

*Criterion Theater*

## When Hollywood Came Downeast: Movie Houses on Mount Desert Island

William J. Baker

In the early years of the twentieth century, the American movie industry originated in the towns and hills of New Jersey just across the Hudson River from New York City.<sup>1</sup> By the time of the First World War, however, most movie-makers had moved to the West Coast to take advantage of year-round sunshine, varied topography, inexpensive property, and weak labor unions. Hollywood stood poised to become a billion-dollar business.<sup>2</sup>

Yet for all its southern California flavor, commercial film's future hinged on two factors far distant from the Hollywood Hills. First, it required local visionaries who would invest in buildings, technical equipment, and personnel to make Hollywood's productions available to the public. Second, success depended on the effectiveness of small-town as well as big-city efforts to cultivate popular enthusiasm for this new form of entertainment. Both factors were abundantly present on Mount Desert Island. Geographically remote and economically marginal, the Island nonetheless possessed several imaginative entrepreneurs ready to pioneer in new ways to make a buck. MDI inhabitants, whose windows to a wider world were heretofore limited to Victorian books, magazines, and Sears catalogues, eagerly responded to the drama and excitement offered by Hollywood.

In the beginning, movies on MDI were occasional events unattached to specific buildings. In turn-of-century Bar Harbor, a hastily erected tent on a vacant lot on Cottage Street and another on the town's athletic field sufficed for summer showings of silent films. On outlying islands, this informal, spasmodic pattern lasted well into the 1930s. Early versions of the Seacoast Mission's *Sunbeam* boat frequently carried feature films to Little Cranberry and Swan's Island for Saturday night viewing in the largest public building available. These events, in turn, advertised the *Sunbeam's* religious services on Sunday morning.<sup>3</sup>

Most of MDI's early movie houses evolved from older buildings variously given to traditional song and dance, vaudeville variety shows, and the new fad of roller skating. In 1914, an "amusement hall" on Bar Harbor's Bridge Street, the Casino Theater, alternated "regular road shows" with movies; later, live boxing and wrestling matches competed for top billing. Neither Seal Harbor nor Somesville ever had a movie house proper, but both places welcomed Hollywood to town. The Neighborhood House in Seal Harbor, heated in the winter by a huge wood stove and cast-iron radiators, occasionally fitted silent feature films around dances, plays, concerts, and basketball games. For several years in the 1920s, Somesville's citizens enjoyed movies every Thursday night at the Masonic Lodge, brought by the manager of the Pastime Theater in Northeast Harbor.<sup>4</sup>

At the apex of the silent film era in the 1920s, no fewer than five movie houses served a mere 8,000 year-round Island inhabitants. In addition to the Casino, the Star Theater thrived in Bar Harbor on the



*Star Theater*

corner of Cottage and Rodick where the "All Fired Up" store now stands. Built around 1908, the Star bulged with summer rusticators and tourists but also remained open year-round for local customers.<sup>5</sup> So did the Pastime Theater in Northeast Harbor, opened in 1913 on the corner of Main Street and Summit Road where the Bar Harbor Bank & Trust Company presently has its drive-through service.

Nor was the Quietside mute in its response to Hollywood. In a building that had previously seen service as a livery stable, church parsonage, post office, warehouse, and store, the Park Theater in Southwest Harbor opened around 1919 on the corner of Main Street and Clark Point Road.<sup>6</sup> The McEachern & Hutchins Hardware store

now occupies that space, its false dormers constructed recently by the producers of the Stephen King made-for-television movie, *The Storm of the Century*. Just three miles away in Bass Harbor (then called McKinley), movies were occasionally shown upstairs in a large white-frame building that in 1921 became H. G. Reed's General Store. Accustomed to dispensing groceries, hardware items, and outdoor sporting supplies, Reed opened his second and third floors to town meetings, club gatherings, and high school graduations. The introduction of motion pictures constituted a logical progression, filling another niche in the local economy.<sup>7</sup>

At the depths of the Great Depression, the early summer of 1932 saw the opening of the Criterion Theater in Bar Harbor, the last and finest of the Island's old movie houses. Just across the street from the Star, the Criterion's exterior appeared as cheap and gaudy as the fronts of most other theaters. Its interior, though, was radically different. First, it was huge, three or four times as large as any other motion

