

BRIDGE THE BAUER / BUILD THE FUTURE

Protecting Our Theatre. Strengthening Our Future.

A Stronger Arts Community for All.



Dear Friends of the Bauer Theatre,

For nearly fifty years, the Bauer Theatre has been Antigonish's creative heart – where students, artists, and neighbours come together to connect, create, and belong. A Fire Marshal order now requires significant life-safety upgrades **by spring 2026** or our doors will close.

The **\$500,000 Bridge the Bauer Campaign** will fund critical fire-safety work while protecting the artistic, youth, and access programs that bring our Bauer Theatre to life. As the image suggests, **every gift is a step from the stage we cherish today toward the arts centre we'll build together tomorrow.**

As we launch this campaign, we're grateful to share that early supporters have already committed more than **\$300,000**, bringing us to **60% of our \$500,000 goal**. Government grants have been submitted. We are doing all we can and your participation now will help close that gap and show how strongly this community stands behind it's need for cultural space.

Without these upgrades, the Bauer will no longer be approved for public performances. That would mean much more than losing a building: we would lose a place where students learn by doing, where artists work is paid, where families bring children to their first play, and where community groups find a stage when they have nowhere else to go.

At the same time, we are working with partners on the **next chapter** – a new Performing & Visual Arts Centre for Antigonish. That project will take time. That is why we are asking for your help with **Bridge the Bauer**. This campaign will keep the Bauer open and safe while sustaining the programs that bring it to life. In other words, your support will both **protect what was built for us and prepare for what comes next.**

Last Year Theatre Antigonish celebrated its 50th Anniversary at the Bauer and five decades of partnership between StFX and community. Together, we now have the chance to ensure there is still a stage for the students and families who are only just discovering this place.

Would you consider a special gift to the **Bridge the Bauer Fund** this year? A gift of any size is one step closer to our goal. All gifts will be received and administered by Festival Antigonish on behalf of Festival Antigonish, Theatre Antigonish, and the community we serve.

Please take a moment to think about what the Bauer Theatre has meant – and could still mean – to you, your family, and this region. With your help, the lights will stay on in the Bauer, and together we'll take the first concrete steps toward a new arts centre that will serve Antigonish for generations.

With gratitude,

Caleb Marshall
Managing Director

Andrea Boyd
Artistic Director

Minoli Amit MD
Chair, Board of Directors

Bridge the Bauer keeps the lights on; Build the Future turns them into a beacon.

THEATRE
GIVING
CAMPAIGN

BRIDGE THE BAUER / BUILD THE FUTURE FOR 2025-2026

Why the Bauer Matters

For 50 years, the Bauer Theatre has been Antigonish’s creative heart – a shared stage for StFX students, local artists, and the wider community. Together, Theatre Antigonish and Festival Antigonish have created roughly **300 productions** on this stage.

Today, more than 8,000 community members pass through its doors each year for performances, classes, rehearsals, concerts, and special events. The Bauer also hosts partner organizations – like L’Arche Antigonish – when they need a place to gather, celebrate, and share their stories. These are the experiences at stake if the Bauer goes dark.

“L’Arche has partnered with Festival Antigonish and Theatre Antigonish for many year’s, bringing people with and without intellectual disabilities together on stage and in the audience. That tradition – and the inclusive welcome it represents – depends on having a safe, code-compliant, fully equipped local venue.”
– Megan MacDougall, L’Arche Antigonish

Why Now: The Bauer Safety Checklist

- A Provincial Fire Marshal order requires significant **upgrades by spring 2026** to remain open.
- Without this retrofit, the Bauer will be closed to the public – it one of the few dedicated professional performing arts spaces in the region.
- Planning for a new Arts Centre will take several years, help us check off these urgent safety items so the theatre can keep welcoming audiences until its successor is ready.



Fire Sealing & Penetrations

Seal gaps so fire and smoke can't spread into the seating area.



23 Fire-Rated Doors

Replace aging doors with modern fire-rated doors that close and latch properly.



Extended Sprinkler Coverage

Extend the sprinkler system across the stage and proscenium.



HVAC /Smoke Venting Upgrades

Upgrade the HVAC system so it can remove smoke during a fire instead of spreading it through the building.

OUR GOAL – \$500,000 BY SPRING 2026 ONE CAMPAIGN. TWO PRIORITIES.

\$450,000 – Bauer Retrofit & Fire Compliance

- To keep audiences, artists, and students safe in the Bauer over the next 5–6 years.

\$50,000 – Programming Bridge Fund

To keep the art going while construction happens, by helping to:

- Maintain core staff and artist employment.
- Secure alternate performance spaces.
- Sustain youth, access, and inclusion programs.

“The Bauer is our gathering place—an engine for youth participation, community pride, and creative expression...The loss of the Bauer—even temporarily—would be significant, not only to Festival Antigonish and Theatre Antigonish, but to our wider community.” -Sean Cameron, Mayor, Town of Antigonish

Your Gift in Action

Every contribution helps protect the people and the experiences they love in the Bauer.

