

BROOKLYN - PARAMOUNT OPENS

NEW PUBLIX TOWN ADDED TO NATIONAL DELUXE CHAIN

The newest jewel in the Publix chain of de luxe theatres was added when the new Brooklyn-Paramount opened November 24.

John L. McCurdy, from the Boston Metropolitan, aided by Steve Barutio as First Assistant, and Lou Goldberg as Director of Advertising and Publicity, comprise the front of the house cabinet, while Paul Ash and Publix stage shows provide the activities backstage. The theatre itself, semi-atmospheric Italian in architecture, is actually "the last word."

Due to the geographical layout of New York City, and Brooklyn, the job of selling the new theatre and shows to the public, both during the pre-opening campaign, and following the opening, presented huge proportions.

Twelve daily newspapers in New York City, and four in Brooklyn, beside the many other mediums for exploitation had to be contacted. The Home Office handled the pre-opening campaign under the direction of A. M. Botsford, with nearly everyone in the organization putting in many extra hours daily to insure success.

For the benefit of those in Publix who may at some future time face the problem of opening a de luxe theatre, a list of the things accomplished, in addition to newspaper advertising and billboards, is presented here:

The campaign of display advertising was handled by the Hanf-Metzger agency through Mr. Botsford, somewhat in accordance with suggestions made from the plan listed below which had the approval of Messrs. Katz, Dembow and Botsford. Also copies of all publicity stories and screen trailers were furnished them through Mr. Botsford. The publicity campaign followed the lines of the proposed plan. Those items marked with a check were carried through completely and successfully. Those marked with an (X) indicate the failures. Those marked with a triangle indicate the ideas which are still in work.

PROPOSED PLAN FOR EXPLOITATION AND PUBLICITY FOR THE "BROOKLYN-PARAMOUNT" THEATRE

(Planned and submitted by Benj. H. Serkovich, Publix Theatres Corp.)

THE CAMPAIGN IDEA

Since Brooklyn for years has been taught that it is the proud home of the B. F. Keith-Albee world-wonder theatre, and since Brooklynites more recently have become conscious of wonderful theatres thru contact with the Roxy and the New York Paramount—and again thru the new 5,000 seat FOX theatre which opened last month a block from our theatre in Brooklyn, it will be hard to excite the trade-area with the thought of another fine new theatre, unless special methods are adopted, since the novelty no longer exists.

This can best be accomplished by the copy theme used in all advertising messages. In the opinion of the writer, the attached photograph of a special card used for a news-photo stunt, tells our story to the best advantage. However, the other ideas for stronger copy will doubtless develop. The fact that we can lay claim to the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre as the CLIMAX OF TEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN BUILDING THE WORLD'S FINEST THEATRES—and that WE claim it tops all our others, sounds convincing. This thought, if persistently implanted, will have permanent benefit to the theatre.

A secondary thought is that the BROOKLYN PARAMOUNT theatre has the advantage of knowledge of the ideas of luxury and comfort of every other theatre in the world, plus months of ADDITIONAL study of new developments in theatre building and operating science.

A third idea is the fact that the Brooklyn Paramount theatre is the FIRST theatre in the world to be especially constructed for per-

fection in projection of talking pictures and probable development of television, etc.

A fourth idea is a piece-meal discussion of every attraction in the theatre—the organ, the orchestra lift, the acoustics, the newly invented luxury-chairs made exclusively for Publix, the colorful ever-new magic in the atmospheric Spanish garden effect in the auditorium, etc.

The stage band leader, and the organist also make good institutional copy that will have permanent benefit. If Paul Ash is to go to the theatre, as a temporary attraction, the temporary thought should be stressed. Likewise if he is to be permanent. In either event, however, none of the institutional facts should be overlooked or sacrificed in order to let Ash or any other personality dominate the story too soon on the campaign. We can always sell a personality, but the theatre institutional story can only be told effectively and with force at its opening. Suggest that we plan our ad-copy to tell the institutional story first, and let it dominate, with a small mention of the fact that Ash is to be the personality, and then, close to the opening date of the theatre, let the Ash name smash out in domination of the ad-copy, with the institutional facts secondary.