PROGRAMS OF Hollis G. Reed's <b>NEPTUNE THEATRE</b> McKinley, Maine			
MOUNT DESERT ISLAND'S NAUTICAL THEATRE			
Two Shows Daily, Except Sunday—Starting at 7:00 and Approximately 9 P. M. D.S.T. Admission 15c and 35c			
Monday-Tuesday	AUG. 29-30	MON.-TUES.	SEPT. 5-6
THERE'S ALWAYS A WOMAN		PARAMOUNT WEEK	
with		PROFESSOR BEWARE	
Joan Blondell	Melvyn Douglas	with	
NEWS	SHORT SUBJECTS	Harold Lloyd	
TWO COMPLETE SHOWS DAILY		NEWS SHORT SUBJECTS	
WED.-THURS.	AUG. 31-SEPT. 1	WED.-THURS.	SEPT. 7-8
THE SINGING VAGABOND		SING YOU SINNERS	
with		with	
Gene Autrey		Bing Crosby	Fred MacMurray
NEWS	SHORT SUBJECTS	NEWS	SHORT SUBJECTS
FRI.-SAT.	SEPT. 2-3	FRI.-SAT.	SEPT. 9-10
ALGIERS		GIVE ME A SAILOR	
with		with	
Charles Boyer	Sigrid Guire	Martha Raye	Bob Hope
Hedy La Mar		NEWS	SHORT SUBJECTS

*Neptune Theater program*

picture venue on the Island. More importantly, it was designed in the fashionable picture-palace grandeur promoted by the moguls of Hollywood in order to attract more affluent movie-goers. It was a style made to order for both rusticators and tourists in summertime Bar Harbor.

The Criterion's lobby sparkled with art deco geometric patterns on walls, columns, carpets, and stuffed chairs, all richly colored in red and gold. Silk wall panels and ornate glass chandeliers created an ambience

in which a Rockefeller could be comfortable. Upon entering the main seating area, first-time visitors were impressed with an ornately-carved art deco ceiling. Each seat came equipped with an audio-jack for the hard of hearing; headphones enabled them to understand the dialogue



*George P. McKay, founder of the Criterion*

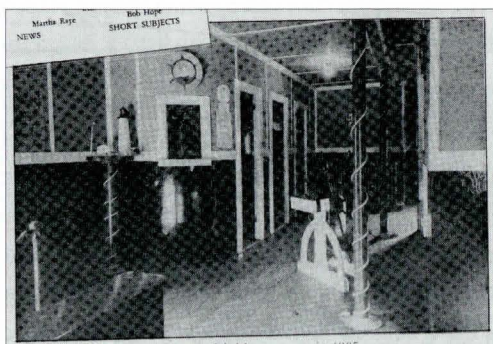
and music that had accompanied film since the late 1920s. Practically as well as aesthetically, the new Criterion distinguished itself from all the other movie houses on the Island.<sup>8</sup>

The Criterion's only rival for uniqueness came from distant little Bass Harbor on the opposite side of the Island. In response to the coming of the "talkies," H. G. Reed decided to embark on something more than mere replacement of obsolete equipment. Beginning in 1936, he built a new entrance with stairs to the second floor at the left rear of his general store. He then elevated the theater floor, thus depriving his business of its earlier dances and roller-skating parties. As a sure sign of the prominence of motion pictures in the MDI marketplace, by 1938 Reed completed his renovations with the installation of 300 cushioned seats, a modern projection room, and a new, larger screen.

For interior design, a summer resident and recent graduate from a Boston school of art suggested a nautical theme in keeping with the village fishing tradition. A miniature lighthouse, its tower light aglow, greeted patrons at the door. Heavy rope rails led to a ticket office resembling a rounded ship's wheelhouse. Across from the ticket office stood a large ship's wheel made of mahogany, beside a metal compass box that received tickets. Both the ticket-seller and the ticket-taker were decked out in officers' uniforms with gold braids and visored hats; ushers wore

white middies, uniforms with bell-bottom trousers. Appropriately, this little local gem of a theater was christened the Neptune.<sup>9</sup>

Compared to today's efficient but bland "cookie-cutter" approach to the building of cinema houses, these old houses were utterly unique. Each one was altogether different from the others in shape, size, and decorative art. For all their differences, however, they shared several characteristics, especially in terms of the people who made possible the feature event.



