

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic McDonald Theater Building

and/or common McDonald Theater

2. Location

street & number 1004-1044 Willamette Street N/A not for publication

city, town Eugene N/A vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Oregon code 41 county Lane code 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Lem Wilson and Son

street & number PO Box 177

city, town Ontario N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97914

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lane County Courthouse

street & number 125 East 8th Avenue

city, town Eugene state Oregon 97401

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The McDonald Theater Building is a one-story block measuring 160' x 130' and is situated at the southwest corner of the intersection of East 10th Avenue and Willamette Street in Eugene, Oregon. The intersection of Broadway (9th Avenue) and Willamette Street is still considered by most people to be the epicenter of the downtown Eugene business district; the McDonald Theater building is just one block south of that location. Designed by Lee Thomas, Thomas & Mercier, Architects, it was completed in 1925. Typical of small town theater buildings, the McDonald satisfied the needs for both entertainment and commerce under one roof. Originally it was built to house the theater and seven businesses. All store fronts faced Willamette Street, and its Willamette Street facade was divided into eight bays (Photograph 1) with each bay marked by a pilaster with a base of gray marble. Today the building still contains the theater, which occupies one-half of the entire floor space, and seven businesses, although the original spaces have been rearranged. An audio equipment store occupies two and one-half of the original spaces, while a candy shop and T-shirt printer together share one and one-half spaces. A tobacco shop, occupying one space, shares its mezzanine with a wine store, and an import shop and a camera shop each occupy one space.

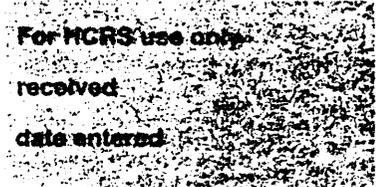
The Willamette Street facade as well as one bay width on the 10th Avenue facade are faced with cream-colored terra cotta, while the remainder of the building is unadorned (Photographs 2 and 3). Constructed of reinforced concrete with a wood truss roof, the McDonald was boasted of as being "one of the staunchest and stoutest structures in Eugene;" some 22,000 yards of concrete were to have been used on its construction.

Display windows at the street level were surmounted by large transom windows which brought light into the mezzanine. The transom windows were tripartite, with a large central fixed pane divided from two six-lighted side windows by spiral mullions. The doors to the shops were recessed. Under the display windows were panels of black marble (Photograph 4). At the theater entrance these panels remain.

Over the years, the street-level facade has been altered with coverings of plywood and corrugated metal sheathing. These coverings appear to be merely superficial and minimally affixed, assuring a strong possibility that the original surface remains intact beneath (Photograph 5). Only one storefront has been altered considerably at the street level--the one which occupies the corner of Willamette Street and 10th Avenue. The original terra cotta has been replaced by white brick and extensive glass surfaces, and the lower portion of the corner pier has been replaced by a more slender, free-standing pier. However, this area comprises less than one-eighth of the entire facade surface and could be restored as good photographic documentation and copies of the original measured drawings of the building facade exist.

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The theater entrance has been altered. The original marquee was of burnished copper and glass (Photograph 6). Above the marquee, a large electric sign spelling "McDonald" in the shape of a sky rocket shot upward from the roof (Photograph 7). Above the marquee at the mezzanine level was a great archway. Beneath the marquee on each side of the box office, facing inward, were built-in display frames. The original copper marquee and sign were replaced in 1938 with a two-sided, lighted marquee that expanded upward to read "McDonald," thus covering the arched opening (Photograph 8). Additional display frames of travertine marble closely matching the terra cotta in color were built on each side of the entrance. In 1971, the second marquee was replaced with a nondescript, streamlined sign (Photograph 9), and the entrance ceiling was lowered with a layer of prefabricated ceiling squares; however, the original ceiling remains intact above. The box office, once located in the center of the entrance bordering the sidewalk, was dismantled in 1971 and now a small table inside the lobby is used for selling tickets. The original etched glass of the booth is still extant in the theater basement.

One of the more unusual original external features of the McDonald was its stylistic blend of classical and Mediterranean motifs. This is seen most clearly in the detailing above the street level which remains intact although two original Mediterranean features have been altered. One is the false shed roof of tile which served as a decorative parapet for the flat roof behind it. The parapet remains but the tile has been replaced with composition shingle. The second feature which has been altered is the top of the piers. Originally, the three corner piers extended above the roof line and supported a pedestal and an urn (Photograph 10). Today the piers end just below the roof line and bear neither the pedestal nor the urn. Copies of the original measured drawings showing the complete corner piers and urns are in the Lane County Museum library.

