

Documentary looks at movie houses of Winnipeg's past

What: Going: Remembering Winnipeg Movie Theatres Where: Eric Martin Pavilion Theatre, 1900 block Fort street When: Monday, 6:30 p.m.

Michael D. Reid
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This theatre on Main Street in Winnipeg is long gone. This picture was taken in 1973.

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When: Monday, 6:30 p.m.

Admission: By donation

Info: 250-595-FLIC

You needn't be a Winnipegger to appreciate Movie Monday's latest feature presentation, although it could certainly enhance the experience.

Fans of classic movie palaces and bygone freestanding theatres of any kind, anywhere are as likely to be interested in *Going: Remembering Winnipeg Movie Theatres*, Kenneth George Godwin's cinephile-friendly documentary.

Godwin, a veteran film editor and longtime movie buff from England who moved to Manitoba from Newfoundland in the 1970s, directed the nostalgic documentary that affectionately journeys back in time to offer a historical overview of the city's moviegoing culture.

The movie-mad filmmaker's valentine flashes back to moviegoing's heyday in Winnipeg in the 1930s and 1940s when cinemas such as The Uptown and The Bijou proliferated and more modest neighbourhood movie houses once even gave away dinnerware to lure female patrons in the 1970s and beyond many turned into grind houses as home video arrived or were replaced by multiplexes.

The film's title has a double-meaning, reflecting both the experience of going to the movies before most cinemas became big-box venues, and the disappearance of single-screen theatres.

Godwin intercuts archival material with interviews with two dozen Winnipeggers, from movie-lovers fondly reminiscing to the children of the owner of the former Uptown, the glamorous 1,700-seat movie palace that was gutted in 1960 and turned into the Academy Lanes bowling alley.

Movie Monday founder and programmer Bruce Saunders is encouraging anyone who wishes it to bring along some of their own fond movie-watching experiences to share.

"One of mine is the culture shock of walking out of a tiny theatre to the sound of water lapping on the shore in the quaint village of Alert Bay after watching *2001: Space Odyssey*," he said.

mreid@timescolonist.com