

THE CIVIC SPOTLIGHT

DEC TO FEB 2026

VOL. 01

—
**THE NEW
CIVIC THEATRE:
AN ACCESSIBLE
SPACE FOR ALL**

—
THE AGM EDITION

—
**LOCAL LEGEND'S
FAVOURITE MOVIES
TO WATCH THIS
WINTER**

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Civic
Theatre

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THE CIVIC SPOTLIGHT

PUBLISHED BY NELSON CIVIC THEATRE SOCIETY

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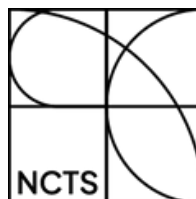
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WELCOME TO THE CIVIC SPOTLIGHT

When The Civic Theatre closed in April 2024 for renovations, we didn't just step away from our screens—we stepped away from the daily moments that kept us connected to our community. We miss the in-person discussions, the warm hellos at the door, and the familiar question we heard at the concession counter: 'So what's coming up next?'

But even with the doors closed, the questions never stopped.

On Baker Street, in the grocery store, at the post office, people ask us:

"How's the renovation going?"

"What's happening inside The Civic?"

"Are you doing okay?"

"When are you reopening?"

All of these questions come from a place of care, curiosity, and love for this theatre. And without a lobby to gather in, we've missed the chance to answer them in the spontaneous, joyful way we used to: face to face.

So, we built a new lobby.

The Civic Spotlight is our gathering place for now—a virtual lobby where we can reconnect, share updates, and bring you along on the journey as we build toward reopening. In these pages, you'll find progress photos, design decisions, milestones, challenges, fundraising updates, and the behind-the-scenes work unfolding every day.

You'll also meet local creators, partners, and the people who are helping ensure our programs and services continue to thrive even while the theatre is closed.

Is it the same as being open? Not quite. Nothing replaces the magic of a theatre full of people. But until we can welcome you back inside, think of this magazine as your quarterly Civic fix—a real-time pulse check on a project that belongs to all of us.

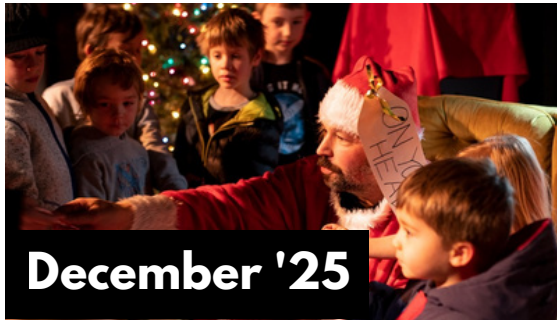
And if you ever miss the in-person conversation, our door at 225 Hall Street is always open.

Thank you for reading, for caring, and for keeping The Civic in your line of sight. Together, in 2026, we will build A Home for Our Imaginations.

Sincerely,
The NCTS Team



NCTS PROGRAMMING



We aren't going to let a little problem like The Civic closure stop us from celebrating another year of our 'Home For The Holidays' community event. Join us Dec. 14th following our AGM.



The real NCTS Christmas present comes after the holiday season; catch up on the award contending films from the Globes and Oscar nominees that grace our intimate Shoebox silver screen.



The continuation of awards season programming is joined by another year celebrating the excellence of Black cinema with a careful curation over Black History month.



Save the dates of March 14th and 15th for a return of an evening Oscar Party followed by the next day by the Free community Oscar Red Carpet Gala & Karaoke party. Details TBA.

Scan me!



A YEAR IN REVIEW

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2025 has been a challenging year. With our theatre closed since April of 2024, we have been in survival mode, and the next year is going to be equally challenging. But there is light at the end of this dark tunnel and there is much to be thankful for.

Since we formed our society in 2012, we have worked towards the goal of renovating our historic theatre. And after many starts and stops that were beyond our control, we are, at last, about to begin reconstruction.

If all goes according to schedule, at this time next year, we should be back showing movies in at least two of the 3 projected theatres. They may be works in progress because we still have a considerable way to go in raising funds to complete all three but they will be operational. And our patrons will enter a brand new lobby that pays homage to the art deco original. Needless to say, this is cause for excitement.

