The Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association Newsletter
June - July 2012

What's Been Happening

"To be, or not to be, that is the question."

In the last newsletter we reported that our theater experts believe that restoration of the Egyptian can be done in phases with the Theatre opened at less cost and significantly sooner than originally anticipated, after the structural safety issues are fully addressed. Though George Kramer (our lead consultant), Rich Foster (from Cascadia Consulting, our major grant funding experts), and Herb Stratford (who is on the board of the League of Historic American Theaters, and the founder of Historic Theatre Consultants, who are performing our market/feasibility study) have a wealth of theater restoration experience, they are not licensed civil/structural engineers. The feasibility of their recommended approach needs to be reviewed and endorsed by such engineers before we can proceed, and we are wasting no time in pursuing this engineering review.



With George Kramer's assistance, a Request for Proposal (RFP) to perform this engineering design work has already been prepared and issued by the City to a solid group of West Coast engineering firms that all have demonstrated historic rehabilitation project experience. We are proceeding on a fast track and expect to issue an award for the engineering design contract by early July. The scope of work encompassed in this engineering design RFP carries us through determining the most appropriate structural repair system and process for the Theatre, producing the drawings and calculations necessary for obtaining required building permits, and developing the detailed design drawings and specifications that will allow us to bid construction of the restoration project.

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

As also reported in our last newsletter, Historic Theatre Consultants (HTC) was awarded the contract to perform a market/feasibility study for the Egyptian Theatre. This study will help us determine what our community would like us to use the Theatre for when it is re-opened as well as help us make a convincing case before the grant funding agencies whom we will approach to obtain the lion's share of the funding we will need. HTC's study is well underway -- many of you may have met with either Herb Stratford or Mary Bosch (from Marketek, HTC's partner in the effort) when they were here. HTC reports that they have received a strong response to the survey they conducted -- thank you for your input! They are scheduled to send us the results of their study in early June and Herb Stratford will be meeting with the ETPA Board and City/ETPA Steering Committee to discuss his findings and recommendations on Wednesday, June 13th. The meeting will start at 5:30 pm and be held in the meeting room at the Fire Station at 450 Elrod Ave. All interested folks are invited to attend. You'll hear more about the results of this study in our next newsletter.

Upcoming Events

June 1, 2012 – First Friday Wine Walk – 5:00-7:30 p.m. Come see us at the Egyptian Theatre office at 255 N. Broadway, Coos Bay.

June 20, 2012 - Special Event - Book Signing & Movie see pg 6 for details.

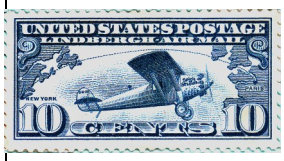
July 6, 2012 – First Friday Wine Walk – 5:00-7:30 p.m. This month's Wine Walk will benefit the Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association! Come out and "Walk Like an Egyptian." You can buy an engraved Egyptian Theatre wine glass to support the cause.

Summer Movies! – We are planning to schedule movies for the months of June and July, so stay tuned for announcements on these. They will be shown across the street from the Egyptian Theatre at the Broadway Rock Hall next to Sharkbite's Café.

Also coming up sometime in the next couple of months: a poker party fundraiser. Stay tuned for more details on this fun event!

Meet Your Board Members - Dave Abernathy

In this issue we are turning the spotlights on a great son of the Show-Me State, an occasional kilt wearing gentleman of Scottish descent whose hometown's bragging rights include the financing of Charles Lindbergh's flight in the Spirit of St. Louis, the invention of ice cream cones, and the Gateway Arch - a symbol of St. Louis as the gateway to the West which led both Lewis and Clark and our own Dave Abernathy to the Pacific Ocean here on the Oregon Coast.



Dave has served on the Egyptian Theatre Board since 2006 and, since the temporary closing of the Theatre, he has admirably filled the role of Co-Chair of the City/ETPA Steering Committee charged with Theatre re-opening and Chair of the ETPA's Visioning and Preliminary Planning Committee.



