernie Kirsh) to show up first for the season and being assigned to wash ALL the windows, the first play of my first season in which my future husband played my father-in-law, late nights striking the current show to mount the set for Monday night *Legend of Devil's Gulch* performances—and then striking and setting up the current show again, the cool rainy weather in June making for cold nights in the women's dorm, the trough in old bath house where we ALL brushed our teeth and washed, the pit under the snack bar where we partied (and others played poker), meals in the old dining hall, music rehearsals in the trillory ... to name just a few.

### *Do you have a favorite memory?*

1968 was my first year and I was a pretty impressionable coed from Dakota Wesleyan University. I was on the prop crew for *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* and we were working on the statuary for Mrs. McGlone's garden. As I was heading to the prop shop to work, Doug Steckler was walking my way with one of the hands for the statue coming out of the fly on his jeans! He approached me with a straight face and acted as if nothing was amiss, which only added to the humor. I was a bit embarrassed but it was hilarious and the scene is indelibly etched in my mind when I think of Doug.

### *What impact has the BHP had on you/your life?*

My years at the BHP gave me a firm foundation in all aspects of the theatre which has served me all my working life. I met my husband, Graham, there in 1968 and we married in the spring of 1970. Having learned all the basics at the BHP, we've been able to make a life and a living in theatre for most of our married life. Using our theatre experience and talents we created a successful niche in Continuing Legal Education for the past 24 years, using theatre as a teaching tool.

Our years at the BHP also gave us MANY lifelong friends! We have BHP friends all over the country and our touring provided us the opportunities to connect with them and often avail ourselves of their hospitality. It's a friendly, wonderful and valuable network!

### *What would you say to young Alums?*

Stay connected to your BHP friends and take advantage of the BHP network. It's a relatively small group—but you will find very successful alums, not only in theatre, but in MANY professions, all over the country who are willing to connect and/or offer assistance if you want!

### *How would you answer this question: "Why BHPAA?"*

The BHP offers a beautiful setting in which to get a

## Black Hills Playhouse Alumni Association

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## Welcome to the BHP Alumni Association

The Black Hills Playhouse Alumni Association (BHPAA) was first formed in 1980. After several dormant years, the organization was re-formed in 1994 as a separate, not-for-profit corporation in South Dakota. People are members by virtue of their association with the Black Hills Playhouse as a company or board member. There is no membership fee.

Since its earliest inception, the BHPAA has organized reunions to bring new and old alums together. With its reformation, it has organized and executed several major projects for the good of the BHP. The first project of the re-formed group was to organize the 50th Anniversary BHP Alumni Reunion in July 1995 which was attended by over 300 alumni and patrons. As part of the celebration, the BHPAA raised \$60,000 to build Haberman Hall.

This log structure on the Playhouse campus now serves as a social gathering place for patrons and company members, as well as a company rehearsal and workspace. It was dedicated to Hap and Ellie Haberman (veterans of almost 50 years at the Playhouse) in honor of ALL of the alums who have worked over the years to bring high quality theatre to audiences in the Black Hills.

## Announcing the BHPAA Website: [bhpaa.org](http://bhpaa.org)

The goal of the BHPAA website is primarily to connect and support Alums, that is what we see as its overriding purpose. A close second is its ability to document and be a repository for BHP history - pictures, stories (oral history?), documents, information, etc. We are looking for any feedback on the website to help us with these two goals, please send feedback and thoughts to [markmeersman@aol.com](mailto:markmeersman@aol.com).

Please keep in mind that the website is very much a WORK IN PROGRESS and we are working diligently to build it and its capabilities out as quickly and comprehensively as possible. Some parts of the website will be prioritized over others and some parts will also take much longer to realize than others. Your patience and understanding is appreciated, but most importantly YOUR FEEDBACK is needed to help us make the website as effective and useful as possible - THANK YOU!

### Website Description:

The **Home** page provides an overview and brief history of the BHPAA. Future additions may include the latest and/or timely information updates regarding the BHPAA or BHP.

The **BuffNet Forum** page is the website's dominant way to put Alums in contact with each other, collect stories and pictures, and provide a way for Alums to network. These are the first three "lanes" we have created. We are open to adding additional lanes to meet the needs of Alums. Any

feedback to improve this part of the website are especially invited. We want to make this part of the website as useful and effective as possible.

The **Communication** page is a repository for BHPAA newsletters, e-blasts, organizational documents, and other materials the BHPAA generates.

The goal of the **Seasons** page is to be the BHP Database (BHPDB) to collect, organize and display all BHP season information—season years, shows and casts, company members, production information and staff, production photos, company members pictures. We want to create a (hopefully) searchable database capability, complete and comprehensive historical record of all seasons, and a photo gallery or photo album capability for each BHP season. This is a huge and worthwhile capability that requires your help - any and all BHP season related pictures can be posted to the BuffNet Forum for now, with those pictures we can begin to build season based records of each year.

The **Reunions** page will be the location for all the previous and future reunions - attendees, photos, information, etc.

The **Fundraising** page will be a record of all the support the BHPAA has provided over the years to the BHP and a record of all the Alums and BHP who have contributed time, effort and funds to these improvements.