Our members tell us often how important The Civic Theatre is to our community. It's heartwarming to hear and means so much to those of us working to bring this project to fruition because we need the support of our community to get there. Our capital campaign, "A Home for our Imaginations" will run all year. This campaign is built on the conviction that imagination is not a luxury; it is nourishment. There is a myriad of ways that the community can help, and we are hopeful that we will see an upsurge in support, much as we did in 2012 when we worked to reopen the theatre.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the City of Nelson for its support. Both staff and Council are solidly behind this project and want to see us succeed, which is so appreciated.

Many thanks also to our Board of Directors for their commitment to NCTS.

And, most importantly, I give heartfelt thanks to our staff. There have been long, stressful hours, days, weeks this year. And throughout it all, they have risen to the challenges we face with enthusiasm and optimism.



Marilyn Mint
President
Board of Directors

*Prepared for NCTS' Annual
General Meeting on Sunday,
December 14, 2025.*



Every great story deserves a sequel.

Renew your NCTS membership and
help write the next chapter for The Civic.
Visit civictheatre.ca/membership for details

A YEAR IN REVIEW

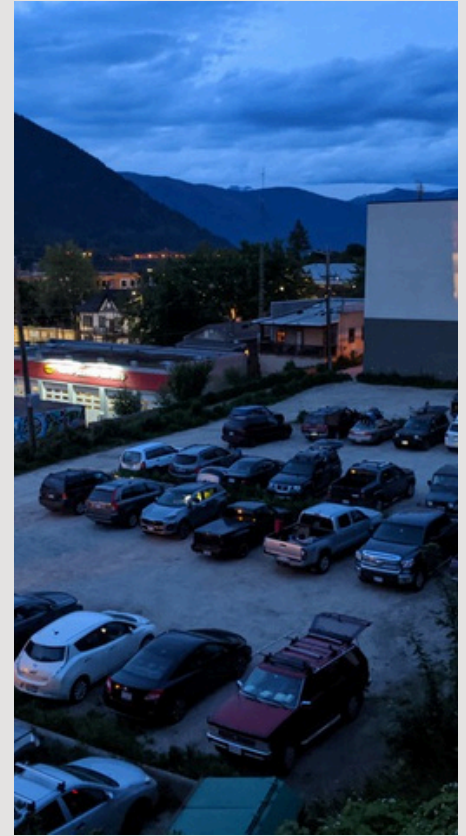
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

T

his has been a year of preparation in motion, focused on getting ready for construction even as timelines evolved. Dates have shifted, but our commitment has stayed constant, and each step has brought us closer to reopening.

Throughout 2024–25, we concentrated on advancing the capital project and preparing our “A Home for Our Imaginations” campaign, which now has a clear goal to raise \$3 Million in 2026 to complete the renewed Civic Theatre.

We screened films year-round at The Shoebox and during Summer 2024 at the Civic Railtown Drive-In, both hosting the second STOODIS Indigenous Film Festival in September 2024. The Shoebox also welcomed families, birthday parties, community groups, and local filmmakers through rentals. At Reo's Video, we kept films accessible. Our Sketch Camp youth program returned for another creative summer.



Even without our main theatre, we delivered signature events, including the Zombie Walk, Home for the Holidays, and the Oscar Red Carpet Livestream & Karaoke Party, and continued regional initiatives like the Kootenay Screen-Based Industry Workers Program and the Kootenay Regional Film Commission (with Kootenay Rockies Tourism).

It has been a challenging year without The Civic open, but our members, audiences, donors, sponsors, and especially the City of Nelson have kept us moving. Your belief in The Civic, and in the future we are building, has sustained us.

This was a year of the hard, often invisible work that allows visible progress to happen. I am grateful to all of you, and to our dedicated staff and board, for your continued belief and commitment. Thank you for standing with us. The best part is still ahead.

Eleanor Stacey
Executive Director

*Prepared for NCTS' Annual
General Meeting on Sunday,
December 14, 2025.*

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT WITH

CARLA SINCLAIR

Carla Sinclair plays a vital role at the Nelson Civic Theatre as the Kootenay Screen-Based Industry Community Engagement & Communications Coordinator. In this capacity, she brings her experience as an award-winning filmmaker, educator, and storyteller to the heart of Nelson's cultural scene.

