MEDICINE HAT MUSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS

COME FROM AWAY

Book, Music and Lyrics by
IRENE SANKOFF and DAVID HEIN

Original Broadway Production produced by
Junkyard Dog Productions

Orchestrations by August Eriksmoen
Arrangements by Ian Eisendrath

OCTOBER 15 – 31

2026 | 2027 SHOW SEASON

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Come From Away was originally co-produced in 2015 by La Jolla Playhouse and Seattle Repertory Theater and presented in 2016 by Ford's Theatre.

Come From Away (NAMT Festival 2013) was originally developed at the Canadian Music Theatre Project, Michael Rubinoff Producer, Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, Canada, and was further developed at Goodspeed Musicals' Festival of New Artists, in East Haddam, Connecticut. The Canada Council for the Arts, The Ontario Arts Council, and The Fifth Avenue Theatre, Seattle, Washington, also provided development support. Come From Away was originally co-produced in 2015 by La Jolla Playhouse and Seattle Repertory Theater and presented in 2016 by Ford's Theatre

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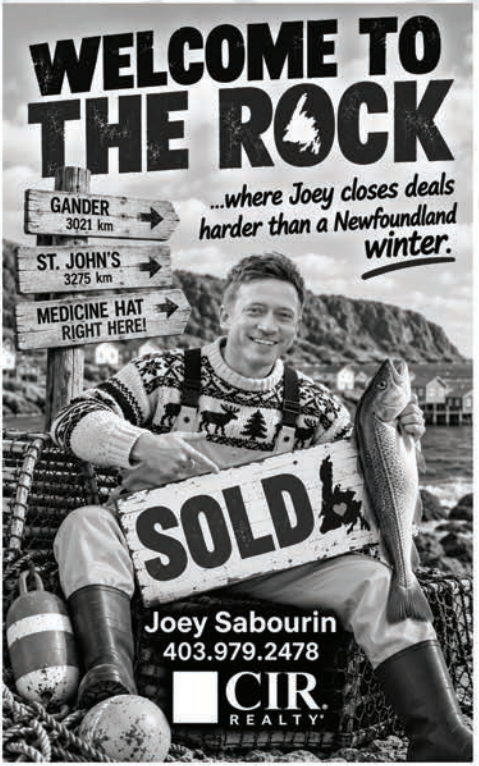




MHMT President



BLAIR BOHNET

Welcome to a brand-new season of Medicine Hat Musical Theatre!

There is something special about opening the curtain on a new season. It is a moment filled with anticipation, excitement, a little bit of nervous energy and the wonderful feeling that anything is possible.

We are thrilled to begin this season with *Come From Away*, a story that reminds us of the extraordinary things that can happen when ordinary people choose kindness, compassion, and community.

At its heart, *Come From Away* is about people coming together during an unexpected and challenging time. It celebrates generosity, friendship, resilience, and the simple power of opening your door and saying, "Come in." Those themes feel particularly meaningful to us at MHMT, because community is at the heart of everything we do.

Medicine Hat Musical Theatre is a 100% volunteer-driven organization. Everything you see and experience - from the performers on stage to the many people working behind the scenes - is made possible by volunteers who generously share their time, talents, creativity, and passion for theatre. It truly takes a community to bring a production to life, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributes along the way. Whether you have years of theatre experience or have never been involved before, there is a place for you at MHMT. We are always excited to welcome new volunteers and new faces into our theatre family.

And to you, our audience: thank you for being here and for supporting live theatre in Medicine Hat. Your applause, encouragement, ticket purchases, and continued enthusiasm make it possible for MHMT to keep telling stories and creating opportunities for our incredible theatre community.

As we begin another season together, I invite you to settle in, open your heart, and let this remarkable story remind you of what can happen when people come together.

Welcome to *Come From Away.*
Welcome to a new season.
And welcome home to Medicine Hat Musical Theatre's Playhouse!

Enjoy the show!

Show Synopsis

Come From Away is not a story about 9/11 - it's a commentary about the kindness and generosity offered to strangers whose flights were diverted to Canada when US airspace was closed following the attacks in New York and Washington DC. During "Operation Yellow Ribbon", Gander, Newfoundland became a symbol of this extraordinary hospitality.