*Inside the Neptune*

From the outset, these local enterprises sprang from the minds and souls, as well as the pocketbooks, of bold Island businessmen. Local histories and vocal reminiscences feature the names of Hollis Reed of the Neptune, Byron Mayo and Howard Robinson of the Park, Bill Dolliver of the Pastime, W. P. Wadleigh of the Casino, Joel Emery of the Star, and George P. McKay of the Criterion. All dreamed big and boldly and put feet and wings to their dreams.

McKay, the founder of the Criterion, prided himself on stepping off the ferry from Hancock "leading a cow with 40 cents in his pocket." Soon he created a trucking business and the Island's first bus service. Apparently he also engaged in the age-old art of bootlegging. For sure, money for the quarter-million-dollar Criterion came from McKay's pooling his resources with several prosperous Bar Harbor residents including Dan Herlihy, a rum-runner for whom the law paid a one-way ticket to a federal penitentiary. During the darkest days of Prohibition, McKay "always had a smile and a drink to offer friends and acquaintances," according to one reporter. Only his drink, not his smile and most certainly not his vision, distinguished McKay from other movie-men on the Island.<sup>10</sup>

Visionaries all, these owners and managers were also pragmatists. In order to survive, they offered varied programs of entertainment. Not

one of the Island's movie theaters confined itself to movies. Concerts, vaudeville skits, juggling acts, sing-alongs, plays, animal shows, and lectures spiced up the usual movie schedule. The most common additive was some form of music.

Each owner tailored his fare to local taste. The Neptune, for example, frequently scheduled country-and-western or big-band music for its largely working-class audience.<sup>11</sup> The Pastime Theater in Northeast Harbor catered to quite a different crowd. For them, summer Sunday evenings at the Pastime meant lighthearted popular and pious songs followed by serious lectures in the Chatauqua tradition. Northeast Harbor's summer resident (or visiting) clergymen, social workers, and college professors delivered the lectures. Some focused on major national and international issues.<sup>12</sup>



*Pastime Theater*

Vaudeville occasionally enjoyed its moment on the Pastime stage, sometimes to the embarrassment of local worthies. The audience nervously twittered when mischievous entertainer Billy Webb came out one night in a red and white blazer, twirled his straw hat and sang "Will the Spearmint Lose Its Flavor on the Bedpost Over Night?"<sup>13</sup>

For years, sing-alongs at the Pastime were led by Miss Helen Pendleton, the organist and director of music at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. Miss Pendleton represents another common figure in the story of movie houses on MDI: the pianist, and in some cases the organist, for each theater in those days when live accompaniment enhanced the old silent movies. Like Pendleton, Flossie Hancock, and Grace Donnell in Northeast Harbor, Marjorie Lindell, Hilda Hodgkins, Dorothy Hodgkins Stanley, and Pearl Westcott in Bar Harbor, Elfrida Dorr in Southwest Harbor, and Lula Thurston in Bass Harbor dominate memories of the early silent film days.

Although Somesville and Seal Harbor had no movie house as such, memoirists from both towns vividly remember Florence Gray providing sound for the flicks in Somesville's Masonic Hall and Aleta Bryant doing the same at the Neighborhood House in Seal Harbor. "When Aleta played," Richard Billings recalled almost half a century later, "you would think that an orchestra was joining in. She played the simplest tune with vigor, strength, and color."<sup>14</sup>

By all accounts, the queen of the keyboard was Pearl Westcott. At the Star, for years her lively piano skills set the tempo for films. In 1924 the Star's owner bought a new organ for the theater, and the Pearl happily adapted. "A few minutes before the show was set to begin," as one commentator has reconstructed the moment, "Pearl would amble down the aisle and step behind the low red café curtain which enclosed the organ. Doffing her raccoon coat, she would click a switch that turned on the bellows, snap on the light over the console and, with one eye on the screen and the other on the keyboard, launch into her first salvo of chords."<sup>15</sup>

The coming of sound around 1930 failed to bury the talent of Pearl Westcott. She continued to warm up audiences at the Star, and later at the Criterion, with organ music prior to feature films. Shortly before the Star closed in 1938, she provided the music for the funeral of her original employer, Joel Emery, whose body was appropriately laid out on the stage of his own creation. Into her eighties, Pearl Westcott performed at private recitals and dinner parties at the Vanderbilts' Sonogee Estate and at the Rockefellers' home in Seal Harbor.<sup>16</sup>

