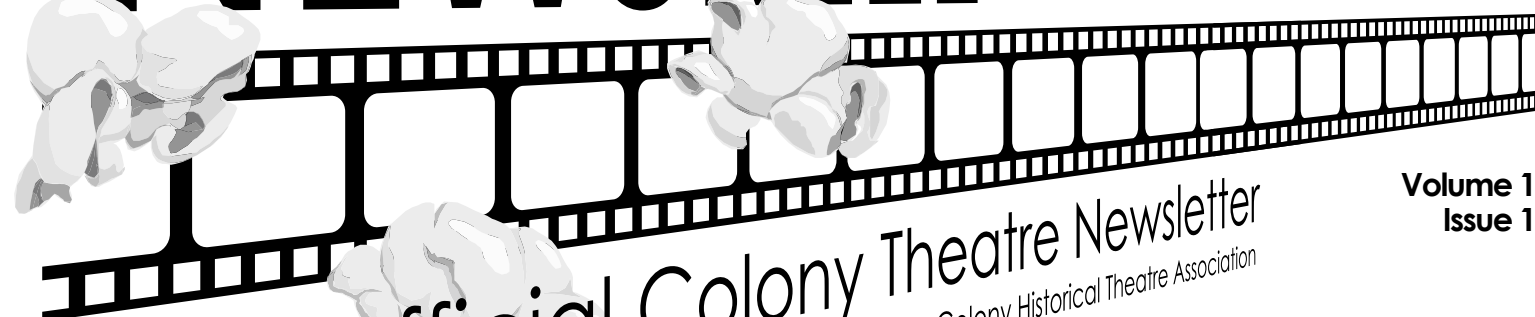




Help support the Colony by purchasing a T-shirt, or become a member and get a video!

NEWSREEL

the Colony Theatre



The Official Colony Theatre Newsletter
A Publication of the Hippodrome-Colony Historical Theatre Association

Volume 1
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The Hippodrome/Colony
Historical Theatre Association



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We hope that this eighty-two year old scenic art curtain can once again become one of Marietta's most unique tourist attractions.

Late last year, Robert Lodge, an art preservationist with McKay / Lodge and Associates, analyzed the fire curtain for restoration purposes. While Mr. Lodge noted that the mural was in excellent condition for something that was painted in 1919, it was done in a water based paint which will make cleaning it more tedious. Mr. Lodge noted that the asbestos fibers in the curtain are actually woven with copper and are much larger than the more harmful "friable" asbestos particles that generally appear in insulation. The curtain would be cleaned and then encapsulated to ensure its safety. Cleaning the curtain should increase the brilliance of the artwork by 50%.

Colony Receives Its Non-Profit Status

In November of 2001 the Hippodrome/Colony Historical Theatre Association received confirmation of its 501(c)3 tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization. Any contributions to the theatre group are now fully tax deductible. There is now a fund with The Marietta Community Foundation that benefits the Colony.

Colony Group Starts Fund-raising Process

The Hippodrome/Colony Historical Theatre Association has hired Hunt Brawley and Charles H. Bentz & Associates to begin fund raising efforts at the Colony. Mr. Brawley, who started looking into the feasibility of restoring the Colony as Director of Community 20/20, will now be devoting most of his time coordinating the fund raising process for the theatre. Charles H. Bentz & Associates of Warren, Ohio, was just retained to conduct the financial feasibility study for the theatre. The Bentz firm has engaged in numerous fund raising efforts for museums, theatre projects and arts organizations in the State of Ohio and across the country.

1919 Hippodrome Curtain Discovered

Forgotten for over 15 years and hidden high and dry in the 50-foot fly loft, this historic piece of artwork has been revealed. Painted for the Hippodrome Theatre in 1919 by Twin City Scenic Studios, this beautiful piece of artwork quite possibly is one of the oldest and largest canvas paintings in Ohio. At nearly 900 square feet, this highly decorated mural originally served three purposes for the theatre.

A pleasant artistic scene for the theatre patrons to view as they entered the auditorium. The colorful painting not only enhanced the grandeur of the theatre's interior, but evoked great expectations of what the audience was about to witness upon the Hippodrome's mammoth stage.

The heavy canvas curtain served as an atmospheric barrier between the stage and the auditorium. With the curtain down, scenery and props along with theatrical trunks could be loaded in and out of the stage's loading doors without the loss of heat or air conditioning in the auditorium.

The word "Asbestos" is prominently emblazoned on the bottom of the curtain's design. This was a good thing in the early 1900's and let theatre patrons know that the Hippodrome took great pride in protecting its



guests with the very best in fire safety features. The back side of the curtain is coated with an asbestos fireproof material. In case of fire on the stage, the curtain would be dropped to protect the auditorium and its patrons as they exited the theatre.

The name "fire curtain" was sometimes given to this piece of canvas because of this particular feature. Current plans for this historic treasure are to clean and restore it to its original glory. It will then be encapsulated in a special coating to encase its asbestos fibers.

Continued on back page...

More Professionals Tour Theatre

Jeffrey Greene, a board member of the League of Historic American Theatres and president of EverGreene studios in New York was impressed during his tour through the Colony. EverGreene is a full service decorative arts studio and a leader in conservation and restoration of decorative painting and ornamentation in historic buildings across the country. They are currently working on the Civic Theatre in Akron and have restored historic interiors in Columbus, Cleveland, and even Radio City Music Hall in New York. EverGreene's expertise would help in restoring the ambience of the theatre's 1900's-era decor. His firm may also be instrumental in restoring the scenic fire curtain.

