



## Broadway North: The Dream of a Canadian Musical Theatre

*Mel Atkey*

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Did you know that the idea behind the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes was first tried out in Toronto? That Canada produced the world's longest-running annual revue? Few people realize the Canadian influences that are at the heart of American and British culture.

Author Mel Atkey's research for Broadway North included interviews with Norman and Elaine Campbell and Don Harron, creators of Anne of Green Gables-The Musical; Mavor Moore, founder of the Charlottetown Festival and of Spring Thaw; John Gray, author of Billy Bishop Goes to War; Ray Jessel and Marian Grudeff, Spring Thaw writers who had success on Broadway with Baker Street; Dolores Claman, composer of the Hockey Night In Canada theme, who also wrote the musicals Mr. Scrooge and Timber!!; and Galt MacDermot, the composer of Hair who started out writing songs for the McGill University revue My Fur Lady. Included is the phenomenal success of The Drowsy Chaperone. Atkey also draws on his own experience as a writer and composer of musicals, and tells the story of why a show that should have starred James Doohan (Star Trek's Scotty) didn't happen.

Composer, lyricist and author, Mel Atkey is currently based in the U.K. Proud of his Canadian cultural roots, he has long been fascinated with the notion of a distinctive Canadian musical theatre.



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