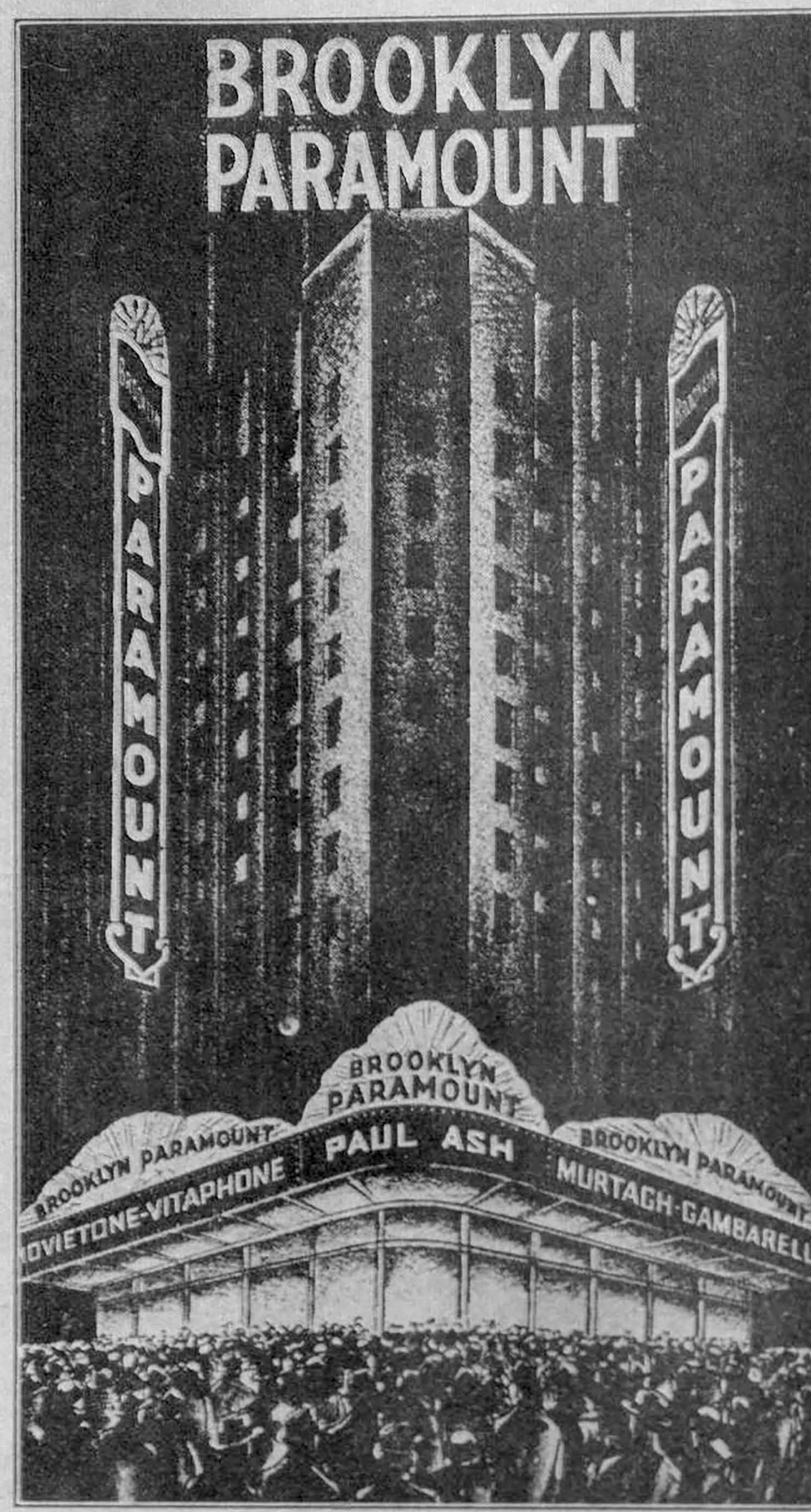
Decision should be made and announced whether we are to call the new theatre the "Brooklyn" or the "BROOKLYN-PARAMOUNT." In either event, the street-address of the theatre should be carried in all copy.

For supplementary purposes, a special section of the New York Evening Journal Brooklyn edition will be issued two days after the opening of the theatre. We won't need it on the opening days (Saturday and Sunday) but on the third day, Monday, it will help.

In addition to this, special shock campaigns will be used. This contemplates the possible organization of a civic or quasi-civic body to sponsor the collection of a fund of several thousand dollars. This money to be spent in decorating the town with flags, bunting, special banners, etc., for daytime display, and colorful carnival electric lights at street-intersections at night; for parades, banners, special stunts of civic nature designed to stampede the town and bring people out onto the streets for the benefit of retail-merchants, etc. This money to be spent by the fund-raisers under my sole direction, as usual, if and when obtained.

