



## Genesee-Clayton Building

207 N. Genesee St.  
Bicentennial Landmark

Christmas Day, 1927, marked the opening of the Genesee Theater, hailed as "wonder theater of the North Shore." Frank Wallin, later mayor of Waukegan, and his Harmony Kings shared the opening bill with the silent film, "The Valley of the Giants," and the great theater was filled with the concert sounds of the Golden Voiced Barton Pipe organ.

The exterior of the commercial-residential structure at 207 N. Genesee St., designed by Edward Steinberg of Chicago, is characteristic of the style of Louis Sullivan. The bold geometric facade is pierced with arched openings and the wall surface highlighted with extensive low relief sculptural ornamentation.

Extravagant is the only word that can be used to describe the interior with its Spanish-Moorish overhanging balcony and gold and silverleaf ornamentation. Five hundred gallons of paint were needed to cover the interior. Peterson and Weeks were the contractors.

Through the Thirties and Forties great crowds of Lake Countians found escape at the movies in the fairy-land setting. The splendor of those days was recaptured at a birthday celebration staged by the Chicago Art Theater Organ Enthusiasts (CATOE), which had restored the organ.