



# THE OLD THEATER

## Celebrating 70 Years

### 1946~2016



**Once upon a time ...** George Merritt of Swansboro, NC decided Oriental needed a movie house. He purchased land at the corner of Broad and Church Streets from James and Ada Mason about 1946 and built the Mart Theatre, named after his new bride Margaret Jones. According to **Billy Johnston, the theater's first projectionist**, the first film to be shown there was *Blue Skies*.

In 1949, George sold it to Hubert, Thomas and W.J. Smith, Jr. They enlarged the balcony and projection room, added restrooms and got rid of the bats that found their way inside through holes in the concrete block construction: Attracted by lights from the projector, the bats flew around the theater, enhancing the ambiance during scary movie scenes and creating an unwelcome distraction at other times!

Until it closed in the late 1950s, the Mart Theatre attracted patrons from throughout Pamlico County. Lifelong residents remember paying 10¢ to see films in those days—and Jackpot Night:

*"Tuesday night was Jackpot night. A name was drawn from the bowl and the winner received a cash prize. You had to be present to win. If several weeks went by without a winner, the jackpot could grow to a hundred dollars or more. On those nights, the theater would be overflowing." ~ The Way It Was by Jim Ragan*

The building languished until 1987 when the Pelican Players rented it for rehearsals, storage of props and costumes and construction of sets. Because it was unfit for public use, they performed at the Oriental Woman's Club building. In the meantime Clem Paffe, a resident of Oriental, would ride by the building and ponder the question, "Wouldn't it be nice if ..." He asked around and found there were other people with the same thought. Soon after, a meeting of interested citizens was set up and the question rapidly became a reality.

The Pamlico County Civic and Cultural Center project began in the early 1990s with a dream of creating a performing arts center within the county. The Old Theater Corporation was formed in 1992 to facilitate acquisition of the theater and to assume responsibility for its renovation. Its first priority was to revive the dormant old building—a major undertaking that required a total renovation to bring the building up to modern systems and county codes: Its interior was completely gutted and refurbished to include professional lighting and sound systems, stage curtains, seating and much more.

*"Since we could not afford to buy new seats at the time of renovation, volunteers brought the original Mart Theatre seats to John Bond's storage building. They removed dirt and paint (including 11 lbs. of chewing gum underneath), sanded and repainted them."* ~Evelyn Stephenson

This major undertaking climaxed when the theater reopened to the public on **March 15, 1995**.

In **2007**, the addition of a motorized movie screen and projection equipment returned the building to its original purpose, providing movie buffs the opportunity to view classic and new release films on a large screen—the way they were meant to be viewed. (The original carbon arc projectors were donated to the Oriental History Museum by Billy Johnston and can still be seen there.)

**Today**, the Old Theater Corporation owns the facility and manages it with a Board that is comprised of Pamlico County volunteers. Keeping this resource alive and strong depends on the additional support and participation of individual contributors, community businesses and service organizations, grants and folks who volunteer on stage and behind the scenes.



One of the two carbon arc projectors in the Old Theater.

We hope you enjoy reading this 70th Anniversary **Commemorative Booklet about the Old Theater's history.**

You can help to ensure that Pamlico County and the town of Oriental continues to have a venue for civic and cultural events by becoming a member or by volunteering behind the scenes on a theater-sponsored event.

A membership letter and form is included in this booklet. To learn more about volunteering, leasing, upcoming events and more, visit our website at

[www.OldTheater.org](http://www.OldTheater.org) or email to [oldtheater@gmail.com](mailto:oldtheater@gmail.com).



B4—The Sun-Journal, New Bern, N.C.—Friday, April 7, 1989

**Theater**

Continued from B1

theater, located at N.C. 16 and Church Street in Oriental, for storage space one year prior to making the renovations, said Stephenson, and now the group has a two-year lease on the property. The owners don't want to sell it at this time, she said.

Removal of the theater, which began at the end of February, includes painting the outside and cleaning up the inside of the structure. "The project is still under way," said Waz Fraser, who handles publicity and major reconstructions. No presentations will be given there. It would send an awful lot of work for that.

The theater has no water, fuel, heat or ventilation and space electricity. "There are no real plans to have public presentations," said Fraser, possibly there are those who hope for this one day.

