



The Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association Newsletter October-November 2012

What's Been Happening

In the April/May newsletter, we stated that our theater restoration experts (George Kramer and Herb Stratford) believed the restoration of the Egyptian could be done in phases and at a significantly lower cost than originally estimated. We cautioned, however, that George and Herb, though very experienced with theater restoration, were not licensed structural engineers. It was felt that the feasibility of their recommended approach needed to be reviewed and endorsed by structural experts before we could proceed. In our subsequent newsletters we reported that the city had issued a request for a proposal to retain an historic preservation and theater-experienced engineering firm. Such a firm would need strong structural expertise to:

1. Review the engineering analysis performed in 2010 that prompted the Egyptian's closure.
2. Determine the appropriate design to address the theater's structural deficiencies and allow us to safely re-open the Egyptian.

KPFF Consulting Engineers was awarded the contract to perform this work from their Portland office. The first phase of KPFF's work was completed and reported to Coos Bay's Urban Renewal Agency on August 21, 2012.

It is now official! Though KPFF generally agreed with the Egyptian's structural deficiencies as identified in the 2010 engineering report, they did not believe a full seismic upgrade as called for by the previous engineers was required to make the theater safe for occupancy. They felt the majority of damage at the Egyptian was isolated to the west end of the building. Based on their wide experience dealing with such issues, they proposed a repair approach that would add significant structural bracing to the back (west) wall of the building, but would not require full replacement of the wall as originally proposed. This change in design is very significant since completely replacing the back wall carried with it significant and costly preservation challenges. One such challenge entails having to completely dismantle and reconstruct our historic, rare and priceless Wurlitzer organ since the side chambers in which the organ's complex components reside are attached to the back wall. KPFF recommended other structural supports as well (such as reinforcing existing roof beams and adding new ones) which we will implement to ensure our patrons' safety. The approach proposed considerably simplifies the work required, substantially reduces the work's impact on the wonderful and historic interior of the Egyptian, and lowers significantly the cost and time required to re-open the theater.



By moving most non-safety related restoration/enhancement work out of "Phase 1" (the work we perform prior to re-opening the Egyptian) and proceeding as KPFF recommends, KPFF estimates that we should be able to do what is required to re-open the theater at a cost between \$500,000 and \$550,000 – a very significant improvement over the greater than \$3 million originally estimated. KPFF's estimate does include adding an ADA compliant first floor restroom to the theater, an enhancement we would very much like to implement prior to re-opening.

Coos Bay's Urban Renewal Agency (owner of the Egyptian) approved proceeding along the lines recommended by KPFF and asked the city to negotiate a contract with KPFF to produce the detailed design and final documentation needed to obtain required permits and construction bids.

On the funding front, we have been working with Rich Foster of Cascadia Consulting Partnership, our grant expert, to develop a “Capital Campaign Plan” – our detailed strategy for obtaining the funds needed to complete the “Phase 1” restoration and re-open the theater. Our plan is designed to collect \$750,000. This figure recognizes that the KPFF estimate is preliminary and final costs once the detailed design is completed and construction bids are obtained may be somewhat higher. It also allows for our performing a limited number of other upgrades to the theater before we re-open. For example, in addition to adding a first floor restroom, we would like to complete not just the structural, but all safety enhancements from which we feel the Egyptian could benefit. One such enhancement would be upgrading the exit and safety lighting in the building. The plan has been approved by the ETPA Board; our city leadership is actively behind it; and its implementation is underway. Our first round of grant funding requests has been issued, and you will soon be hearing about our fundraising efforts in our community. Our project experts, city leaders, and your board are convinced this is all very doable. We are working towards inviting you all to a grand re-opening of the Egyptian in 2014!



Is there any justice in life? Rodger Craddock, Coos Bay City Manager and strong supporter of the Egyptian, is being dunked at the Fun Fest by ETPA director Rick Shearer.

