

## Movie Theaters in Hoosick Falls

At the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, Thomas Edison introduced two pioneering inventions related to showing moving pictures. From 1895 to 1906, films went from a novelty to the beginning of a big business. Small towns and neighborhood movie theaters usually had a pianist.

The first movies in the village of Hoosick were shown in 1903 at the Armory. The Lyman H. Howe Productions came once a year and showed scenes taken from the rear platform of a moving train. They also included comedies involving characters from the Sunday funnies.

In 1907, two theaters were started in Hoosick Falls. The Bijou Theater opened on John Street where the present Loretan Gallery is located. A second theater, the Lyric, opened at 54 Classic Street near the Holmes Furniture Store. The piano player at the Bijou was Grace Sommerville and Margaret O'Brian played at the Lyric Theater. Jack Eberle, manager of the Lyric, sang popular songs as colored slides were shown on the screen. Margaret married Jack Eberle, and they were the parents of the Big Band Era singers, Bob and Ray Eberle.

The Star Theater was erected at 56 Church Street around 1909 and was well attended. It was located across from the Senior Center in the present empty store. It advertised "No Cheap Trash – 8 reels – all licensed – all Censored". One night during the showing of the movie, "A Trip Thru Death Valley," the floor caved in during the middle of the showing. There was no cellar under the building, and no one was injured. The Star Theater went out of business with the construction of the New Theatre at 40 John Street in 1913. The auditorium had a seating capacity of 1,050. It booked vaudeville shows as well as motion pictures.

On October 19, 1915, a movie picture filmed in the gladiola fields of Arthur Cowee in Berlin, NY was first shown at the New Theatre. It was the only feature filmed in this area.

The New Theatre was demolished in September 1969.