

Oh Canada Canadiana onstage at Cornerstone  
By Dave Whitfield - Rocky Mountain Outlook  
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It's about hockey (what could be more seasonable), about Our Anne and it's about what makes us tick as Canadians.

Yes, Oh Canada Eh?'s summer dinner show is back on stage in Canmore at Cornerstone Theatre and Restaurant.

Running every night but Thursdays until Oct. 20, the cast of six will serve up both cuisine and character sketches as they perform in three or four roles apiece.

The cast includes Joe Morris, Christine Stewart, Clayton Labbe, Karita Mullins, William Petrie and Melody Robinet, who joins in the fun this week.

"It's a two-hour tribute to Canada," said Morris. "There are 70 parts or whole songs by Canadian artists and it focusses on Mounties, Anne of Green Gables, saloon girls, hockey players – all things Canadian.

"It's an integrated dinner show with the cast both on and off stage."

Oh Canada Eh? dinner shows run from 6:30 to 9 p.m., with cast members, backed up serving staff, attending to tables, appearing on stage and encouraging audience participation – all amidst a flurry of costume changes.

Those costume changes can be tricky, said Petrie, who began performing in Oh Canada productions part-time in Niagara Falls. Petrie portrays a hockey player, which means appearing on the floor and on stage in skates. "You have to be versatile," he said. "It's challenging, but people will be able to come out and see my pirouettes."

All cast members have appeared in previous dinner shows and getting together for the 2010 season, said Mullins, "has meant fine tuning, we're not starting from scratch this time."

While the summer production has been staged in Canmore previously, changes have been made to the musical selection and choreography.

"And we try to get everyone involved," said Stewart. "We see who can get the best cheers from the audience, get people singing and up on their feet dancing. It's really interactive."

The summer show was written and created by J. Sean Elliot, Jim Cooper and the original 1992 cast, with musical arrangements by Ross Inglis and a revised script and score by Morris, JP Thibodeau and the 2006 cast. The show is directed by Thibodeau, with choreography by Jodi Harrison, stage management by Gina Power, sound programming by Etienne St. Jacques and musical direction by Deb Rosen.

The dinner show began April 23 and, other than some less than full houses due to Iceland's volcanic ash spewing into the ozone and cancelling international bookings, all have been well attended, said Morris.

In an effort to make the summer production even more popular, a locals' special has been incorporated where for every ticket purchased at full price, a second can be had for 50 per cent off. Kids under 12 are free with paid tickets.

"That's a great promotion for locals," said Labbe, who arrived in town a few days ago to take up his role. "And for people who saw the show years ago, with the changes made, it's different this year."

Musically, the summer dinner show offers everything from the musical Hair to a Shania Twain medley, Anne Murray and Joni Mitchell. Specific songs include Gordie Lightfoot's "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald", Trooper's "We're Here For A Good Time" and "American Woman" by The Guess Who.

Dinner is a four-course meal served family-style; with roast beef and chicken, Haddock, veggies, dessert and tea or coffee. A full bar is available as well.

A portion of the proceeds of the show go to KidSport Bow Valley.

For more information, or tickets, visit [www.atthecorner.ca](http://www.atthecorner.ca) or call 609-0004.