Fraser said the painting has been completed and that a Pelican Players sign for the theater will be dedicated April 14.



FRESH LOOK — Pelican Players, from left, Faye Williamson, Evelyn Stephenson and Carol Fraser erect a poster on a newly painted wall.



The old theater before renovation.

**Renovation gives new life to movie house**

By AMY CLOYD Staff Reporter

ORIENTAL.—An old movie house in Oriental has a fresh coat of paint and a new life as a recreational hall for the resident theater group.

The Pelican Players group needed a place to rehearse, the group's president. "For the purpose of making the theater more livable," a \$1,500 grant was made from the special ap- Beverly Fordice, D-Craven; Gerald Anderson, D-Craven; and Dan Lilly, D-Lenoir.

theater was built in 1916 by a man from Swain County. "It was called the Mart Theater then," said Smith. "His wife's name was Margaret, and he named it after her. It was built similar to the one in Swain County. He owned that one."

"His wife wanted to be back in Swain County. She was lonely down in Oriental so he was forced to do something about it," said Smith. The Smiths bought out the theater in 1961 until late 1984 when television became popular in the county, said Smith. It was rented out as storage space for white and then to the Pelican Players.

The theater was the only movie house in Oriental, although there was another one in the county in Haywood, built prior to World War II. "They used to bus people in to that one," said Smith.

"They was always a good show-going crowd in Oriental until TV got pretty well saturated," said Smith. "There's not one (movie theater) in the county now."

The Pelican Players rented the





Bernard B. Hollowell, front on left, recently accepted the position of honorary chairman of the funding committee for The Old Theater Corporation. Pictured with Mr. Hollowell are: Allen Propst, Jr., front on right, the general chairman of the fundraising committee and Board of Directors; back row, left to right, Board of Directors, Robert Roskind, Evelyn Stephenson, Clement Paffe, Jr., and Curtis Lewis.

## New theater for old is hope of Pamlico groups

From Oriental

It's been a long time since Oriental's Old Theater has seen any life besides that of a storage building and rehearsal place for Pamlico County's Pelican Players. But some folks in Pamlico hope that won't be the case much longer.

The Broad Street theater is the focus of a fund raising effort for what they're calling the Pamlico County Civic and Cultural Center Project.

The organizers want to raise \$90,000 to restore the theater and add a dressing room annex, said Evelyn C. Stephenson, chairman of the board of the Old Theater Corp., incorporated this past summer.

If they can, she said, they see all kinds of possibilities:

‘Many people remember it as a theater.’

Evelyn C. Stephenson  
Old Theater Corp.

more cultural events, a children's theater, a performance place for the Pamlico Chorale, even a summer theater.

Thus far, they're about one-third of the way toward the fund-raising goal, Stephenson said as the Pelicans rehearsed last week for "Love, Sex and the IRS," their opening play of the 1992-93 season. The play opens Wednesday.

The Pelicans have been leasing the building from its owners, Hubert and Thomas Smith, ever since the theater group grew out of the old school bus that was its first

home, not quite 10 years ago.

"We've just now gotten to the point of feeling we could make a drive for money to fix up the building," Stephenson said. They also have an option to purchase as part of the lease, she noted.

She heads a board appointed by the Pamlico County commissioners and Mayor Sherrill Styron of Oriental and including Curtis "Skoos" Lewis, Clement A. Paffe Jr., C. Allen Propst Jr. and Robert Roskind.

Propst is general chairman of the funding committee, and Bernard B. Hollowell is

honorary chairman. The project has also been endorsed by county legislators, the Pamlico County schools, Pamlico Community College and the Pamlico Arts Council.

The building was built about 1945 by a Swansboro businessman who operated it as a movie theater briefly and then sold it to Will Smith, father of Hubert and Thomas Smith. The Smiths operated the theater until the late 1950s, when television and better roads cut into profits.

"Many people remember it as a theater," Stephenson said. Indeed, she hopes it can be used for movies too, once it's fixed up.

