

Barry Morse

# Thoughts & reflections

By JOHN KNECHTEL  
Brunswickan Staff

As Barry Morse relaxes in the chair opposite, sipping from a cup of SUB coffee, his steely eyes look out at me, transposed from such television classics and *The Fugitive* and *Space 1999*, from radio shows and theatres across the globe.

Barry Morse is starring as the infamous Scrooge in TNB's production of *A Christmas Carol* and this Wednesday, with the aura and texture of a storyteller immersed in his craft, he spoke to *The Brunswickan* of the energy involved in a touring company, a *A Christmas Carol*, of Charles Dickens, and of himself.

Q. How do you feel about being at TNB and in the sort of atmosphere a touring company creates?

A. Working for TNB is an unusual and exciting experience, the company brings theatre out of the major cultural centres and makes it accessible to more and more people. The touring company is an extraordinary accomplishment simply in terms of the technical problems that arise, the sheer complexity of this type of theatre is horrendous. TNB is one of the wonders of this country and the envy of the better endowed cities in Canada.

Q. *A Christmas Carol* is one of the classic shows, is the TNB production along the lines of a Stan Dard production or is it more innovative?

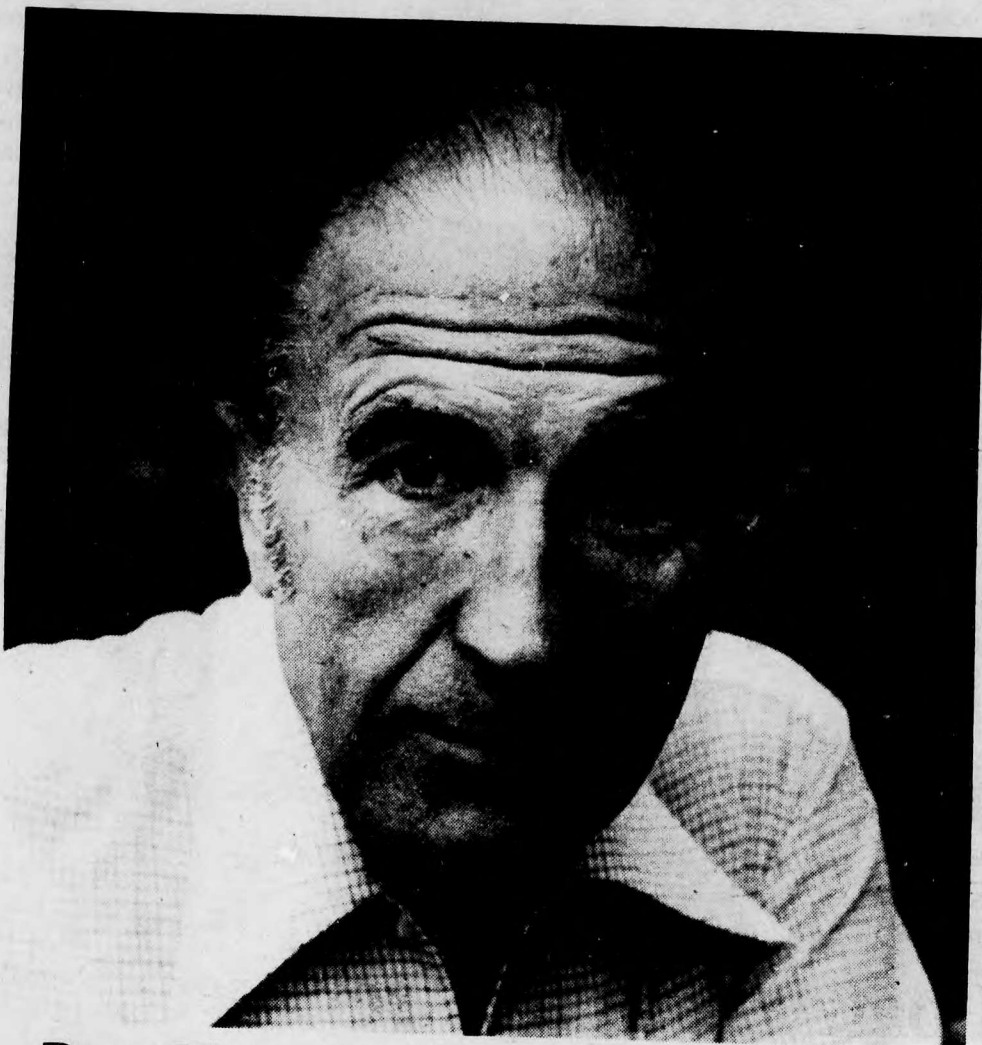
A. Well, since the book was written in 1843 *A Christmas Carol* has become the greatest Christmas story since the original Christmas story. Almost everyone knows about Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit, the ghost of

