

THE NUGGET NEWS-HERALD

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COMPLIMENTARY

EXTRA EXTRA NUGGET TO ADD TWO SCREENS



FOUR NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART THEATRES TO OPEN MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

HANOVER — The 80-year-old Nugget Theatre will undergo its fifth major transformation this spring, opening in late May as a state-of-the-art four-screen complex. According to John G. Skewes, president of the Hanover Improvement Society, the present cinemas will close on Monday, March 17. The second will continue to screen the Academy Award nominated "Shine" through Sunday, March 23. The Improvement Society has owned and operated the theatre since July, 1922.

The four new theatres are scheduled to reopen by Memorial Day weekend in conjunction with the Society's 75th anniversary this summer.

The renovation plan calls for dividing the two current cinemas in half, creating four theatres of various capacities. The two largest theatres will be on the west side (rear) of the building. Each will contain about 200 seats. With the installation of new technology, it will be possible to show the most popular films to 400 viewers through the use of synchronized projectors that simultaneously present the same film in both large theatres. This innovation will allow the Nugget to accommodate more customers than it does today for the most popular films.

In addition to the two 200-seat theatres, there will be a third with 155 seats as well as a "screening room" theatre with 100 seats.

Each of the new theatres will feature state-of-the-art, high-quality "surround sound," replacing outdated equipment. The quality of sound will further be enhanced by the improved dimensions of the theatres which in recent times, have been elongated and difficult to engineer for proper acoustics.

Screens, more than 20 years old, will be replaced and, with the reduced projection focal length, all theatres will present clearer and brighter images.

Except for their relative size, the theatres will be nearly alike. The goal is to assure a consistently excellent viewing experience. The slope of the auditoria, the arrangement of seats, and the height of the screens will be designed and coordinated to satisfy the most critical audience.

Management of the Improvement Society and the Nugget are confident that this latest renovation will help the Nugget to retain its long-time position of strength in a competitive market place. "The improvements will provide exceptional variety and a cinematic experience unsurpassed in the region," said Stella Pence, Nugget consultant and film programmer.

Pence noted that the availability of four screens will be important to the theatre's film-buyer. The increased two-theatre capacity will provide an advantage in negotiating contracts for quality films. In addition, the diversity offered by the smaller theatres will enable the Nugget to extend a film's availability as long as it continues to draw an audience. She added that many quality films are not shown in the Upper Valley on a timely basis due to the current shortage of screens.

The flexibility of shifting films from theatre to theatre will permit the Nugget to feature a variety of films not possible with two screens. The new complex will allow the Nugget to cater to the diverse interests of the Upper Valley's strong film-going community, and double its ability to meet their appetite for more quality films.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of

the not-for-profit Hanover Improvement Society. Throughout the Society's existence, it has been totally dependent upon the Nugget to generate funds for its "good works" throughout the community. "This major renovation is the most significant project scheduled to celebrate our first 75 years," said Improvement Society General Manager Tom Byrne.

The original Nugget Theatre opened in 1916, a Spartan concrete and steel structure built by Hanover businessman Frank Davison. The Improvement Society was formed in 1922 to operate the theatre and donate the proceeds to the betterment of the Town of Hanover.

The theatre's first major renovation took place in 1928 when new seats and an attractive facade and lobby were added, and the main entrance was moved from the end of what we know as "Olde Nugget Alley" to its long-time location on West Wheelock Street, behind the Casque and Gauntlet House.

In 1938, a second major improvement increased the seating capacity to 900 and included new air conditioning, a spacious balcony, and a more elegant lobby. Unfortunately, this improvement was enjoyed for only six years: the Olde Nugget burned in January 1944, totally destroying the auditorium.

After seven years of operating "The Nugget" in Webster Hall on the Dartmouth campus, the present theatre on South Main Street opened with great fanfare in September 1951. With 900 seats and modern air conditioning and elegant decor, the new theatre was an instant success.

