

# Dream Becomes Reality, The Palace Is 'Reborn'

By PHYLLIS SHERRER  
Star Staff Writer

The "Palace Reborn," once just words on a bumper sticker, became a reality Thursday night when the doors of the landmark were open once more to the public after months of extensive renovation.

The grand re-opening ceremonies were highlighted by a ribbon-cutting ceremony, executed by Joyce Brown, wife of U.S. Rep. Clarence J. Brown, and the switching on of the Palace sign and marquee lights for the first time by James Sloan, president of Marion Federal Savings and Loan and Mrs. John Steward, president, and Mrs. Loren Heiser, past president, of the Junior Service Guild.

Ceremonies got under way when guests and dignitaries began arriving at the Palace in a caravan of antique cars. Hundreds of persons gathered outside the theater to watch the caravan and opening ceremonies.

Ula Watts, president and a director of Marion Community Theater presided over the opening ceremonies, introducing persons as they alighted from the cars.

Awaiting the arrival of cars were Marion Cadets standing at attention amid a flourish of flags. The Cadets also provided appropriate music after the lights were switched on and the red, white and blue ribbon was cut.

Mrs. Brown also presented a flag that has flown over the nation's capitol to John Keggan, president of the Palace Cultural Arts

Association (PCAA) and called Marion "an All-American city."

A brief moment of tension prevailed when Mrs. Steward and Mrs. Heiser flipped the sign switch on and nothing happened. Seconds later, they tried again and cheers from the crowd signified the switch had indeed worked that time.

Time and time again, throughout the ceremonies the people of Marion were credited for their contributions of time, money and support in making the renovation project of the vintage theater a success.

Following the outside festivities, more activities took place inside the theater where the lights twinkled once more and the clouds floated across the ceiling.

Madge Cooper Guthery was mistress of ceremonies for the inside ceremony and she greeted the audience with "How do you like the Palace?" A round of applause was the immediate answer.

Keggan told those gathered it was "Just a great thrill to finally stand" in the completed theater and he credited the members of the Palace Guard for providing the leadership that made the dream come true.

Photographer James Busch and Keggan unveiled - a photograph of the guard which will be hung in the lobby of the theater. Members of the Guard, Theodore Myers, Stephen L. Stuart, Frank Henson, Robert Babich, George Lane, Lyle DeVilling and Keggan all received smaller copies of the photograph.

Calling them "simply super great guys," Keggan presented the photos. Also recognized were the PCAA board members, trustees and others instrumental in the project.

Members of the audience gave Keggan a standing ovation for his part in the renovation project and Keggan gave credit to his wife for standing behind him throughout the long and busy process.

Also receiving special recognition for their part in the project were W. Alan Kirk, manager of the theater; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bennett, coordinators of the event, and Arthur Radwin, coordinator of publicity for PCAA.

Following the ceremonies, the musical comedy about our nation's birth as a free country, "1776" made its opening debut on the Palace stage and the Palace once again enjoyed a first night as Marion's entertainment center, but this time as an historical landmark.