In order to stay in all newspapers every day for several weeks prior to the opening of the theatre, the writer of this plan will prepare news stories, news pictures, etc., for the various daily and weekly publications. Radio and newsreel media will also be kept in mind. This will work up an excited interest climaxed by the theatre opening on November 24th.

Two contests for Brooklyn or New York daily newspapers are contemplated, with the approval of Mr. Partington of our Publix-Production department already granted. One contest will be a newspaper-theatre quest for twelve (12) of Brooklyn's most beautiful girls, to be trained by one of our dance-producers for a ballet to tour the circuit in a unit show at \$45.00 a week, sponsored by the newspaper. The other contest in another newspaper will be



the Paul Ash Personality Girl quest, and the three winners will get prizes of autos, diamonds, fur coats, etc., which I will get from the merchants free, in return for tie-up publicity breaks.

(1) All newspaper and billboard advertising will be written, and placed by us thru the Hanf-Metzger Advertising Agency. This agency will investigate the media selected, and rates, and will take complete charge of all schedules. This accounts for practically all of the appropriation except for about \$2,000 which will be used for additional and supplementary exploitation as follows:

✓ (a) Entertaining important newspaper editors and public officials, in order to facilitate special privileges, publicity, etc. Banquet to Press, etc.

(b) Special printing.

(c) Expenses incurred in handling campaign, such as taxis, hotel bills, luncheons, etc.

(2) With the newspaper and billboard phase of the campaign being handled by Hanf-Metzger, under the direction of Mr. Botsford, the following supplementary ideas will be undertaken. In nearly every case, in the following, the cost to Publix will be nothing, or almost nothing, except salaries for effort involved.

✓ (a) A special section of the Brooklyn Edition of the New York Journal, to be issued on November 26, two days after the theatre is opened. This will give us the largest circulation in Brooklyn, at no cost to us, as the section will be made up of ads from contractors, sub-contractors, etc. The section will be composed of 65 per cent advertising and 35 per cent news of the theatre, institutional stories, pictures, etc.

X (b) Stenciled one-sheet 2-color or smash on all sidewalks at

important intersections.

✓ (c) Posted 8x30 2-color snips on all telephone poles, saying "this street leads to the Brooklyn-Paramount—wonder theatre of the world."

✓ (d) Testimonial dinner by Chamber of Commerce to theatre owners, with attendant newspaper and other publicity, 2 weeks before opening.

✓ (e) Trailers in all local theatres five weeks in advance, advertising with "newsreel" shots the various talking points of new theatre.

✓ (f) Brooklyn-Paramount Theatre Personality Girl contest to get four weeks of daily page one publicity for theatre, costumes provided by local stores with added advertising.

✓ (g) Story and photo in all papers nearly every day for three weeks in advance.

X (h) Free cards displayed inside and outside street cars saying "Use street cars to Brooklyn-Paramount and forget parking troubles."

✓ (i) One-sheets sniped; tack cards; 2-faced cards on fire-plugs, mail boxes, etc., all over city. Window displays with chain store tie-ups; tie-up newspaper ads.

✓ (j) 400 local and outstate weekly, daily and monthly papers covered in weekly clip-sheet stories about new theatre, what it has, etc., in return for Press Passes.

✓ (k) Paramount-Publix institutional booklet to be sold to advertiser on backpage; booklet not a program but describing the theatre and policy and Publix, distributed opening week in the theatre.

✓ (l) 14 stories designated to hit in AP, UP and INS national news syndicates, which cover field closely and internationally

according to importance story.

✓ (m) Newsreel shots to be taken for national newsreel distribution and for local or interstate where we can control.

✓ (n) 150 radio stations Publix towns covering who U. S. broadcast stage tale salute for a week, in honor new theatre. Local station deal for three weeks.

X (o) Mayor to send girl representative in airplane to near governors and mayors with invitation to opening of theatre.

✓ (p) All factory whistles blow for 10 minutes when theatre opens.

✓ (q) Invitational opening.

✓ (r) Tie-up ads and congratulatory ads that hit several days in advance of opening and several days afterwards in newspapers, in addition to special supplement.

X (s) Street parade army, Boy Scouts; R. O. T. C. Cadets; city and industrial units, etc.; banners on all trucks, wagons, etc. owned by city; on yellow cabs; on fleet of department store delivery trucks.

✓ (t) Pageant of Progress raise fund to put festival colored criss-cross festoons of electric lights on important intersections of streets. Web-banners, size 30x10 on each of main streets. Cloth double-faced sheet banners, hung alternate with American flags on all trolley wires.