Due to its large airport, 38 planes carrying 7000 people landed in Gander - almost doubling the population! Over the next five days, the small, surrounding communities rallied together providing housing, clothing, food, phones, and friendship to these "come from aways".

25 years later, the stories told in *Come From Away* remain relevant and the friendships made remain strong. These remind us that kindness, resilience, and the power of community in the face of fear and uncertainty bring hope and exemplify the best of the human spirit.

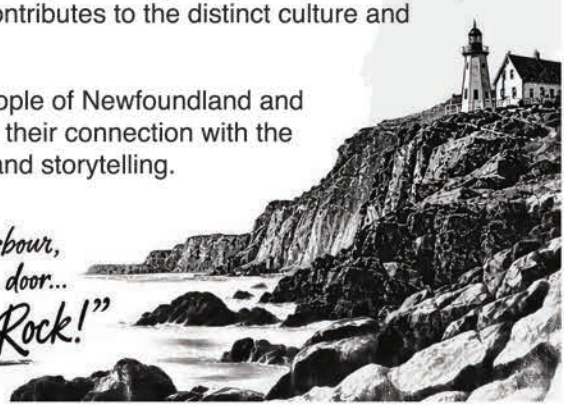
Welcome To The Rock

Newfoundland and Labrador became the easternmost province in 1949. It combines rugged, remote terrain (exposing the rock of the Earth's mantle) with over 29,000 km of coastline.

This province boasts a long and varied history including highlights such as Indigenous hunters and fishermen,the only North American Viking settlement (at L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of the island), Basque whaling stations, and the first European settlements in the 1400s (St John's is one of the earliest European cities in North America).

This heritage, combined with the large Irish migration in the 18th century and with geographic isolation, contributes to the distinct culture and dialect of "the Rock".

More than the history, it's the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that are recognized for their connection with the land and sea, kindness, music, and storytelling.



Director



COLLEEN WHIDDEN

There are certain stories that arrive at exactly the moment we need them. *Come From Away* is one of those rare works. This award-winning Canadian musical is intimate and expansive, deeply human, and quietly profound. In the hours following September 11, 2001, as planes were grounded and uncertainty swept the globe, 7,000 stranded air travelers landed in the remote town of Gander, Newfoundland. With no time to prepare, the people of Gander opened their homes, their hearts, and their lives to these complete strangers. *Come From Away* is based on over 200 interviews producing more than 16 000 stories from residents, passengers, and crew members. All the characters and events in this show are based on real people and events and many lines and lyrics are verbatim from the interviews.

Through MHMT's unparalleled commitment to live theatre combined with this immensely talented cast, crew, and directorial team (special note to Carolyn Freeman who wears many hats!), we have been able to bring to life a show that combines these true stories in a powerful, Canadian way. *Come from Away* acknowledges fear, confusion, and grief, while simultaneously holding space for laughter, resilience, and unexpected joy. It is a reminder that community is not an abstract idea; community is built, moment by moment, choice by choice. As we gather together in our MHMT theatre, we are invited into that act of community ourselves. To sit beside one another. To listen. To feel. And perhaps, to leave with a renewed sense of what is possible when we choose compassion over division.

Acknowledgements

Rob Cook

Grainne Concaugh

Fifth Ave Memorial United Church

Earl & Rae Wahl

MHMT Board

You, our audience!

Song List

Welcome to the Rock

38 Planes

Blankets and Bedding

28 Hours/Wherever We Are

Darkness and Trees

Darkness and Trees (reprise)

Lead Us Out of the Darkness

Phoning Home

Costume Party

I Am Here (Hannah)

One the Edge/Heave Away

Screech In

Me and the Sky (Beverley)

Stop the World (Nick and Diane)

38 Planes (reprise)/Somewhere

Something's Missing

Finale

My Heart Will Go On *Words and Music by Will Jennings and James Horner. ©IRVING MUSIC, INC. on behalf of BLUE SKY RIDER SONGS (BMI) Used by permission of Sony/ATV Music. Publishing. All rights reserved.*

Prayer of St. Francis *dedicated to Mrs. Frances Tracy. ©1967, OCP, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. All rights reserved.*

