

## STATE COLLEGE HISTORIC SITE



### Nittany Theatre Building

For its first 70 years, the commercial portion of this stately building (designed by W.H. Lee of Shamokin and built by Thomas P. Kennedy and son, William, of State College) was a movie house: The Nittany Theatre (1914-1973), then The Garden Theatre (1973-1984). *The State College Times* called James P. Aikens' new two-level theatre "one of the handsomest in the state and the finest in the country." It was equipped with the latest Edison-Powers hand fed arc projector. Ownership passed to Maurice Baum, who also bought the older Pastime Theatre (116 South Allen Street). He would open The Cathaum Theatre (114 West College Avenue) in 1926, closing The Pastime.

Live piano music accompanied "The Perils of Pauline" and other silent features. The May 1934

screenings of "The Blue Angel" were touted as "the first in the state" after a three-year censorship ban was lifted. During its lifetime, The Nittany was known for Saturday cliffhangers, cartoons and westerns, European art films, then "scrated" films. The main stream Garden Theatre showed "Star Wars" in 1977- six years after Sidney Friedman bought the building.

For decades, this building held the town's cab stand (pictured above, 1955). Companies included Resides Taxi Service, Clemson Taxi Service, J.D. McClellan Taxi, and L.R. Toney Cab & Airport Limousine Service. The last taxi service here, K.E. Triessler's Golden Cab Company, closed in 1979.

Retail shops succeeded the silver screen.



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