Programming

- **\$50** – Makes it possible for a family to bring a child to the theatre for the very first time.
- **\$100** – Supports access initiatives like Pay-What-You-Can, relaxed performances, and accessible hearing.
- **\$250** – Provides a bursary for a child to attend a week of youth classes
- **\$500** – Secures an alternate venue day so programs continue during construction.

Fire-Safety Upgrades

- **\$1,000** – Helps seal fire-risk openings between the audience, basement, and backstage.
- **\$2,500** – Helps extend sprinklers and alarms to better protect the stage area.
- **\$5,000** – **Buy a Fire Door** – Funds one of **23 fire-rated doors**, with naming recognition on the door.
- **\$7,500** – Helps the HVAC system properly vent smoke in an emergency.
- **\$10,000** – **Builder’s Circle** – Underwrites a full “safety zone” (doors, sealing, and sprinklers in one area).
- **\$25,000+** – **Founders’ Circle** – Anchors a major phase of the retrofit and is recognized as a founding supporter in both the Bauer and the future Arts Centre.

You do not need to choose between these priorities – every gift supports the full bridge plan.

THEATRE
GIVING
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BRIDGE THE BAUER / BUILD THE FUTURE FOR 2025-2026

50 Years of Stage Lights & Stories

Theatre Antigonish was founded in 1974, transforming a former StFX gym into the Bauer Theatre. Festival Antigonish Summer Theatre joined the story in 1987 and a major community-led renovation campaign in the 1990s turned that makeshift space into the dedicated theatre we know today.



Together, Theatre and Festival Antigonish have created **over 300 plays** for the Bauer stage, involving **more than 2,300 local actors** and now welcoming **over 8,000 visitors every year**. Along the way, the Bauer has launched national careers—from Seamus O’Regan Jr. to actor John Ralston and Gaelic singer Mary Jane Lamond—and nurtured beloved local theatre families like the Murrays and the Alcorns, with multiple generations under its lights.

Through FAST alone, around **400 people attend Relaxed Performances each season**, more than **700 patrons access Pay-What-You-Can tickets**, and **over 100 audience members use the hearing loop system this summer**—real people, every year, whose access to live theatre depends on this building staying open and safe.



Stage Lights & Stories Podcast



To mark Theatre Antigonish’s 50th anniversary, a special five-part podcast series was created, **Stage Lights & Stories**, recorded on the Bauer Theatre stage. Hosted by longtime performer and volunteer **Janet Becigneul**, the series traces our history through conversations with every Artistic Director who has led Theatre Antigonish over the past five decades. Each episode offers a different window into the life of the Bauer – from its early days as a converted gym, and the 1990s community campaign that renovated and renewed the theatre, to today’s commitment to Canadian voices. Together, these stories reveal how many people, choices, and chances it took to build the theatre we know and love — and remind us that this community has stepped up to save the Bauer before, and can do so again.

Listen to the Episodes

Scan the QR code or visit open.spotify.com/show/3rOG3oTk0q66mr0r2oJF8f to hear the full series

SCAN



- 1. The Founder’s Flame: James Colbeck
- 2. The Show Must Go On: Jeannie MacKay-Smith
- 3. A Legacy of Belonging: Addy Doucette
- 4. Changing the Script: Ed Thomason
- 5. Holding the Space: Andrea Boyd

“The ARTS have always been and are the very cornerstone and foundation of every culture and civilization’ All which has been undertaken for over fifty years at the Bauer Theatre - in dedicated service to its community, the region, and the province. And with your help and commitment, Theatre and Festival Antigonish will be able to continue to do so well into the future”

– James Colbec, Founding Artistic Director, Theatre Antigonish

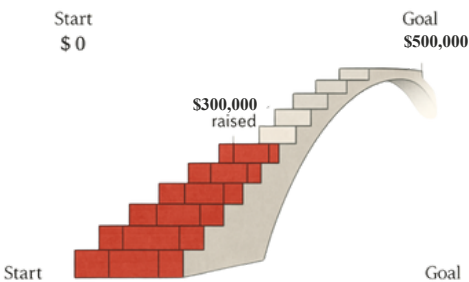
HOW WE'LL REACH \$500,000



Thanks to early leadership, we're **already halfway across the bridge**.

- The **Festival Antigonish Foundation's \$125,000 lead gift**, matched by **anonymous Arts Champions**, has set a powerful example and brought us to **\$300,000**.
- Applications totaling **\$100,000** are now with provincial, federal, and corporate partners to support.

Bridge the Bauer – Campaign Progress



Cumulative Giving: Today's Gift, Tomorrow's Recognition

Bridge the Bauer is the first phase towards a new Arts Centre. Every dollar you give now—toward the Bridge the Bauer Fund—will also count toward your total contributions when we launch the future arts centre capital campaign. The recognition steps you take in the Bauer today will carry forward into our new facility tomorrow: **every gift is a step on the same bridge**. Because this campaign runs into 2026, you may also choose to **spread your pledge over two tax years**, making gifts in both 2025 and 2026 and receiving a charitable receipt for each year.

