

McLean County Museum of History

Normal Theater Collection

Processed by
Emma Meyer
Fall 2014

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1937-2014
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	Section on the Normal Theater (pp. 40-44) in <i>The Legacy: A Survey of the Historical Architecture of the Town of Normal</i> (1990). Call number: IL (McLean) ARCH EKB

Brief History

The Normal Theater was built by Sylvan and Ruth Kupfer, who owned the 209 North Street lot where the movie house went up. The grand opening was held Friday, November 19, 1937. In December 1974, the Springfield, IL based chain Kerasotes Brothers took over the Normal Theater. Moviegoers to the Normal became increasingly scarce, especially after the 1990 opening of the eight-screen Parkway Cinemas off Veterans Parkway. The end for the Normal Theater as a commercial enterprise came on May 16, 1991. The Town of Normal purchased the theater in November 1991. The grand reopening was held October 7, 1994, with a showing of *Singin' in the Rain*. October 7, 2014, marked the 20th anniversary of the rebirth of the Normal Theater as a town-run venue.

Scope

The collection includes newspaper article about the Normal Theater, advertisements, tickets, invitations, schedules, movie programs, etc.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Newspaper Articles detailing 1937 opening (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 1.1 Advertisement in *Normalite*, November 12, 1937, p. 4.
- 1.2 "New Theater Opens Friday," November 18, 1937, p. 6.
- 1.3 Four sheets containing six congratulatory ads from local contractors, November 18, 1937, p. 6.
- 1.4 Normal Theater ad, November 19, 1937, p. 5.
- 1.5 One sheet containing ads from Normal Theater's competitors, November 19, 1937, p. 5.
- 1.6 Front page of *Normalite*, "Normal Theater Opens Friday," includes a series of articles, November 19, 1937.
- 1.7 Full page advertisement, *Normalite*, November 19, 1937, p. 3 (includes enlargement of theater image).
- 1.8 "History Centers Around Rubens Family," *Normalite*, November 19, 1937, p. 4.
- 1.9 Normal Theater ad, November 20, 1937, p. 2.
- 1.10 Normal Theatre Restoration Project "Theater News" with articles about renovation and re-opening, list of donors, solicitation, etc., undated.

Folder 2: Newspaper Articles 1937-1994 (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 2.1 "City To Have Film Theater," April 19, 1937, p. 7.
- 2.2 "New Normal Theater Will Have Colorful, Modernistic Facade," August 22, 1937, p.6.
- 2.3 "Former Actor Will Manage Normal Theater," October 7, 1945, p. 2.
- 2.4 "Normal Manager Once in Films," March 2, 1947, p. 10.
- 2.5 "Theater License Boosted \$200," December 16, 1947, p. 2.
- 2.6 "Sylvan Kupfer Dies Following Brief Illness," April 22, 1953, p. 3.
- 2.7 "Normal Theater Manager Named" (Dennis Arnold), December 30, 1961, p. 10.
- 2.8 "Operettas To Show At Normal Theater," September 30, 1962, p. 21.

- 2.9 "Film Fans Write Own Mad Diary," August 19, 1963, p. 3.
- 2.10 "Leaves Vietnam, Marines To Manage Normal Theater," January 15, 1967, p. 15.
- 2.11 "Irvin, Normal theater sold," December 11, 1974, p. A-5.
- 2.12 "Normal Theater to reopen," March 19, 1982, p. A8.
- 2.13 "Curtain pulled on Normal Theater," May 16, 1991, p. 1A.
- 2.14 "GKC chief says public closing at fault for theater closing," May 17, 1991, p. C2.
- 2.15 "Fade to Black," June 14, 1991, p. C 1.
- 2.16 "Normal Theater fund drive sitting pretty with patrons" May 12, 1994, p. A3
- 2.17 Theater News printed by Pantagraph concerning reopening, dated unknown, 1994

Folder 3: Newspaper Articles after Reopening (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 3.1 "Normal honored for theatric effort," April 10, 1996, p. A1.
- 3.2 "Normal Theater honored" (National Register of Historic Places), August 9, 1997, p. A5.

Folder 4: Magazine Articles

- 4.1 August 1992 issue of *Business to Business* (pp. 20-21).
- 4.2 March 2003 issue of *Illinois Country Living* (pp. 10-13).

Folder 5: Movie Listings (*Pantagraph*, unless noted)

- 5.1 December 3-11, 1937, *Normalite*, December 3, 1937, p. 6.
- 5.2 Includes new prices, February 12, 1938, p. 2
- 5.3 "Wizard of Oz", November 5, 1939, p. 8.
- 5.4 "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," February 4, 1940, p. 6.
- 5.5 Ladies shoppers bargain matinee special, July 5, 1940, p. 2.
- 5.6 August 21, 1941 (listings for August 23 through September 12).
- 5.7 "Together Again" and "She Gets Her Man," June 10, 1945.
- 5.8 Western Week, December 29, 1952, p. 2.
- 5.9 "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," "Sands of Iwo Jima," and "Song of the South," July 4, 1956, p. 2.
- 5.10 "The Sheepman" and "Zero Hour," as well as a Mouseketeers club party, June 13, 1958.
- 5.11 "Splendor in the Grass," December 30, 1961, p. 2.
- 5.12 "Woodstock," January 29, 1971, p. B-3.

