

WALT DISNEY

After a Decade of Growing the Disneys Move to a New Studio

By **MAURICE FISHER**

IN JUST a little more than a decade after Walt Disney started a small animation studio in a garage, he will move into a brand new \$2,000,000 plant consisting of 21 buildings on a 51 acre tract.

Walt, his brother Roy, and a few helpers moved from Hollywood garage in 1924 to a small store building on Kingsley Drive, and thought that it was really a step upward in the world. When, in 1925, they felt that they had enough money scraped together to build themselves a little studio, they thought they were pretty well settled for a while.

What they built was a neat little green and white studio on two or three acres of weeds they purchased between Hollywood and Glendale. The new studio consisted of one big room for the artists, a cubby hole apiece for Walt and Roy, and one or two other offices for the business administration boys.

By 1930, the Walt Disney studios had grown in fantastic fashion. Instead of the 25 employees of 1929, there were now 40 people, and the walls were beginning to bulge a little. A wing was added to take care of the growing enterprise.

By the end of the year there were 66 employees, and it was necessary to keep on building. In 1931 the total number of the personnel had jumped up to 106.

When "The Three Little Pigs" came along in 1933, the studio had grown from 1,600 square feet of floor space in 1929 to 20,000 square feet. A hundred and fifty people

WALT DISNEY

were now turning out the Disney productions. Walt purchased a little more land adjoining the studio.

From 1933 until 1936, growth in studio building activities and in personnel was steady. What had started out to be a neat little stucco box-like structure now attained two stories in spots, looked vaguely California-Spanish in appearance, and rambled around with no particular aim. In addition, the main building had a sound stage, an inking and painting building, and some bungalows as satellites.

In 1936, Walt began to feel the full-length-production bug biting him. So before 1936 grew to be an old man with a long beard, "Snow White" was under way.

In 1937, all the employees were still jostling each other, so the Disneys purchased a couple of old apartment houses right next door. Into the apartment houses Walt poured his story department and some miscellaneous people right along with all the sinks and bath tubs and pantries. They're still there.

By the summer of that year, the studio was hectic and wild-eyed, trying to prepare "Snow White" for an early 1938 release. The production control department was trying to arrive at some sort of more efficient organization by moving various departments into more convenient and strategic spots around the studio.

"We'll just have to build an entirely new studio," declared the Disneys.

From around 600 employees in the summer of 1937, the organization had grown to almost 900 by the winter of 1938. In the new studio's animation building, there will be room for around 900 artists alone. And the animation building is but one of 21 buildings.

As a matter of fact, Walt Disney's new \$2,000,000 studio, set for completion by the last of this year, will be practically a complete 20 acre city.

There will be parking facilities for 1,250 cars, and under-cover parking can be rented by employees for a nominal sum. In conjunction with the parking lot will be a gas station and garage.