As the film industry changed and competition from television, professional sports, and other recreational and

entertainment alternatives increased, attendance declined sharply. In 1975 the theatre was subdivided, creating the two theatres that operate today. Each holds 325 viewers. The new configuration streamlines and updates the Nugget.

Trumbull-Nelson Construction Company of Hanover is the contractor for the project which is being financed through Ledyard National Bank of Hanover.

OLD TWIN CINEMAS CLOSE _ MARCH 23

The "old" Twin Cinemas will continue screening films until Sunday evening, March 23. Plans are to shut down the southernmost Cinema on March 17, and begin demolition work there. The Nugget will continue to screen "SHINE", the Academy Award nominated film through the 9:00 PM show on March 23.

The Twin Cinemas will then close for about 10 weeks. Plans are to open the theatres with a Grand Opening celebration on or about Memorial Day weekend. The Grand Opening film is not yet identified, but our intentions are to screen the biggest hit of the coming summer season for the grand event.

THE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY'S SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

The Hanover Improvement Society has operated the Nugget since 1922, and, this summer, celebrates its 75th Anniversary.

The Society was formed specifically to run the Nugget which had been donated to the Town of Hanover by owner, Frank W. Davison. Davison's terms were that all of the net proceeds from Nugget operations

would go to benefit the citizens of Hanover.

When the Town found that state law prohibited it from running an enterprise that might lose taxpayer's money, the Improvement Society was formed to operate the cinema.

The Improvement Society was a direct descendant of the original "Ornamental Tree Association (a.k.a. "Hanover Tree Association"), and it's follow-on "Village Improvement Society".

These organizations were not unique to Hanover, but like many all over the northeast which served the needs of the developing villages. Typically, groups of citizens grouped together and pooled resources to beautify the village common, streets, and sidewalks when the Towns were unable or unwilling to do so.

Under the strong leadership of a succession of four Presidents, the Improvement Society has used the funds generated by the Nugget to develop the Storrs Pond Recreation Area, help build and operate the James Campion, III Ice Skating Rink, fund many important civic improvements, provide for recreational outdoor skating for the general public (Occom Pond), underwrite much of the cost of maintaining Hanover's gardens through the Hanover Garden Club, and contributed to health and educational efforts which benefit the citizens of Hanover and the Upper Valley.

The Society consists of 20 citizens of the Towns of Hanover, NH and Norwich, VT, and is governed by a Board of Directors of seven individuals elected by the membership. The Society is totally independent of the Town but steadfast in its mission to use its resources for the benefit of all of her citizens.

THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The new theatre complex was designed by Harvey Allen Berg and Associates, architects of Washingtonville, New York, specialists in theatre design and renovation. Technical elements of the renovation, including projection, film-handling, and sound equipment and screens have been specified by Freeman Theatre Service, Inc. of Garden City, Long Island, New York.

The Trumbull-Nelson Construction Company of Hanover won the competitive bidding for the project. Trumbull-Nelson constructed the original Nugget in 1951 and was the contractor for the 1975 renovation which developed Cinemas I & II.

The Ledyard National Bank of Hanover is providing financing for the project.

Improvement Society Board Member Gordon V. DeWitt, who also serves as the Director of Facilities Planning for Dartmouth College, is the Project Chair, and is assisted by Roy Banwell, Architect and Board Member; Bill and Stella Pence of Film Arts Enterprises; and Tom Byrne, General Manager of the Society.

Plans and exhibits related to the renovation project can be viewed in the Nugget Lobby, will be on display at the Home and Trade Fair, and the James W. Campion, III Ice Skating Rink.

Inquiries, comments and suggestion from Nugget patrons are welcome.

The Nugget business office phone number is 643-7424. The Mailing address is P.O. Box 106, Hanover, NH, 03755.



1927

The Improvement Society's first renovation adds a lobby to the front of the original Nugget, orienting the entrance toward West Wheelock Street. A Columned portico adorned the structure, new "theatre seating" increased the capacity from 571 to 616.