Local reminiscences frequently identify a third important figure in the cast of characters providing movies for Mount Desert Island: the projectionist. Not by coincidence, the best film ever made about small-town movie houses, *Cinema Paradiso*, focuses on the projectionist in a coastal village in Sicily. The projectionist is the Wizard of Oz behind

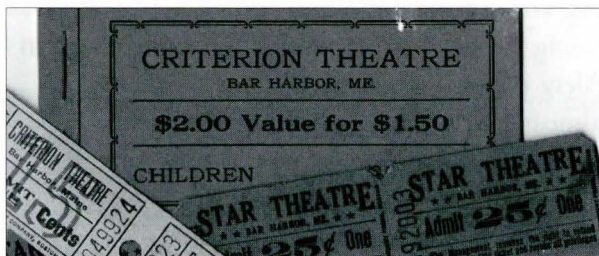


*Park Theater poster*



the mechanical apparatus, making magic happen. The theater manager might open the door, the concessions clerk might do a brisk trade, but the show does not start until the projectionist performs his duty.

His duty was complex, especially in the early days when a new technology required expertise and manual dexterity. Brittle old films often broke, requiring instant repair.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the projectionist had to be extremely careful working with highly flammable film based with nitrate. The turning point in *Cinema Paradiso* occurs when a monstrous fire results from an over-heated film.



Beginning in 1930, Augusta's Office of the Insurance Commissioner annually required projectionists to be tested and licensed "to operate a cinematograph or similar apparatus." Presumably the test involved some elementary mechanics and electricity, perhaps even some chemistry. A candidate from Northeast Harbor, Sumner B. ("Bucky") Sullivan, reportedly came out of the exam complaining about "them bastards" who made it too rigorous.<sup>18</sup> Priscilla Trafton of Southwest Harbor still proudly owns the 1940 license of her husband, Joe, who worked for forty years in the projection room of the Park Theater.<sup>19</sup>

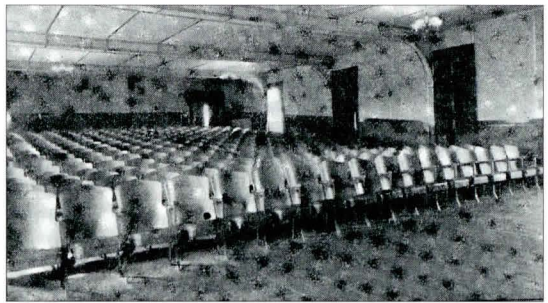
Projectionists Bucky Sullivan and his older brother George once played out a little drama that still provokes chuckles from Northeast Harbor librarian Robert Pyle. A native of Islesford, Pyle in 1963 took the "movie boat" to meet a date, Pam Pervear, for an evening at the Pastime. They arrived early, took seats that had faulty springs, and hastily moved to new seats just before the lights went down for the feature film. As the screen lit up, some garbled, indecipherable words appeared, looking like "The End" written backwards. From the projectionist room, George Sullivan blurted out, "Gawd dammit, Bucky, you got it in there backwards again."<sup>20</sup>

Like many islanders, Bob Pyle came by sea from Islesford to Northeast Harbor. Numerous folks recall boat rides to the movies. People

from Little Cranberry came by boat not only to the Pastime but also to the Park Theater. Swan's Islanders ferried to the Neptune in Bass Harbor; people from Bernard rowed across the bay. Nan Lincoln and her brother rowed from their Northeast Harbor home on Peabody Drive, just across from Bear Island, to the town docks for an easy walk up the hill to the Pastime.<sup>21</sup>

Islanders also have stories to tell about transport to the movies by open wagon, truck, and car. Old-timers on the Quightside vividly recall horse-and-wagon parties to both the Neptune and the Park. From West Tremont, the family of Miles McIntire regularly packed into the cab of their pickup truck to drive to the Neptune every Saturday night. Before highway safety became an obsession, they stopped frequently along the way to fill the truck bed with friends and neighbors eager to see the flicks.<sup>22</sup>

The farther one gets from the bright lights of Bar Harbor, the more one hears stories about walking to the movies. In summer and winter, in rain and snow, for matinees and late-night showings, people hap-



