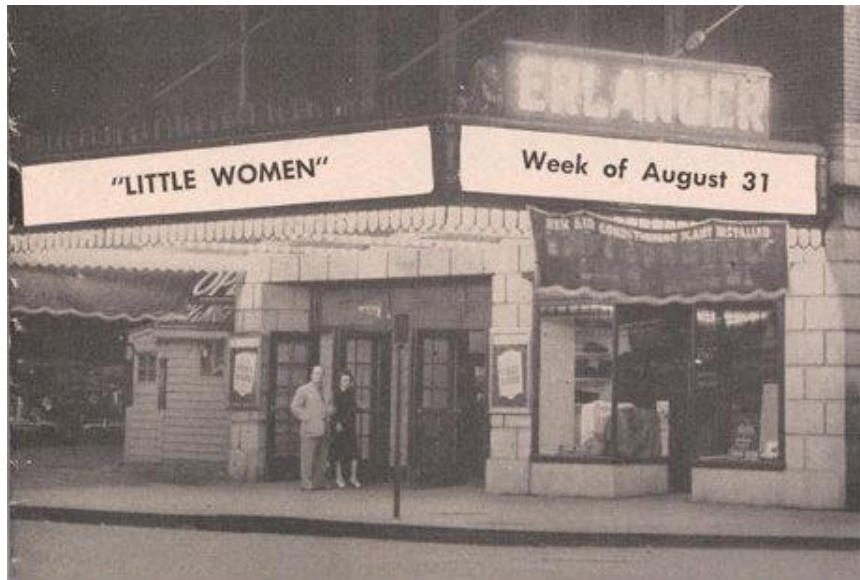


Buffalo Theater Research:

SELECTED SOURCES IN THE GROSVENOR ROOM



The Playgoer Theatre Magazine (playbill of the Erlanger Theatre). August 31, 1943

KEY

* = Oversized Book
Buffalo = Buffalo Collection
BufS = Located in Closed Stacks, ask for retrieval
GRO = Grosvenor Collection
NON-FICT = Non-Fiction
MEDIA = Located in the Media Room
*RBR = Rare Book Room, appt. needed
Ref. = Reference book, may not be borrowed
Stacks = Located in Closed Stacks, ask for retrieval

Grosvenor Room
Buffalo and Erie County Public Library
1 Lafayette Square
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 858-8900
www.buffalolib.org
October 2017

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INTRODUCTION

The Grosvenor Room of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library has a number of resources to help you research theaters and theatre history in Buffalo.

While no published book covers all of Buffalo's illustrious theater history, we are lucky to have a copy of compiled history created by a local researcher. This source lists brief historical information on many theatres, such as known addresses, dates of operation, and related newspaper article citations. It is an excellent starting point for theater research:

Sandhu, Ranjit. Buffalo Theatres prior to 1930: An ever-growing index of references.
[Tonawanda, NY. 2002.] Available at the Grosvenor Room reference desk.

*For **architecture** research on theater buildings, see the separate guide: *Buffalo Architecture Research: Selected Sources in the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library*

***Please note:**

Items in the RBR (Rare Book Room) must be viewed by appointment. Please call 716-858-8900 or see a Grosvenor Room Librarian.

INDEXES & STARTING POINTS		
Resource	Time period	Location
<p>Sandhu, Ranjit. Buffalo Theatres prior to 1930: An ever-growing index of references. An extensive compilation of references on local theaters, including general history, saloons, concert halls, burlesque, vaudeville, and cinemas. Look up venue by name or address. Sources for general Buffalo theater history are listed in the preface. A key resource for researchers.</p>	1815-1930	Grosvenor Room Reference Desk. See a librarian for access.
<p>Local History File: A card index for Buffalo newspapers, magazines, and some books. Locate citations for articles about theaters and theater owners. Look under the subject heading of Theaters and the owner's name.</p>	Primarily 1930s to the 1980s, with some earlier and later entries.	Grosvenor Room. For later newspaper articles, see the Newspapers section for the <i>Buffalo News</i> , 1989-present.
<p>Famous Speakers and Visitors File: Card index. Search by name of actor. Includes name and date of production, and theater. Articles from newspapers are also referenced.</p>	Mid 1800's through the 1960's, some 1970's.	Grosvenor Room card files.
<p>Vertical Files on Theaters Vertical Files contain newspaper clippings and periodical articles, pamphlets, and miscellaneous material.</p>	Primarily 1970-present. Some earlier items.	Grosvenor Room. See a librarian.
<p>Theatre Program Card Index. Indexed by title of play. Programs are in the library collection; see the Playbills & Programs section.</p>	c. 1890s-1950s	Closed Stacks. See a librarian
<p>Erlanger Theatre Index Indexed by performer name and title of play.</p>	1927-1956	Closed Stacks. See a librarian.