But a lot of work is needed, including the addition of heat and air conditioning, a sprinkler system to meet building code requirements,

See THEATER /C5

## Theater

Continued from C1

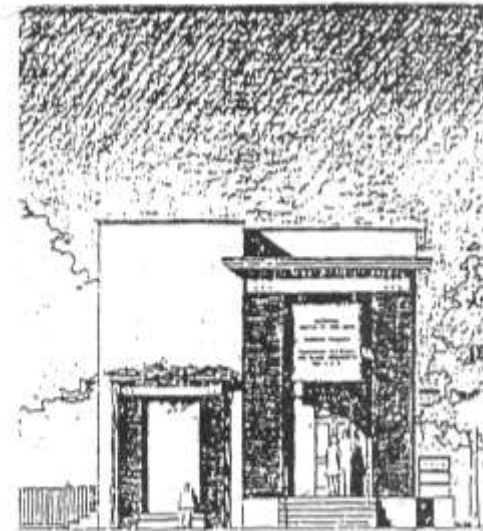
more seats, paint, a stage and the dressing room annex.

The Pelicans have been performing at the Oriental Woman's Club the past few years, and that is where "Love, Sex and the IRS" will take place next week. But both actors and staff may be

forgiven if they dream a little too in their offstage time.

As the brochure the Old Theater Corp. board members and funding committee members are passing around in Pamlico County states, "Those familiar with the theater's history and those who have recently become interested in its renovation always end their speculation with the comment, 'What If ...?'"

— Tom Dillon



This drawing by architect Haynes Spencer Richards of Raleigh shows the Old Theater as it's envisioned after restoration.

# The Way It Was

by Jimmy Ragan  
*Pamlico News*  
Wednesday, March 10, 2010



Movie posters from Mart Theatre. Found by Georgie Powell in the walls of her home, put there when Red Lee, her father, did some work on their house. Based on the movie release dates, we guess the posters are from the mid-50s. --Photo: TownDock.net

"There was no TV in those days—at least not in these parts. But about two blocks from my house was something that was even better—the Mart Theatre.

The Mart Theatre was built in 1946 by George Merritt who after a couple of years sold it to the Smiths, Tom and Hubert, who ran it until it closed in the late 50s. They made a lot of improvements to the theater: They enlarged the balcony and projection room, added restrooms and eliminated the bats. The concrete block construction of the building permitted bats to enter through the holes in the concrete blocks. Drawn by the lights from the projector, the bats flew

around the theater, enhancing the ambience during the scary scenes and creating an unwelcome distraction at other times. Tom Smith capped the holes with screen wiring to keep out the bats.

With or without the bats, I loved the Mart Theatre. For a quarter I could see a movie. And I hardly ever missed one. Candy sold for a nickel and popcorn was a dime, but I rarely bought refreshments. Although my father never went to movies, and my mother didn't go regularly, they generously gave me enough allowance to go every time the movie changed, provided I didn't have refreshments.

On Sundays and Mondays, there was usually a musical. Without alternative entertainment, I learned to enjoy them. My favorite actors were Gene Kelly, Donald O'Connor, Dan Dailey and Ethel Merman. I didn't care much for Fred Astaire. *Singing in the Rain* and *There's No Business Like Show Business* were my all time favorite movies from this genre. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays there was a variety of movies ranging from dramas to comedies. I didn't care much for the dramas, but loved the comedies. Of course the best movies, the westerns, were on Fridays and Saturdays.

Tuesday night was Jackpot night. A name was drawn from the bowl and the winner received a cash prize. You had to be present to win. If several weeks went by without a winner, the jackpot could grow to a hundred dollars or more. On those nights, the theater would be overflowing. As much as I went to the movies, I can't imagine why I never won. Maybe kids were not eligible. (Continued ...)

According to my wife and our friend, Gail, the back rows of the theater were make-out rows. Young couples seated there could smooch without being disturbed. I don't remember that. Apparently, I stopped going to the movies before I hormonally progressed to that section.

There was one aspect of the theater that would greatly offend modern day mores and sensitivities. There were two entrances to the theater: White people entered the front door while blacks entered the side door. The main floor was for "whites only" and "colored people", as we called them, would take the steps up to the balcony. As wrong as it was, I never gave the matter much thought one way or the other. Sadly, it was the way things were in those days.

At that time, there were at least a dozen cowboys that appeared regularly in the westerns. One stood out from all the rest. It was a time when the good guys wore white hats and rode white horses, but Lash LaRue was not your typical good guy. He spoke with a tough-guy accent and wore all black. Even his horse was black and appropriately named Black Diamond.



