



Drive-in movie at the Hyde Creek Petro Can. (Gaby Wickstrom/Facebook photo)

Gate House Theatre presents: Drive-in movies on Halloween weekend

‘As we work towards next year’s lineup of movies, we will begin to have themes’

TYSON WHITNEY / Oct. 23, 2020 1:39 p.m. / COMMUNITY

Halloween weekend will likely be the last chance this year to experience a Gate House Theatre drive-in movie night.

If you haven’t heard, the Gate House Theatre has been showing drive-in movies at the Hyde Creek Petro Can all throughout September, primarily thanks to a grant from the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) that helped pay for part of the equipment, and also the generous support of local businessman Aaron Gabrysh.

Gate House’s technical director Gord Oppen noted the Hyde Creek Petro Can has been quite the convenient location for the movies to be held at. “Parking has been very easy to

manage,” he said, also pointing out that thanks to the gas station store being open, “people have been able to go in and get a coffee or a popcorn.”

As for why they wanted to start a drive-in movie theatre, Oppen noted the project appealed to the Gate House because “in this COVID-reality, we knew it would be a real challenge for us to host a traditional event inside.”

While the theatre building in Port McNeill can accommodate around 150 people, due to strict COVID-19 guidelines they would only be allowed to have 40-50 patrons, which means it just wouldn’t be financially viable to hold shows.

In the beginning, the Gate House wanted to make sure the drive-in events had family appeal, with Oppen stating the goal was “to be as encompassing as we could be. As we work towards next year’s lineup of movies, we will begin to have themes, such as a horror night, a nostalgia night, a western night, and we will be looking to take the show on the road all over the North Island. Sointula, Alert Bay, Port Hardy, Port Alice, we’re quite portable and we are eager to go all over.”

Growing up, Oppen used to go to drive-in movies when he lived in Edmonton and he mentioned that he still has some great memories from the experience.

“I do recall putting some guys in a trunk,” laughed Oppen as he reminisced on the past. “And I really do have fond memories from seeing the actual movies.”

The drive-in experience is something that most youth haven’t had the chance yet to experience, and Oppen says the Gate House wants to ensure they get that opportunity and more.

“Our vision for this is once COVID guidelines are more relaxed, we want to have a farmers market and local artisans stationed around the drive-in, so as you’re waiting for dusk to settle in and the movie to start up you can go and check out the booths.”

He said they would also love to incorporate live music before the movie starts.

For the upcoming Halloween weekend, the adult movie is being held on Friday, Oct. 30, at 7:00 p.m. where they will be showing “Halloween” (2018), which is a direct sequel to the original 1970s John Carpenter horror classic “Halloween”.

The family movie will be held on Saturday, Oct. 31 at 8:00 p.m., and they will be showing the 1990s cult classic “Hocus Pocus”.

Tickets are available for sale online right up to the day of the show.

“The drive-in movie theatre has been a significant investment, and we are hopeful that the community will get years of enjoyment out of it, and we would sincerely appreciate your support,” added Oppen.

Tickets for “Halloween” can be purchased [HERE](#)

Tickets for “Hocus Pocus” can be purchased [HERE](#)

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