

Little Theater Gains State-Wide Publicity

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The lead article in the current NYS Community Theater Journal is dedicated to a full page picture and story of the renovation of the former Shea's Theater Bldg. into headquarters

for Little Theater of J. mestown, Inc.

The article, written by Marshall B. Dahlin, past president and veteran performer and director for LT, points to the dream that started in 1936, when LT was formed as an outgrowth of the old Players Club.

Mr. Dahlin unravels the chain of events that took the community organization to its peak membership of 5,400 in 1945; its bare survival through the 1950's when only rent-free property to operate from saved the thespians from a final curtain call when television was king; the sale of the former Howard Johnson Restaurant property at 414 Fairmount Ave.; the purchase of the old theater building at 18 E. 2nd St.; the fund drive; and the curtain raising on the completely revamped, modern theater plant, last spring.

Mr. Dahlin reports the building was purchased for a nominal fee and renovation estimates ranged from \$160,000 to \$175,000. With \$80,000 from the sale of the property on Fairmount Avenue to an oil company, the board of directors undertook a \$100,000 fund drive to meet costs.

Total cost of the project, which cleaned up a deteriorating span of downtown shopping area, was \$211,000. The theater's insurance company places the worth of the structure at half a million dollars.

Mr. Dahlin also notes a parking ramp, able to accommodate 350 cars, is located half a block away for extra convenience to patrons of the theater.

Little Theater will initiate its first membership campaign from its new quarters later this month. An upswing in sales is expected due to more comfortable seating, larger stage, better lighting and accoustical effects, convenient placement of coat rooms and rest rooms and a large, carpeted, comfortable lobby for intermission socializing.