His style was in sharp contrast to Roy Rodgers and Gene Autry. At some point in their movies, they would pick up their guitar and sing to the leading lady. That was much too mushy for a young boy. Instead of a guitar, Lash had a bullwhip which he used more often than his six shooters. His movies always ended with Lash using his whip to rein in the bad guy.

Not only was he my favorite cowboy, he was also the only one I ever saw in person. When I was about ten years old, we found out that Lash and his sidekick, Fuzzy, would make a personal appearance at the Kehoe Theatre in New Bern. Somehow, Odell Sawyer and I got tickets. With his famous bullwhip, Lash snapped a cigarette out of Fuzzy's mouth and performed other seemingly impossible feats. Proving to all, he was a real cowboy.

Many years later, I found out Lash had begun his career as a hair-dresser. Oh well, that's Hollywood."

Have a memory about the Old Theater?

**We'll be publishing a series of articles about the Old Theater's** history—from her days as the Mart Theatre to present times—and would like to hear from you. To share a story contact Carol Small at [smallkencarol2@gmail.com](mailto:smallkencarol2@gmail.com) or 252-617-0269.



March 9, 1995

# At last, Pamlico to debut theater

Thursday, March 9, 1995.

By Tom Dillon  
Sunday Editor

**ORIENTAL** — The volunteers and subcontractors working to turn Oriental's Old Theater into the Pamlico County Civic and Cultural Center have almost finished the lengthy construction work.

Now they have to concentrate on convincing the Phantom of the Old Theater that it's all to the good.

That will be one of the themes of next week's gala opening of the building starting Wednesday in Oriental, enfolded Evelyn Stephenson, president of nonprofit Old Theater Corp., as she led a tour around the mostly-completed building Tuesday.

She wouldn't let on what happens, beyond the fact that the Phantom, played by Jim Stobie, is being excited and isn't happy about it.

But most of the rest of the county seems happy the work is nearly complete, to judge by comments on the street Tuesday. "It's keeping the history of Oriental," said Trezar Willson, a teacher at Fred Anderson Elementary School.

The work isn't complete. Theaters next week will use the side steps instead of the main, still-crooked steps, Stephenson noted.

Work on the steps and some facade work remains to be done, along with purchase money to be raised.

But inside, new wiring and air conditioning, a new handicapped-accessible bathroom and a new 20-

See THEATER/C3



Charlie Peck/Sun Journal

Bill Glye fastens nameplates onto a seat in the newly-renovated Old Theater, set to be reintroduced to the public next week.

## Theater

Continued from C1

by-30-foot stage are complete, and a "green room" has been added at the back of the theater for dressing and makeup.

New green curtains and the new lighting system are going in this week, complementing the art deco lights that have been kept from the theater's old role as a movie theater.

And the 150 seats, all of which have been sold to raise money, have been dedicated to people or groups from Pamlico County's past and present — a situation which will undoubtedly lead to considerable searching among the seats next week.

"Some people's names here are those who sat in these seats

when they were children," Stephenson said as volunteer Bill Glye fastened the nameplates onto the seats Tuesday. But there's no particular order to them.

"The seats were done at random," she said, "however they came out of the box." Searching for one's parents or company or whatever on the back of the seats is a little like

searching out a name on a war memorial — you know it's there, but finding it takes a while.

The Old Theater Corp. is still raising money for the theater; it has a dinner scheduled Saturday night to help, and is planning a further individual dedication effort to raise money to outfit the green room. But the seat dedications raised \$15,000, money which was matched by the Bryan Family Foundation and used to pay for the lights.

The show next week includes public performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16, through

Saturday, March 18. A special preview has been set Wednesday for those who have helped do or pay for the work.

The gala includes a script by Stephenson and Bill Gould with songs by Gould and Reba Tiller and direction by Janet Stobie.

Performers include M.C. Pat Dallas, the Pamlico Chorale, organist Greg Owen, various members of the Pelican Players, "bag lady" Mary Byrnes and many others.

Tickets are free and available from Williams Paint Store in Alliance, Buckhorn Books in Bayboro and Neuse Builders Supply in Oriental. Information is available from Stephenson at 249-1537.

‘Some people’s names here are those who sat in these seats when they were children.’