In line with the architrave, the corner pier panels are capped with terra cotta trim surmounted by a circular, convex surface of blue terra cotta in a frame of cream terra cotta (Photograph 11). This motif, employed at both ends of the front facade and around the corner on 10th Avenue, remains intact. The terra cotta cornice and upper portion of the frieze are embellished in a classical decor. The frieze contains a row each of dentils and egg and dart pattern. The cornice is mounted with a row of projecting, open-mouthed lion heads (Photograph 12). These details, crucial to the strong horizontal nature of the facade and its understated classical elegance, are intact.

Inside, the theater was highly embellished with plush carpets, draperies, furnishings, iron work, and wall murals. The interior was furnished by B. F. Shearer, Inc., a theater equipment specialist from Portland. Although numerous

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decorative changes have occurred through the years, the interior remains specially intact. The foyer once contained specially designed iron chairs, a console, tapestries, and mirrors. Other customized furniture was to be found in the women's rest room and men's smoking lounge. Unfortunately, none of these pieces is still in use in the theater.

The foyer is, however, still dominated by a double ramp leading to the balcony and rest rooms. Five arches divide the ramp from a base of iron-grilled openings. At the time of the theater's opening, the Eugene Daily Guard noted that "Wrought iron, rivaling in design that of the period when the craft was brought to real art, graces the Lowell Theatre interior. The work was all done by the Eugene Foundry and every bit of it was done here in Eugene. Exquisitely wrought grilles are the first of this work that greet the patrons as they enter the foyer. Here true artistry is at once apparent in the design, which is made to harmonize with the rest of the building."²

Originally five murals from old Norse tales, personally selected by owner A. H. McDonald and executed by Portland artist Carl F. Berg, were seen through the arches. The murals have since been painted and plastered over. The arched aisle entrances on each side of the projection booth were originally draped with silk. The entrances are still there, but double push-doors have replaced the draperies. The manager's office, which originally opened into the foyer through an arched opening in the ramp wall, is still intact, although it no longer opens into the foyer for security purposes. The arch, with its decorative grille work, is now part of the closet wall in the office. Four chandeliers hung from gilded rosettes in the foyer's ceiling. The rosettes still exist, although the chandeliers have been replaced with modern fixtures. Three of the original chandeliers are stored behind the stage.

The theater sat 1,400 on the main floor and balcony levels. The original seats were Heywood-Wakefield chairs with soft, springy seats upholstered in Spanish leather. The stage was designed for both live theater and motion pictures. It is still intact, including the original 42-line motor-operated pulley system for raising and lowering the curtains, and the central switchboard for controlling the lights. However, the original silk draperies and blue-gray draw curtains are no longer there; and, the orchestra pit has been filled with sand and covered over. The specially designed Wurlitzer organ, once located in front of the stage, was donated to Willamette University. However, the organ grilles set into arches at each side of the stage and rising from floor to ceiling are intact and appear to be in excellent condition. Made of wrought iron, highlighted with gold and Oriental motifs, they are now covered from view with draperies. The Eugene Daily Guard described them as "One of the finest

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pieces of iron work in the state is the grille work over the organ sound chambers, declare architects who have inspected it. The bars are placed with mathematical precision each in close harmony with the next, and the whole is so carefully designed that the casual spectator is struck at once with its beauty. Both the contractor and decorators are loud in their praise for this touch of Old World artistry."⁵

Two plaster columns with painted capitals between the grilles are also intact. Carved and painted motifs, also with an Oriental flair, were executed around and inside the stage opening (Photograph 13). Due to the large screen now used in the theater, it is difficult to see if the outside paintings still exist. Inside the stage opening, however, the painted motifs are clearly visible. The auditorium was lighted by five wall "baskets" on each wall, set into arched niches. Three colored and one white light were contained in each to achieve a variety of lighting effects.⁴ The "baskets," which are no longer there, appear from photographs to be cast plaster elements perforated at the top to expose the glow from the lights they held. The niches are now filled with plaster, but their arched outlines are clearly visible.

The walls and ceilings were in blends of gray, "conestone," and ivory with a brightly painted band in Oriental motif which ran around the wall at the balcony level.⁵ The auditorium has since been painted, but photographs show areas of the lower wall surface painted to resemble stone. What was called "conestone" in newspaper accounts may very well be caenstone, a stone quarried in France and used extensively in the Middle Ages. To paint an interior surface to resemble stone was not unusual at this time. In fact, the lounge at the University of Oregon's Gerlinger Hall, designed by Ellis F. Lawrence and built in 1919, originally contained painted walls imitating caenstone.