1938

The next major renovation was accomplished in June, 1938 when a balcony was added, providing 300 additional seats (capacity 900). Also added was a more spacious lobby and a modern air conditioning system. "Attractive appointments" were added as well.



1944

On January 28, 1944 the Nugget caught fire, burned and exploded, leaving the building in complete devastation, and putting the Olde Nugget out of business for good.

For seven years after the fire, the Improvement Society offered

films at "the Nugget at Webster Hall." The destruction of the physical plant also destroyed the rowdy and treasured traditions of the Nugget which had characterized it for decades. The Improvement Society began to search for a location, and plan a new and modern theatre to replace it.

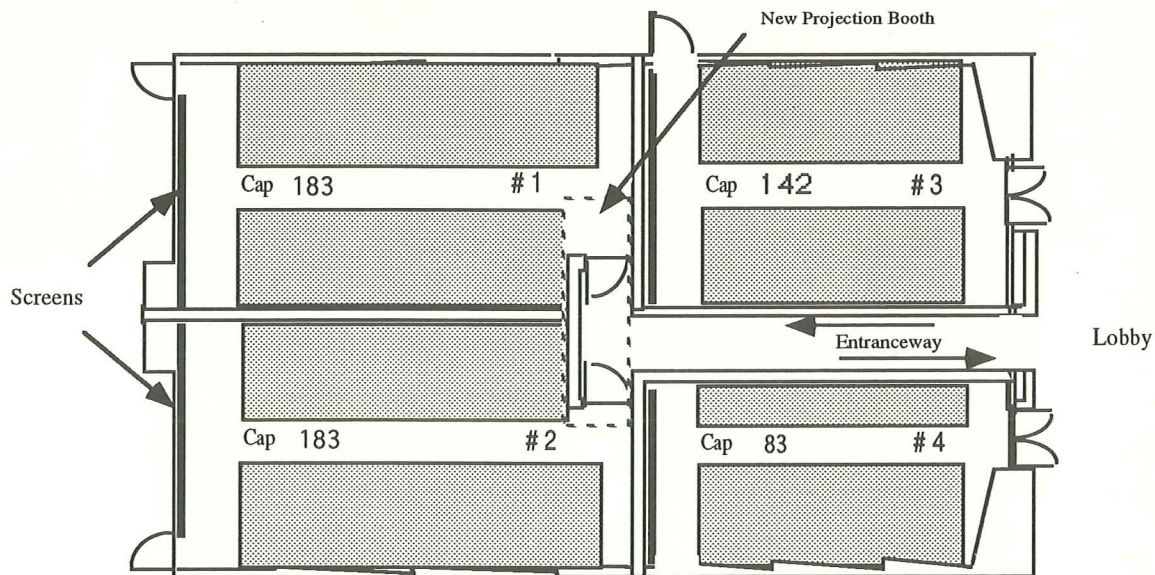


1951

After seven long years of planning and preparation, the present Nugget on South Main Street in Hanover opened to rave reviews.

On September 23, 1951, the original Nugget Manager, Bill Cunningham, sportswriter for the Boston Globe,

returned to Hanover to play the piano at the Grand Opening of the theatre. The New Nugget was elegantly appointed, featured 900 seats, the newest air conditioning, film-handling and sound equipment of the times.



The Nugget 4 Theatres

May, 1997

Above is an approximate layout of the New Nugget Theatre as it will look in late May, 1997.

Entranceway will be constructed between #3 and #4 to provide access to the two large theatres.

New exit doors will be added for theatres 3 & 4. A new projection booth will be built over the entrance to the front theatres (1 & 2). Each theatre will feature "surround sound" with four speakers.

New film handling equipment (platters) and automated controls will be added to the projection booth. New screens modern aisle lights, new carpets, and modern fire detection and alarm systems are included in the renovation.