

Endnotes...

SHOW BUSINESS SHOWS SNOW BUSINESS

By Douglas W. DeCroix

Today, it is no surprise to see meteorological personalities from The Weather Channel popping up in Western New York to share images with the country—nay, the world—whenever the latest lake effect band drops multiple inches per hour on parts of the region. In fact, in my travels throughout the Midwest and elsewhere over the past several decades, it is not at all unusual to come across someone who thinks we live in some kind of ever-frozen arctic environment, thanks to the likes of Jim Cantore and others.

But in digging around for some background on a set of snowy photos from 1937 that were generously donated recently by one of our subscribers, I discovered that—as is so often the case with history—there is little new under the sun. The photos, donated by the Schulte family, show scenes from a mid-December 1937 snowstorm. In browsing back through several newspapers from that period, I came across an unexpected story. On page 34 of



A stopped car provides some scale to the roadside piles of snow in this photo looking down Eggert Road.

the December 17, 1937, edition of the *Buffalo Evening News* is a brief article with the headline: “Snowstorm in Buffalo Is Depicted on Screen.” Here are the details, as reported in the paper:

Starting today, motion pictures of the snowstorm that hit Buffalo and Kenmore last week are being shown in Shea’s Buffalo and Shea’s Century theaters.



In this photo, an entrance archway seems to have been carved from the roadside snowdrifts to gain access to John V. Ross' floral shop in Kenmore. Located at 3735 Delaware Ave., just north of Sheridan Drive, the location is now the site of Ken-Ton Presbyterian Village.

The films are being given a national release by Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, which sent cameramen here at the height of the blizzard.

Drifts 15 feet high, covering automobiles and demoralizing bus and trolley service, are depicted. Boy Scouts are shown delivering food and fuel to families isolated by the unprecedented snowfall, which amounted to 30 inches on the level during the three days.

While 30 inches of snow is certainly nothing to take lightly, I doubt that such an amount today would warrant calling in the Boy Scouts, given some of the spectacular amounts of snowfall caused by lake effect events of recent years. But it was interesting to learn that Western New York's reputation for wintry weather was fascinating audiences nationwide almost 90 years ago. While it is no newsreel, here are a few of the donated photographs from the storm. H



The driveway and sidewalk leading to this home on Niagara Falls Blvd. have a trench-like appearance about them, thanks to the huge piles of shoveled snow on each side.