On each side wall at the lower floor were two huge arches reaching up into a coved ceiling. Around each arch was a decorative plastered molding. Inside each of the arches was a 12' x 20' landscape mural, referred to as "futuristic" in style (Photograph 14). Painted designs were also executed inside the arch above the painting and along the front of the balcony. The walls of the lower level are now painted and plastered over and are covered with draperies from the rear of the theater to the screen.

Restoration of the interior decor would not be difficult and should be encouraged in those areas which would not interfere with modern screen and projection needs. The excellent photographic documentation and drawings at the Lane County Museum library, the lengthy descriptions found in local newspapers, and the saved parts of the building, such as the original ticket booth and chandeliers,

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would facilitate such an undertaking. The McDonald Theater Building is a fine example of terra cotta's longevity as a building material. The terra cotta sheathing is in excellent condition with no apparent spalling or crazing of the glaze. All outside joints appear to be weather-tight and well-sealed. A thorough cleaning with water, a mild detergent, and a soft-bristled brush in the deeply recessed areas of the cornice would give the exterior a new life.

The building's overall condition, with its moderate street-level alterations and its fine and intact detailing make the McDonald Theater an excellent candidate for restoration.

¹Eugene Daily Guard, May 7, 1925.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Eugene Daily Guard, April 23, 1925.

⁵Ibid.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1925 **Builder/Architect** Lee Thomas, Thomas & Mercier, Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The McDonald Theater Building completed for the McDonald-Schaefers Company in 1925, occupies the southwest corner of the busy intersection of West 10th Avenue and Willamette Street in the central business district of Eugene, Oregon. The architect was Lee Thomas of the Portland firm of Thomas and Mercier, specialists in movie house design whose masterwork in the genre, the imposing, reinforced concrete Oriental Theater of 1927 on Portland's East Side, was demolished in 1970. It was typical of West Coast motion picture theater construction projects of the 1920s to include or adjoin commercial/office space, and the McDonald in Eugene was no exception. Its one-story, eight-bay commercial facade extends 160 feet along Willamette Street. Floor space occupied by the businesses has been revised over the years, but the varied surface alterations of the store fronts are considered readily reversible. With its cream-colored terra cotta facing, a classical entablature embellished with lion masks, a shed roofed parapet originally covered with mission tiles, corner piers decorated with elaborate cartouches and urn terminations (now missing), and salomonica mullions dividing upper story windows, the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Mediterranean Style. The theater entrance on Willamette Street was modified in 1938 and again in 1971. The marquee was twice replaced, and the free-standing box office removed. As is not unusual, the furnishings and decorations which carried the architectural theme into the theater lobby and lounges have long since been replaced. However, the spatial organization of the theater interior is essentially intact, as are much of the decorative plasterwork and the extensive wrought iron grille work locally manufactured by a Eugene foundry. The main floor and balcony seating remains, and the stage designed for live entertainment as well as motion pictures is intact. The orchestra pit, which originally contained a Wurlitzer organ, was filled in, but the wrought iron grilles covering the arched organ sound chamber openings on either side of the stage remain in good condition. The plaster auditorium walls, originally decorated with mural arcades and painted in imitation of building stone, have since been plastered and painted over.

The McDonald Theater building is one of the four substantial commercial buildings of one and two stories which formed a related group at this intersection. Each of the buildings was owned and operated by the Schaefers brothers - Frances, George, Charles and Albert - businessmen who contributed significantly to Eugene's revitalization and upbuilding after 1900. Across Willamette Street to the east stands the Schaefers Building, the Art Deco landmark of 1929 designed by Truman Phillips which was entered into the National Register in 1979. The other remaining building of the historic ensemble, one which also is being nominated to the National Register, is the Ax Billy Department Store (1910) at the northeast corner of the intersection. The D. A. Paine Block which once occupied the northwest corner is no longer standing. The McDonald Theater possesses integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and sufficient integrity of workmanship and materials to meet the criteria of the National Register. It is significant locally as the only intact movie palace now standing in Eugene. Movie palaces of the 1920s were a phenomenon which combined solid construction with illusory, showy decoration, the like of which seldom would be attained again after the Great Depression. Such theaters are landmarks wherever they remain. The McDonald Theater is significant also for its association with its builders, the Schaefers brothers, and as a component of the best-preserved ensemble of early 20th century commercial

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Eugene East, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	0
Zone	