Evelyn Stephenson  
Old Theater Corp.



THE OLD THEATER CORPORATION

presents the

# Gala Opening

of the

PAMLICO COUNTY  
CIVIC AND CULTURAL CENTER

March 15, 16, 17 & 18, 1995

Old Theater  
Corner of Broad and Church Streets  
Oriental, North Carolina

## The Gala

A Celebration By and For the People  
of Pamlico County, North Carolina

Directed by Janet Stobie  
Produced by Evelyn Stephenson

Master of Ceremonies ..... Pat Dallas  
The Phantom ..... Jim Stobie  
Baggy ..... Mary Byrnes

Music by Greg Owen and Reba Tiller  
Script by Bill Gould and Evelyn Stephenson

### ACT I

1. Greg Owen (at the organ) ..... Songs 1944-50 Era
2. The Pamlico County Chorale ..... No Business  
(Directed by Reba Tiller) ..... Like Show Business  
Original Songs ..... Pamlico County  
Entertainers  
(Lyrics by Bill Gould)
3. Mary Clyde Dunn & Ben Caskill ..... Broadway Melodies
4. Gouse Creek Island Players ..... Abab the Arab  
Barbara Fulcher ..... Country Western Tunes  
(Directed by Annette Jones)
5. Senior Citizen Center Entertainers:  
Quarter - Simple Melody ..... Vintage Voices - Sr. Citizen Song  
Soloist Bill Blair - Italian Aria
6. The Make Believers ..... The Church Fight  
(Directed by Graco Hudson)
7. Steps in Time ..... Tap Variations  
(Directed by Janet Stobie)
8. Frank Murphy & Robin Ward ..... A Musical Variety

9. Baggy and Phantom ..... How's a Girl Goin'  
to Make a Livin'?

15 MINUTE INTERMISSION

### ACT II

10. Greg Owen (at the organ) ..... Selections from  
"Phantom of the Opera"  
Send in the Clowns
11. Joe Bliss
12. Pelican Players Puppets ..... Skit by Bill Gould  
(Directed by Bobbie McIntosh)
13. Miss "C" Gets Married ..... Excerpt from "Southern Girls"  
(Directed by Mike Ilvona & Featuring  
Carnell Barrow, Keith Cannon and Rod Merritt)
14. Elaine Benedict ..... The Waltz
15. Christine Rogers ..... I Got a Crush on You  
Wonderful Guy
16. Finale ..... Entire Cast ..... Carolina in the Morning

## The End

NO SMOKING IN THE CENTER  
NO PHOTOGRAPHS DURING PERFORMANCE,  
PLEASE

OLD THEATER CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Evelyn Stephenson - President    Curtis Lewis - Secretary  
C. Allen Propst, Jr. - Vice-President    Robert Fasnacht - Treasurer  
John Valassis - Asst. Treasurer

September 12, 1995

# Pelican Players, Old Theater Corp. merge into one organization

The Pelican Players, a community theater group, and the Old Theater Corporation, the group responsible for the renovation of the old movie theater in Oriental, are now effectively acting as one organization, and will soon legally be one.

The community theater group, however, will retain its own identity within the combined organization as the Pelican Players Productions.

Evelyn Stephenson, president of the Old Theater Corporation, which reincarnated an old movie theater in Oriental as the Pamlico County Cultural Arts and Civic Center, explained that the Old Theater Corporation was formed as a nonprofit organization whose goal was to renovate and eventually purchase the building. The Pelican Players were to be the center's primary tenants, and also planned to assist with operating expenses until sufficient revenues could be generated by renting the facility.

But after the center opened, and lease negotiations between the two organizations began in earnest, "all kinds of complications were raised," said Stephenson.

Robin Ward of the Pelican Players and Scoot Lewis of the Old Theater, though, suggested a solution. "They came up with the idea of a

merger," she said. "We were all in this together anyway."

The Players, said Susan Fenner, president of that group, already were paying the insurance, taxes, and utilities as their contribution for use of the building. "We're doing no more than that with this merger."

The idea was presented to the boards of both groups, and they, for the most part, liked it.

Pelican Players will now function as a division within the Old Theater Corporation, with its own budget, said Fenner. Their board of directors will be retained as a committee. "Artistically, we will operate as an autonomous unit," Fenner noted.