If you spend any time around the Nelson Civic Theatre, you'll eventually cross paths with Carla Sinclair and honestly, you'll know it when you do. Carla has this mix of filmmaker-brain, community-heart, and "let's-make-this-happen" energy that's kind of impossible to miss. She's the one who helps connect the Civic to the wider screen-based world in the Kootenays, making sure local creators, audiences, and opportunities can actually find each other. She's always juggling something be it youth programs, community events, industry connections YET still manages to make the whole place feel more open, creative, and fun. Carla believes deeply in stories that matter, especially ones that lift up voices that don't always get heard, and you can feel that in everything she touches. The Civic is in a big moment of change, and having someone like Carla helping shape that story? It just feels right.

Check out what Carla is up to
[@EmptyCupMedia](#)

LOCAL LEGEND PICKS

Each issue, we feature someone who inspires our community and their three film picks. Want to suggest someone? Visit civictheatre.ca/contact



FEATURING

SHERRY PERRY

Sherry Perry is a beloved Civic volunteer, event creator, and performer (also known as Vesper Valentine) who has helped shape Nelson's arts scene through her work with the Kootenay Burlesque Festival and Academy.



DECEMBER PICK *THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL*

To get me in the mood for the holidays, my go to December movie is The Muppet Christmas Carol. It is, in my opinion, the most heartwarming chaotic masterpiece ever created. Where else can you find Dickensian ghosts, emotional redemption arcs, and a singing vegetable chorus all in one place? It is charming, it is musical, it is just the right amount of ridiculous, and honestly, watching Gonzo narrate classic literature is the festive energy I aspire to bring into the season. This film never fails to remind me that joy, community, and a little theatrical whimsy are what the holidays are all about.



JANUARY PICK *THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY*

To get me through the humdrum, snowed in days of January, I turn to The Secret Life of Walter Mitty. There is something magical about watching someone break out of their routine and step, sometimes quite literally, into adventure. When the world outside feels frozen in place, this movie reminds me that creativity, imagination, and bold choices can spark warmth even in the coldest months. It is visually stunning, quietly inspiring, and the perfect nudge toward dreaming big while still wrapped in a blanket with a hot drink in hand.



FEBRUARY PICK *THE PRINCESS BRIDE*

To get me in the mood for everyone's second favourite Hallmark season, Valentine's Day, my February pick simply has to be The Princess Bride. It is the ultimate romantic adventure: equal parts true love, sword fighting, hilarious one liners, and dramatic cape swishing. This movie delivers all the heart without ever taking itself too seriously, which is exactly what February needs. It is sweet, clever, endlessly quotable, and it reminds me that even in the dead of winter, a little bit of whimsy and a well timed "As you wish" can go a very long way.

HOT TIP: ALL OF SHERRY'S SELECTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO RENT AT REO'S!



INSIDE THE NEW CIVIC

DESIGNING THE NEW CIVIC HAS BEEN ANYTHING BUT SIMPLE .

Our one-room theatre sits inside a poured-in-place concrete building from 1935, full of sloping floors, original materials, and structural quirks that make quick changes nearly impossible. Every improvement requires careful planning, creativity, and patience. And still, we remain undeterred because the vision is worth it.

Working closely with Nelson-based Cover Architectural Collaborative, we're creating a space that honours The Civic's Art Deco roots while thoughtfully reshaping it for the future. The design is practical, welcoming, and built to support a wider range of screenings, events, and community gatherings.

We are also working toward **Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)**, a national standard that measures meaningful, real-world accessibility. This will place The Civic among a small number of arts facilities in BC designed to meet or exceed universal design principles.

The comprehensive rebuild will modernize the main auditorium, create a warm, new lobby, and introduce two additional theatres. Transforming our historic one-room movie house into a fully realized, three-screen home for film, connection, and community.

1935 – A Bold Beginning

Construction begins on the Civic Centre, hailed as “BC’s major building project of 1935.”



1936 – Grand Opening

The 954-seat auditorium opens with cutting-edge theatrical and film technology.



1938 – Famous Players Era

Famous Players leases The Civic, hosting films, touring acts, and live performances for decades.



2010 – Curtains Close

A private renovation stalls, leaving the theatre dark and unfinished.



2012 – The Rally

Community members, led by Cindy Sherry, mobilize to save The Civic.



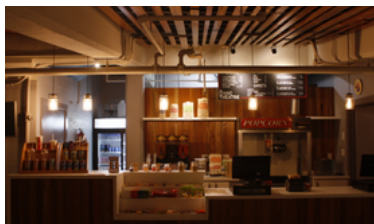
2012–2013 – NCTS is Born

Over 4,000 signatures, 1,000 members, and unanimous City support secure the theatre’s future.