Folder 6: Movie Programs

- 6.1 "The Thin Man" synopsis, Sixth Annual Dan Craft Film Festival, October 15 (no year given).
- 6.2 "Notorious" synopsis, Dan Craft's Hitchcock after Dark Film Festival, October 27, 2006.
- 6.3 "Strangers on a Train" synopsis, Dan Craft's Hitchcock after Dark Film Festival, October 29, 2006.
- 6.4 "Out of the Past" synopsis, August 25-26, 2007.
- 6.5 "Blackboard Jungle," Schoolhouse Film Festival, October 18-21, 2007.
- 6.6 "O' Brother Where Out Thou?" synopsis, WJBC Mini-Film Fest 3: Coen Bros., April 19, 2008.
- 6.7 "Dear Mr. Watterson," synopsis and other information, June 26-29, 2014.
- 6.8 Playbill for "Desk Set," April 19, 2016.

Folder 7: Movie Schedules

- 7.1 October—December 1994
- 7.2 November – December 1995
- 7.3 October—December 2000
- 7.4 Beyond Normal Films, July-September 2006
- 7.5 Beyond Normal Films Showcase 2007
- 7.6 July 2010
- 7.7 April—June 2014.
- 7.8 Beyond Normal Films September Showcase, September 4-October 5, 2014.
- 7.9 November 2014
- 7.10 April 2015
- 7.11 August-September 2015
- 7.12 October 2015
- 7.13 January 2016
- 7.14 February 2016
- 7.15 Beyond Normal Films, Jan-Mar 2016
- 7.16 April-May 2016.
- 7.17 July 2016.
- 7.18 October 2016.
- 7.19 November 2016.
- 7.20 December 2016.
- 7.21 January 2017.
- 7.22 May 2017.
- 7.23 May 2018.
- 7.24 May 2018, Tuesday Night Classics.
- 7.25 May 2018 The Late Show
- 7.26 Sept 2018 “Now Playing.”

Folder 8: Theater Special Events

- 8.1 Rebirth of the Normal Theater, “Premier Night,” October 7, 1994 (3 copies).
- 8.2 “Seconds” (1966 John Frankenheimer film), John Randolph in person, June 19, 1995.
- 8.3 Normal Theater Gala, “Welcome Home Mclean and Ann,” September 30, 1995 (2 copies).
- 8.4 The 2015 Asian Film Festival, April 9 – 12, 2015.
- 8.5 “Consider the Conversation: A Documentary on a Taboo Subject”. May 12, 2014.
- 8.6 “Movie talk” panel discussion after showing of The Devil Wears Prada, October 13, 2015
- 8.6 “A Night of Comedy” with Brett Walkow and Jeremy Nunes, October 11, 2015. Flier.
- 8.7 Rocky Horror Picture Show, Oct 28-31, 2015. Flier.
- 8.8 A Night of Silent Film Inspired Improv & Sketch Comedy, December 6, 2015
- 8.9 The Normal Humor Spring Comedy Showcase 2016, April 8, 2016.
- 8.10 2016 Asian Film Festival, April 14-17, 2016.
- 8.11 Hello From Japan! Fest, Aug-Sep 2016. In conjunction with Children’s Discovery Museum traveling exhibit.
- 8.12 Six Week Film School Film Noir, Sep-Nov 2016.
- 8.13 Rocky Horror Picture Show flier, Oct 27-29, 2016. 2 copies.
- 8.14 Dress Up Movies and Youth Dance Program flier, Dec 2016-Apr 2017.

- 8.15 Asian Film Festival, April 12-15, 2017.
- 8.16 Flier: Further Jazz Inc & Normal Theater present Second Saturday Jazz Screenings film plus concert of Coltrane music by Glenn Wilson's Chasing Trans ensemble, Sept 9, 2017.
- 8.17 Flier: "Sustainable" plus Q&A with Spence Farms' Marty Travis to follow, Oct 2, 2017.
- 8.18 Flier: Harvest Bash 2017 featuring Shinzon Kiosk, Wes Prather & Chris Wiman, Nov 16, 2017.
- 8.19 Flier: Dress up Movies, Oct 2017-Jan 2018.
- 8.20 Flier: Tuesday Night Classics: Holiday Season 2017.
- 8.21 Flier: Harvest Bash 2017 featuring Shinzon Kiosk, November 16, 2017.

Folder 9: Theater Invitations

- 9.1 Normal Theater Gala, "Welcome Home Mclean and Ann," September 30, 1995.
- 9.2 Secret Cinema, January 20, 2009.
- 9.3 Secret Cinema, May 25, 2010.

Folder 10: Theater Tickets

- 10.1 Opening Night of the Normal Theater, October 7, 1994 (2).
- 10.2 Normal Theater Gala, "Welcome Home Mclean and Ann," September 30, 1995.
- 10.3 Complimentary Admission Cards, expire 11/1/15. (2)

Folder 11: Miscellaneous

- 11.1 City directory listings, 1938-1991.
- 11.2 Flier, "Sponsorship Opportunities at the Normal Theater! / Host You Next Event at the Normal Theater!" ca. 2008.
- 11.3 Flier, going away party for projectionist Todd Hoback, May 5, 2008.
- 11.4 "Adopt A Seat Program" pamphlet with application (3).
- 11.5 Volunteer information sheet application (2).
- 11.6 How to be a Volunteer sheet.
- 11.7 "All About Adam Fox," Theater and Civic Arts Manager for Normal, from Town of Normal *Newsline*, Feb 2016.
- 11.8 Flier for Beyond Normal Films membership, 2016.
- 11.9 Maze puzzle of Normal Theatre sign by Amy Miller with accompanying email, Sep 2016.
- 11.10 Friends of the Normal Theatre brochure, 2016. 2 copies,