

The Bijou Dream

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This vintage photo of the Bijou Dream in Albion dates back to 1908 and the era of silent films, when the movie industry was in its infancy.

Certainly, the visage of this theater's exterior image was one of glitz and pseudo elegance. The colonnade affect for the entrance supporting an arch dotted with a series of multi-colored light bulbs, draws attention to the theater. Likewise, the electric bulbs are used in the letters over the arch.

The dictionary defines bijou as "a small dainty ornamental piece of delicate workmanship: Jewel." Hence its selection for the name of this small theater.

It would appear that the entrance was painted white to catch your eye with perhaps gold trimmings on the column capitals. It's interesting that the lobby here is an open-air one.

Looking more carefully, we notice a ticket booth in

the back center with admission advertised at 5 cents.

Entrance doors are to the right while the exit doors are to the left. A victrola horn appears above the ticket booth which indicates records were being used for sound effects. The lobby appears to be finished entirely with pressed metal, both on the ceiling and side walls.

None of the people in the photo have been identified. However, at least we have a fair idea of clothing style from this time frame. Note the woman to the left with a big fur muff and the enormous hat the other lady is wearing. Indeed, hat pins were a necessity. None of the men's shirt collars or neckties are the same.

The Bijou Dream was



located on the west side of Main Street in Albion in the Odd Fellow's Building. The cornerstone on the second floor level of the impressive stone structure was laid on May 31, 1907. This building is directly north of the old Swan Library.

The 1911 Orleans County Directory lists the following theaters: Bijou Theater, Main near State St., Albion; Elco, 539 Main St., Medina, NY; Hippodrome Theater, 33 E. Bank, Albion; Scenic Theater Karney & Tuohy Props., 114 E. Center St., Medina NY.

At the time, the Hippodrome advertised: "We are

running two machines, - no waits".

In the 1915 Orleans County Directory we also find: Delmar Theater 605 Main St. Medina; Frisbe & Sawyer 35-29 Public Square, Holley, NY; Lydon Theater, N. Main St. Lyndonville, NY; New Lyric, Public Square near Wright, Holley, NY.

Eventually, these small theaters were replaced with much larger facilities such as the Rialto in Albion and the Diana in Medina, all of which in our county succumbed to being unfeasible economically.