BOOKS ABOUT BUFFALO THEATERS & THEATER HISTORY

General information	Buffalo F116.A45 v.22 Smith, Ardis & Kathy Smith. Adventures in Western New York History: Theatre in early Buffalo. Buffalo: Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society, 1975.
General information	Buffalo PN2277.B8 S7 Strong, Eve Elizabeth. Theatre in Buffalo, New York Thesis (M.A.)--U. of Michigan, 1942.
General information	Buffalo PN1968.U5 A4 1984 Stein, Charles W American vaudeville as seen by its contemporaries New York: Knopf, 1984.
For further general theater information, browse the 3 volume scrapbook set <i>Theatres and Convention Halls in Buffalo</i> , recent newspaper & magazine articles cited in the Local History File, the Theatre Vertical Files, and the sources listed in the preface of Sandhu's <u>Buffalo Theatres prior to 1930</u> .	
Academy of Music	Buffalo PN2277.B8 H5 A Thespian temple: A brief history of the Academy of Music and review of the dramatic events of over fifty years in the city of Buffalo... Buffalo: Courier Co., Printers, 1893.
Shea's	Buffalo NA6835.B9 S52 1987 Gallagher, Gloria Peabody. Shea's Buffalo Theatre: From 1920s movie palace to present day performing arts center. Thesis (M.A.)--University of Maryland, College Park, 1987.
Shea's	Buffalo *NA6835 .B9 S5 1994 Shea's Buffalo Theatre: Buffalo Performing Arts Center, Buffalo, New York Elmhurst, Ill: Theatre Historical Society of America, ©1994 See also Map 39M-18.
Studio Arena	Buffalo PN2277.B8 S83 Studio School of the Theatre 1927/1928 – 1947/1948 General information pamphlets. Theatre school linked to Studio Arena. Later known as the Studio Theatre School.
Studio Arena	Buffalo PN2277.B9 M3 McEvoy, Ruth Melvina A history of the Studio Theatre School of Buffalo Thesis (M.A.)--University of Buffalo, 1957.

CITY DIRECTORIES

The Grosvenor Room has Buffalo City Directories in print from 1828 to the present. Directories list individual residents, as well as businesses. Check listings to learn where (and for what years) a particular theater was located. See also R. Sandhu's [Buffalo Theatres prior to 1930](#).

Buffalo city directories from 1832 to 1993 are also available on microfilm in the Grosvenor Room.

NEW! Our Buffalo City Directories 1832-1893 are now digitized online:

<http://www.buffalolib.org/content/digital-collections>

Buffalo directories 1861-1960 are also in the *Ancestry Library Edition* database.

<http://www.buffalolib.org/content/research>

Look for the "**U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989**" in the card catalog feature; directories can be browsed by year or searched.

NEWSPAPERS	COVERAGE	AVAILABILITY
<p>To find newspaper articles on a theater or performance, browse newspapers by date on microfilm and the Theatre Scrapbooks. Or, use the Local History File and Buffalo Theatres prior to 1930 to locate specific articles. See the Indexes & Starting Points section of this guide.</p>	<p>Buffalo newspapers, bulk are 1845-present.</p>	<p>See this guide for more information on Buffalo newspapers: Buffalo, WNY, and NY State Newspapers</p>
<p>THE BUFFALO NEWS 1989-present http://www.buffalolib.org/content/research</p>	<p>Full-text of articles 1989 – present. Search by keywords, narrow by dates. Does not include photographs.</p>	<p>For use at any library or from home with a valid Buffalo & Erie County Public Library card number.</p>

PHOTOGRAPHS

Pictures of performers may have been published in programs/playbills, newspaper articles and news "picture pages," as well as theatre magazines (see **Journals & Periodicals** listed in this guide).