*The Neptune could seat 300.*

pily walked miles to see films. Special events enticed them, sometimes not on convenient weekend nights. A Southwest Harbor girl, Rebecca Carlson, walked every Wednesday night to attend a Roy Rogers Club at the Neptune, some three miles away. Club "business" followed a Roy Rogers and Dale Evans movie, then Rebecca walked back home in the dark, sometimes alone.<sup>23</sup> Years after the event, a life-long resident of Somesville, Nelson Leland, vividly remembered that as a boy he had to walk home — at the far end of the village — in the dark from the old Masonic Lodge after seeing the 1925 classic, Lon Chaney's *The Phantom of the Opera*. The movie's creepy scenes and Somesville's absence of street lights made young Leland glad to have friends with him for much of the walk. They peeled off to their homes, though, leaving Leland to run alone, terrified, up his darkened long driveway. As he later lay in bed replaying the movie in his mind, the security of home felt "awfully good."<sup>24</sup>

In another case, a walk turned into a run to the movies. Sometime in the mid-1970s, Charles and Susannah Jones drove their two boys from their home in Bernard to the Park Theater in Southwest Harbor to see the 1939 thriller, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. On the way home, the younger son, Amos, registered infatuation for the heroine, Maureen O'Hara. An hour or so after the family arrived home, Amos was nowhere to be found in the house or yard. The family piled back into the car, rushed back to the Park, and there found ten-year-old Amos at the ticket office, crestfallen. He had run all the way only to find the second showing finished just as he arrived.<sup>25</sup>

Youthful enthusiasm for the movies and neighborhood movie houses reverberates throughout all the reminiscences I have heard. And well it should. These old movie houses were wells of imagination for people tied to the prosaic tasks of work and raising families. For some, they were church substitutes dispensing values and hope; they created rituals, im-



"Ruggles of Red Gap" at the Park

ages, and illusions for people who no longer went to church. For folks isolated by Maine winters and island insularity, the Neptune, the Park, and their kind were sociable community centers where families and friends gathered. For the young at heart, they were dating parlors spared the need to ask permission to turn off the lights.

Unfortunately, they did not last. Nationwide, the movie industry peaked in 1946 with an all-time record of \$1.7 billion in domestic profits; by 1962 those receipts fell to \$900 million, slightly more than half the 1946 gross. Diminishing profits produced panic and despair. As the last picture show played in one small town after another, the major film studios drastically cut their production schedules. Thousands of miles removed from Mount Desert Island, Hollywood itself seemed "an island of depression in a sea of prosperity."<sup>26</sup>

With fewer dollars rolling in, MDI movie houses began cutting costs to the bone. Bass Harbor's Neptune was the first to sink. In the mid-1950s, an aged H. G. Reed turned the entire second floor of his

general store over to the more lucrative business of selling new home appliances. The Pastime's end came more decisively in December, 1966, with a fire that destroyed it and four other buildings on the corner of Main and Summit in Northeast Harbor. The flames that lit up the sky could be seen as far away as Blue Hill. As the ashes smoldered, a local pundit was heard to comment that this event would free the town of any further concern for measures of urban renewal.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, the Park Theater in Southwest Harbor followed the Neptune's lead in turning its space over to a more commercially viable enterprise. In the summer of 1974, the Park stored away its equipment and stacks of hand-made posters in the attic of its new establishment, McEachern & Hutchins Hardware.<sup>28</sup> All the while the Criterion, a grand old reminder of better days, became increasingly shabby at the elbows. It had "fallen into disrepair," as one observer put it, "the sleek elegance of its art deco design dulled with age."<sup>29</sup>

Why this dramatic reversal of fortune, a reversal that echoed all the way from Hollywood to Mount Desert Island? People instinctively blame television, the aggressive new kid on the media block whose rise to dominance coincided precisely with the decline and fall of the traditional movie industry. By 1953 about 46 percent of American families owned television sets; by the end of the 1950s, that number jumped to 85 percent. A paraphrase of Friedrich Nietzsche's trenchant comment about old gods and churches seems in order: the local movie house is dead and the television set is its tombstone.

As usual, Maine, and more specifically, Mount Desert Island, violates the rule of thumb. Long after the movie houses fell into decline, television sets were still few and far between on the Island. Until cable and the disc, reception was spotty at best. Old-timers had a descriptive name for Somesville: "Betwixt the Hills." They should have tried to get decent television reception betwixt all the Island's hills and mountains.

In truth, television was merely one of many new leisure and recreational opportunities that contributed to the demise of the local movie houses after the Second World War. If any other single culprit is to be fingered, surely it is the automobile.