2013–2019 – Upgrades

The theatre goes digital, rebuilds the concession, installs air-conditioning, purchases a retractable screen and myriad lighting and sound upgrades. Programs and services grow substantially.



2020–present – Major Project

\$3.3 million secured in 2020. Pandemic, roof failure, snow-load warnings, and rising costs follow. Design for the 3-screen project is underway; major fundraising begins in 2026.

WHAT ARE WE WORKING TOWARD?

AN ACCESSIBLE & WELCOMING SPACE FOR ALL.

Built for Everyone

Accessibility has guided every design decision. The new Civic will include:

- A LU/LA (Limited Use/Limited Accessibility) lift connecting the lobby and new theatres.
- Accessible and inclusive washrooms.
- Flexible seating that allows wheelchairs and mobility aids to integrate naturally, with enough space for companions and family members too.
- Assistive listening systems.
- Audio description capability for guests who are blind or have low vision, providing real-time narration of on-screen action.
- Tactile signage and visual contrast to improve wayfinding for everyone.

PROJECT FAQ

THE FUTURE OF THE CIVIC

1



What is happening at The Civic Theatre?

We're transforming Nelson's historic single-screen Civic Theatre into a fully accessible, modern, three-screen community media arts centre.

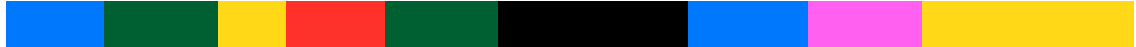
2



Why three theatres?

Three screens mean more flexibility—different shows for different audiences, longer runs, private rentals, and better programming options year-round. Our projections also consistently point to a future with three screens that is financially stable.

3



Didn't this project start ages ago? What's the hold up?

Yes, and we totally understand the confusion. The building's closure began in April 2024 due to the City's necessary roof and infrastructure upgrades.

The nature of the City's work meant that it needed to be completed before our interior renovations could begin. We have worked diligently throughout this time to develop our design plans. Tendering for our project is taking place this winter, and we expect to be able to break ground early in 2026.

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737 BAKER STREET

THE FUTURE OF THE CIVIC

4



Will ticket prices go up?

The very most important thing to us is that you can see a movie at The Civic Theatre. We're designing pricing to stay accessible through:

- Regular affordable tickets
- Discounted & barrier-free options
- Free and all-ages events
- Membership benefits & points

5



How much will the whole project cost?

It is expected that it will cost approximately \$6.5 Million. We've already raised more than \$3.6 Million, so in 2026 our goal is to raise the balance. If we can't meet this target, the project may need to be phased, which will cost more and take longer, so we are really focused on reaching this goal on time.

6



Where has the \$3.625 Million gone?

It's been committed to the actual capital costs: design, permits, construction, accessibility, equipment, and more. All of our grants for this project are tied to specific uses and timelines (with some extensions in our case, given the situation).

7



How can I help?

Renew your NCTS membership
Come to movies at The Shoebox
(and buy lots of popcorn!)

Become a monthly donor even \$10/month helps
Make a one-time gift to our Operating Fund
Help us connect with businesses, funders, or philanthropies that will help us through our closure and also support the fundraising goal for the capital campaign itself.



Scan to help us reach our goal.

THE NEXT ACT

IT'S BEEN A LONG INTERMISSION.

Nelson has gone nearly two years without its theatre, the popcorn, the energy, the shared sense of community. Now, it's time to bring The Civic back to life.

For more than a decade, Nelson Civic Theatre Society (NCTS) has been working toward a bold vision: transforming our historic one-room theatre into a fully realized, three-screen, community-owned cultural hub. The plans are ready, the team is in place, and the future is within reach.

