

**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 Star Theatre

historic Partridge Hall

and/or common Star Theatre (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 200 South North Street not for publication

city, town Argyle vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Wisconsin code 55 county Lafayette code 065

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Cal Flach

street & number 106 West Baker Street

city, town Blanchardville vicinity of state Wisconsin 53516

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lafayette County Courthouse

street & number 626 Main Street

city, town Darlington state Wisconsin 53530

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wis. Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The present Star Theatre was built in two portions: the original building (now the north wing) in 1878, and the south wing sometime after 1881. Both wings are rectangular, two-story frames, sheathed with clapboards with varied lengths of wood siding, and are joined to form a T-shape plan. Each wing is covered with a gable roof. There are two brick chimneys, one located at the junction of the gables, the other at the west end of the original wing. Some of the exterior features have deteriorated, but the hand-fashioned wood trim on the segmental-arch windows and the unique bell-shaped fascia under the east gable end of the north wing remain in place. Even the wood-frame storefronts on the north wing, and the 6/6 double-hung sash throughout, have been retained.

The original (north) wing is 62 feet long and 32 feet wide, with Partridge's carpenter's quarters, now individual shops, located on the ground floor, and the first hall, the performance hall and stage on the second floor. The south wing is about 40 feet by 40 feet in dimension, with each floor consisting of large, open halls that were used for banquets and dances. Most of the building's interior is intact as originally constructed, with a few exceptions: the stage of the performance hall was dismantled in the 1940's, although the audience seats are still in place; steel beams were added to the ground floors for support at about the same time, and modern electrical wiring and plumbing were also installed. The south wing has a small partial basement, with stone walls and a newer concrete floor, which is now used as a ceramics shop. At the present time the new owner of the building plans to restore it by rebuilding the stage and repairing interior and exterior details. This is scheduled to begin during the summer of 1980.

Occupying a corner lot at the intersection of South North and East streets one block from the main commercial axis, the Star Theatre was appropriately close to the center of activity in the village.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input 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 1878¹

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1878 as a carpenter's shop, the Star Theatre subsequently became the community center of Argyle, serving as stage, forum, and banquet hall for nearly 70 years. In addition to its use as a center of social activity, the building is important as a small-town, frame commercial construction, extant examples of which are increasingly rare.

Social. The Star Theatre took form in 1878 under the skilled hands of Alanson Partridge (1831–1925), a carpenter who had moved to Wisconsin from New York in 1856. Partridge built the structure to serve primarily as his carpentry shop but, being enterprising, he also fashioned a large hall on the second floor for public and private use. The hall eventually became as important to Partridge's income as his carpentry.³ Private groups rented the hall for a variety of purposes, including meetings, dances, and dinners. On occasion, Partridge would promote the hall by sponsoring a Christmas Ball or other function.⁴ Events at the hall were advertised by sending barkers into the streets to sell tickets. A typical event's ticket price might pay for the play, dinner and a dance, as well as lodging for the family horse in the blacksmith's stable across the street.⁵ Interestingly, Partridge was a strong advocate of temperance, so that as long as he owned the building, no alcohol was served at functions. Papers found in the theatre include a temperance petition, signed by Partridge and others, advocating the prohibition of liquor sales in the entire village of Argyle.

In 1908, Partridge sold the hall, which had been enlarged with another wing to accommodate the growing audiences, to the local chapter of the Modern Woodmen of America. Like the previous owner, the Woodmen continued to lease the hall for social functions in addition to using it for their own activities. Several Argyle residents can remember going to the hall for roller skating, graduation proms, lodge meetings, lectures, and even basketball games. In 1920 the hall took the name of Star Theatre, the appellation by which it is known today. For another two decades the building was the social center of town, this time adding the new entertainment form of motion pictures: six- and seven-reel silents and 'talkies' featured for the then considerable price of 25 cents.⁶

Finally, in 1945, age caught up with the Star Theatre and it fell into disuse. Until recently only a hatchery operation occupied the building. At this writing, however, members of the Argyle community have begun to restore the hall for use as a summer stock theatre. If these plans are successful, the Star Theatre may once again play its part in the community.⁷

Architecture. With its varying lengths of clapboard siding, handsome bell-shaped fascia, wood-frame storefront, wood segmental-arch window frames, and original 6/6 sash, the Star Theatre in Argyle is a prime example of vernacular commercial construction of the latter nineteenth century. Standing in isolation one block from the business district, the building has been unaffected by commercial development and alterations, and with minimal effort will be restored to its post-1881 appearance and usage. As part of the limited architectural resources of the village, the building is a valuable complement to the extant frame vernacular residences of the same era, and an instructive contrast to the later, more elaborate masonry commercial styles nearby.

9. Major Bibliographical References

C. W. Butterfield, History of La Fayette County, Wisconsin, Chicago (1881)
 Argyle Atlas
 Monroe Evening Times

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 0.2
 Quadrangle name Argyle, Wis. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>265160</u>	<u>4731260</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Parts of Lots 3 and 4 of Block 8 of the plat of the Village of Argyle, Wisconsin

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Terry L. Shoptaugh, Historian, Historic Preservation Division
 organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date June 8, 1980
 street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-3390
 city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

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

Richard Menn

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 8/13/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<i>W. Ray Luce</i>	date <u>11/7/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <i>Jane Hunt McClelland</i>	date <u>11-6-80</u>
Chief of Registration	

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

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



Star Theatre, Argyle, Wisconsin

Continuation sheet

Item number 8, 11

Page 1

8. Significance

Footnotes

1. C. W. Butterfield, History of La Fayette County, p. 648.
2. Ibid.
3. A brief biographical sketch of Partridge appears in Butterfield, pp, 782-783. According to the United States Census schedules, Partridge had been living in Argyle since at least 1860. Papers found in the Star Theatre indicate that among other carpentry work, Partridge constructed coffins.
4. Argyle Atlas, Dec. 18, 1886. An account of social activities that were held at the hall is Dorothy M. Glasz, "The Star Theatre," published in the Monroe Evening Times, March 18, 1980. A copy of this account is filed with this office.
5. Glasz; Argyle Atlas, April 7, 1885.
6. Mrs. Glasz, in the course of researching the Star Theatre, interviewed several members of the Argyle community; the account of activities held in the building in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s is drawn from these reminiscences, copies of which are filed with this office.
7. Ibid. See also the Monroe Evening Times, March 18, 1980.

11. Form Prepared By

Diane H. Filipowicz, Architectural Historian, Historic Preservation Division	June 19, 1980
State Historical Society of Wisconsin	608/262-2970
816 State Street	Wisconsin 53706
Madison	

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

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

STAR THEATRE, Argyle, Lafayette County, Wisconsin
Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

10. Geographical Data:

Revised verbal boundary description:

Part of Lots 3 and 4 in Block 8 of the Village of Argyle, according to the recorded plat thereof, described as follows:-

beginning at the NE corner of said Lot 4,
thence West 74 feet,
thence South 80 feet,
thence East 74 feet, and
thence North 80 feet to the said place of beginning.

in
Lafayette County, Wisconsin

Submitted by
Michael R. Matucheski
Preservation Assistant
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706
608/262-2970
10-30-80