

*Impermanence*  
(*The Beverly, other Janesville, Wisconsin,  
Theaters; Kerwin Mathews; Sprawl;  
and The Automobile.*)

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*Impermanence* (148 pages, 8.5" x 11") begins as a search for a photograph of a Janesville, Wisconsin, movie house that was built in 1916 and demolished in 1959. It expands to cover the history of Janesville's movie theaters (four large indoor and two outdoor) and discovers the impact of the car and the arrival of the interstate on the city's originally bustling, now all but abandoned downtown straddling the Rock River.

It features many rare photographs and other unusual images including risqué movie advertisements from the 1920s and pictures of Kerwin Mathews, dubbed "Janesville's only movie star" by the local newspaper. Images (scroll down for an example) range from high school pictures and views of Mathews working on plays at Milton and Beloit Colleges to a promotional glossy of him in *The Waltz King*, his favorite role.

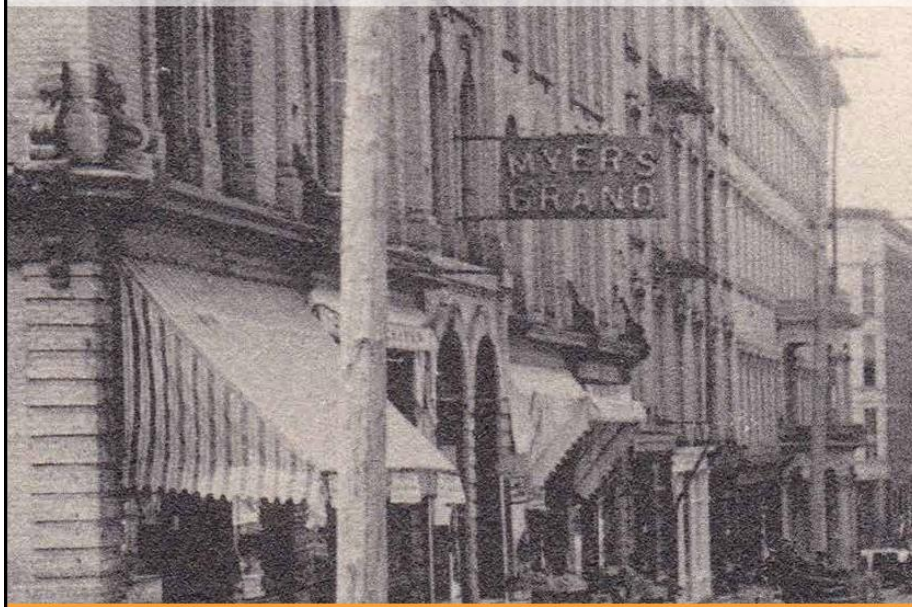
But mostly it's a story about Impermanence—what's common today is soon gone forever and sometimes not more than a memory.

The book is available at the Hedberg Public Library, 316 South Main Street, Janesville, Wisconsin, and may be requested through interlibrary loan. Barnes & Noble offers an electronic version at:

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/impermanence-ted-h-schaar/1132293046?ean=2940163119776>

# IMPERMANENCE

*The Beverly, other Janesville, Wisconsin, Theaters;  
Kerwin Mathews; Sprawl; and The Automobile.*



Ted H. Schaar

Cover.

Cover: Detail from a circa 1907 postcard purchased on eBay and credited to (exactly as it appears on the back of the card):

"The Rotograph Co., N.Y., City. (Germany)."

The Myers Grand Opera House—later the Myers Theater—  
was about 16 when the photograph was taken.



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Courtesy of Rock County Historical Society

In 1950, Janesville had four downtown movie houses and two outdoors. *Impermanence* centers on a search for an image of one, the Beverly, built in 1916 and demolished in 1959.

It includes information about the city's other theaters—Myers to Mid-City—and reports on the Hotel Monterey; Kerwin Mathews, Janesville's "only movie star"; the automobile's rise; the opening of Creston Park and other car-connected businesses; and the arrival and eventual dominance of I-90.

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*Impermanence* back cover.

Kerwin Mathews,  
vice president.  
Gene Cart.

Joanne Schlueter.  
Joan Damrow.



Kerwin Mathews in high school  
Page 79, 1943 Janesville Senior High School Phoenix.

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