ETPA Elections

As called for in our bylaws, the board held ETPA officer and director elections in mid-September. Here are the results:

Directors: We are happy to announce the election of 3 stalwart ETPA members as new directors of our Association. Effective immediately, Lee Littlefield (our wonderful long-time supporter and Christmas Concert organist), Christina Geierman and Ed Nichols (one of our dynamic husband and wife teams who volunteered regularly to run the projection booth for us at the Egyptian) are directors of the ETPA through 2015. At their request, Christina and Ed will together fill one director position (e.g., 1 director vote between them) since they felt their busy careers may not allow them both to attend all of

our meetings, but that between them they certainly can very effectively carry out their director duties. Geno Landrum will be ending his term as director. The board wishes to thank Geno for his unrelenting support of our theater and looks forward to working with him in other capacities as we strive together to re-open the Egyptian.

Officers: Greg Rueger has been elected as President of our Association. Greg and his wife Barbara have been supporters of the ETPA for many years and helped our board significantly whenever it needed them – prompting some of our directors to dub them the ETPA Board’s “guardian angels.” Greg took on a more direct role with the board when he became a director at the start of this year and will now apply his talents to leading the board. For more about Greg, we refer you to the “Meet Your Board



Greg Rueger, newly elected president, and Anella Dumas, outgoing president, staffing the Egyptian booth at the Fun Fest together with ETPA volunteers Pat Ryan and Sue Morgan

Members” article in the February/March 2012 edition of our newsletter. You can find it on the Egyptian’s web page. Anella Dumas, our current President, was elected to a Vice-President position where she will assist Greg in his transition to President. Susan Watson was re-elected as Treasurer of our association. Officers are elected for 2-year terms and must be elected from among existing directors. Anella and Susan will begin new 3-year terms as directors, consistent with their holding renewed officer positions.

2013 ETPA Membership

It’s time to hitch your wagon to our Egyptian star and renew your membership in the ETPA for 2013! You will soon be receiving a letter from us asking for your continued support of the ETPA. With re-opening the Egyptian clearly in our sights and our funding requests now being reviewed by grant funding groups that look for community support, it is particularly important that you show your support for the Egyptian Theatre by continuing as an ETPA member. Where possible, please consider upping your membership to a higher level and providing us with a contribution towards the restoration and re-opening of your own Egyptian Theatre!

A Former Employee of the Egyptian Theatre, Shares Some Memories

All my life I have been a movie buff. I’ve attended movies at the Egyptian Theatre since I was two. In August of 1960, I turned fifteen and was able to get a work permit. Gathering my courage, I went to the Egyptian Theatre before it opened for a Saturday matinee and approached the man I viewed as a deity, Stan McSwain, to interview for a job in the concession stand at the Egyptian. The miracle call came on the following Monday. I got the job! This was a dream come true. I was not only independently wealthy now, earning \$.75 per hour, but I had free admission to any movie at any theatre the McSwains owned.

Stan McSwain, “Mr. Mac” The Popcorn King, was a demanding employer. He expected you to show up on time, dress appropriately (always a skirt or dress/no pants allowed). He expected you to be doing something at all times when not waiting on customers, and if you couldn’t think of anything, he could. I learned the correct way to make change, how to stock i.e., rotate the stock for freshness. For evening showings, we always had a male ticket taker at the door in a suit and tie. Someone was designated to check the loge seats (the first six rows at the back of the main auditorium that were cushy, with backs that tilted back slightly and cost an extra \$.25 to occupy). You knew you were on a special date when you sat in loge! The job description also included patrols of the downstairs and upstairs seating to make sure patrons were not causing a disturbance, feet were on the floor, no necking/petting. It could be awkward if any of these forbidden activities were being carried out by your family or friends.