✓ (u) Drop theatre tickets at checks for money from airplane on opening day.

✓ (v) Inspire editorials in each newspaper; write "vox pop" and "Public pulse letters."

✓ (w) Get stores to decorate windows and buildings and carry "Welcome Brooklyn-Paramount" window cards while committee furnishes them.

✓ (x) Paul Ash sundae tie-up with Ice Cream Company for drug store chains.

Paul Ash radio tie-up with department stores.

✓ (y) Paul Ash ice cream sundae. Window tie-up in a fountain, via a printed window strip delivered a week in advance.

Δ (z) Free 2x4 institutional stereotype in papers for week pass to theatre not good Saturdays or Sundays or holidays. In addition to these, the following things were accomplished:

1. Seven Hundred Window displays were obtained through cooperation with Mr. Halperin making use of the theme song "Manhattan Cocktail," both as sheet music and phonograph records. Over 1000 Window display and news stand tack cards were obtained thru Brooklyn Standard Union Contest.

2. Several hundred window were obtained through the jobber of the Crosley Radio set by having Paul Ash pose with the Radio set. A half page newspaper ad in several papers also resulted. 750 window posters made and distributed by us.

3. Newspaper ads and window displays were also obtained by the Thomas Hair endorsement by Paul Ash.

4. A full page ad in New York World was obtained free through a want-ad tie-up on employment of the usher personnel.

5. At a cost of \$1000 which was a 50% reduction in the original asking price, the Old Gold Radio Broadcasting Airplane was employed on the opening day. This resulted in considerable newspaper publicity as well as causing valuable mouth to mouth conversation regarding the opening of the theatre. The plane was in the air for seventy minutes, flying and broadcasting under the direction of the writer, while a passenger. One story resulting from this tie-up made a national break on press wire syndicates.

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BROOKLYN-PARAMOUNT NEW LINK TO PUBLIX CHAIN

(Continued from page 6)

6. The girl flag-pole sitter, who lost an election bet with Paul Ash broke into considerable local newspaper space, as well as national, through newsreels and press wires.

7. Tie-ups with Paul Ash included hats, overcoats, wrist-watches, hair cures, radio sets, which resulted in full display ads and large groups of window displays obtained through jobbing distributors.

8. A unit show tie-up with synthetic pearl company, resulted in considerable full newspaper display space out of town.

9. By authority of Mr. Chatkin's signature, theatre managers in all Publix towns went to local broadcasting stations and obtained with their local talent radio salutes during the week prior to the opening of the theatre. We have several score of acknowledgments where this was actually accomplished and it is reasonable to suppose that a great many more complied with the request but did not notify us.

10. By arrangement with Mr. Cowan and Mr. Partington, vaudeville agencies booking radio talent over New York and Brooklyn stations arranged to have them sing salutes to Ash, Murtagh and the new theatre.

11. By arrangement with Mr. Boris Morros and Ben Black all of the music dealers sent their song pluggers to radio stations to sing salutes to the new theatre. Its stories went a week in advance and we have acknowledgments of nearly a score of important stations covered.

12. There are no important radio stations in Brooklyn but, as part of a plan I have in mind, whereby additional revenue may be made possible to the new theatre and publicity to every Publix theatre, I made an arrangement with radio station WBBC which is the most important of the four. This station, at no cost to us, installed microphones in the theatre and for one week prior to the opening, radioed our publicity stories several times daily, alternating with their entertainment and they will keep us on the air for one month, at least, at no cost, until Mr. McCurdy and I complete whatever permanent arrangement we are able to make.

It is my plan to sell the radio program to a local advertiser for as much money as I can obtain for same, the revenue to be divided between the performers and the theatre.

13. Several hundred publicity stories were written, most of them by myself. These have been mimeographed so that copies will be available for any future theatre openings, since nearly all are of an institutional nature. These stories were used day by day in daily and weekly newspapers and other publications for several weeks prior to the theatre opening and also in the New York Journal supplement; Standard Union Special Edition and the Chamber of Commerce Magazine. These publicity stories totaled, approximately, 100,000 words, the equivalent of a full length popular novel.

14. Fifty or sixty news photos were made and captioned for publication in various newspapers, etc. Most of these were made by the Publix staff photographer, Lou Nathan and his assistants. Others were made by the press syndicate photographers. Many of these photographs have been duplicated for circuit distribution. Science and Invention, Art, Music, Theatre, and Fan magazines were covered with stories and pictures. These all had to be personally directed.

