

hardin county historical museums'

Byroads & Bygones



Shows in Dunkirk

By GLORIA PATTON

Ben Parcher and John Hawk had the first moving picture show in Dunkirk. It was in a room on the east side of Dunkirk just north of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Charles Mason had the next show located on the west side of Dunkirk in one of the Lydick rooms. Other owners were John Rinchart, Roy Bash, Carl Moore, Lewie Douglas, and Bill Day. Nora Lewis, Evalyn Morgan and Martha Lydick sold tickets. Piano players were Mayme Mahon, Edna O'Rourke, Stella Lewis and J. B. McMillen.

Lewie Douglas offered a free show every Wednesday night. He turned the machine and the pictures showed across the street. Children sat on boxes and the curb.

Some of the other shows around that period (1924-25) were the Owl Theatre and shows owned by W. Pfefferle, C. Pfefferle, Clark Hagerman and Bill Day. J. B. McMillen played the piano.

Lewie Douglas and sons, Robert and Billy, bought the Grand Theatre, located on State Road 68, in 1954. Every Saturday night, from 8- 12 P.M., stars of radio and stage appeared there, in person. It was called "Little Opry" because it had Western Singers.

The "Little Opry" co-managers Arthur Utley and Sonny Morrow featured such record artists as: Chet Chester and the Rythym Rangers, Archie Poe, Wells Sisters, Jennie Lee, Buddy Motter, Jimmie Thompson, Firolin Waltz and the Rythymaires, Harry Massey,

Vern Burnett, and Don Miller. There were many, many other guests, including comedians.

The information for this article was acquired from "As I Remember (A History of Dunkirk)" by Jim Shuff as related to Dorothy Gillen.

First Kenton Toy Collectors Cast Iron Toy Show, Feb. 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Hardin County Historical Museum, 223 N. Main St., Kenton. It will feature the world famous collection of Kenton Toys on display. Buy, sell and trade! Kenton Toy Collectors Club will be on site to appraise toys. Free admission.

The museum is open Tuesday through Friday 1- 4p.m. Group tours are available by calling 419-673-7147. Linda L. Iams, Director, Hardin County Historical Museums, 223 N. Main St. Kenton, Ohio 43326. Board Members: Bob Bailey, Kathleen Blumenschine, Charlene Hilty, Sue Sanders, Tim Striker, Barb Wood and Vern Woodruff.