4	9	2	6	5	0
Easting					

4	8	7	1	7	0	6	0
Northing							

B

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

C

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

D

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

E

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

F

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

G

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

H

Zone	

Easting			

Northing			

Verbal boundary description and justification the east 130 feet of
The McDonald Theater Building occupies/Lots 1 and 4 of Block 16, Mulligan's Donation in the present townsite of Eugene, as recorded in Lane County Deeds and Records, Lane County, Oregon.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carmi Weingrod and Judith Rees

organization City of Eugene, Department of Housing and Community Conservation date December 22, 1981

street & number 72 West Broadway, Suite 200 telephone (503) 687-5443

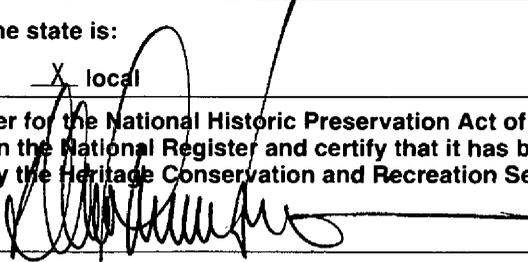
city or town Eugene state Oregon 97401

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date July 22, 1982

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 Entered in the National Register date 8/26/82

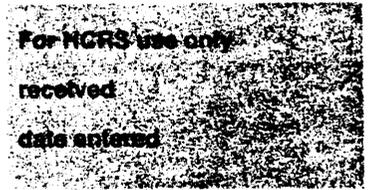
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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buildings now standing in Eugene's downtown core.

The movie palace can be called one of the truly unique forms in American architecture-- a creation all its own. Having been derived as theatrical entertainment which grew from stage to screen, the movie palace reflected the imaginative qualities of both live and filmed production. Although a distinctly 20th Century building type, the movie palace had its roots in both the theater and the fairground. According to Dennis Sharp in The Picture Palace, each one was tailored for its location and usually constructed according to local tradition. "Most cinemas," says Sharp, "had a simple external appearance, except for the show facade, with undecorated backs and sides. The special treatment given to the frontages evolved directly from the fairground booth."¹

The McDonald Theater was designed by Lee Thomas, a Portland architect. "Lee Arden Thomas was born in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, and was educated in Oregon State College where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1907. In 1910 he was graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. He also attended a special course in architecture at Columbia University in New York City. He started practice on the West Coast in the studios of Seattle architects Sommerville and Putman. On moving to Portland, he was associated with A. E. Doyle and subsequently spent three years on the architectural staff of the Portland School District before launching private practice in 1913. When, in 1919, the Oregon Architects Registration Law was enacted, Lee Thomas had the distinction of being named by Governor Ben W. Olcott to the original State Board of Architect Examiners."²

The firm of Thomas and Mercier, formed in 1924, is probably best known for its design of the Union Memorial Building on the campus of Oregon State University in Corvallis. Completed in 1928 and of 20th Century Classical design, the building was widely acclaimed upon its completion and brought the firm into prominence.

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However, the firm is also recognized for designing a number of movie theaters in the then-popular exotic styles. The most notable of these was the Oriental Theater, built in 1927 in Portland. The firm also designed the Bagdad (1926) in Portland, the Capitol (1926) in Salem, and the Egyptian (1925) in Coos Bay.² Completed in May of 1925, the McDonald Theater appears to be the firm's earliest theater.

Although not as ostentatious as many of the movie palaces in larger cities, the McDonald was the grand theater in Eugene. Similar to many of the theaters described by Sharp, the McDonald's terra cotta facade was treated in the classical style with arched openings and low horizontal solidity in the Renaissance manner. The interior, like the grandest of theaters, was an original work of art. Hand-painted murals exuding the lure of faraway places, elaborate chandeliers, plush carpets and draperies, luxurious seats, and the most personalized service were all provided by theater management as a way of creating a new and magic world for the theater goer. This was part of the national trend to entice people into the theater by creating a total, illusionistic world inside. "The feeling that the interior has a spirit," said a Eugene Register article about the new theater, "an atmosphere that places the patron in the most receptive state of mind, is there."³ Color and light were important factors in creating the foyer and auditorium as atmospheric places. "The ceiling is indeed a masterpiece of interior work. It is designed primarily to give the impression of a sky overhead and an interplay of color and light . . . is instantly available for any mood that the picture on the screen may inspire."⁴ Instead of the ornate relief carvings found in many of the movie palace interiors, the McDonald was a gallery of painted murals. Thus, viewers were treated with a array of rich colors everywhere in the theater.