Christmas Past and Christmas present and that whole great story. The novel has been dramatized in countless ways...for the theatre, for movies, for television, for radio. It has even been made into a musical a couple of times, and this version is, in my view, the best dramatization of the original Dickens story that has ever been done because it manages to encompass not only the actual structure and the characters and the events of the story but it manages much more importantly, to encapsulate the spirit, the very Dickensian spirit which is a marvelous realization in external terms a story that never grows old. It is the story of how the spirit of Christmas manages to lay hold of his heart and turn him into a thoroughgoing Christmas lover. It is a very valid and very, very timely story about how appallingly

self-centred we are about our own interests and our own concerns. If it does have a theme, a moral, it is simply that we, all of us, have the right and the duty to pay some attention to the fact that there are a few other people on this planet.

*A Christmas Carol* had, when it came out, an incredible impact that is hard to measure in real terms. It was an immensely popular show.

The story and his others were written in serial form, so very often, as he wrote a story, he had no idea how it was going to end. He was always writing against the calendar and against the clock and this created an awful headlong rush against deadlines. This gives



Barry Morse, starring in "A Christmas Carol"

to his writing and to his whole personality in a way a marvelously breathless, headlong, and enthusiastic, excited, hurried sort of tempo that I hope we will be able to capture that in our production.

Q. Several actors have said that they find it hard not to take their work home with them. In this production you are co-starring with your wife; does this make it especially difficult?

A. No, not especially difficult, especially easy. I have a built in guide, support and friend. For

some people in our trade to work together can sometimes produce all kinds of strains and stresses, but one has to be aware of this possibility and keep at an effort to work together. It is a great joy, in a private, personal family sense to return home after the day's rehearsal and relax and discuss our work.

## Molly Oliver ...an image of New Brunswick

By JOHN HAMILTON  
Brunswickan Staff

To tavern goers of Fredericton the name Molly Oliver should be a familiar one. A band that appears fairly frequently in this city, the Nova Scotia based group spoke briefly to several members of the campus media the last time they were here.

"We're a reflection of New Brunswick," said Bruce Wheaton, lead guitarist and one of two lead vocals in the band. "That's one reason for our popularity in the east."

Molly Oliver plays pop rock or what some call "tavern rock n'roll," and Wheaton is the one responsible for any original material the group does. They have one album currently on the market and one now in the works. Wheaton said that they record mostly in Halifax and Montreal but they have ventured father afield in search of quality recording studios.

The name Molly Oliver comes from a pirate ship, which,

according to legend ran rum up the east coast in the 16th century. Wheaton said that this choice of name reflects the band's eastern heritage, but that lately they have toured much of central Canada and as far west as Calgary. Wheaton said that he finds western audiences as a whole tend to be less open minded and more into fads when it comes to tavern bands.

"Some universities are so into New Wave that when we play for them, they ignore us," he said.

Wheaton added that Molly Oliver could play new wave music if they wanted to but that new wave is the "easiest music going." New wave is basic, like going back to the 50's rock n' roll," he said.

Wheaton concluded by saying that with five members together doing a lot of travelling there are bound to be disputes, worn tempers and the like. "We all get along though," he said. "You have to when you're in five different cities a week."



Molly Oliver