"There will be no changes in the Pelican Players' operations," Stephenson emphasized.

The full merger will be in effect by the annual meeting set for February 1996.

Fenner said she believed the merger will enable the Players to grow. Equipment for lighting and sound, for instance, that was being bought by the community theater will now be purchased by the Old Theater Corporation as part of their continuing improvements to the facility.

The Old Theater has planned several fund raisers. The popular wild game dinner and art auction will be back November 4, and a yard sale and variety show/gala are scheduled for the spring.

Pelican Players Productions will be presenting "Social Security" October 19, 20, 21, 27, 27, and 28.

The facility is available for rent for cultural, civic and educational events.

Fireplace Experts

Gas & Wood  
Vermont Castings



# Curtain going up on theater renovation

Dinner tonight focuses attention on work at former movie theater

By Sandy Semans  
Sun Journal Staff

ORIENTAL — Some Oriental residents are hoping that a wild game dinner will put them a step closer to providing the county with a cultural and civic center.

The Old Theater Corp., a nonprofit organization formed by local residents, has already raised \$80,000 toward renovating a former movie theater on Broad Street in Oriental, said Evelyn Stephenson, president of the group.

"Our purpose is to promote and conduct the renovation of the old theater and later to act as operations manager for what will be named the Pamlico County Civic and Cultural Center," said Stephenson.

Volunteer workers have become a regular sight at the old movie theater as they have torn down, put up, carried out and spiced up the structure, built in about 1945.

The building holds memories for many of the locals including Oriental resident Billy Johnston, a projectionist at the theater for the first five years that it showed movies.

Only 14-years-old at the beginning of his employment, Johnston said that he was left to operate the theater when the owner got married and went on his honeymoon.

"I was just a kid and I was scared to death," laughs Johnston.

"We showed two movies at night except on Sunday when we showed one in the afternoon and the second after church was over at night," said Johnston.

"Gone with the Wind" drew the one of the bigger crowds, he said.

Different types of movies played best on different days, he explained.

"On Sunday and Monday we always played a musical or comedy; Tuesday night there was a \$10 jackpot that carried over to the next week if the winner wasn't there to



Jesse Avery/Sun Journal

Evelyn Stephenson, president of the Old Theater Corp., has high hopes for old movie house.

claim the prize, Wednesday and Thursday we always ran a high class detective type movie, and Friday and Saturday were always shoot 'em up, bang-bang cowboys movies. Sometimes we would run high class western on Sunday — but it had to be quality," said Johnston.

Quality use will still be the criteria as the building is recycled.

The Old Theater Corp. envisions the building being used for civic forum, children's theater, music concerts and perhaps extension classes from Pamlico Community

College, said Stephenson.

"We hope to rent it to various county agencies for their use as long as it happens to be in the realm of civic, cultural, art, entertainment and education," said Stephenson.

Most of the interior work has been accomplished including the refinishing of its 150 seats. Now comes the outside work.

The renovation cost was originally projected to be about \$90,000, however unexpected costs may push the renovation bill closer to \$100,000, she said.

But that's not dampening their

enthusiasm. Tonight the group is offering a wild game dinner for \$50 per person. Eighty percent of the dinner's price will go toward the project and is tax deductible.

Local chef Liz Valassis, assisted by Bill Gould, will prepare the evening's fare that includes h' or doeaves and dinner. There will be an open bar and an auction of original art works.

Dinner will start at 6 p.m. at the Oriental Women's Club. Tickets may be purchased at the door or by calling Alan Propst at Mariner Realty at 249-1014.



(Left to right, seated) Nancy Huff, John O'Shaughnessy, Alice O'Shaughnessy, Patti Higginbottom, John Burrirt. (Middle row) Allen Probst, Linda Johnson, John Valassis, Evelyn Stephenson, Judi Heit, Janet Stobie. (Top row) Jim Higginbottom, Will Huff, Charlie Carpenter, Weldon Howe, Eliz Valassis, Hubert Smith, Norma Smith, Gary Brinson.

# Cultural Center purchase finalized

By John Burrirt

Many people were reluctant to contribute financial support when work began five years ago to convert Oriental's old movie theater into a facility capable of presenting live plays and concerts. Much of this reluctance stemmed from the fact that the building had been leased instead of purchased.