Photographs (original or copies) may be harder to locate. We have a "Performing Artists Photograph Collection" of about 300 photos of musicians and actors, most from 1900 to 1950:
[https://bepl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default/search/detailnonmodal/ent:\\$002f\\$002fSD_ILS\\$002f0\\$02fSD_ILS:1902450/one](https://bepl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default/search/detailnonmodal/ent:$002f$002fSD_ILS$002f0$02fSD_ILS:1902450/one)

For additional image resources, see our related guide, *Buffalo Illustrations*, which goes into greater detail on finding vintage photographs of Buffalo buildings in books and other publications in our collection: <http://www.buffalolib.org/sites/default/files/pdf/genealogy/subject-guides/BuffaloIllustrations%20updated%207-2014.pdf>

The Buffalo History Museum also has an extensive photograph collection that may include some Buffalo theaters. See "**Where else can I research Buffalo Theaters?**" in this guide.

JOURNALS & PERIODICALS (HISTORIC)

These national theatre journals may provide reviews, commentary on theatre happenings, and advertisements.

Stacks *PN2000.T4
Theatre Guild Magazine / The Stage
v.6, 1928 – v.16, 1939

Stacks *PN2000.T5
The Theatre
1901-1931

Stacks PN2000.T55
Theatre Arts Magazine / Theatre Arts Monthly / Theatre Arts
v.1, 1916 – v.47, 1963 + Jan. 1964

PLAYBILLS & PROGRAMS, 1850S-PRESENT

The Grosvenor Room has an extensive collection of programs from theatrical and music concert venues in Buffalo and Erie County. The bulk of the collection is 1900-1950.

The years listed below may be incomplete; **our collection does not include every single performance for these years.** Recent and newly donated items are added upon receiving, and may not be immediately added to this list.

Please see a librarian for access to this collection.

See a librarian for assistance with the complementary collection of **Music Concert and Dance programs.**

Theater/Ensemble	Years we have
710 Main Theatre	2013-2017
Academy of Music See also Buffalo Amateurs	1869-1895 Buffalo theatre cabinets (and undated), 1874-1894 bound in Buff Coll. PN2073.B86
Academy Theatre	1901-1903, 1905-1906, 1908, 1914
Adelphi Theatre	1883-1887 oversize boxed & Buffalo PN2073 .B863
Adelphia Theatre	1887-1888, oversize
Aurora Players/Hamlin Park Pavillion (East Aurora)	1981-1994
Bonstelle Company	1921 newsletters
Broadway Theatre League of Buffalo see also Lafayette Theatre	1959-1961

Buffalo Amateurs See also Academy of Music	1884-1886, n.d.
Buffalo Driving Park	1891
Buffalo Ensemble/Entertainment Theatre	Approx. 1978-1990
Buffalo Entertainment Theatre/Buffalo Theatre Workshop	c.1980
Buffalo Players See also The Playhouse	Undated membership information, programs 1923-1925, 1934
Buffalo Theatre?	1816
Buffalo Theatre Collective	1983
Buffalo United Artists (BUA)	1994, 1995
Bunnell's Museum Theatre	1884, 1886-1888, oversize
Casino Theatre	1886, oversize
Catholic Theatre Guild Catholic Actors Guild	1934, 1936, 1937, 1939
Century Theatre	1964
Church Home League	1899, 1904, 1905
Concert Hall	1895, 1898, 1905
Convention Hall	1894?, 1903
Court Street Theatre	1884-1889, 1895, oversize
Criterion Theatre	1923
Dreary Lane Theatre	undated
Eagle Street Theatre	1844, undated
East Aurora Opera House	1903
Erlanger Theatre	1927-1956
Gaiety Theatre	1889, undated
Gayety Theatre	1920
Germania Theater	1890, 1893, oversize
Grand Central Theatre	1887, 1888, undated -oversize
Grand Island Playhouse	1949-1951, 1953 schedule, 1958-1960
Holloway Bay Playhouse	1948, 1950
International Theatre (Niagara Falls)	1903
Irish Classical	1991, 1997-2000, 2004-2017