# Remembering Hap Haberman



*Hap & Ellie Haberman in Deadwood, 1994*

As most of you probably have heard, a memorial tribute to the remarkably long and lovely life of perennial BHP favorite Dr. LeRoy D. “Hap” Haberman has been in the works for Memorial Day weekend, just days after what would have been Hap’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. We’re pleased to announce that the BHPAA, in sponsorship and coordination with the BHP, can now confirm this joyful celebration will take place at the Black Hills Playhouse beginning at 4pm on Sunday, May 27, featuring a special video presentation to start at 5pm. Food and beverages will be provided, and plans are also afoot to offer complimentary transportation from Rapid City to any who might find it difficult to attend otherwise.

Those lucky enough to have spent much time around – or better yet, worked with – Hap (and of course his delightful Ellie, the proverbial life of many a party) need little introduction to his wonderfully long, rewarding life and career in educational theatre, much of it at the BHP. Over his impressive 99 and 1/3 years, Hap inhabited an equally impressive array of roles – beloved teacher, mentor and stage director, devoted husband and father, outstanding light comedy writer, accomplished actor, talented musician, delightfully witty public speaker and storyteller, avid sports enthusiast, voracious reader, and effortlessly congenial party host / bartender. On top of all that, Hap may very well have been the kindest, most thoughtful man any of us were ever lucky enough to know, and supremely charming and clever company to boot.

Although Hap spent so many, many seasons at the BHP, not all of his life played out there, though he likely wouldn’t have minded if it had. A South Dakota boy from the outset, Hap debuted in Watertown on May 20, 1918, alongside WW1 and the Spanish Flu epidemic. Being a pretty bright kid, he avoided both. At age 12 his family moved to nearby Huron, where he and Ellie later became high school sweethearts. Not long after graduating from USD, Lt. Hap served four wartime years in the Army, marrying Ellie in 1945. After the Army, Hap earned his MA under Doc Lee at Vermillion, then began teaching college theatre and soon after pursued his doctorate at Stanford, thanks to the GI Bill. Son Jim also showed up during this time. After paying his dues at a few interim teaching gigs, Hap finally secured the permanent position of his dreams at Ventura College in 1963 where his family contentedly remained for 23 years. Hap and Ellie finally locked in their ideal yearly schedule – winters in balmy Southern California and summers in the spectacular Black Hills. Post-retirement from Ventura, they became blissfully semi-nomadic and traveled extensively, eventually spending four colorful mid-’90s years in Deadwood living above a casino. Soon after they moved to nicer amenities in Rapid City, but continued their much-loved travels to favorite people and places.

Of course, Hap and Ellie’s record 42 seasons at the BHP starting in 1947 ran concurrently with most of the above, making occasionally challenging moments elsewhere seem far more tolerable. They even came to think of the BHP as their true primary “Home,” more than any other place including Ventura. That tie grew even stronger once Hap and Ellie found their perfect little home away from the Playhouse, that enchanting Remington Road cabin they loved so. Luckily, being mere minutes away from the BHP, they even managed to shuttle between both places almost daily for numerous seasons in the ‘70s and ‘80s. Less luckily, without electricity and running water, the cabin grew too burdensome to keep going by their mid-senior years. But even after they parted with it, the Playhouse continued as their magical “Home” for several more summers.

Ironically, Ellie was just as terrified of performing onstage as she was brilliant at performing off it. So while Hap and Ellie both left lasting legacies at the Playhouse, hers was largely confined to the social arena. However, Hap left his mark in many areas. In his earliest years at the BHP, he rapidly grew a local following as its principal stage comedian, much as he’d done earlier at USD. Two of his most celebrated stage roles even became recurrent ones. The most frequently performed was Aaron Pribble, the lead role written for him in Doc Lee’s *The Legend of Devil’s Gulch*, which he portrayed every Monday night over a 20 year period. Hap’s other signature role covering an even longer time span was Elwood P. Dowd in *Harvey*, which he portrayed at the BHP in four different decades (1950, 1963, 1978 and 1990). Hap often said he felt too young to play it the first time, and too old for the last one, but at least he wasted less time on make-up with each successive production.

In addition, Hap was a tireless worker offstage, instrumental in helping to build the tent theatre his first summer there, and often undertaking arduous tasks around the BHP, both in set construction and camp maintenance. This even included some very “dirty jobs” like shoring up the Playhouse’s aging CCC structures from underneath with large cinder blocks. Ellie often fretted over him doing that, but Hap always said he enjoyed tasks that balanced the ephemeral nature of putting on plays with more tangible lasting results.