Today that's no longer a problem.

On Thursday, final papers were signed transferring owner-

ship of the Pamlico County Civic and Cultural Center to The Old Theater Corporation, the nonprofit organization that was created in 1992 to develop and manage the facility.

"This transfer of ownership marks a major step towards making the Civic and Cultural Center a permanent fixture in Pamlico County," stated Old Theater Corporation's president Elizabeth Valassis. "While we've had a good working relationship with the former owners, Hubert and Tom Smith, there's

no worry now that the building might be diverted to someone making a higher offer."

"Our ability to purchase the building at this time is a reflection of the tremendous support we have received from individuals, businesses, and civic and governmental organizations throughout the county and beyond over the past five years," Valassis continued. "Not only have we been able to raise enough money to cover the

See THEATER, page 8

## About the Old Theater Corporation

The Old Theater Corp. owns and manages the Old Theater with a Board that is comprised of Pamlico County volunteers. Our mission is to ensure that Pamlico County and the town of Oriental has a venue for civic and cultural events. We accomplish our mission in the following ways:

- By the daily maintenance and operation of the Old Theater facility and grounds. *(Income Source: Membership Drives)*
- By making the Old Theater available for use by providers of performing arts and a variety of civic, business, club and charity organizations. *(Income Source: Leasing)*
- By presenting a broad range of theater-sponsored programs. *(Income Sources: Films, Plays, Performing Artists & Fundraising Events)*

Our ability to achieve this mission depends on the ongoing support and participation of individual contributors, community businesses, service organizations, grants and folks who volunteer on stage and behind the scenes.



*Pictured: Carol Small, Marc Kaplan, Lynn Whalen, Dick Flaherty, Tom Cochran, Judi Heit, Art Whalen & Nelda Coats  
Not Pictured: Cherry D'Angelo*

## A Grand Lady of Oriental is Turning 70 ... and she's hoping she can count on your support!

From the mid 1940s to the late 1950s, and since its revitalization in 1990, the Old Theater has provided a stage for plays, concerts, children's programs and workshops, movies and a variety of civic, business, club and charity events. Our ability to provide that stage has depended on membership drives, on leasing income, on ticket sales and on the dedicated service of volunteers who keep the facility running.

**As we humans age, we sometimes find ourselves in need of 'maintenance.'** This is also the case with our dear Old Theater. As she turns 70, we are discovering a multitude of things we need to do to keep her fit. These items range from a new roof and heating/cooling system to a paint job and interior refurbishing. A successful membership drive will help provide the funding needed to accomplish those things, allowing us to continue providing the wide range of entertainment our community has come to enjoy.

**Here's where YOU enter the stage! With graduated benefit levels, it's easy to share in the spotlight as a contributing member of the Old Theater, and the rewards are great.** While helping to keep the Old Theater a vital and active venue where performing arts can thrive in Pamlico County, you will receive the following benefits in 2016:

- **Recognition on the Old Theater's website and on theater-sponsored playbills**
- Discounts on tickets to theater-sponsored events
- Priority notification for all theater-sponsored events and ticket sales
- Invitation to the members-only annual meeting and reception
- <sup>1</sup>Reserved seats for two (Daddy Warbucks, Executive Producer and Director levels)
- <sup>2</sup>Invitation to meet-the-artist receptions (Daddy Warbucks, Executive Producer and Director levels)

We need and welcome your financial support and look forward to hearing from you. If you are a current member of the Old Theater, we thank you again for your generous support and hope we can count on it once again!

THANK YOU!

<sup>1</sup>Subject to available seating. Tickets must be purchased, and reservation made, 5 days in advance of first performance date.<sup>2</sup>Advanced ticket purchase through the Old Theater is required.

### 2016 Old Theater Membership Drive

Make checks payable to Old Theater Corp. and mail with this form to  
P.O. Box 521, Oriental, NC 28571.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daddy Warbucks \$750.00 & up     | <input type="checkbox"/> Playwright \$100.00 & up   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Producer \$500.00 & up | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage Manager \$50.00 & up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director \$200.00 & up           | <input type="checkbox"/> Cameo \$30.00 & up         |

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Email Address Required for Advance Event Notifications ~ Never Shared!*

We would like to honor our veterans. Have you any in residence?  Yes  No