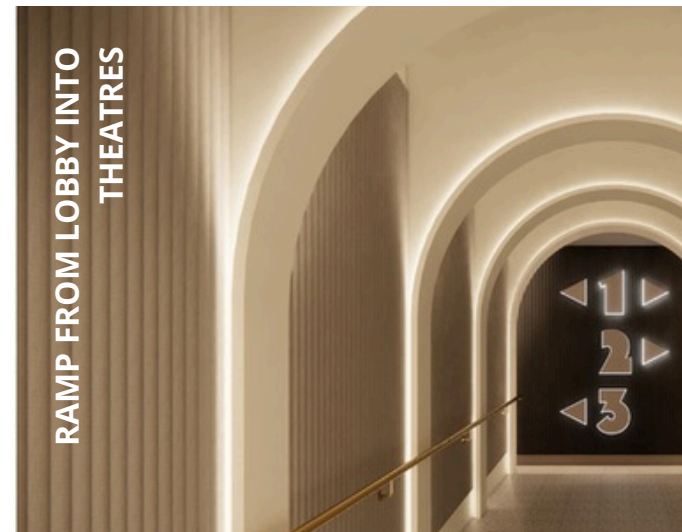
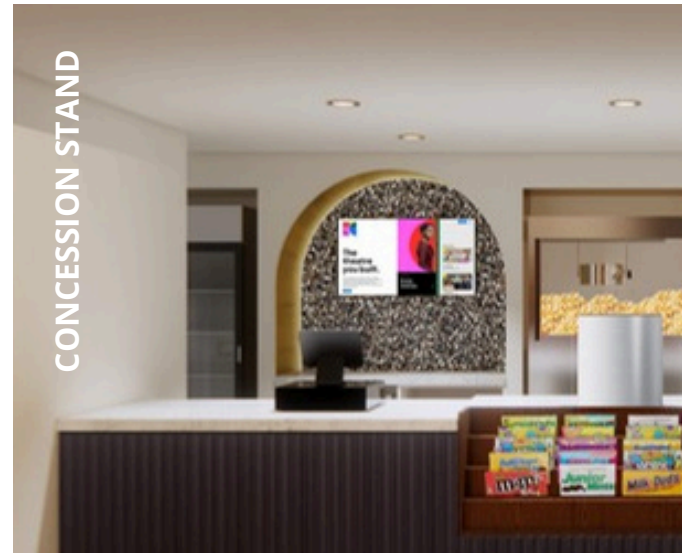
WHY IT MATTERS

Construction costs continue to rise, and every month we wait adds to the expense. But right now, everything is aligned: shovel-ready plans, committed partners, and a clear path to a Civic that will deliver lasting cultural, social, and economic benefits for Nelson.

When complete, the new Civic will:

- Welcome more than 100,000 visits annually, boosting downtown economic activity
- Provide year-round opportunities for creative and technical employment, including youth
- Expand education, youth programming, and digital media initiatives
- Support artists and creative projects in new ways
- Host festivals, special events, and gatherings that draw visitors from near and far

The payoff for the community is lasting: growth, vibrancy, and a civic space that belongs to everyone.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

This isn't a corporate project—it's a community one. Completing the transformation will take thousands of acts of generosity: donations, volunteer hours, advocacy, and community engagement.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- Major Capital Gifts: anchor the \$3 Million community goal. Naming opportunities are available and essential to the success of this once-in-a-generation campaign.
- Corporate Partnerships: support construction, equipment, and accessibility upgrades, with valuable reciprocal benefits available.
- Community Giving & Monthly Donors: sustain programming, youth outreach, and operations.
- Introductions & Advocacy: connect us with people and organizations who share our vision.

THE CIVIC IS MORE THAN A THEATRE

It is infrastructure for imagination, and an investment that multiplies community benefit. We've done the groundwork, secured the partners, and proven the model through a decade of successful programming and fiscal management. Now, the next act is in our hands. With your help, Nelson can complete a project that will stand as a national example of what small cities can achieve when they work together.

Learn more about our plans at civictheatre.ca or contact us at info@civictheatre.ca to discuss ways to get involved with this exciting project.



NOT TO BE DRAMATIC, BUT YOUR BUSINESS SHOULD BE HERE.

Local exposure with a little theatrical flair,
and a great way to help The Civic into its
next act.

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FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This February, we're proud to honour Black
stories, filmmakers, and histories that have
shaped culture.

Join us this February.

More details coming soon
at civictheatre.ca



OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

Each gift to NCTS is a vote of confidence in our work and our vision. Our donors and partners make it possible to tell local stories, support creative careers, and grow Nelson's role as a hub for culture and innovation in the Kootenays. Your generosity helps us to keep the story going— especially during the last few challenging years, and helps us plan and prepare for what's next. We are so deeply grateful to the following individuals, families, companies and programs for their generous support of NCTS and our programs and services.