15. The Brooklyn Standard Union is operating a contest called "The Good-Will Ambassadors." Brains and Beauty quest in conjunction with the new theatre.

This contest kept us in the newspapers for several weeks prior to the opening and will keep us in the newspapers for several weeks after the opening for half page and full page layouts in which institutional facts are carried.

In addition to this the prize winners will obtain considerable national publicity when they go on tour, due to the credentials they will carry from Brooklyn organizations addressed to prominent organizations in each Publix city. This contest also obtained three sheet-flat banners on both sides of about 100 of the newspaper delivery trucks; on about 1000 news-stands with tack cards in about 1500 store windows with special window streamers all of which carried the opening date of the Brooklyn-Paramount theatre. Samples and photos of same are in the scrap book.

16. The Chamber of Commerce has a magazine of ten years publication prestige which was used for several months before the opening to carry publicity stories designed to enlist merchant tie-up cooperation, as well as sell the theatre to Brooklyn business men as an important economy factor. In addition to this, the entire issue of the magazine was turned over to me to carry our entire institutional story. Those magazines were distributed, free of charge, in the theatre during the opening week and were mailed to every Chamber of Commerce in the United States.

After considerable maneuvering an honorary luncheon was arranged for members of Publix and Paramount, selling us as an important economic factor. This resulted in considerable prestige, as well as publicity several weeks before the theatre opened, which gave us a proper importance with the industrial interests.

17. Seven hundred and fifty beautifully colored process posters were made by our Poster Department and distributed in downtown windows, welcoming the new theatre. All of the Ludwig-Bauman stores carried newspaper ads and window tie-ups on Paul Ash endorsing their piano.

18. The Postal Telegraph Company, which controls the Telephoto transmission device arranged with Van & Schenck in Cleveland to send an autographed picture to Paul Ash, likewise Paramount movie stars in Hollywood. The Postal Telegraph plans to use some newspaper tie-up ads in every city on this idea, as well as window display material.

19. A fund of several thousand dollars obtained by a POPULAR subscription to the "Greater Brooklyn Boosters League," which unanimously elected me to spend same in the interests of a gala celebration in honor of the new theatre. This celebration took the form of expending all funds for the purchase and placement of banners, tack cards, etc., on all public highways, city property, telephone lines and with the transportation systems. Permits for same being granted, despite ordinance to the contrary because of the civic nature of the enterprise. The area covered included the entire downtown business district, the borough hall district and all important transportation transfer corners. Eight hundred double faced cloth one-sheet bannerettes and one-sheet tack cards carrying only the theatre name, location and opening date made the center pieces of each decorative streamer of pennants. The proclamation from the borough President calling for public cognizance of the new theatre resulted in many voluntary tie-ups. The front of the theatre was decorated out of this fund at that time.

20. The biggest newspaper supplement ever published in New York in conjunction with any enterprise was published by the New York Journal for the opening of

the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre. One third of the space, including the front page was devoted to the institutional publicity stories. This in itself was a gigantic task involving a mass of detail. The ads were obtained through cooperation of our various department heads, particularly, Wm. Saal, Frank Cambria, and M. J. Mullin. The follow-up work on this phase of the special section was done by Mr. Raymond Puckett, who handled same in a very capable manner. The stories and pictures in same were described in the foregoing.

Half a dozen news reel subjects were arranged and executed for release on our own screens and nationally where the subjects had sufficient merit. The election bet flag pole story carrying the Paul Ash Brooklyn-Paramount sign broke into all our opposition theatres through Kinogram News reel.

21. Proclamation and speech for Borough President was written and arranged for movietone presentation and newspaper publication.

21. Special advertisers were solicited to buy newspaper space in New York Journal and other newspapers congratulating the new theatre.

23. At least, four and possibly five stories were sent out over the telegraph press syndicates and were published in papers all over the world, thus nationalizing the theatre.

24. A special appeal by Mr. Botsford and the writer to all Publix managers and publicity men obtained the first concerted-strength selling effort. This took the form of stories about the new theatre in local papers as well as local radio salute idea.

This proved highly successful.

A great many other things were attempted without results and some with results, which have escaped the memory of the writer in the rush of the theatre opening. The scrap books on the opening are not fully posted, due to the chaotic conditions surrounding the opening. However, these will be completed as quickly as possible. As the scrap books now stand a rough idea of the magnitude of the selling job may be obtained by any one, who wishes to look at same.

This completes the report on things accomplished.