

N.C. ESSAY

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de Mille Rife With Flaws

Risks Seen In Carpet, Steps, Exit

By BRYANT ARRINGTON

Essay Staff Reporter

The construction of the de Mille Theatre has received many derogatory descriptions since its completion. Perhaps one of the more infamous quotes is from a group of "techies" who "lowered" the orchestra pit (exposed the hole.)

This requires unbolting huge I-beams and disassembling the entire support structure. When faced with the awesome job, one of the group exclaimed in a groan, "What a chocolate mess!"

Martin Sokoloff, vice-chancellor, stated in an interview, "It's important in an article of this nature to stress the positive. The theatre is a success in many aspects from both an acting and audience viewpoint." Sokoloff did mention, however, "a number of items that do not have a major affect on the theatre" and admitted, "they're annoying."

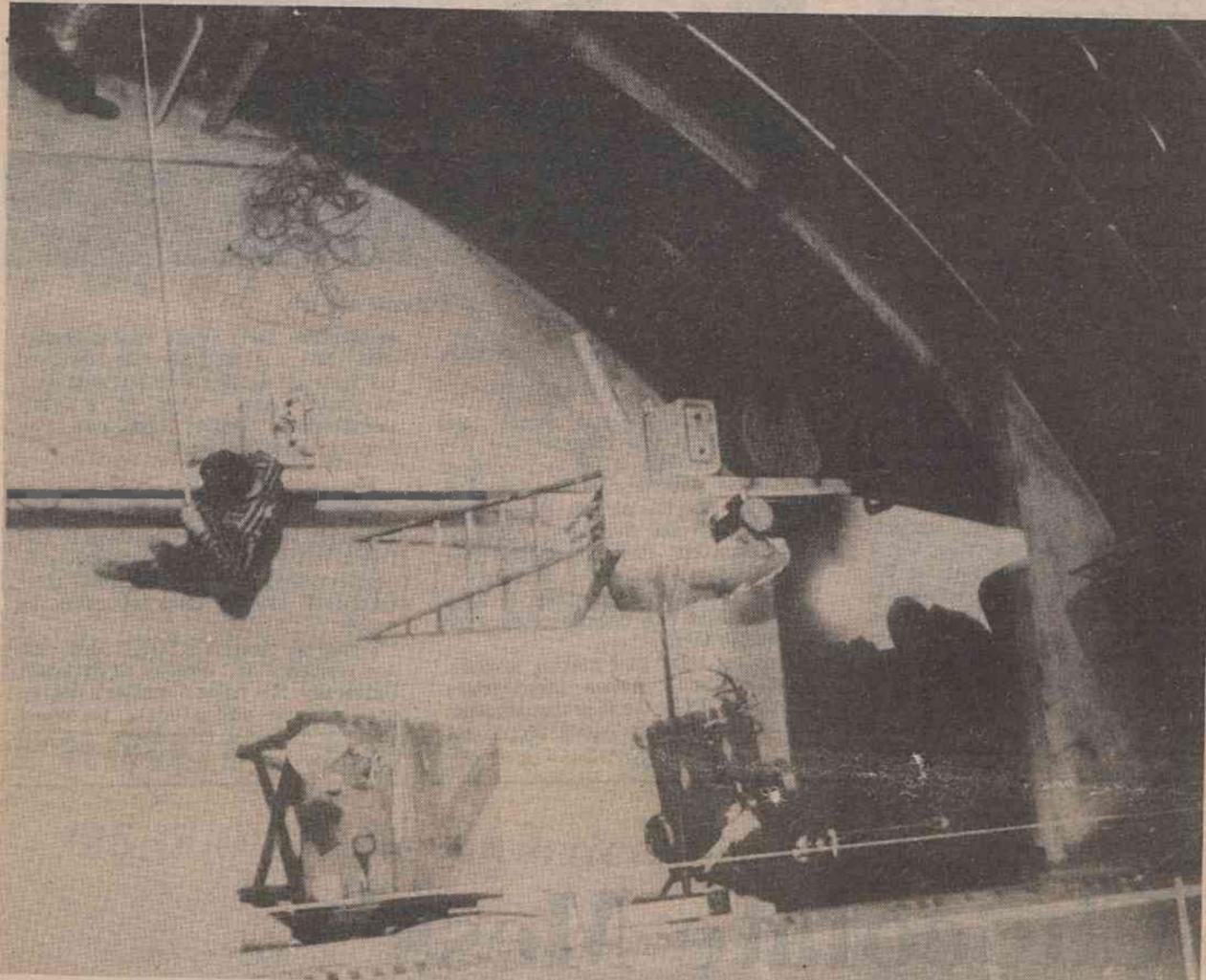
HOWEVER, COMPLAINTS by teachers and students, especially those in technical circles, are numerous. Major criticisms are:

- Complete lack of sound proofing;
- Discomfort to legs due to arrangement of seats;
- Dangerous and unsafe steps;
- Difficulty of raising and lowering the orchestra pit;
- Maze of ironwork which makes catwalks unsafe;
- Floors pulling away from walls;
- Flammable carpet on walls and floor;
- Design criticisms from teachers who use the theatre and studios.