\$10,000+

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Chinook Scaffolding *
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Tony Maglio *
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Osprey Community Foundation
Rona Maglio Building Centre

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Marcelline Moore
Janice Morrison
Garth Mowat

For the purpose of this list, donor contributions have been summarized for an 18-month period (covering our closure).

Up to \$499, continued

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Ed Zych

* In-kind Gift

Error or omission?
Please email us at
info@civictheatre.ca

SUPPORTERS WHO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE

NELSON HOME HARDWARE BUILDING CENTRE is proud to support NCTS and The Civic Theatre. As a locally owned business, we're committed to strengthening the region and helping make Nelson a vibrant place to live, work, and create. Thank you for supporting local businesses and community spaces.

TRANSFORMING CONFLICT INTO DIALOGUE. I support teams, leaders, and everyday people to navigate conflict with clarity and compassion. Through mediation, facilitation, and coaching, I help repair relationships, strengthen communication, and create shared agreements that last. My work empowers people to find common ground and move beyond division. Connect for a free discovery call: www.natashaedmunds.com

BE PART OF WHAT'S NEXT

A great way to support NCTS is by volunteering. Volunteers are vital—many hands make light work. Together, we're creating a vibrant cultural hub where stories, artists, and audiences thrive.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



**Come Lend a Hand
(and Eat Some
Popcorn!)**

Volunteering at The Civic is a fun, meaningful way to support local arts and connect with your community. Whether you love greeting guests, organizing, or pitching in wherever needed, there's a spot for you here.



LET THE CREDITS ROLL

When I saw my first movie in the Nelson Civic Theatre, E.T. wanted to phone home. That was 1982, and phones were clunky rotary dial affairs attached to a wall. The Civic was independently run, the floor was perpetually sticky, and teenagers necked in the back row.

From that first film I was struck by what I saw as a curiously Nelson habit: everyone stays to watch the credits roll. I'd never seen such a thing! Did people just want to sit in the dark, the better to grasp at the last wisps of cinematic magic? Did they have a burning desire to find out the name of the Best Boy, Key Grip, or Gaffer? Were they otherwise occupied in the back row?

My next first movie was in 2013 in the newly-opened, pre-digital Civic Theatre. Skyfall was our grand re-opening; many came dressed as spies and femme fatales, and all came to enjoy the newest episode in Nelson's history of screening films, which began in the 1920s. We followed Daniel Craig as James Bond through two hours and 23 minutes of twists and turns—and yes, we stayed to watch the credits.

It was a both thrill and a balm to be back. I was president of the new Nelson Civic Theatre Society, and by then we had been hard at work for some time at everything from feasibility studies to seat installation, fundraising for a digital projector, and building a vision together. What the community assumed would be the return of our beloved movie theatre has since become much more thanks to a combination of hive mind and chutzpah.

There have been some unforeseen hiccups (a pandemic, imminent roof collapse, ballooning costs), and yet the flowering of the Civic Theatre has been astonishing. It is all due to a credit-roll of creative and persistent people who rolled up their sleeves and got at it. The people behind the Nelson Civic Theatre—your friends and neighbours—have shared the responsibilities of Director and Producer; Gaffer, Key Grip, and Best Boy; Composer, Consultant, Casting Director, and Caterer.

The result is an epic tale of innovation and inclusion, from the Stoodis Indigenous Film Festival to zombie walks, and a whole lot in between. A movie Theatre? Sure. Creativity incubation centre? Yes, indeed. Community-builder? Always, and forever.

I have come to believe that Nelson's credit-watching tendencies are born of a reluctance to leave that happy collective experience as we emerge, blinking, to smile at our neighbours seated around us. Reading between those rolling credit lines is an unspoken recognition that we, collectively, wrote the screenplay that is the Nelson Civic Theatre, with all its twists and turns.

As much as things change, they stay the same: my phone is now smart, and we are again waiting for the Civic Theatre to reopen. The next act, of course, is the long-planned renovation to three screens, essential to securing The Civic's future so that the next generation can stay and watch the credits roll—unless they are otherwise occupied in the back row.

As for my next first movie in the reopened and renovated Nelson Civic Theatre—I can hardly wait.



Anne DeGrace
Past President
Board of Directors

SAVE OUR CIVIC



**THE CIVIC THEATRE IS A
CHERISHED COMMUNITY ASSET
THAT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE.**

