The Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association Summer/Fall Newsletter 2020

What's Happening (or Not)

Though our doors are closed, the heat is turned way down and the interior lights are off, there is still quite a bit going on behind the scenes at the Egyptian.



Donald and Carole

This spring, we received a generous bequest from the estate of Donald and Carole Kinnaird. We have set that money aside as leverage for future grant writing for other projects like repairing the stage. For those of you who don't know, our stage slopes downward dramatically and is about a foot lower at the back wall than it is at the front of the stage. This is due to the sinking of the building over the years which was caused from being built on fill. The back wall was stabilized in the first round of renovations to get the theatre open again back in 2013-14, so that shouldn't happen again. Leveling the stage will make live performances much safer once we are open again and will permit us to host more events such as acrobats, ballet and ballroom dancing.

You may remember that the Board and other volunteers worked on the rigging last summer when we brought down the beautiful drops and replaced the ropes holding them.



Last summer— putting new ropes on our antique drops.



This summer—Jeremy and David in the fly loft running aircraft cable to hold the weights.

That was just a portion of all the work that needed to be done. There were also metal cables that needed replacement. They stabilize the counterweights that make it possible to raise and lower the movie screen, curtains and drops. Replacing those required special equipment and more expertise than we had. We are pleased to announce that the work to replace those got started in mid August thanks to help from both Board member, Jeremy Conway, a rigging expert who has been under employed due to the pandemic and some of our great volunteers. (see page 3 for more)

Thanks to the generosity of our members, patrons and a few grants for COVID relief, we have accumulated enough money to fund our monthly operating expenses through the end of the year. The Oregon Community Foundation provided us with $5,000 to assist in operating expenses.

Thank you to all of you who have contributed!

Lastly, we are delighted to announce that **we are moving forward with the roof replacement** that many of you donated towards this past year. This is the flat roof that covers the auditorium portion of the building and suffered a few leaks last winter. The roof over the stage area was replaced in the first set of renovations. The City of Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency put the project out for bids in July. In August the bid was awarded to LP Metal Works of Turner, OR. The project is estimated to cost $122,600 which is very close to what was expected. They expect to begin work the 31st of August with completion in October. The ETPA would like to thank The Coquille Indian Tribe, the Hillman Foundation, the Oregon Community Foundation and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office for their support of this project.

So, as you can see, there is a lot that has been going on behind the scenes. However, given the current situation with COVID, there is also a lot that cannot go on. We anticipate being closed through the end of 2020 and possibly into the early part of 2021. This of course, is dependent on what happens with the virus and the state orders for gatherings. It is just not financially feasible for us, or the people that rent our facility for their fundraisers, to open with the current restrictions. Sadly, this means there will be no “Sounds of Christmas” concert this year.

We will look at reopening as soon as it is safe and we can accommodate whatever distancing, disinfecting and other requirements as may still be necessary. We hope you will all bear with us and be ready to return as soon as we are safely able to do so.

As we enter the fall, our membership drive will begin in October. You may say, “Why should I pay dues when the theatre is closed?” Even though our doors are locked, there are some expenses that are on-going during the closure. We must still maintain our website, phone, insurance, etc., and we want to keep the marquee lit every evening. We just spent a little over $300 to have the flasher on the Egyptian part of the marquee repaired as well as replacing burned out light bulbs. You’d be surprised at how much the electricity is for just that!

You are the heart of the Egyptian and we want to keep her beating now and for the future of all of Coos County.

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Behind the Scenes from our Executive Director

Even though the Egyptian is closed during the pandemic, we are working behind the scenes.

On August 20 & 21 a group of volunteers, led by board member Jeremy Conway and a local professional rigger, helped install an entirely new set-up to a line set for lighting.

This entailed 3 people climbing to the top of the fly loft to install a new head block and running new aircraft cable down to the stage floor to install the new light bar. For the first time since 1925 the Egyptian now has one all new lighting bar that we can easily operate to install lighting for stage shows.

This process now needs to be repeated 16 more times to bring the rigging up-to-date.

Last summer a large group of volunteers ran all new ropes for the drops so that will help save weeks of time when the new equipment arrives.

We want to thank our volunteers who came to help with this process. Board members: Al Ellis, Jeremy Conway, David Calvillo, and Laura Fisher. Also, volunteer climbing expert Dave Wilhite and our professional help, Dave Rader.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page ***Egyptian Theatre Coos Bay*** for more pictures of our progress.

Kara



An old pulley being removed



New tension block installed with old pulley to left. 1 down, 16 to go!



Preservation Association

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