

A FUTURE... STEEPED IN THE PAST

Interview and story by Debbie Watson



Ned Thanhouser in front of the Hollywood Theatre

While at Intel, Ned had a fascination exploring his family's history in the silent movie industry. Ned's grandparents, Edwin and Gertrude Thanhouser, established a pioneering independent silent movie studio in 1909 in New Rochelle, New York. The Thanhouser Studio eventually made over 1000 silent films that were distributed around the world until suddenly closing in 1917...almost all the films were either lost or destroyed.

Ned has spent over 25 years researching and recovering what he could find of the studio's output, including original nitrate films, posters and historical artifacts. Working with archives and private collectors around the globe he has found 225 Thanhouser films, and he finds a couple more every year. Over 50 of these films are available for viewing on his web site or for sale on DVD.

Meet Ned Thanhouser who retired from Intel in 2011 after 28 years. When he retired, Ned was the Director of Market Development ESPD, which is the boards and systems division in the Enterprise Server Group. Ned started at Intel in 1982 as the engineering manager for Multibus® and went on to do stints in Product Marketing, Customer Marketing, as well as OEM Account Management.



Thanhouser studio in New Rochelle, NY



Reels of nitrate film

Ned strongly believes that the Thanhouser story deserves a place in any discussion of early American Cinema. To that end, after he retired, he produced a 50-minute documentary called "The Thanhouser Studio and the Birth of American Cinema." It tells his family's story and his own journey of discovery. Set against a backdrop of an industry dominated by Thomas A. Edison's Motion Picture Patents Trust companies, the story plays out in New York, Florida and California. It is a compelling story of fame and fortune, twisted by the vagaries of fate and ending on a bittersweet note.



Ned at the Pordenone Silent Film Festival (2011)

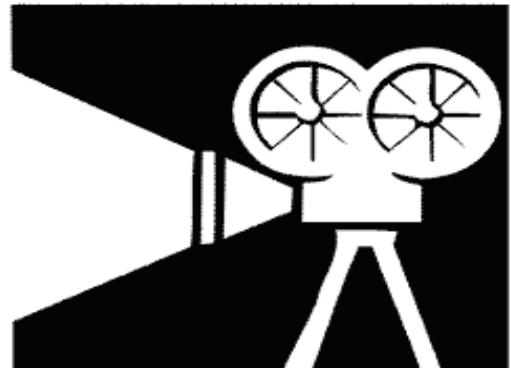
The documentary made its worldwide premier in October of 2014 at the

Pordenone Silent Film Festival in Pordenone, Italy, the largest festival of its type. Also, it was recently awarded a Remi, a prestigious film award, by the Worldfest International Independent Film and Television Festival! As a part of this effort, Ned has traveled to film festivals around the globe, presented papers on early film history at academic conferences, and visited the world's premier film archives in London, Australia, The Netherlands, and of course in the United States. Ned has established personal contacts with the curators that hold the surviving Thanhouser films and, thanks to skills gained while at Intel, he negotiated agreements to gain access to their valuable collections.

In addition to his negotiating skills, Ned uses business and marketing skills honed at Intel to run two 501(c)(3) companies: Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc. and the International Youth Silent Film Festival. Plus, he is on the Dean's Advisory Board at Iona College in New Rochelle, NY where he has established the Thanhouser Film Archive. He's also made use of "tons of technical skills" (MS Office, web programming, computer networking, etc.), and people skills learned at Intel to accomplish his goals.



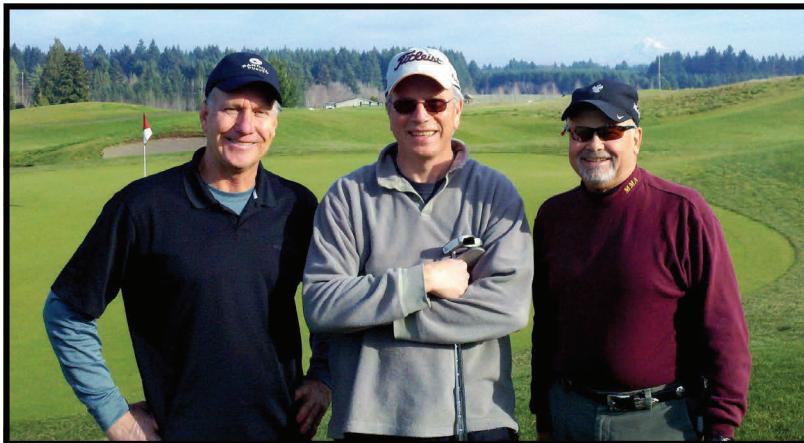
Thanhouser Studio documentary marketing poster



When he isn't consumed with the past, Ned still collects and rides motorcycles, continuing a hobby that he enjoyed while at Intel where he was active in the Intel Motorcycle Club (iMC). He also indulges in a weekly golf game with other retirees. Lest you think that Ned doesn't keep busy enough, he also does photography, videography and video editing for his wife's small video production company.



Ned and his wife, Michele, on a motorcycle ride in Italy



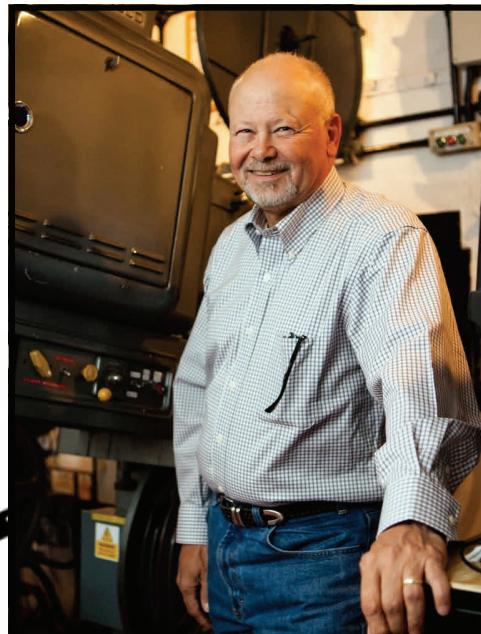
Steve Delach, Greg Rainer and Ned Thanhouser

Keep your eyes peeled for Ned's documentary that will screen this July (date/time TBD) on Turner Classic Movies.

Learn more about Ned's endeavors at www.thanhouser.org. And, of course, feel free to contact ned@thanhouser.org. He welcomes connecting with old friends and coworkers, and discussing an era of motion pictures that is often forgotten amidst the high tech productions of today's industry.

As for what Ned misses about Intel... "I miss interacting with the people I worked with...projects come and go, but the people and relationships remain."

His advice for people considering retirement is to have something lined up before you retire that will keep your mind and body active.



Ned at Hyde Park Playhouse, Leeds, UK