Jewish Center	1937, 1952-1953, 1958, 1962
Jewish Repertory Theatre of WNY	2005
Kavinoky Theatre	1982, 1985-1989, 1993, 1994, 1997-1998 2000, 2002, 2007-2015
Lafayette Theatre See also Broadway Theatre League	1904, 1911, 1927, see also oversized
Lafayette Square Theatre (movie theater)	1930
Lake Shore Playhouse (Derby, NY)	1947-1949
Lancaster Opera Theater House	1995, 2012-2015
Loew's Buffalo Theatre	1971
Lyceum Theatre	1894-1906 & oversized
Lyric Theatre	1906-1912, 1918
Majestic Theatre (W. Genesee, legitimate theatre, 1912-1927)	1912-1927
Majestic Theatre (e. Ferry, movie theatre, 1911-1924)	1919
Metropolitan Theatre	1867, undated
Mister Anthony's Theatre-Restaurant / Dee Jay Players	c. 1970s
Music Hall	1883-1884, 1885, 1887, 1890, 1891, 1895-1898, & oversized
MusicalFare Theatre Company (previously SummerFare)	1995, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2010-2017
New Academy Theatre	1912
New Garden Theatre	1909
New Phoenix	2012
Park Theatre	1905
Paul Robeson Theatre	2016
The Playhouse (652 Main St)	1981-1983
The Playhouse (Pearl & Huron) See Buffalo Players	
Rendezvous Theatre	c.1962
Road Less Traveled	2010-2015
Roadside Theatre (Roadside Players, Athol Springs)	1939, 1940
St. James Hall	1871, 1872, 1874-1880
St. Louis Dramatic Circle (at Teck Theatre)	1905, 1907, 1909-1910, 1921, 1929
Shakespeare in Delaware Park	1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2009, 2010

Shea's 710 See 710 Theatre	
Shea's Theatre (40 Court Street)	1905-1928
Shea's Court/Shea's Court Street	1927, 1928, 1935, 1937
Shea's Garden	1898-1905
Shea's Vaudeville	1909-1923
Shea's Center for the Performing Arts (1976-present, 644 Main Street)	1980s-2000s
Shubert-Teck See Teck	
Star Theatre	1888-1919, undated seating chart in oversize
Studio School of the Theatre /Studio Theatre School/ Studio Theatre Players) See also Buffalo Players	1928-1965
Studio Arena See also above	1965-2006 bound PN2277.B8 S84, 1965- 1974, 1990-2008 Buffalo theatre cabinets.
Subversive Theatre & Brazen Faced Varlets	2012
SummerFare See MusicalFare	
Teck Theatre/Shubert-Teck See also St. Louis Dramatic Circle	1900-1934, various undated.
Theatre Guild Repertory Company (at the Buffalo Consistory)	1927
Theatre of Youth	1976 season schedule, 1982, 1985, 1987, 2010-2012, 2017
Theater School Players See Studio School of the Theatre	
Ujima Theatre Company	1998
Waxman's Art Theatre	1927
West Side Repertory Theatre	1970s?
Wonderland Musee Theatre	1889, 1890, oversize
Miscellaneous - Various venues including churches, clubs, community theatres, schools, and minstrel shows.	various
Miscellaneous – Schools: St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute	1938, 1940
Miscellaneous – Schools: University of Buffalo, [University at Buffalo] Baird Music Hall, Center Theatre, Harriman Hall, Pfeifer Theatre, Slee Concert Hall See also Center for the Arts in Music Concert Collection	1960, 1963, 1980-1982, 1984-1985, 1988-1989

WHERE ELSE CAN I FIND THEATER PLAYBILLS OR PROGRAMS?

See also the **Scrapbooks** section in this guide below, as many contain programs.