Steps on the Bridge – Donor Recognition

All Bridge the Bauer donors receive a charitable tax receipt and inclusion in cumulative giving total for future arts centre recognition. Each Step receives the Benefits of all previous steps.

Step & Range	Summary of Key Benefits*
1 – Friends of the Bauer (up to \$499)	Name in donor roll and on campaign page, plus Insider e-newsletter.
2 – Access Allies (\$500–\$999)	Acknowledgement in house programs, name on lobby digital display, and a 48-hour priority booking window for tickets.
3 – Safety Stewards (\$1,000–\$2,499)	Your name on a lobby stair step, Annual Report listing, invite for two to the annual donor event, and a Festival tote bag.
4 – Stage Protectors (\$2,500–\$4,999)	Your name on a theatre stair, one companion ticket with two drink tickets, VIP discussion with the Artistic Director, and a key-chain flashlight.
5 – Safe Passage Circle (\$5,000–\$9,999)	Your name on a new fire door, invitation to the Bauer reopening ribbon-cutting, a limited-edition signed show poster, and extra drinks at the event.
6 – Builder's Circle (\$10,000–\$24,999)	Prominent Builder's listing in the Bauer, invitation to the Managing Director's Social, option for a donor profile, priority behind-the-scenes tour, and a Festival lapel pin.
7 – Founders' Circle (\$25,000+)	Naming on a dedicated Founders' Wall in the Bauer and new arts centre, access to host a private Greenroom reception.

**For the full list of benefits at each level, please visit the Bridge the Bauer Giving Page at festivalantigonish.com.*

"Our theatre is a place where the magic of enlightenment, awakening, and connectedness unites us. It is a realm where artists and theatre-goers come together in laughter, better able to face the tragedies of our world. It is a place where we create the possibility of seeing the world in a new light, from a new perspective, with a new heart—so that we may become more empathetic, compassionate, and wise. The Bauer Theatre, and all that is contained within, sparks joy. Our future is rooted in imagination, community and visionary aspirations."

- Andrea Boyd, Artistic Director

Your gift builds on major commitments already in place – it does not rest on the community alone. Your gift helps carry us the remaining steps across the bridge

**THEATRE
GIVING
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BRIDGE THE BAUER / BUILD THE FUTURE FOR 2025-2026

I would like to support: The Bridge the Bauer Campaign

FESTIVAL ANTIGONISH SOCIETY
CHARITY #88620 1599 RR 0001

Your Name/organization (for recognition)

Phone Number

Email Address

Address

City

Postal Code

☐ I've enclosed a cheque to my chosen charity.

(With this form) sent to

5015 Chapel Square,
Antigonish, NS, B2G 2W5

OR

☐ I'd like to make a credit card donation online
using the QR code
(No form needs to be submitted.)

AN ANNUAL GIFT (for 2 years):

☐ A 2-year annual gift of \$_____

☐ I prefer a one-time gift of \$_____

☐ Please acknowledge my gift

☐ I wish for my donation to remain anonymous.

☐ This gift is in honour of _____

Please accept my ☐ **1-year** or ☐ **2-year pledge to the Bridge the Bauer Giving Campaign.**

You may choose to make your annual gifts in both 2025 and 2026 and receive a charitable tax receipt for each year.

Total Donation

SCAN



All gifts to the **Bridge the Bauer Fund** are received and administered by **Festival Antigonish** to deliver the Bauer upgrades and programming bridge on behalf of Festival Antigonish Summer Theatre, Theatre Antigonish, and the wider community. To learn more about multi-year pledges, gifts of securities, or recognition opportunities, please contact caleb@festivalantigonish.ca

WAYS TO GIVE

All donations of **\$20 or more** will receive a charitable tax receipt.

- **CHEQUE** Payable directly to charity of choice. (Details on Giving Form)
- **ONLINE** at canadahelps.org. (Search: Festival Antigonish Society)
- **PHONE** Cassie Macdonald at **902-867-3333** between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (Tue -Fri) to donate.

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO SUPPORT

- **Legacy / Planned Giving:** The simplest option is to leave a bequest in your will. It could be a sum of money or a gift in kind such as securities or real estate. Your generosity lives on, securing the maximum possible tax benefits for your estate.
- **In Celebration / In Memory:** Consider a gift when you are planning an event, retirement or to honour the memory of a loved one.
- **Third Party Events:** You can turn any activity into a fundraiser. Let your imagination run wild! From bake sales to dinner parties, the possibilities are endless. Contact our office to let us know what you are planning.

Those who help us bridge the Bauer today will be remembered in the new facility tomorrow — their names carried forward as the founders who kept our community's creative flame alive.