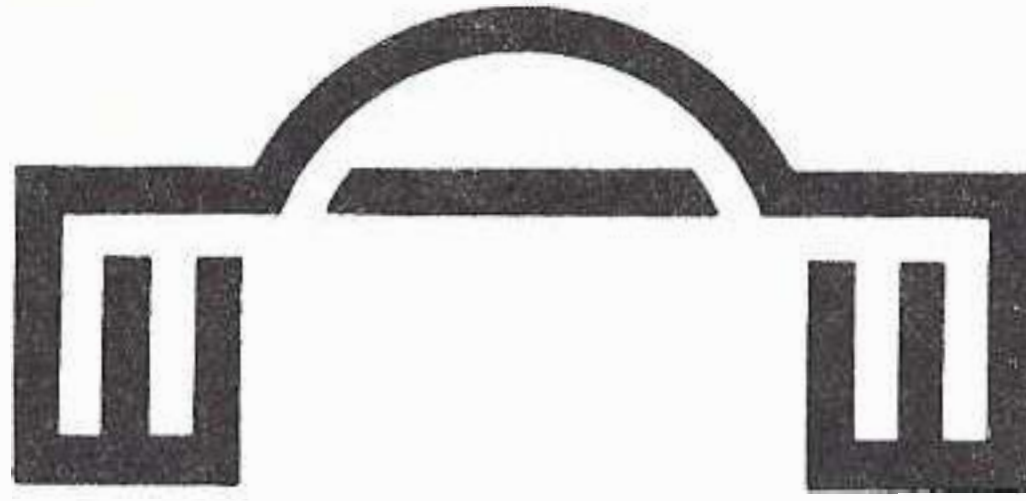




**NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INC.**

NEWS RELEASE

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N.C. THE LEADER IN OUTDOOR DRAMA

North Carolina has more outdoor dramas than any state in the country, says the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. And, those ten dramas contribute to the artistic and economic life of the state in several important ways, says Louise Lockwood in an article in a special arts issue of the Center's magazine, N.C. Insight. The largest three outdoor dramas--"The Lost Colony," "Unto These Hills," and "Horn in the West"--have evolved into indispensable ingredients in the tourist economies of Manteo, Cherokee, and Boone, respectively. The other seven dramas contribute to a sense of community in areas with modest artistic resources. In all ten productions, ticket prices remain low and the outdoor atmosphere high.

Fifty-six outdoor dramas dot the American landscape, and 230,000 people attended the ten North Carolina dramas in 1982. North Carolina also serves as the administrative base for this national genre through the Institute of Outdoor Drama at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Center examined the extent to which the state subsidizes the outdoor dramas. Author Lockwood found that over \$1 million had been appropriated for the ten dramas in the last five years (FY 1978-82). The average state subsidy per paid admission during that five-year period for each drama was only 89 cents per ticket. However, "Liberty Cart" in Kenansville receives funds from the state that amount to a subsidy of \$7.98 per paid admission, while the 1982 ticket price for adults to "Liberty Cart" was \$5.00. "The Lost Colony" in Manteo--the first outdoor drama in the U.S. (1937)--receives a subsidy of only 24 cents per admission.

Five of the ten dramas began as historical commemorations during the Bicentennial celebrations in 1976. They have continued to operate, sometimes in the face of small crowds, because "state funding has made it possible for outdoor drama to continue on a personal level," according to Judy Chavis, director of the state's Theatre Arts Section. Chavis adds, "Outdoor drama has done a lot for theater. It's taken away the elitist atmosphere of red carpets and posh seats. It's made people feel more comfortable with theater, giving them an incentive to try theater in other settings."

The magazine spotlights two outdoor dramas, one a community production in Valdese called "From This Day Forward," and the other a major tourist attraction, "Unto These Hills." "Unto These Hills" documents the story of the Cherokee Indians, from the tribe's first encounter with DeSoto's soldiers in 1590 to the "Trail of Tears" march to Oklahoma in 1838.

One shopkeeper in Cherokee is quoted as saying his business jumps 15 to 25 percent when the drama opens and declines by a comparable amount when it closes. Jim Cooper, who operates the local Holiday Inn agrees: "My business picks up immediately upon the opening of the drama and drops immediately upon the close of it. We provide bus service to the drama every night, six days a week."