The McDonald not only boasted the largest seating capacity in town but also the finest and most modern equipment. The result, according to the Eugene Register, "gives Eugene a reputation in the theatrical circles that will be hard for any other city to surpass."⁵ The manager of the McDonald brought all of the top-rated, first showings in film, and the liveliest in stage presentations to the theater (Photograph 15). The personal touch was something the owners wanted to emphasize. When a patron entered the doors of the theater, he became the personal guest of the house; employees of the theater considered themselves hosts at all times. The opening of the McDonald on May 7, 1925, was billed as the biggest event of its kind that Eugene had ever experienced. A program of great variety was planned, beginning with the organ music of Renaldo Baggot on the newly installed Wurlitzer. This was followed by a comedy entitled, "Fares, Please," a series of short prologues, and then the feature film, "Madame Sans Gene," starring Gloria Swanson. The promise of making the new theater Eugene's finest was a vow taken seriously by the owners.

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Aaron Harding McDonald came to Eugene in 1913 from Portland where he was secretary-treasurer of the Progressive Amusement Company. Once in Eugene he immediately became involved with the local theater business and in 1922 formed the Castle Theater Company, later the Eugene Greater Theater Company. The company sold, leased, and operated motion picture and other amusement shows. At one time McDonald also owned and operated three other early Eugene theaters: The Heilig, the Castle, and the Rex. Of Eugene's four early moving picture theaters, only the McDonald remains a recognizable, architecturally intact remnant of the great era of the movie palace. The Castle was closed in 1925; the Heilig was closed and destroyed in the early 1970 s; and the Rex, now the National, has been remodeled beyond recognition.

In July of 1924, McDonald, together with Charles J. Schaefer, formed the McDonald-Schaefer Company, a real estate investment firm. Schaefer was one of five brothers who came to Eugene in 1908 from Clermont, Iowa. In 1910, four of the Schaefer brothers moved their Ax Billy Department Store into a large new building on the northeast corner of 10th Avenue and Willamette Street. Later, they expanded their property holdings by purchasing this building and the D. A. Paine building on the northwest corner of this intersection (no longer standing); the latter building housed Seymour's Cafe and other businesses, including their own office and the offices of the Stien brothers, contractors, and John Hunzicker, architect. Finally in 1929, on the northeast corner they built the Schaefer Building which housed a bowling alley and retail shops. It was designed by Hunzicker and, like the McDonald Theater, was constructed by the Stein brothers. In 1979, the Schaefer Building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The largest endeavor of the McDonald-Schaefer Company was the McDonald Theater Building, planned as a mixture of both entertainment and commerce under one roof. It was a true merger of interests for the two men; McDonald was primarily interested in the theater business, while Schaefer's involvement centered around commercial ventures. This system increased the economic benefits for both owners in addition to providing a new outlet for social entertainment and essential downtown spaces for the exchange of goods and services. Proof of its need was shown in the fact that the seven store fronts had been rented before the building was completed. Two stores specializing in ladies' apparel, a drugstore, a market, a music shop, a print shop, and a shoe store were the original occupants, in addition to the theater. It should be emphasized that the McDonald Theater Building demonstrates a continuity of commercial usefulness by continuing to house both business and entertainment to the present day.

One reason the building may have survived the extreme alteration and demolition suffered by many of Eugene's downtown buildings lies in the fact that it remained in the hands of the Schaefer family until 1977. Along with the Schaefer

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Building (1929) and the Ax Billy Department Store (1910), the McDonald Theater Building (1925) helps to grace the once-dominant 10th Avenue and Willamette Street intersection--an architectural and historical junction unlike any other in Eugene. Historically, the three buildings together represent the Schaefer's family's social and economic contribution to Eugene by providing entertainment (bowling and theater) and commerce (the department store and the various businesses which rented spaces from them). Architecturally, the three represent the persistence of one family to resist urban renewal changes which demolished or robbed many downtown buildings of their original facades and character. As a result, the three have remained virtually intact except for minor alterations of the street-level facades. While each building can claim its own architectural singularity and merit, together they comprise an intersection of unique historical context and visual interest in Eugene.

¹Sharp, Dennis, The Picture Palace, New York: Praeger, 1969, page 8.

²Walton, Elisabeth, "The Oriental Theater," unpublished photo-data report for the Historic American Buildings Survey selection titled "Ten Early 20th Century Theatres: Nickelodeon to Movie Palace, 1910-1931," 1970-2, page 6.

³Eugene Daily Guard, May 7, 1925.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Eugene Daily Guard, May 2, 1925.

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Oregonian, May 5 and 8, 1951; August 24, 1960.

Oregon Journal, May 4, 1951; August 24, 1960.

Conversations with James F. Brorby and George F. Schaefers, September 9, 1981.

Walton, Elisabeth, "The Oriental Theater," unpublished photo-data report for the Historic American Buildings Survey selection titled "Ten Early 20th Century Theatres: Nickelodeon to Movie Palace, 1910-1931," 1970-1972.

