

# Limerick



appointed rooms in the Development.

covered in natural oak to all parts of the catering panelling and the chairs services. Suite are finished in black. The entire building is purple leatherette. The main kitchens, are modern elevator with a second located on this floor and commodation for 12 people. The new foyer designed elevator is the absence of the cinema gives access a cage door.

## Restaurant goes Electric

the new self-service, restaurant and main kitchen in the Savoy Cinema, Limerick, electricity has been chosen to provide all the facilities for cooking, refrigeration, dishwashing, steaming and heating. If you have a catering problem get free expert advice at our local E.S.B. office

**FOLLOW THE LEADERS**

**GO ELECTRIC!**



See it for yourself!

**THE NEW**

**VOY LIMFRICK**

### THE SAVOY PROSCENIUM AND ORGAN

THIS magnificent picture of the Savoy Cinema proscenium shows in all its wonderful detail the richly resplendent Moorish style which gives that fine atmospheric effect for which the cinema is noted.

The impressive interior is well in keeping with the excellent frontage and gives a fine sense of spacious comfort, combined with architectural beauty in all its details.

The Compton Organ at the Savoy is one of the biggest instruments on this side of the Atlantic.

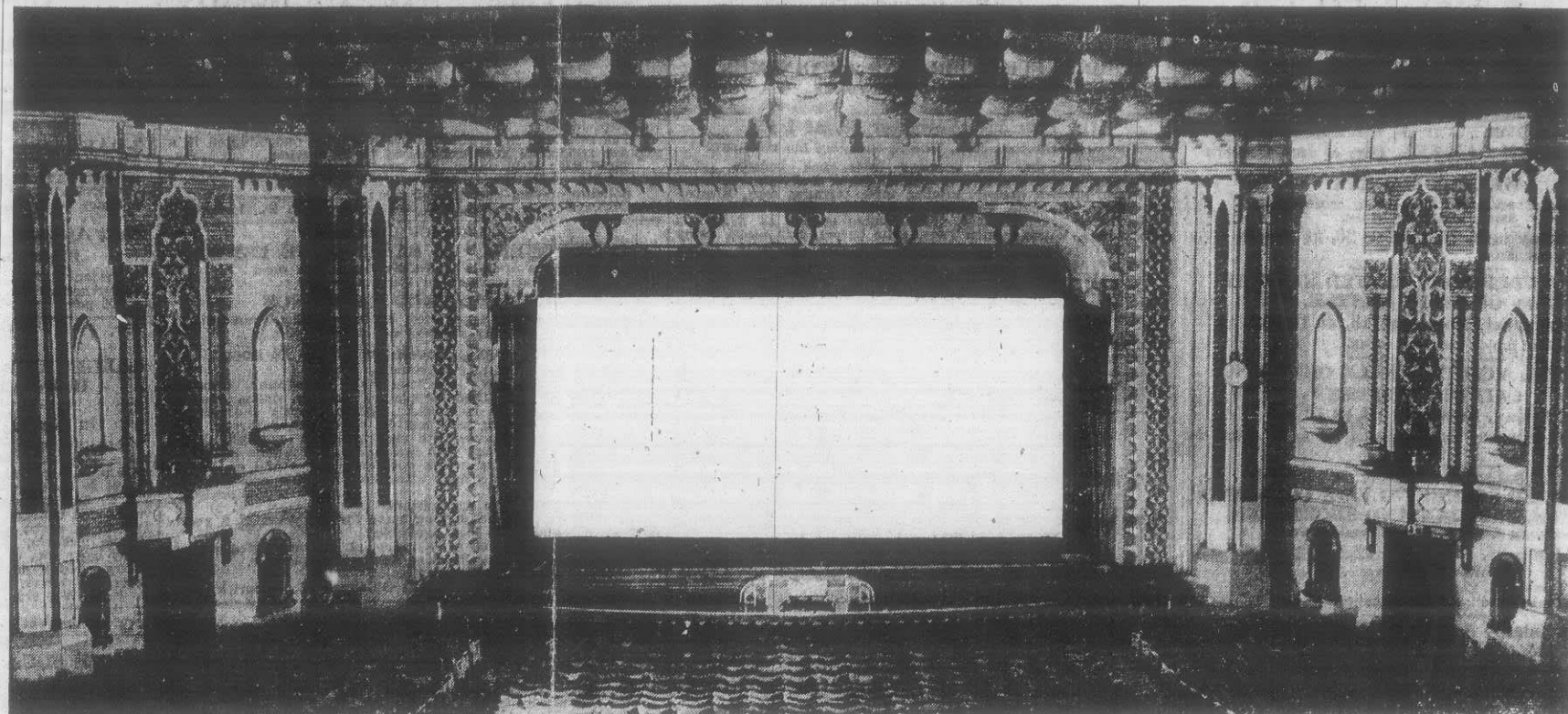
In the cinema, the audience only sees the four rows of keys.

Under the huge stage there are about 2,000 pipes, xylophones, drums, train whistles, car horns and countless other effects.

The Savoy Organ is completely theft-proof.

To take it away, a large part of the theatre would have to be dismantled.

At present-day values it is worth about £20,000; the organ is also 25 years old this year, having formed one of the highlights of the opening programme in 1935.



The Savoy interior, which has been completely re-seated, re-carpeted and re-decorated. New ceiling lighting and stage curtains have also been installed.

## Earl Connolly talks about . . . . . 28 years of Savoy-going

ON the evening of Thursday, December 19, 1935, the Savoy Cinema and Restaurant, Bedford Row, Limerick, opened their doors to the public, and down through the years have maintained a very high standard in stage and screen attractions and catering service.