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is a private nonprofit corporation formed to study state government policies and practices. The Center received a special corporate contribution of \$1500 from R.J. Reynolds Industries, Inc. for this fifth anniversary arts issue of N.C. Insight. The Center also receives support from the Mary Reynolds Babcock and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundations, other corporate contributions, and individual members across the state. In addition to publishing N.C. Insight, the Center also publishes major research reports, such as its recent study of Teacher Certification: Out-of-Field Teaching in N.C.

For more information, call Beth Briggs at (919) 832-2839.

Table 1. Outdoor Dramas in North Carolina—Five Year Fiscal Summary (N.C. FY 1978-1982)

Ranked by Average State Subsidy Per Paid Admission (1978-82)	Name of Drama	Location	Year Started	Source of Funds (N.C. FY 1978-1982) ¹				Level of State Subsidy		
				Department of Cultural Resources ²	Legislators' Special Bills ³	Governor's Contingency and Emergency Fund ⁴	Five Year Total	Average Annual State Funding (FY 1978-82) (Rank in State)	Average Annual Paid Admissions (1978-82) ⁵ (Rank in State)	Average State Subsidy Per Paid Admission (1978-82)
1.	Liberty Bell	Kenansville	1976	\$108,599	\$ 95,000	0	\$203,599	\$ 40,720 (1)	5,098 (7)	\$7.98
2.	Sword of Peace	Snow Camp	1974	84,052	45,000	0	129,052	25,810 (4)	6,915 (6)	3.73
3.	From This Day Forward	Valdese	1968	11,538	30,000	5,859	47,397	9,479 (8)	3,155 (8)	3.00
4.	Strike at the Wind	Pembroke	1976	65,615	60,000	0	125,615	25,123 (5)	8,505 (4)	2.95
5.	Listen and Remember	Waxhaw	1965	0	15,000	0	15,000	3,000 (10)	1,100 (10)	2.73
6.	First for Freedom	Halifax	1976	11,000	0	24,000	35,000	7,000 (9)	2,720 (9)	2.57
7.	Horn in the West	Boone	1952	42,400	125,000	19,000	186,400	37,280 (2)	22,609 (3)	1.65
8.	Blackbeard	Bath	1977	7,500	30,000	17,057	54,557	10,911 (7)	6,970 (5)	1.57
9.	Unto These Hills	Cherokee	1950	115,518	50,000	11,000	176,518	35,304 (3)	102,069 (1)	.35
10.	The Lost Colony	Manteo	1937	83,763	0	11,000	94,763	18,953 (6)	78,550 (2)	.24
Totals for all ten dramas:				\$509,985	\$470,000	\$87,916	\$1,067,901	\$213,580	237,691	\$.89

¹A five-year period is used because of the wide fluctuation of funding levels from year to year. See text regarding impact of special-bill funding.

²Annual expenditure ledgers. N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, sections labeled "Aid-to-Outdoor Drama" and "Aid to Professional Theater", pp. 947-949 (FY 78), 1012-1014 (FY 79), 1179-1181 (FY 80), 1231-1233 (FY 81), and 1243-44 (FY 82); *Certified Budget 1977-79 Biennium*, budget code 18441, Dept. of Cultural Resources, 1360 Grants-in-aid to arts, line 6438; *Certified Budget 1979-81 Biennium*, budget code 18441, Dept. of Cultural

Resources, 1350 Theatre Arts, line 6446.

³Chapter 986 of the 1977 Session Laws and publications of the legislature's Fiscal Research Division: for FY 78, *Highlights of 1977 Session*, pp. 65-68; for FY 79, *Summary of Appropriations and Revenues: 1977 General Assembly (1978 Session)*, July 10, 1978, pp. 35-38; for FY 80, *Summary of 1979 Legislative Fiscal Actions*, pp. 55-61; for FY 81, *Legislative Budget Actions: 1980-81*, pp. 44-47; for FY 82, *Legislative Budget Actions: 1981-82 (Supplement)*, 1981 *General Assembly (Fall Session)*, pp. 41-51.

⁴Listing of transfer of funds from the Governor's

Contingency and Emergency Fund, as recorded in the following documents, all published or located in the State Auditor's Office: for FY 78, *Annual Report and Supplement Information*, p. 48 (Schedule A-7, p. 31); for FY 79, *Annual Report and Supplement Information*, p. 25 (Schedule A-7, p. 7); for FY 80, FY 81, and FY 82, State Auditor's Office ledger sheet, Account Code 19001.

⁵Institute of Outdoor Drama files. For more information, contact Mark Sumner, director, 202 Graham Memorial, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.