Our Cast

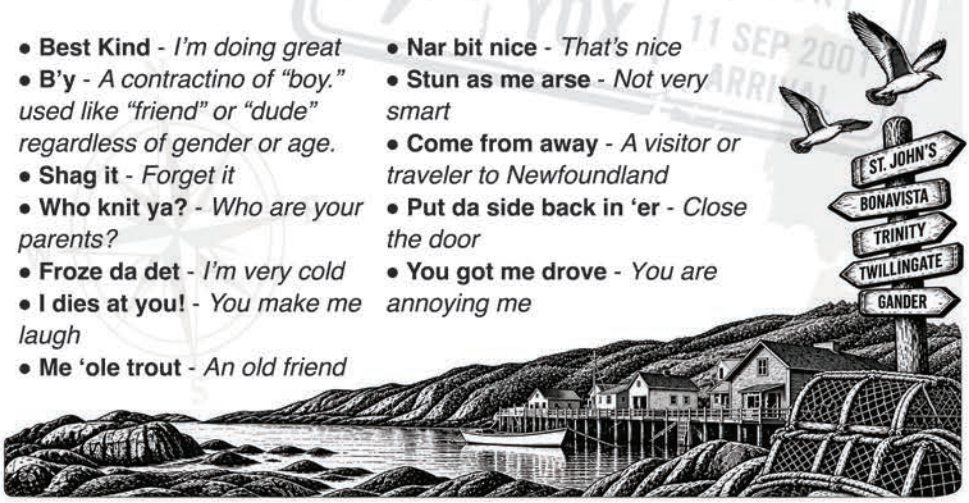
All 12 cast members play several characters throughout the show - both locals and come from aways. The characters listed are the primary ones for each actor:

Diane	Ginette Drury
Hannah	Courtney Warkentin
Janice	Jocelyn Walters
Beulah	Shannon English
Bonnie	Shelby Wray
Beverley	Dee Cannon
Oz	Eric Walker
Kevin T.	Nick Kush
Kevin J.	Noah Smith
Bob	Matthew Fosen
Claude	Jason Thompson
Nick	John Whidden

Newfinise

Nothing defines a Newfoundlander quite like Newfinise. Centuries of cultural history and isolation have preserved distinctive dialects, words, and phrases found nowhere else. The Dictionary of Newfoundland English, first published in 1982, celebrates this unique language. Here are a few to get you started:

- **Best Kind** - *I'm doing great*
- **B'y** - *A contractino of "boy." used like "friend" or "dude" regardless of gender or age.*
- **Shag it** - *Forget it*
- **Who knit ya?** - *Who are your parents?*
- **Froze da det** - *I'm very cold*
- **I dies at you!** - *You make me laugh*
- **Me 'ole trout** - *An old friend*
- **Nar bit nice** - *That's nice*
- **Stun as me arse** - *Not very smart*
- **Come from away** - *A visitor or traveler to Newfoundland*
- **Put da side back in 'er** - *Close the door*
- **You got me drove** - *You are annoying me*