In the early ‘50s, Hap began directing some plays for the BHP, and before long was directing as often as acting. Once Doc’s impressive “new” theatre opened and larger productions became possible, the mid-season musical quickly established itself as a hugely popular tradition. By the early ‘60s, Hap had become the BHP’s primary director of those musicals, a task he viewed with somewhat mixed feelings (“many extra headaches, no extra perks”), though he handled it all with his customary grace, humor and level-headed common sense. In the ‘80s, Hap chose to direct less in order to spend more time at their Remington cabin, and over the next several years he shifted back to acting much more often than directing, in a full-circle sort of way. Hap and Ellie finally bid a reluctant farewell to their lengthy run of BHP summers at the close of the 2000 season – and also their cozy camp housing since 1953 at the top end of the Snack Bar – after deciding their increasing fragility made rustic camp life no longer too feasible, especially in Ellie’s case. Of course, they’d be back numerous times to see shows, mingle socially and participate in certain events such as the annual Buffalo (originally Comanche) induction ceremony, in which “Medicine Man” Hap was seen by many as a near-indispensable figure.

Sadly of course, Ellie’s health slowly declined, failing altogether after a disastrous fall in late 2007. Troupers Hap remained Ellie’s faithfully diligent overseer through her several dreadful years in nursing care, and stayed in Rapid a few months after her 2013 passing. He finally accepted his kids’ oft-repeated invitation to move into their California home, forever worrying about being

# Hap Haberman, continued

burdensome. In fact, his unfailing cheerfulness made him quite truly the opposite. While clearly missing his beloved Ellie and so many friends he’d outlived, Hap’s final years held plenty of happy moments full of socializing with family and dear friends, playing games, enjoying scenic drives and often simply relaxing in his cherished recliner while gazing out with a sweet smile at the trees and mountains just outside. And, oh yes, that nightly scotch and soda – like those priceless Playhouse summers, a hardly-ever-missed tradition!

So we sure hope you can all join us for this very special celebration on Sunday May 27 to help fondly re-enact Hap’s treasured happy hour ritual with your own favorite libation, and also to share your best Hap stories and any trademark “Hap zingers” you recall. You could even chime in with an Ellie story since many are so memorable. (And we all know she wouldn’t mind!) Best of all, you’re bound to meet plenty of very dear old friends too – so we all look forward greatly to seeing each of you there!!

## In the Spotlight

### Janet Brown



#### *How did you end up at the BHP your first summer?*

During my sophomore year at the University of South Dakota, as a theatre major, it seemed only natural that I go to BHP in the summer of 1971...encouraged by Doc Lee, Wayne Knutson, Ron Reed, Skip Swenson, Graham and Anna Marie Thatcher and many theatre majors.

#### *If you came back, why did you decide to come back?*

I had so much fun my first season, on-stage and working on productions. I had made so many close friends from around the country and I was emotionally attached to the Black Hills, the passion and intensity of doing summer theatre and all the people involved. Ultimately, I spent about ten summers at BHP.

#### *What do you remember most about your time at the BHP?*

Between 1971 and my last summer of 1985, I changed so much from a young single college student to a wife and mother. So my memories are kind of aligned with where I was in my life. In the early 70s, it was about who you were going to room with, what building would

# In Memorium: Ron Moyer

VERMILLION | Ron was born on July 31, 1944, in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. He earned his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Theater at the University of Illinois, and his PhD in Theater History at the University of Denver in 1974. Ron taught theater at the University of South Dakota for 36 years.

Ron died February 8, 2018. Grateful for having shared his life are his wife of nearly 30 years, Caitlin F. Collier, and his children: Elizabeth Moyer and fiancée, James Kaplan; Kelsey Collier-Wise and her husband, Royce Miller and granddaughter, Aurora Collier-Wise; and Sarah Johnson, and her partner, Seth Andrews, and grandson, Rowan Andrews.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the USD Foundation for the Ronald L. Moyer Theater Scholarship fund at 1110 North Dakota in Vermillion, South Dakota.

you be in, how devastated would you be if not cast. In the later 70’s I became the box office manager and then business manager which gave me another perspective. I was the one putting people in living spaces and determining roommates and also the one asking for receipts after those shopping trips to Rapid City. Then in the 80s, when I returned as business manager, I had kids which meant a whole new set of memories! Mostly, I remember laughing so hard I cried, people in interesting and humorous (at least later) situations, lines that I continue to use with my BHP friends today, and the many many people who are still friends today. All the “traditions” that were so important and lots of antics... including my infamous #10 can of pears.

#### *Do you have a favorite memory?*

Personally, it was nights of practice in the Trillery before auditions for *West Side Story*. I felt like a real singer/dancer (this was short lived, but still...) I was cast as Anita (pretty implausible to me today) but nonetheless, it was a big role for me. I also loved being the chorus of *Mame* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. The night we opened *Mame* without doing a tech run of the second act; the night(s) we hid from Doc because we were up and making too much noise and probably drinking?!! My first Gold Discovery Days where I began celebrating a bit early and nearly missed the matinee. Drives on the cut-off, (one during a tornado), driving fast over “the bump” by Legion Lake and the Gold Dust Saloon. There are so many more memories and I’m hard pressed to say which is my favorite.

#### *What impact has the BHP had on you/your life?*

My kids are among the only ones to be third generation BHP company members...so the BHP has played a part in my life and theirs since before they were born. As adults Miranda and Jason Pratt both attended the BHP as company members and are theatre professionals today. Their dad, Gordy Pratt, pretty much grew up at BHP