



## **New band shell rededicated to Ringwood**

The new Botanio Park stage roof was rededicated Thursday night just before Performances in the Park.

Gwen Ringwood came to Williams Lake with her doctor husband in 1951 as an established writer with CBC radio series, TV drama and short stories to her credit. She continued her writing career in the Cariboo and was best known locally for the musical play, "The Road Runs North," which was produced here in 1967 to celebrate Canada's centennial.

Ringwood conducted many workshops in writing and theatre and had a special interest in young writers. She volunteered to adjudicate at festivals and competitions, and encouraged the arts in any way she could. She worked with students at St. Josephs Mission, developing the book "My Heart Is Glad," with the grade seven and eight students.

She also worked on a rudimentary dictionary of Shuswap, Chilcotin and Carrier. The University of Victoria honored her with an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts for her Contributions to British Columbia literature.

During the BC Centennial celebrations in 1971, the city built the Gwen Ringwood Amphitheatre in Botanio Park and dedicated it to her. It was the scene of many activities for a number of years, but eventually fell into decay.

The existing concrete slab was constructed in the early 1980s to replace the Gwen Ringwood theatre, but the structure was never completed. In the fall of 2001, Pioneer Log Homes was approached to design a new multi purpose log structure which could function as a band shell and picnic shelter.

Thanks to a donation of half the value of the structure from Pioneer Log Homes and a further contribution of \$12,500 from the Williams Lake and District Credit Union 50th Anniversary Fund, the project was able to move forward and was complete last week.

The new Gwen Ringwood Theatre is currently home to Performances in the Park, and it is hoped that the community will take advantage of the facility for hosting other special events in the park.

The roof construction brings the city another step closer to fully implementing the Botanio Park Master Plan, which was completed in 1999. The next project for consideration is a new washroom building, which had been, designed and is proposed to be located adjacent to the Seventh Avenue entrance to the park.