OUR
GINETTE DRURY
COURTNEY WARKENTIN
JOCELYN WALTERS
ERIC WALKER
NICK KUSH
NOAH SMITH

CAST



SHANNON ENGLISH



SHELBY WRAY



DEE CANNON



MATTHEW FOSEN



JASON THOMPSON



JOHN WHIDDEN

Production Crew

Director.....Colleen Whidden
Music Director.....Carolyn Freeman
Producer.....Carolyn Freeman
Stage Manager.....CJ Klepatz
Backstage.....Sharon Slenders, Erinn O'Brien
Choreographer.....Twila Whidden
Costumes.....Laurel K
Assisted By.....Maia Klimaszewski, Vicki Steiner
.....Jessica Whitford, Sheilagh Rally
Props.....Diane Hope
Assisted By.....Rayne Kush, Angie Finnie
Rehearsal Pianist.....June Reid
Preshow Musician.....Rob Cook
Make-up.....Melissa MacKay
Assisted By.....Diane Ziegenhagel, Nicole Schupe
.....Kyra Gill , Amanda Wiebe
Hair.....Courtney Warkentin, Kellen Gerrard, Twila Whidden
Set Design.....Linda Gordon, Corey Place, Carolyn Freeman
Set Painting.....Linda Gordon
LOFT Liaison.....Corey Place
LOFT Crew.....Otis Bates, Baz Clarke, Ray Hoger, David Craipley
.....John Whidden, Lawrence Gordon, Mike Groth, CJ Klepatz
.....Kevin Klepatz, William Pringle, Jean Prysiazny, Fred Robichaud
.....Sharon Slenders, Brian Schlachter, Mikel Tait, Mitch Clarke, Dean Bradford
Board Liaison.....Mitch Clarke
Sound.....Geoff Coley, Chad Albers
Light Design / Programmer.....Mitch Clarke
Light Operator.....Dave Cannon
QLab Programmer.....June Reid
QLab Operators.....Carmelita Currie, Helen Snortland
Graphic Designer & Photographer.....Andrea Krause

Guest Services / Front of House Chair.....Lyn Weisgerber
Front of House Team Leads.....Amber Krause, Lorena Wadman
Assisted By.....Darlene Dee, Deb Deans, Linay McDougall, Cheryl Finnie
.....Rob Olson, Tristan Glasier, Bruce Sandford, Jason Johnson
.....Matt Klimaszewski, Pam Wagner, Pat Jamieson
.....Leah Steiner, Shelby Hope, Shauna Kohls-Walters
.....Rae Wahl, Bill Taylor, Rhonda MacNeil
Bar Lead.....Gary Busch
Bar Staff.....Adam Koch, Shannon Yeast, Carol Nieman, Charlene Smith
.....Carol Hintz, Deb Deans, Eileen Cote, Jocelyn Bouvier, Linay McDougall
.....Linda Glasier, Loretta Lutz, Marg Stewart, Margerite Dorchak, Mary Tulip
.....Natalie Faber, Paul Hemsing, Yzrhael Moreno, Paul Piea, Travis Boser
....Sylvia Howell, Tammy Giesbrecht, Tara Ensz, Taylor Place, Tristan Glasier
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Did You Know?

• A **Screech-In** is an initiation ceremony to become an honorary Newfoundlander. It involves reciting the creed, eating a Newfoundland steak (fried bologna!), kissing a cod, and downing a shot of Screech (40 proof Jamaican rum).

• With four large runways, **Gander Airport** was the largest airport in the world in the 1940s. From here Allied jets flew to Europe during World War 2. After the war, Trans-Atlantic commercial airlines stopped in Gander for refueling. When this was no longer necessary, Gander's airport became almost obsolete.

• The residents of **Gander** and neighbouring communities exemplified remarkable hospitality, opening schools, churches, and their homes to accommodate the influx. They provided shelter, food, clothing, and emotional support to the stranded passengers, who were affectionately known as "the plane people" and "come from aways." 25 years later, connections and friendships remain strong.

• **9/11** has become a "where were you when" moment in modern history. It was the largest attack on American soil since Pearl Harbour. It is now 25 years after these attacks, but the impact is still seen in airport security and stories of the day.

• **Operation Yellow Ribbon** - Following the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, American airspace closed. As a result, 270 transatlantic flights heading toward North America had to turn around and return to Europe. Another 224 flights carrying over 33,000 passengers were directed to land at 17 Canadian airports. Gander was the destination for 38 of these planes.

• The **Ugly Stick** is a whimsical percussion instrument originating in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is made of commonplace materials such as a broomstick, mop, bottlecaps, tin cans, bells,and a boot.



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Book By
JEFF WHITTY

Based on an Original Concept By
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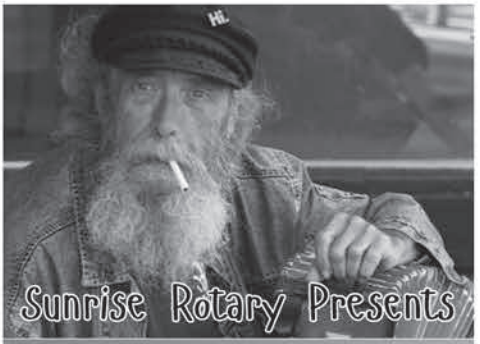

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