Microfilm PN2098 .G76 1741c

Grosvenor Library collection of late 18th- and early 19th-century English playbills, with a few 19th-century American playbills.

Microfilm. [Buffalo, N.Y.] : Buffalo & Erie Co. Public Library, 1992. 2 microfilm reels

Playbills advertising theatrical performances at many theatres in London: the Theatre Royal, Haymarket ; at English theatres outside London; and at American theatres in Boston, New York City, and Buffalo, New York (New Opera House), dated between 1741 and 1862.

SCRAPBOOKS

NOTES

GRO scrapbook shelf *PN2277 .B8B8

Theater and Convention Halls in Buffalo, v. 1-3

Buffalo newspaper clippings and printed ephemera. The *Local History File* acts as an index to these scrapbooks.

Buffalo Stacks PN2073 T5 2 vols.

The play [scrapbook of theater and concert programs, mostly from Buffalo theaters, 1924-1926]

Includes a few programs from Shea's, Shubert Teck, Majestic, and The Playhouse theatres.

Buffalo Stacks PN2285 .S3

[Scrapbook on the theatre]

Mostly facsimiles of photographs (perhaps from playbills or other) of actors and actresses performing in the theaters in the late 1800s and early 1900s; also includes newspaper articles about Helena Modjeska and her connections to Buffalo. Contains an index to actors and actresses and an index to plays.

Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .B8

Buffalo theater programs. 1900-1906

Cast lists clipped from programs (theatre unidentified) and images of performers clipped from playbills and theatre magazines. Includes an index to performers and plays. Compiled by Harriet A. Beach.

Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .B82 v. 1 & 2

Programs from Buffalo Theaters, 1904-1927 (2 Vols)

Cast lists clipped from programs, mostly from the Majestic, Star, and Teck Theatres. Images of performers clipped from playbills and theatre magazines. No index.

Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .B83

Theater and concert programs, mainly in Buffalo. [1905-1934] (2 Vols)

Cast lists and programs from a variety of Buffalo venues including the Star, Teck, Convention Hall, and Elmwood Music Hall. Includes many music concerts and recitals, including the Guido Chorus and symphonies. No index.

Buffalo Stacks PN2073. B865

Buffalo Theatre Programmes 1886-1895

Music and theatre performances, programs and clipped cast sections, primarily from Academy of Music and Star Theatre productions. Index in front.

SCRAPBOOKS	NOTES
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .B88 Fiscus, Julius C., compiler Programme[s] from The Star Theatre of Buffalo, N.Y. of the season 1892-3 and 1893-4. [Buffalo, N.Y.: s.n., 1894]	Bound programs from the Star Theatre with pasted newspaper articles, reviews, and clipped images of performers.
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .B9, v. 2, 3 & 4 Barnes, Mabel E. [compiler] Program Book, Volume II, June 1895 to June 1906. Also pictures of famous actors, musicians, and speakers.	A mix of theatre, music and other events, including those held at local high schools, churches, and social clubs Not all Buffalo, some in New York City. WAS COMPILER A MUSIC TEACHER?
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .C7 Vol.1-4 Rare Book Room appointment needed [Theater performance advertisements, Buffalo, N.Y., 1877-1903] [Buffalo, N.Y. : s.n., 1903]	Four slim scrapbooks of advertising and casts lists for performances by Chauncey Olcott, Edwin Booth, Fanny Davenport, Ethel Barrymore, Ellen Terry, Helena Modjeska, Richard Mansfield, Marie Dressler, Julia Marlowe, John Philip Sousa, and many other artists at many different theatres, mainly at the Academy of Music, the Grand Opera House, St. James Hall, the Court Street Theatre, and the Star Theatre. Compiled by Thurston Family.
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .S24 Lawrence, Vincent or Vincent, Lawrence? [donor, compiler] [Scrapbook of concert and theater programs covering the years 1898 to 1900]	Newspaper clippings, theatre cast lists, venue not always indicated. Music concerts and theatre productions held at venues including 20 th Century Club and the Star theatre.
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .S26 [Scrapbook of theater programs covering the period from 1880 to 1905]	Mostly clippings of lipped cast lists from programs-- Academy of Music, Lyceum, Liederkrantz Hall, Star Theatres. May not all be Buffalo, at least one Chicago
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .T45 Juergens, G.M. Theatre record and scrap book. Buffalo, N.Y.; 1890-1922.	Newspaper clippings and theater programs; 1890 to 1922. Mostly Star and Teck Theaters in Buffalo, theaters in New York City, singing societies and light opera companies. Contains a partial program from a performance by Anna Pavlova in 1921, a libretto from the operatic burlesque "Orpheus and Eurydice" at the Star Theater in 1897, and a concert book for "Concert des Wiener Akademischen Gesangsverein" by the Buffalo Orpheus in 1910. No index.
Buffalo Stacks PN2073 .T5 [Theatrical scrap album, containing clippings from the New York Clipper and Buffalo newspapers, Oct. 1875 to October, 1876, and a number of original Buffalo play-bills]	Mostly newspaper clippings.
RBR WNYO 1920.L68 Rare Book Room appointment needed [Louise Michael scrapbook].	Autographs, photographs, and letters from celebrities of the 1920s through 1940s, including Geraldine Farrar, Serge Rachmaninoff, Katherine Cornell, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Jack Dempsey, Fritz Kreisler. Also included are theater programs, mementos, and menus.