Dave was born, raised and educated in St. Louis, Missouri where he capped his academic studies by earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Washington University. He began his working career at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and then moved on to Continental Bank and Trust where he became the supervisor of the Trust Department Operations Section. Eventually Dave followed the lure of the West to San Francisco where he rose to the position of Trust Operations Officer of Northern California for Union Bank and, later, served as comptroller for a California food importer. Along the way, Dave became acquainted with Coos Bay, and finally decided to retire here in 2003.

The Banker Has a Heart!!!. . . (to be found beating to the sounds in our own Egyptian Theatre!)

Banking was Dave's bread and butter, but sound is his life's passion. In Dave's words, "At Roosevelt High School in St. Louis, I went nuts over the public address equipment and its operations. In my sophomore year I joined the Public Address Club which ran the equipment for audio sessions, after school dances, and various shows, and was elected the President the following year. In college I helped several amateur groups out with their sound equipment, designing, set-up and operation. After college I continued to do sound for various churches and to collect stereo and mono sound equipment. During this time I purchased the crown in my collection" . . . (read more about this later on!!).

Dave developed his interest in historic theaters at the Fabulous Fox of St. Louis where he knew the celebrated organist, Stan Kann, for many years. As Dave tells it, "Every time I went back to St. Louis, I met Stan at the Fox. I got to see a lot of the Fox including the back stage and below stage areas by following Stan as he would get the organ ready to play, and I became acquainted with Mrs. Strauss who owns the Fabulous Fox. She and her husband restored the Fox after it had been closed for six to seven years." As inspiration for the future of our own historic gem, the exotic Egyptian Theatre of Coos Bay, take a look at the Fabulous Fox of St. Louis: http://www.fabulousfox.com/photo_gallery.aspx



Fortunately for us, Dave became interested in our Egyptian Theatre in 2006 after he spoke with two members of the ETPA at a Fun Festival. Dave recalls, "They told me what they were attempting to do and I told them about my interests in P.A. sound and the equipment that I had collected over the years. We had a match and that leads to today as I am the Director of Sound for the Egyptian Theatre. I love doing the sound for live productions."

To say that Dave is dedicated to his role as Sound Director is an understatement. The sheer time commitment he has been willing to make is a gift beyond price. It was Dave who was always on-site long before the audience arrived and until the late hours of the evening, carefully winding up microphone cords, putting away speakers and assuring that everything was shut down safely for the night. Dave brought in his own equipment to use until the ETPA could afford to buy equipment of their own. So the word "dedication" doesn't begin to describe his service. A self-sacrificing kind of love comes much closer: love of

his craft and a deep love and respect for the Theatre. It follows that Dave is one of a select few who have earned the coveted Egyptian Golden Charioteer Award, an honor bestowed by the ETPA on those whose devotion, length, and quality of service to the Egyptian Theatre have been truly exceptional.

And now, to end the suspense, what is the "crown" of Dave's sound collection? When you next see Dave, inquire regarding his Motiograph speaker. As he tells us, "the speaker was made about 1934 for a 1,000 seat movie house and was re-coned in 1974 -- it sounds fantastic!" Susan Watson, one of those who has heard it, says, "The sound produced by this speaker was so pure that it made me feel I was listening to Bach live from the middle of a cathedral! " Maybe Dave will give you a demonstration too!

Did You Know? By Helen Doving, ETPA Historian

THE GRAND OPENING

As the ugly duckling became a swan, the whole community marveled at the metamorphosis when the Nobles and the Marsdens commissioned Lee Arden Thomas, architect, and Carl F. Berg, designer, to convert the not-particularly-beautiful Motor Inn into the magnificent Egyptian Theatre, bringing big-time entertainment and culture to this isolated section of the southwest Oregon coast.

The grand opening, complete with state and motion picture bigwigs, professional vaudeville, guest performers, and a premier movie featuring top name stars, was celebrated on a Wednesday evening, November 25, 1925.

But even before all this excitement, for 50 cents- adults and 25 cents-children, on Monday and Tuesday, November 23 and 24, families could view a sort of preview of this fabulous new movie house and enjoy a full program of vaudeville acts *plus* "A SPLENDID PROGRAM OF PICTURES."