On May 1, 2002, two other theatre professionals toured the Colony and saw the potential for restoration. John Williamson, President of American Theatre Equipment Company, looked at the film capacity of the Colony and made some recommendations for showing feature films. In Mr. Williamson's words – "The venue's great sight lines and large auditorium would most certainly be met with enthusiasm by audiences that are now seeing films on a



Sight line from the upper balcony, circa 1960.

small screen at the mall. Your programming would probably lean toward classic films, family films, and archival films, shown a few times as opposed to multiple week runs. These films are readily available in 35mm format."

Dave Mead of Live Technologies went through the Colony Theatre and analyzed it from a sound and lighting perspective. He said that one of the features that makes the Colony such a good restoration project is its apparent ease of conversion into a modern facility. In terms of maintaining the historic nature of the building, the Colony can accommodate modern sound and lighting that would be almost fully hidden from view. There are ample crawl spaces and recessed areas in the theatre that would conceal the lighting positions and preserve the sight lines and architectural integrity of the theatre.

River Cities Symphony Orchestra Wants Colony As Home

The River Cities Symphony Orchestra has announced that they would like the Colony Theatre to be their home. Mac Lichterman, Director of the RCSO, says "The Colony would give the orchestra a consistent space for rehearsals and would provide the elegant setting suitable for symphonic performances." Remember to support the RCSO at upcoming events.

New Colony Website

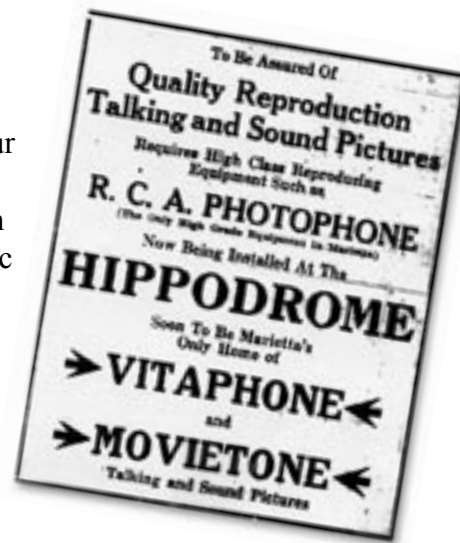
Have you checked out our website at colonytheatre.com? Andrew Jones, a local website developer and long-time supporter of the Colony has created the site, which features much of the progress and exciting information on the Colony. Get the complete history of the theatre, stay up-to-date on current news and upcoming events or browse our extensive photo gallery. Now you can even watch a fifteen minute film on the history of the Colony which can be viewed directly from the site or buy cool merchandise!



View our video (right) online at colonytheatre.com!



1929 Ad for the theatre's "new" Photophone sound system.



Restored Seats On Display

American Seating Company recently delivered two restored historical seats now on display in the theatre's lobby on Putnam Street. One is an original early 1900's Victorian seat (left) with a floral motif that was recovered from the basement, repainted and restored. It will be used on the first floor. The second one (right) is a 1940's Art Deco seat like those currently in the balcony. Both of the seats will compliment one another by having the same colors and upholstery. There is also a modern version of a classic seat with purple upholstery that is currently in the lobby.



Marietta Community Foundation Assists With Restroom Renovation

The Marietta Community Foundation which previously supported Community 20/20 with \$11,000 in its efforts to start the process of restoring the Colony and have provided \$2,000 to aid in the restoration of a handicapped-accessible restroom. This will help establish limited public access and an office presence at the theatre.



Ladies powder room (left) and men's restroom (right) circa 1960.

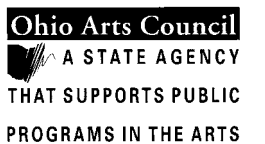
Colony A Member Of LHAT

The Hippodrome/Colony Historical Theatre Association has just joined the League Of Historic American Theatres (LHAT) as an "emerging theatre project member". Founded in 1976, LHAT is America's only service organization dedicated to the rescue, restoration and reuse of one of this nation's greatest treasures - the historic theatre. By providing a network of historic theatres, operation specialists, government agencies and individuals who appreciate the cultural and architectural heritage of historic theatres, LHAT continues to help save theatre gems from the wrecking ball.



Early Feasibility Work Complete

Local engineering firm Lock One, Inc. has completed a "Least Investment Renovations" study for the Colony Theatre. The study was funded in part by the Ohio Arts Council and was intended to help the Colony group prioritize the renovations within the theatre. The study addressed building code issues, plumbing, HVAC, electrical systems, and interior finishes. Based on this study, and the work of theatre Consultant, ArtSpace Design, Inc., it is anticipated that theatre renovation will take place in roughly three phases. Phase I will address the compliance issues identified by Lock One and will provide the electric, heating, and air conditioning. At the completion of this stage it is possible the theatre would be open for business. ArtSpace Design helped develop a theatre programming document necessary for Phase II improvements which focus on the amenities that create the "magic" of the theatre. These items include lighting, sound, rigging, and film capacity that will allow for the accommodation of first rate touring acts. Phase III would be directed at interior finishes, such as office and lobby restoration and cosmetic detail work.



The Colony Board

Dan Stephan, Sr.,
Paul Callihan, Steve Miner,
Terry Miller, Mike Mullen
Karl Ulmer, Bill Wesel
740-376-9533

The Colony On TV!

The Colony video will be shown on Cable Channel 7 prior to City Council meetings throughout July at approx. 7:15pm.