Wheels, cheap petrol, and improved highways took locals away from their traditional gathering places. Thanks to the bridge, Islanders went off working and shopping in Ellsworth and Bangor, visiting relatives and friends in distant towns. For restless youths, the automobile afforded



*Fire destroys the Neptune's home.*

freedom from censorious parents and neighbors, and something more than virtual engagement with distant sites on film. The car meant that the libido no longer had to be limited to the touching of elbows and knees, the holding of hands, and (at most) a hasty kiss in a darkened movie house.

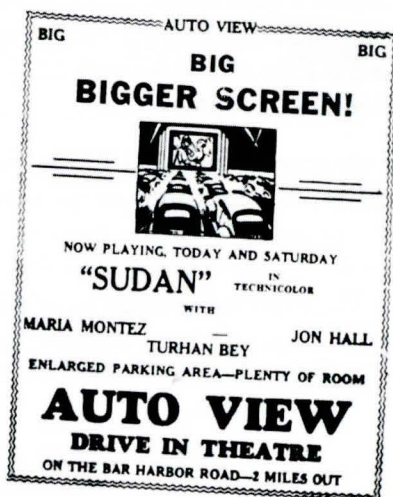
If this sounds like a segue to the drive-in theater, so be it. Although the drive-in certainly did not kill the Island's local movie houses, the car culture on which the drive-ins depended was one of the key factors in the death of the Neptune, Park, and Pastime. Expensive real estate prevented any drive-ins from ever being constructed on MDI, but just over the bridge at Trenton the Auto View opened for 250 cars in June, 1949, fully a year before the Bangor or Brewer drive-ins were built. Three years later the name of the Auto View was changed to the Ellsworth-Trenton Drive-in.<sup>30</sup>

All over the United States, drive-ins enjoyed brief stints under the stars. By the late-1950s some 5,000 outdoor screens and groups of speaker-posts dotted the American landscape. No fewer than forty-seven drive-ins operated in Maine. Some catered to family fare, but others quickly gained a seedy reputation as passion pits offering little

but pornography. Trenton typified the latter tendency. In June, 1974, the X-rated *Deep Throat*, starring Linda Lovelace, packed in such large crowds that it was held over until late September. At season's end, a local wag doctored up the billboard with a note, "Clothed for the Winter." In 1984 the Ellsworth-Trenton Drive-In closed for good.<sup>31</sup>

A sadder ending occurred on a cold January night in 1991 when a Bass Harbor landmark, H. G. Reed's General Store, the old home of the Neptune, burned to the ground. In the end, the sea got its revenge on the Hollywood artifice that had been imposed on the Island. In a futile attempt to combat the fire, local volunteers led by Hollis Reed's grandson, Brad, pumped salt water from the bay only to have the hoses clog up with seaweed.<sup>32</sup>

Lest this little excursion end on a note dripping with salty nostalgia, one is reminded of a landmark event that occurred shortly after the old Reed store burned. An ambitious young projectionist for the Criterion, Chris Vincenty, initiated an entirely new movie-house venture, Reel Pizza, in Bar Harbor. Arguably, the alternative and foreign films at Reel Pizza represent a vast improvement over the old class B fare provided by most of the original movie houses. Certainly the usual candy bar and Cracker Jacks cannot compete with tasty pizza.



*Trenton Auto View*



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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Three good Carolina women, Tina, Dew, and Maggie, generously provided critiques of this manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of motion pictures, see Gerald Mast and Bruce K. Kavin, *A Short History of the Movies* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2006, 9th ed.); Louis Giannetti and Scott Eyman, *Flashback: A Brief History of Film* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2001, 4th ed.); and Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994, 2nd ed.).

<sup>3</sup> For early film showings in Bar Harbor: Barbara Ellen Joy, "Historical Notes on Mount Desert Island," (Mar. 1, 1966, unpublished ms. in MDI Historical Society Archives), Part I, p. 72; information on Cranberry Island and Swan's Island is from interviews with Mary Locke (Dec. 15, 2004) and Margaret Bailey (Jan. 7, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to David Weiss, director of the Northeast Historic Film Archives, for information on the Casino; cf. *Maine Register, State Year-Book and Legislative Manual*, no. 61 (1920), p. 652. For Seal Harbor, see Richard W. Billings, *The Village and the Hill: Growing Up in Seal Harbor* (Augusta: Day Mountain Publishing Co., n. d.), chapter entitled "The Neighborhood House," no p. numbers. Nelson Leland, "Nostalgia," unpublished memo in the Mt. Desert Island Historical Society Archives, is a colorful account of the movies in Somesville.

