

CAMPUS theatre and music groups will have a new home by mid-September, Derek Mann, University Information Officer, said Monday.

The Arts Centre, now under construction on University Avenue opposite the SUB will house facilities for the fine arts. The complex includes a 1100-seat auditorium, a drama theatre, an art gallery and facilities for the departments concerned.

Delays in construction have been caused by financial difficulties, changes in the seating capacity of the auditorium, and discussion about furnishing priorities, explained Mann.

The auditorium, to be named after Rebecca Cohn, a noted patron of the arts, was slated in 1966 for completion by early 1968. At that time, the estimated cost of the complex was over \$1,000,000.

Delays caused by changes in the seating capacity in the auditorium and other plan changes, resulted in an increased final cost. The \$3,840,000 contract was awarded in May 1969 to Kenny Construction of Yarmouth.

Dr. Malcolm Ross, Chairman of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, explained why the centre was built. "The germ of the idea was definitely the Rebecca Cohn bequest". The money, now over \$500,000, was given for construction of a music auditorium, to be completed by mid-1969. "Expansion on the idea grew naturally as a result of looking at the needs of the campus," he added. The executors of the estate agreed to an indefinite extension, provided construction was started in 1969, Mann added.

Mann explained that the centre "is not planned to be run the same way as the SUB, paying off a mortgage. In this case, the university won't be able to do it."

Finances were supplied by the bequest, a \$2,000,000 self-liquidating loan from the provincial government.

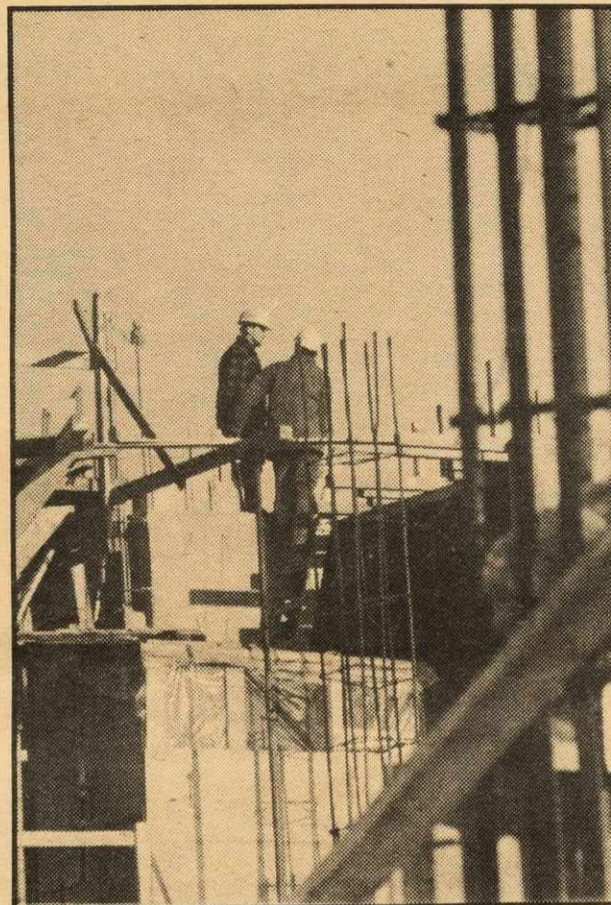
by Dorothy Wigmore

\$500,000 from the Sir James Dunn Foundation for the theatre and \$100,000 from Molson Breweries. Approximately \$400,000 must come from other sources. This means some parts of the building will not be finished by opening day.

"I'd like to stress that the Cultural Affairs Committee is concerned with the development of cultural events on the campus at large," said Ross. "We hope to do what we can to stimulate cultural interest among students and staff." The Arts Centre will provide this opportunity, he added.

"We are anxious to avoid any conflict between cultural and educational groups," he said. To achieve this, John Crompton, a young man with experience in almost every facet of entertainment, has been appointed Co-ordinator for Cultural Activities. "He is very anxious to work with the Students' Council, and will be available to help any proposed student activity," Ross added. There will be no conflict with SUB activities as a result.

Both men feel the building is going to be "pretty busy." "It is a university building and it will be fully used", ex-



THE ARTS CENTRE

plained Ross. "But, it's just not a great big O'Keefe centre. We hope to see a good deal of student productions," he added.

The Atlantic Symphony is the only outside organization that has asked to use the building so far, said Mann. In agreement with the will, they can give five or six concerts a year. They also may use it for rehearsals the morning of any concert.

The building, Mann explained, is a four floor splitlevel affair.

THE art gallery of the lower level, will take the large travelling exhibitions. The present gallery has been unable to do this. One possibility, suggested Ross, is a National Gallery exhibition.

The entrance provides easy access to the three principal parts of the building — the art gallery, the auditorium and the theatre. It serves as lobby for the theatre, balcony of the auditorium, a possible sculpture gallery, and as a student lounge on the second floor.

"The auditorium is regarded as another facility for general university use," said Mann. It is larger than the first plan by 300 seats. "It may have to be used for large lectures," added Ross. "We have to use what space we can get."

The theatre has seats for 200-400, depending on which of the possible six stages is used. Like the auditorium, it has annexed facilities for departmental staff — offices, practice areas, lecture rooms, etc. "It is conceived of as part of the drama department," Ross explained. They hope to retain the use of the theatre in the old Law building, he added.

The Committee is responsible for the centre. It has both student and faculty members, some of whom are professionals in the fine arts. They have planned the major opening program for late in November to commemorate Beethoven's 200th birthday.

It will be held in November "in case the building does not open on time," explained Ross. A series of concerts by different musical groups, including the Atlantic Symphony will be presented. This is an attempt to demonstrate the wide range of Beethoven's work, from opera to chamber music. Lectures on the master will precede the concerts. A large pictorial exhibition on Beethoven will be shown in the Art Gallery at the same time.