In the early months of seasons was launched—Rawicz and Landauer, 335, plans were completed seasons that were to last Jimmy Campbell and the Theatre Royal Orchestra, Ted Ray, The Tannier Sisters, Kitty Masters, Bob and Alf Pearson, Cavan O'Connor and many more headliners.

During that time patrons thrilled to the "over-your-head" acrobatics of the Two Cromwells, the life-like impressions by film actress Florence Desmond, and the magnificent acrobatic virtuosity displayed by Gipsy Nina (later to die tragically in an accident).

All the way from Australia came the sensational Tom Katz Saxophone Six; from America, Raymond Percheron and his Mini-Piano 8; from Hawaii, the Hawaii Islanders; from Mexico, the exotic Movita; from Germany and Hungary, the greatest acrobatic stars of that time; from China, illusionist Chung Ling Sen, and from faraway New Zealand, Edgar Benyon.

All these top-line entertainers represent only a mere fraction of the band of world-famous stars who appeared at the Savoy during the years of variety. Space restrictions permit only brief reference to names of Cine-Variety acts like The Four Aces, years.

The magnificent floodlit Compton Organ, reputed to be the finest of its type in these islands, was played by leading organists, including such eminent performers as Alban Cham-

bers, Fred Bridgeman, Philip Dore, Neville Turner, Jack Courtney, A. Gordon Flynn, Jean Harlow, Wallace Beery, Grace Moore, Rothwell (later to lose his life in an accident), Stanley Bowyer, Peter Held, and Limerick's John A. Enright and Norman Met-

### Specacular attractions

On the home front, Jimmy O'Dea brought his war-time revues, which for sheer spectacle have never been equalled since. Singing in these shows was Joseph McLoughlin, later to become world-famous as Josef Locke.

The Savoy stage also had "Celebrity Concerts," world-famous orchestras, circuses, boxing tournaments, The Abbey Players, Carl Rosa Opera Company, the Hilton Edwards-Michael MacLiammoir Gate Theatre Company, "The Roll of the Drum," and the unforgettable Midnight Matinees; in fact, one could go on and still only do scant justice to the vast array of entertainment which the Savoy has offered down through the years.

### The war years

Also during the war years, before Limerick had Sunday films, the Savoy shows in aid of various charities were patronised by concertgoers from all over Munster, and Limerick had an opportunity of seeing and hearing stars of stage, screen and radio, and an abundance of local talent.

It is a well-known fact that every type of "turn" popular in the variety world has appeared at the Savoy at some time or other, and it is of further interest to note that among the TV and radio performers who owe their rise to fame to the kindness of Limerick are Joe Lynch, Jack Cruise, Christopher Lynch and Eamonn Andrews.

### Organists

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Savoy were Humphrey Bogart, Dick Powell, Errol Flynn, Jean Harlow, Wallace Beery, Grace Moore, Lewis Stone, Carole Lombard, Ross Alexander, Frank McHugh, Louis Calhern and Leslie Howard. These names represent just a few of greats who at one time or other thrilled audiences with their musical ability.

### Films

The 28 years history at the Savoy is practically a history of the lush talkie era.

It was on the Savoy screen that James Cagney rose to fame in "G-Men" and Kay Francis, Virginia Bruce, Ava Gardner, Deanna Durbin and Mickey Rooney became the leading stars of the late 30s.

Greta Garbo, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, John Wayne, Fredric March, Charles Boyer, Laurence Olivier, Maureen O'Hara, Marlene Dietrich, Walter Pidgeon, Charles Laughton, Ingrid Bergman and Laurel and Hardy, all climbed to fame on the Savoy screen.

### The Golden Era

Among the "greats" (now deceased) who came into the limelight at the

generation will thrill anew to these macabre films next year.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "Gone With The Wind" shattered all records when it played for three weeks and "The Best Years Of Our Lives" also had an extended run, but it was not until the introduction of 20th Century Fox's revolutionary ultra wide-screen CinemaScope and the Limerick premiere of "The Robe" that new all-time attendance records were established here.

### Previews

Among the many superb forthcoming attractions for the coming months are such top-line films as "Bye, Bye, Birdie" (the film version of the famous New York and London stage success); "To Russia With Love," Sean Connery in the second "James Bond" adventure; "The Ugly American," with Marlon Brando and his sister, Joclyn; "Summer Magic," with the irrepressible Hayley Mills; "The List of Adrian Messenger," with a host of stars, including Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis; and "Doctor In Distress"—the first new "Doctor" film for almost five years. Other big films on the way are "Jason And The

Argonauts" (currently a house-packer in England); "80,000 Suspects," with Claire Bloom and Cyril Cusack; and "The Thrill Of It All." "Back Street," with Susan Hayward and John Gavin, is a film version of the novel by Fannie Hurst and has just come from the censor's office, after a hold-up of some years. These and many others, including the fabulous "Laurence Of Arabia," are some of the films you will be seeing as the Savoy enters its 29th year in Limerick.

### A proud history

But the more one reflects on the proud history of the Savoy the more one becomes aware of the total inadequacy of this brief review to cover fully every aspect of almost three decades now passed. The reader will fully appreciate that a short article such as this can only spotlight a few of the memorable events down through the years. Many patrons will have their own pleasant memories of evenings at the Savoy, of seeing stars and films that they will long remember; and of stage attractions and variety acts that they recall with particular affection.



Savoy Cinema Manager Maurice Johnston

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