My employee privileges allowed me to see all the movies as many times as my off-times allowed. When I was working, if it could at all be managed, I could see my favorite scenes endless times during a shift. Example: the closing scene of “The Wild One” where Marlon Brando comes into the café and orders coffee from the virginal female who lives in the hick town he has been evicted from by law enforcement after running amok for the last 24 hours. What was he going to say to her? Was he going to invite her to come away with him and become his “squeeze”? All in silence, he takes one sip of coffee, contemplates the trophy he stole at the beginning of the film, and with an expressionless gaze, slowly slides it on the counter toward the girl. His eyes, then mouth, slowly betray a smile. Something he has been too cool to do the entire film. Wordlessly he gets up and leaves, conveying volumes, revealing nothing, leaving much to ponder about “where does it all go from there”? This scene never fails to melt me, daddy-o.

Working at the Egyptian was a milestone in my life as it laid the foundation for the standards of what a good employee should be and prepared me for my eventual career as a nurse. I learned how to remain cool, calm and collected in the mini-crises that can occur, with nose bleeds, chipped teeth, and vomiting.

Stan McSwain and The Egyptian: thanks for the memories! By Gail Virgili

Meet Your Golden Charioteers



The Golden Charioteers are board members who have been recognized for giving outstanding service to the Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association over a sustained period of time by being granted Golden Charioteer status. Currently there are only six individuals who hold this designation. We look to them to bring their drive, energy, dedication and creativity to the challenge now facing us...the Capital Campaign! Pictured above from left to right are: David Engholm, Susan Watson, Rick Shearer, Pete Kalina, Dave Abernathy, and Anella Dumas.

Upcoming Events:

October Wine Walk – Friday, October 5th Come see us at the Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association office at 255 N. Broadway in Coos Bay. New Egyptian T-shirts, mugs, specially-engraved Egyptian wine glasses, and the 2013 Egyptian Theatre calendar will all be available.

Movie - Saturday, October 13th - 7:00 PM - *Night of the Living Dead* will be presented as part of the Zombie Fest that weekend. It will be shown at Broadway Hall next to Shark Bites Café. General Admission \$5.00, Egyptian Theatre members \$4.00. No host bar available.

Wednesday Farmer's Market – Visit our booth each week at the Farmer's Market to stay connected with the latest news about the Egyptian Theatre. You can sign up to be a 2013 member, give a donation toward getting the Theatre reopened, and purchase all sorts of great Egyptian merchandise.

2013 Egyptian Theatre Calendar – Our second annual Egyptian Theatre calendar is now available for \$15.00, and features wonderful photographs of the inside of the theatre. Get yours today by calling Rick Shearer at 541-297-8659. These calendars also make great gifts, so purchase some extra copies!

Board Secretary needed – The Egyptian Theatre Preservation Board is still seeking a recording secretary to take minutes for monthly board meetings, help with periodic mailings, and assist with other tasks as volunteer time allows. If you are interested in joining our team and filling this very important role please contact Susan Watson at: susan@mikegordoncpa.com, or call Rick Shearer at 541-297-8659.

Co-Volunteer Coordinator needed – The Egyptian Board is searching for a local volunteer coordinator who is willing to work as a co-chair with Kelly Gallagher. This person would help gather together, organize, and motivate a passionate group of individuals who are dedicated to seeing that the Egyptian Theatre be reopened and sustained for generations to come. Our Capital Campaign plan is targeting reopening the theatre in early 2014, and we will need a solid, dedicated group of people to help run operations. If you are a people person who enjoys rallying others to join together for a good cause, this may be the perfect spot for you. If you are interested in helping us, please contact Rick Shearer at 541-297-8659.

General Membership Meeting - Stay tuned for news of an Annual Meeting for ETPA members. The purpose of the meeting will be threefold:

1. Hold a "state of the Egyptian Theatre" discussion regarding progress being made to restore and reopen the theatre.
2. Present the ETPA's directors, officers and committee chairpersons to the membership at large.
3. Promote member participation as volunteers in ETPA activities.