SELECTED WEBSITES	NOTES
http://www.buffaloah.com/ Buffalo Architecture and History Check the table of contents or search for a particular theatre.	An extensive, well-illustrated online encyclopedia of notable architects, buildings, houses, neighborhoods, and more in the Buffalo area.

VERTICAL FILES
<p>The Vertical Files contain newspaper clippings and periodical articles, pamphlets, and miscellaneous material on historical topics. Ask a librarian to see the following files:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theaters (General) [more than one theater in an item] • Theaters -- Basil • Theaters – Irish Classical • Theaters – Kavinoky • Theaters – Shakespeare in Delaware Park • Theaters – Shea’s • Theaters – Studio Arena • Theaters – Theater of Youth (TOY) • Theatre in Buffalo [history, companies and actors not represented above]

VIDEOS/ MEDIA ROOM	
Videos can be found in the Media Room at the Central Library. They may be borrowed. Check the catalog for other copies and locations: http://www.buffalolib.org/vufind/	
Media NA6835 .B9 S49 2004V [DVD] Newberg, Rich A Palace for Buffalo Buffalo, NY: LIN Television Corp., [2005], ©2004	Documents the history of Shea's Buffalo theater, which opened in 1926 and was once one of the country's most elaborate movie palaces. Thanks to the efforts of many volunteers and experts, Shea's Buffalo has been restored to its original glory and now attracts national Broadway touring companies.

ADDITIONAL SEARCH SOURCES

Search the online catalog for books, magazines, videos, maps, and manuscripts owned by the Grosvenor Room, the Rare Book Room, Central Library, and every town and branch library in Erie County. Search at the web address below, or go to www.BuffaloLib.org →Library Catalog

https://bepl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default

To find additional sources beyond what is listed in this guide, use the keywords: buffalo AND theatre or theater, or the name of the theater, or use the following *subject terms*:

- Theatrical publishing
- Theater programs New York State Buffalo
- Theaters New York State Buffalo
- Playbills New York State Buffalo

WHERE ELSE CAN I RESEARCH BUFFALO THEATRES?	NOTES
<p>University at Buffalo Archives & Special Collections 420 Capen Hall Buffalo, NY 14260-1674 (716) 645-2916 http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/</p>	<p>Katharine Cornell collection, student work on theatre history, various Buffalo theatre histories.</p>
<p>Buffalo History Museum's Research Library 1 Museum Court Buffalo, NY 14216-3199 library@buffalohistory.org 716.873.9644 x 306 http://buffalohistory.org/Learn/Research-Library.aspx</p>	<p>Theater resources include historic photos of theatres, scrapbooks of theater programs, an archival collection on the Palace Burlesque Theater, and the papers of playwright Marian DeForest.</p>
<p>Search www.worldcat.org to find further materials on specific theaters and on Buffalo theater history.</p>	