

Drive-in

The 1950s luster still lingers

They come out at night. They're aficionados of fresh air, conversation and a little loving by the light of the silvery screen.

Somewhat, between walking dogs and watching children crawl over the nearby playground equipment, drive-in fans manage to sandwich in a movie.

"There's more freedom at a drive-in," said a veteran projectionist. "People come here to have a good time," said Greg Gort, manager of Farmington's Grand River Drive-In.

Drive-in patrons' ideas of what constitutes a good time have managed to survive the transition from the quiet '50s to the unsettled '60s and the low-key '70s.

Patrons picnic on the roofs of cars, after carefully spreading out the inevitable threadbare blanket. More enterprising ones haul out lawn chairs and coolers in front of their cars and enjoy the night air.

With the addition of vans to the drive-in scene, patrons can cart their favorite easy chair and half the neighbors for a night at the movies.

"VANS WILL PARK with their backs to the screen and then they'll throw open the back doors," said Gort.

Although drive-in managers would like to believe their patrons come to see the movie in comfort, some come to see each other in private.

Unlike their parents and older brothers and sisters, today's teen-age couples are left alone by drive-in guards, Gort said.

"We don't bother them," he said, shaking his head. "Our guards watch out for vandals and for people trying to climb over the wall." Most of Gort's patrons are family groups out to enjoy the show. "A drive-in person is a family individual," said Fred Felletto, general

manager of the chain that owns the drive-in.

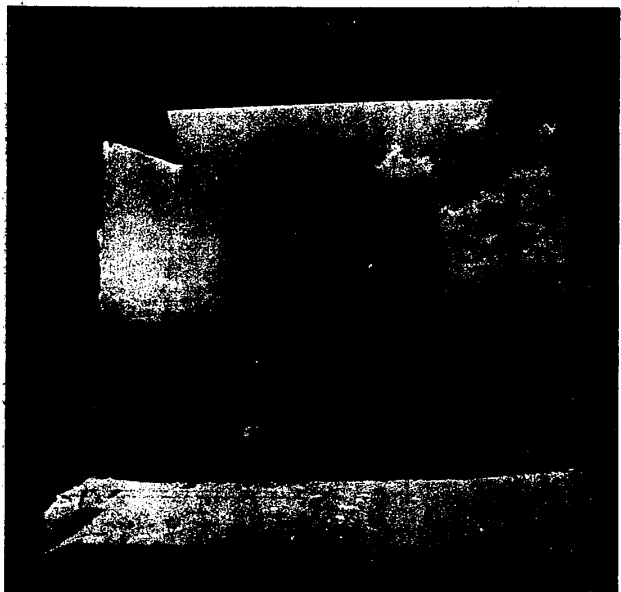
"They like the convenience of it all. There's an advantage to coming as you are. You can bring your own popcorn and potato chips."

"And the teens come into the drive-ins to relax," adds Gort. During intermission, they can be seen sauntering between cars, exchanging greetings and insults.

A BLUE-JEANED patron tucked his hands into his jacket pockets and knelt beside the driver's side of a battered orange sports car.

"Hey man," begins the tribal greeting. "What've you been doing?" The driver, about 17 years old and sporting the results of a brave effort to grow a beard, leans out of the window and gives an inaudible answer. The conversation continues, lapsing into a cantata of obscenities. The ex-

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In the evening the giant screen will reflect another chapter in American movie history. A projectionist gets a unique view of the drive-in scene through the



A projectionist checks out the inner workings of a show, the movie that will entertain the evening audience. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

They bump and hustle

Seniors swing at Rooster

They bumped, hustled and calypsoed their way through an evening at the Roostertail.

And in the spare time devoted to food and drink, little thought was given to calling the 158 nightclubbers senior citizens.

The members of the Gathering Place, Marion West and Baptist Manor, under the auspices of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission, enjoyed showing off their knowledge of contemporary dances while, outside, the evening lights glittered through the Detroit River fog.

"It's a lovely evening," said Genevieve Lynch of Farmington Hills. "I enjoy being out with other people. It's good to see people getting up and doing the dances. I think you should keep up on dances of the day."

On the dance floor, Grace Lloyd, Ruth Sherlock, Bea Honstain, Leola Rammel and Florence Allman joined into the spirit of the evening by executing the latest disco dances.

In addition to giving the Farmington area seniors a chance to wear their favorite evening clothes, the excursion also gave them an opportunity

to take another look at Detroit.

"I WAS HERE 30 YEARS ago," a woman said, as she disembarked from one of four Farmington school buses that carried the group.

Once inside, Helen G. Brown, of Farmington Hills, surveyed the night-club's palm tree and crystal chandelier decor.

"This is the first time that I've been to the Roostertail. I've always wanted to come here," she said.

"The whole evening's been good," Mrs. Brown continued. "But I didn't dance because I didn't have a partner."

While the seniors were enjoying the club, Karen Ross stepped aside to enjoy the sight.

"It's a good chance for them to get out and wear their long dresses and evening clothes," said Mrs. Ross, who works at the Gathering Place. "They wouldn't come here by themselves."

After dinner and dancing, the house lights dimmed and the group settled back to enjoy the Trinidad Steel Band.

"A bottle of champagne to the person who is the best calypso dancer,"

offered the steel band's leader.

The dance was almost over and the offer went neglected until Nettie Pollock decided to show her friends how to calypso. She persuaded the band leader to be her dance partner.

AFTER THE DANCE Mrs. Pollock received a bottle of the bubbly on the house. She declined to drink it and offered it to her friends.

At the end of the evening, as the buses made their way back to Farmington, the group still had enough energy to sing a few songs.

Musgrave named vp

Richard Musgrave has joined Westronics Inc. of Farmington Hills, as vice president of marketing. He formerly was the Michigan branch manager of GBC Closed Circuit TV Corporation.



Ruth Sherlock, (left) Florence Allman and Leola Rammel kick up a storm during an evening at the Roostertail, last weekend. (Photos by Kern Ross)



Showing the latest dances are Grace Lloyd, (left) Karen Ross and Ruth Sherlock.

Sun straws...

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