Imagine a whole vaudeville troupe, complete with costumes, properties, and equipment, traveling down the coast from Portland. There were five ferry crossings (the ferries ran only on specified schedules), or, going by way of Drain, still having to "make" the Coos Bay ferry crossing. 1925 travel arrangements provided a rather low priority on the comfort factor for wayfarers. Highways were two-lane, rough, and curvy. Every vehicle carried a jack and a tire repair kit, for good reason. Defrosting equipment consisted of a rag to wipe off the condensation on the windshield—and hope that the mechanical windshield swipe would work. Blankets provided heat—open windows ventilated the fumes from the exhaust. Travel from Portland to Coos Bay took anywhere from eight to ten hours, barring unforeseen problems.

The vaudeville program featured two complete shows, one at 7 p.m. and the other at 8:45, with performers from the Ackerman and Harris Circuit, direct from the Hippodrome Theater in Portland. This new and exciting experience was being introduced on the stage at the opening of the Egyptian, while Hoot Gibson was starring in "The Great Stampede" at the Noble located on 3rd and Central—Adults, 35 cents, children l0 cents.

A song and dance review billed as "Stepping Along" opened the program with an elaborate presentation featuring popular tunes of the day, the latest dance steps, and colorful costumes.

Following the high stepping revue came "The Sallardo Trio," an act featuring several contortionists performing unbelievable feats of strength and balance in a novelty act entitled "Jungle Land."

"Oddities on Land and Sea" was the title of the third offering on the bill, featuring Ardinger and Frain. This was somewhat of a mystery performance.

Esmeralda and Webb – "Marimbaphonists Supreme" brought dexterity and musical talent to the stage with their offerings on their marimbas, an unusual and exotic instrument, proving to be a popular act with the audience.

The top performer of the evening was Billy Single Clifford, one of the early day song and dance men. He was billed as "The Musical Comedian" in SENSE AND NONSENSE—A sort of an early-day Jack Benny.

After all these vaudeville acts, "A SPLENDID PROGRAM OF PICTURES" was shown, with the entire program repeated to an enthusiastic audience for the second show beginning at 8:45 p.m.

Wednesday night—THE GRAND OPENING!!!



~~ Doris Parker – Our Faithful Lady of the Ticket Window ~~

As a member of the board of the Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association, I'm very proud to say that our group was able to successfully operate the Egyptian Theatre for over four and a half years before its closure in March of 2011. None of this would have been possible without the continuous support of our membership, our donors, and most importantly the energetic group of volunteers that gave their personal time to staff the Theatre every weekend. One of the most dedicated of these volunteers was Doris Parker. Most of you have probably had the opportunity to meet her. She was the first person you would have seen when you came to the movies. Her volunteer work was done, front and center, in the Egyptian's ticket booth.

Doris wasn't the first or only volunteer to sell tickets during our operation of the Theatre, but before long she became our most regular volunteer for that position. In fact she took such a liking to it that soon she was there for almost every event. During the summer months when we were the busiest, it didn't seem to matter how many events we had or what time they were held. Doris took special pride in manning "her window"! She took her volunteer position very seriously and we knew we could always count on her to be there. She really got into the spirit of things too. For some of our movies, as an entertainment to our patrons, we would encourage our volunteers to dress up in costume to match the particular film we were showing. Doris continually surprised us by donning outfits that ranged from western garb to 70's styles to a costume for the "Rocky Horror Picture Show." All of this added a fun touch that our patrons very much enjoyed.



As many of you may have noticed, the Egyptian Theatre lobby took on a different look in the years the ETPA managed it. We wanted our patrons to feel welcomed and to know they had come to a special place. A lot of that "homey" feel came from the decorations that adorned the lobby, and most of the decorations came from Doris. She loved decorating the Egyptian for special events and holidays almost as much as she loved selling movie tickets! Halloween and Christmas were two of her very favorites, but so was the Fourth of July. A couple of weeks before the holiday she would arrive at the Theatre with a cart loaded full of decorations; then she would go to work decking out the concessions counter and her ticket booth with lights, streamers and other festive adornments. Here is a picture of her,



taken during one of our Fourth of July events. It brings back particularly happy memories to me, because she and I shared in our love of decorating the lobby, so we would often work together on these projects.

