THE BRUNSWICKAN- 15

Gaiety fades with films

By PETER F. KUITENBROUWER **Brunswickan Staff**

While 35 people scattered through the cavernous 600 -seat wooden theatre Tuesday night watched the last first-run movie, The Competition, The Gaiety's manager talked about the closing. "I've done everything but stand on my head and spit nickels," to draw people into the theatre, Derrick Smith said. But for many I say?" asked Smith. reasons he listed, such as less movie-goers, the deterioration of the product, and competition from other theatres, the Gaiety can not compete any more.

While Smith was initially upset when he heard the cinema would be closing its doors, he now seems quite resigned to its fate.

he said, the present owner's of the place are not all good.

Sure, Fredericton thinks this is a great place," he said. "But the owner worked here for 35 years. He worked for his old man, a staunch, shrewd conservative guy. His memories of this place are not all good, and he's just decided to shut the doors.'

"The man's gonna do what the man's gonna do. What can

Smith says he's known something like this would happen eventually. "I've known about the deterioration of the industry and the deterioration of the product," he said. "There are more movies being made now, and a lot of then are no good.' He also said that if there's a

good woman's movie they'll

"I've done everything but stand on my head and spit nickels,' said Derrick Smith"

The Gaiety, which replaced drag the men in, but the the Unique theatre in 1910 as Fredericton's only cinema is the property of William Fennety. His grandfather built the Unique, and late the downtown landmark that is now disappearing.

Financial problems are one reason the theatre must close, asserted Smith. On top of this,

reverse is not true. The average age of movie-goer But The Gaiety, specifically, is hit hardest by this because it needs big crowd-draws in order to make money. It has trouble renting good movies because many movie companies give 'first-refusal' rights to theatre chains.





The Gaiety theatre will close March 31

Smith pointed out the Famous Players cinemas now has four screens and will soon have six. They have almost 250 theatres in the Maritimes, he pointed out.

"They have a lot of pull." Smith said. "They can say 'Give me that picture or I won't play any of your movies."

Another big hassle, Smith said, is repairs needed at the theatre. "We got hit by the fire

marshall last year," he said. "The sprinkler system and other changes cost us Smith had lots of ideas for \$15,000."

"The theatre also needs new wiring, which would cost about \$30,000," he said. "Then, new mortar between the bricks would have had to change the would cost another \$10,000 and you might well add movies of all time." another \$40,000 for a new heating system."

these changes would What will Smith be doing with all have to be made within the his livelyhood now that his job next year, Smith said.

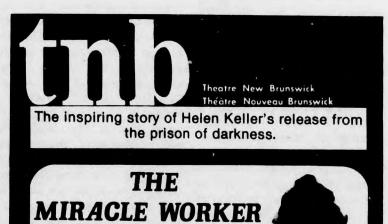
gestions about what could be do some fishing," he said. done with the building, Smith "Then I'll se what's happening said. "The lobby will stay, for in the industry. I want to stay sure, but I don't know about in films."

the auditorium. It's pretty rundown."

changing the cinema's format. such as changing it into a repertoire theatre. "It should have worked," he said. "We films, to show all the best

But, sighed Smith, "this building won't be maintained If the theatre remained open, as a motion picture theatre."

is gone? "I bought a seven-Fennety hasn't made any sug- foot fly pole, and I'm going to





Andre Michel, an artist living in Sept-Iles Quebec will open his second exhibition in Fredericton on March 15th. Until April 13th, the UNB Art Centre will show 35 of his paintings of Montagnais Indians entitled "Paysages, Visages Montagnais" (Landscapes and _rtraits of the Montagnais.)

Andre Michel has chosen to paint these people and their land quite directly using strong line and rich colour in a spontaneity for an immediate effect. The Art Centre is open from 10 a.m. from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

By William Gibson

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