<sup>5</sup> In 1931 a Rockefeller party for Seal Harbor locals began with cake and ice cream, and ended at the Star Theater: Mildred L. Wright, "Seal Harbor" in *Mount Desert Island: An Informal History*, ed. Gunnar Hansen (Privately published by the town of Mount Desert, 1979), p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Seth S. Thornton, *Traditions and Records of Southwest Harbor and Somesville*, MDI, ME (Privately published, 1938), p. 149.

<sup>7</sup> Nan Lincoln, "Klondike Fortune Preceded Bass Harbor Gold Mine," *Bar Harbor Times*, May 29, 1986; Raymond E. Robbins, Jr., *A History of the Houses of West Tremont, Maine*, 2 vols. (Privately published, 1977), II, 268-70: "A History of Reed's Store," undated, unpublished ms. in the Tremont Historical Society archives, Bass Harbor.

<sup>8</sup> The best account of the Criterion is to be found in an essay that resides in the archives of the Bar Harbor Historical Society: Peter Cooper, "The Theater in Bar Harbor's Changing World," pp. 4-17 from an unidentified journal.

<sup>9</sup> For this information, I am especially grateful to Emma L. Richards, the youngest daughter of H. G. Reed. She kindly composed for me a four-page handwritten memo entitled "Childhood Memories" (2004).

<sup>10</sup> Cooper, "The Theater in Bar Harbor's Changing World," p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Richards, "Childhood Memories," pp. 3-4.

<sup>12</sup> Emily Phillips Reynolds, *Down Memory Lane* (Portland: Maine Printing Co., 1966), p. 2; Robert R. Pyle, "Northeast Harbor," in Hansen, ed., *Mount Desert Island*, pp. 84-85; W. W. Vaughan, *Northeast Harbor Reminiscences* (Hallowell: White and Horne Co., 1930), p. 60.

<sup>13</sup> Reynolds, *Down Memory Lane*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>14</sup> Leland, "Nostalgia," and Billings, *The Village and the Hill*.

<sup>15</sup> Cooper, "The Theater in Bar Harbor's Changing World," p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Clipping from the *Bar Harbor Times*, date unidentified, in the "Star" files of the Bar Harbor Historical Society; Cooper, "The Theater in Bar Harbor's Changing World," p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> See Reynolds, *Down Memory Lane*, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> Thanks to an informative letter to the author from a Northeast Harbor native, Don Cousins, Mar. 1, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with Priscilla Trafton, July 29, 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Author's interview with Robert Pyle, Oct. 1, 2003; details confirmed by Don Cousins letter, Mar. 1, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Author's interviews with Robert Bartlett, Feb. 15, 2005, and Nan Lincoln, Sept. 10, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> Author's interviews with Wayne Libhart, Sept. 8, 2003, and Robert Bartlett, Feb. 15, 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Author's interview with Rebecca Hodgkin, Sept. 10, 2004.

<sup>24</sup> Leland, "Nostalgia."

<sup>25</sup> Author's interview with Susannah Jones, Aug. 20, 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Giannetti and Eyman, *Flashback*, p. 256. For the best analysis of the film industry's national crisis, see Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 249-304.



<sup>27</sup> Pyle, "Northeast Harbor," in Hansen, ed., *Mount Desert Island*, p. 95; *Bar Harbor Times*, Dec. 22, 1966.

<sup>28</sup> Thanks to the generosity of Les McEachern, these posters are now housed in the archives of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society, in the yellow schoolhouse at the head of Somes Sound.

<sup>29</sup> Cooper, "The Theater in Bar Harbor's Changing World," p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> Will Anderson, *Those Were the Days: Drive-Ins, Dance Halls, Fried Clams, Summer & Maine* (Bath: Anderson & Sons, Publishing Co., 2002), pp. 67-68.

<sup>31</sup> Author's interview with Nan Lincoln, Sept. 10, 2004; Anderson, *Those Were the Days*, 68.

<sup>32</sup> *Bar Harbor Times*, Jan. 3, 1991. Brad Reed confirms the seaweed story.