Sadly, Doris is no longer with us, but we have honored her love and dedication to the Theatre by placing her name on our Lifetime Membership Plaque, which will hang in the Egyptian lobby when the Theatre is reopened. Also, at the request of her family, we have set up a special memorial fund in her name for restoration of the Egyptian ticket window, the spot in the Theatre she loved the most. What more can I say of my dear friend Doris? First, that I miss her, and second that I'm happy I had the chance to work side by side with her. Her constant commitment was nothing short of amazing, and her spunky sense of humor kept us all laughing. She served the cause very well and for that she will always have our deepest gratitude.

By: Susan Watson

The Historic Holly Theatre in Medford, Oregon is Re-lit!

Our congratulations go to George Kramer, special consultant for Jefferson Public Radio's project to restore the Historic Holly Theatre in downtown Medford. On April 21, 2012, a special ceremony was held to light the gigantic sign and marquee that will now grace the front of the theater. See the article and picture below for more details of the event. As many of you know George Kramer is also our consultant. We are very lucky to have his expertise to guide us in the restoration of the historic Egyptian Theatre!

Holly Theatre Grand Relighting Event Huge Success!

The JPR Foundation celebrated completion of the restoration of the Holly Theatre's historic facade on Saturday, April 21, 2012 by holding a Grand Relighting event during which the theatre's restored 33-foot neon blade sign and marquee were lit for the first time since the 1970s. Over 1,000 people lined 6th Street in front of the theatre, which was closed to traffic, to participate in the event marking completion of the first phase of bringing the 1,000-seat,1930-era classic theatre back to life as a venue for live entertainment, cultural and film events.



Holly Relighting / Photo: David Gibb Photography

As part of the façade restoration, the Holly Theatre's 6th Street façade was reconfigured to the way it was originally constructed when it was built in 1929-30. Aluminum awnings and other modifications added to the building over the years were removed, windows were refurbished, roofing and gutters were repaired, facade brick was cleaned and repointed, new poster cases and doors were fabricated and installed, paint colors were returned to their original hues, a new tile entryway was created using the pattern of the original entry and, most dramatically, the theatre's 33-foot blade sign and marquee were replicated to match the building's original signs. All restored elements were completed in consultation with Medford's Landmark and Historic Preservation Commission and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and are consistent with the *U.S. Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.*

Oregon Coast Lab Band and Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association hold successful fundraiser!

On April 21, 2012, the Oregon Coast Lab Band and the ETPA held a joint fundraiser at the Hales Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Southwestern Oregon Community College. The Lab Band was raising money for travel expenses to attend the Sacramento Music Festival at the end of May. The ETPA was raising money for the Egyptian Theatre renovation fund. The event was very well attended and patrons enjoyed not only a fantastic performance by the Lab Band but also a large silent auction with all kinds of great items to choose from. The event was a **BIG** success, bringing in over $1,800 for **EACH** of the organizations!

We would like to send out a **HUGE THANK YOU** to the Lab Band for inviting us to co-sponsor this concert and fundraiser.

Saturday, May 26, 2012 - Memorial Day Parade -

Join the ETPA and march in the Memorial Day Parade. Meet on the corner of 4th and Golden behind Bi Mart at 10:30. Wear your Egyptian Shirts and help us let folks know we're still here and working to save the Theatre.



Memorial Day Parade 2011

PAYPAL Account Available!

For your convenience, we now have a PayPal account on our website! Go to www.egyptian-theatre.com to access it on our "Home" page. Contribute to the Renovation Fund by clicking the "Donate" button. King Tut thanks you for your support!

Wednesday Farmer's Market

Come see Rick Shearer and the Egyptian gang in our booth at the Farmer's Market each week. You can become a member of the ETPA, and buy a great looking Egyptian T-shirt, coffee mug, calendar, or other collectible items. Your donations will be gratefully accepted as well. Your show of local support is essential to the Egyptian Theatre restoration project!



Special Event - June 20th Meet the Author of "Sometimes A Great Movie"

6:00 PM at Sharkbites' Broadway Theatre. Then stay to see **"Sometimes A Great Notion"** at 7:00 PM. Matt Love, the author, will sign copies of his book and give a short talk before the movie. Members: $4.00 General Admission $5.00.

Happy Fourth of July to you from the ETPA board and volunteers! Thank you for your continued support of our efforts to save the Historic Egyptian Theatre.