

Tinsmith Circle in starring role

By NANCY WEIL
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The title appears first on the screen: *Edward Scissorhands*, in sharp, giant letters. The audience claps and cheers. Then, as the opening music plays, a castle on a mountain comes into view, and the crowd whoops.

"Hey, there's Tinsmith Circle!" says Bill Cardoza, president of the Chamber of Commerce in Land O'Lakes.

"It's covered in snow," says Dave Adams, sitting next to Cardoza during a special sneak preview of the movie Tuesday. (The snow is weird. This is, after all, Florida. But it's explained at the end.)

Many of the 439 people at the sneak preview at University Square Cinema in Tampa didn't need too much explanation because they had something to do with the production.

And even though Tinsmith Circle in the Carpenters Run subdivision has a Lutz mailing address, when Hollywood comes to Pasco County, everyone at the screening, even Cardoza who lives in New Port Richey, claims a part of it.

Some residents even gave up their homes for the sake of cinema after Tinsmith Circle caught director Tim Burton's eye as the suburban landscape he wanted to create, where conformity rules and gossip keep the women busy.

The fable tells the story of Edward, a boy-creature whose inventor dies before finishing his greatest creation. So Edward, a bedraggled and forlorn character, has no hands. Instead, he has scissors — very sharp scissors that he uses to create topiaries.

The local Avon lady, played by Dianne Wiest, finds Edward, portrayed by Johnny Depp, and brings him to her suburban home, where he unwittingly charms the gossip housewives, despite his strangeness.

Many in the audience know where the movie is headed because they watched it being filmed, but it's still something quite different to actually see the finished product. Up there. On the big screen.

So, they whoop and yell and cheer and clap.

No single moment compares with the first glimpse of the suburban circle. Although the houses were repainted four pastel shades and much of the landscaping was uprooted, with trees and shrubbery potted and stuck away in a warehouse during filming, people recognize houses important to them.

"There's my house!" shouts one woman in the theater. "That's it! That's my house!"

While she carries on about her house — and some impatient moviegoers ask her, not so kindly, to pipe down — Cardoza begins to put it all together in his mind.

As sales manager for Waste Management of Pasco, Cardoza

was contacted, when the film crew arrived last summer in Pasco, to provide trash bins and waste removal at movie sites.

During filming, he had access to Tinsmith Circle and the castle, and he was intrigued by the structure from start to finish.

The castle was built on a hill off County Road 41 north of Dade City, but the wonders of technology transform it into a "mountain" overlooking the pastel neighborhood. During filming, a gate was erected at the end of the cul-de-sac on Tinsmith Circle. The gate leads to the castle, and the neighborhood doesn't exactly know what has transpired there, but rumor says the place is haunted. Of course.

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After the moviemakers and stars cleared out, Cardoza went to the castle to take a look and figure out how best to demolish the structure.

Unknowingly, he re-created one of the film's scenes in which Wiest's character decides to make her sales pitch to the castle's inhabitant.

Cardoza, 41, crept up the path and approached the door. He used the knocker and listened to the wood thud echo through the building.

"And I opened the door and looked around," Cardoza says, widening his eyes and peering to each side, just as Wiest's character does in the movie. "I was just playing a little game with myself."

He went up the tall, wide staircase to the top room, an important location in the movie, and peeked out the window from which Edward peers down at the suburb below. Cardoza took a piece of glass from the window as a souvenir.

For Robert and Judy Nyberg, the most lasting souvenir they have is their home.

The house was taken over for three months by Burton's crew and transformed into the home Wiest's character shares with her family and Edward. A fence and treehouse were added and later taken down and moved back to Hollywood, Calif., for a set there. The white-gray exterior paint was changed to Smurf blue.

Although their house has been returned to its natural state, a band of blue paint remains at the bottom of the house. They decided to leave it there. Mrs. Nyberg says, adding that on Halloween, trick-or-treaters wanted to check it out.

The Nybergs also got a new roof out of the deal because in one



Times photo — JACK ROWLAND
Residents from Carpenters Run stand outside the University Square Cinema after watching *Edward Scissorhands*.

scene the Avon lady's husband uses a staple gun to attach fake snow atop the house.

The movie, in the Nybergs' opinion, is great. But then they knew what was going to happen.

So did Susie Lebron, a neighbor of the Nybergs whose home was transformed into the dwelling of the suburb's chief gossip.

"I watched the scenes over and over and over," she says. "It was right outside my bedroom window."

While they understood what was going to happen, the Nybergs and Lebron say that actually seeing the movie pulled together everything they had witnessed on the set during the three months of filming at their homes.

Michael Kennedy, whose son, Mike, 21, worked on the set, and whose daughter, Maggie, 16, met and befriended the teen-age actors in the film, drives by Carpenters Run every day on his way to work.

"So we saw the transformation," Michael says. "Seeing it being made took some of the imagination out of it."

His children had brought home a script, so Kennedy knew the ins and outs of *Edward Scissorhands*. And though he couldn't fathom the story, he managed to have faith that the film would be good despite the bizarre fairy-tale plot, telling himself, "This is the same guy (Tim Burton) who made *Batman*."

For Maggie, who has been in a music video and aspires to a show-business career, watching the movie Tuesday was an experience quite different from that of her father and many others at the pre-

view.

She had gotten to know several of the teen-age actors when she went to the Saddlebrook resort, where the cast stayed.

At the resort one day, she started talking to Marti Greenberg, who plays the best friend of Kim, Wiest's character's daughter. They hit it off and became friends. Maggie also met Winona Ryder, who plays Kim, the girl who falls for Edward. Ryder is Depp's real-life fiancée.

Because it was summer and she was out of school, Maggie went to Saddlebrook a lot and, as she got to know Greenberg, was invited to the set at Carpenters Run.

Watching the movie, she says, "was neat because I could say, 'I was standing on that corner. I was standing behind that house' as they filmed."

During the screening, moviegoers observe and wait for a scene of Southgate Shopping Center. When it arrives, they go bonkers as the camera pans the local stores and extras they recognize as area residents.

Tinsmith Circle dwellers watch and remember the irony of it all. A year ago, they started receiving strange letters that they dismissed because such things as moviemaking just don't happen in Pasco County.

"It was a year ago that they started sending out letters," Susie Lebron says after the movie, recalling how Tinseltown first approached Tinsmith Circle. "We all disregarded them. We thought it was kids playing a joke."