Fire Marshal Kenneth Thomas of Winston-Salem stated, "As for immediate hazards, there are several areas that do not conform to safety standards. Since no building permit was obtained, the local fire prevention department was unaware of the renovation and they were not asked for recommendations as is usually the case."

"The carpet on the floor has a manufacturer-specified flame spread of 0-75 per cent," Fire Marshall Thomas explained. This means that if the carpet is exposed to flame, the fire should not spread to an area beyond 75 per cent of the originally exposed area. However, the fire prevention department does not recommend carpet with more than 25 per cent flame spread." Unfortunately, the carpet in De Mille is not even within the rated 75 per cent flame spread. In a field test, the carpet proved flammable in a verticle position. This is important since much of the carpet in de Mille is in a vertical position. A piece of the carpet has been sent to Raleigh for further testing.

FIRE MARSHALL Thomas stated that, "Carpet on the walls is a definite hazard. The carpet will burn and sustain buring. However, I consider the most pressing problem to be that the bottom exits, which the architect says are not fire exits, are marked with exit signs which are visible to the entire audience. The audience will try to go through these exits which appear to be the most accessible. I'm afraid that there is a risk of high life loss in that situation due to the aisle being blocked by seats, poor



Essay Photo By Bryant Arrington

Orchestra pit was designed and built too deep so floor was rebuilt.

N.C. Essay: Is It Dead?

By JOHN HUBBARD

Essay Staff Reporter

Over the past two weeks many events have occurred which will have a telling effect on the future of the N.C. Essay.

Since the beginning of the year the newspaper staff has slowly dwindled, the most recent loss being that of a hard working editor: Kay Crutcher. However, the remaining staff has continued its toils despite an almost overwhelming job.

At the last two student council meetings, the student activity fees budget was discussed, along with the possibility that the fees would be raised for next year.

DAVE BELNAP, director of student activities, pointed out that NCSA was the only school he knew of having a gym room and a film program free to students. One item (the largest item) on Belnap's budget, however, met with disapproval by some of the representatives in attendance: the \$4,000 allotted to the newspaper.

Robin Wood, a drama major stated "the stories are not news", and Bill Williams, a voice major suggested that the money be used to get John Dean to speak for one night.

At that point, the council moved that a survey be distributed to all NCSA students. Adrian Durlister, a D&P major, was placed in charge of drawing up the survey. When student response to the survey was questioned, Woodrow Childress, director of Food Services, announced that 95 per cent of the student body responded to his food questionnaire.

The following week, Durlister returned with an extensive two-page questionnaire, which was distributed to students, beginning at dinner on Wednesday, March 5.

BY THE time this issue is printed, the decision of what is to be done with the student activity fees, and with the N.C. Essay for next year, will already have been made. This decision is very im-

portant to the staff members planning to return next year, but to the entire staff, the question, "What about this next issue?" is even more pressing.

There are complaints that the news is not up to date. If the staff were large enough, or if the present staff had enough time, the Essay could print stories which

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D&P Students

No More Overtime

By SHELLY McPHERSON

Essay Staff Reporter

There will be no more overtime for D&P students. Dean John A. Sneden has directed in a recent memorandum that students are to work no more than a certain amount of crew hours. There are to be no more cancelled classes or excuses that students don't show up for these classes because of working on productions. We do not cancel classes for productions," he stated.

The school of design and production puts in a lot of hours, blood, sweat and tears, to get costumes, scenery and lighting together to complete a show. They not only do it for the school of drama but for the other schools as well.

They also designed lighting for several of the student dances. To say the least,

D&P is the backbone of the school. Wherever there's a show, there's D&P behind the scenes, usually working overtime to present the best technical side of the show possible. This meant sometimes staying overtime to meet deadlines.

Now, no more overtime and no cancellation of classes. "I think that its good. Someone had to put a stop to what had been happening. We all tended to glide a little further with our time," pointed out Dana Demuth of D&P.

"THE WHOLE NEW policy is a good idea but it came in the middle of a whole new transition period. Anytime you go through a change, the transition time is always hard," said Becky Wakefield, also of D&P.

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