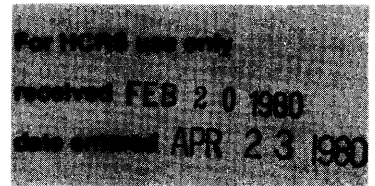


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Criterion Theatre

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 35 Cottage Street _____ not for publication

city, town Bar Harbor _____ vicinity of congressional district Second

state Maine code 23 county Hancock code 009

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. James Johnson

street & number 7 Wayman Lane

city, town Bar Harbor, _____ vicinity of state Maine 04609

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hancock County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Ellsworth, _____ state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state _____

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 Criterion Theatre of 1932 in Bar Harbor is a rectangular building 85 feet wide and 154 feet deep. The front section, housing two shops and the theatre entrance and lobby, is one story in height while the rear portion, containing the 77 X 100 foot auditorium is two stories in height. Construction is steel and stone with the floor laid in concrete except for the rear wall which is of brick.

The street facade, which is contiguous with buildings on either side, contains the theatre marquee in Art Deco style, centrally located, with a shop front on either side. These shop fronts originally featured Art Deco styling as well in the upper sections of their display windows but this has since disappeared.

The theatre entrance consists of a 20 foot wide corridor running 20 feet into a lobby the full width of the building, behind which is the auditorium. The auditorium contains 784 seats on the floor and 132 seats in a single balcony divided into 9 loges which are separated by a red plush velvet curtain from a corridor behind.

Decoration throughout the lobby and auditorium is in the Art Deco style, designed by D. H. Pickering of Boston. Seats, curtains and draperies, carpets, and ceiling design were furnished by National Theatre Supply Company to specifications by Pickering. A special feature is the raw silk decorative wall panels in the auditorium. The lobby and foyer are surrounded by a large plaster cornice and the lighting throughout is in the Art Deco mode.

The backstage area is 70 feet high, 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep. It houses all equipment necessary for theatrical productions including travellers, tormentors and two original vaudeville backdrops behind the motion picture screen. There are six dressing rooms.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1932 **Builder/Architect** Bunker and Savage, Augusta, Maine

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Criterion Theatre in Bar Harbor is one of only two Art Deco movie theatres extant in Maine, the other being the State Theatre in Portland. In its day an avant-garde style, one might wonder at the appearance of Art Deco in Bar Harbor until one remembers that in 1932 this community was at its height as a summer playground of the very rich. Attuned to the latest fashions, they were captivated by the new designs which emanated from the "Exposition des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Moderne" held in Paris in 1925. The attempt to achieve modernity by uniting the decorative arts and industry, and the resulting emphasis on geometric patterns in design, proved immensely popular. In America it diffused a sentiment that modernity could be achieved by means of decoration.

Most of the typical Art Deco themes are present in the Criterion Theatre such as the emphasis on the rectilinear with curves playing a secondary role within rigid patterns. Common motifs appearing include fluting, reeding, chevrons, zig-zags and various frets. Typically, highly emphatic polychromatic effects are everywhere present.

The Criterion Theatre opened on Monday, June 6, 1932, with two performances combining movies and vaudeville to a capacity, standing room only, audience totalling over 2,000. Originally there was a change of shows four times a week including a regular picture, short subjects and an orchestra with five acts of first class R.K.O. vaudeville. There were three shows a day except Sunday. Movies are still shown at the Criterion during the summer season.

This rare and almost totally unaltered Art Deco movie palace deserves recognition as an example of its style and because of its place in the social evolution of this remarkable summer resort.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Battersby, Martin, The Decorative Thirties. New York, 1971.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property 1/2

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Bar Harbor

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A

1	9	5	6	3	2	2	0	4	9	1	5	2	7	0
Zone		Easting				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

Assessors Map 3, Block 3, Lot 23

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 Frank A. Beard, Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January, 1980

street & number 242 State Street telephone 207/289-2133

city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

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 Earle S. Shellfworth

title SHPO date 9/14/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Bruce Van Buren</u>	date <u>9/23/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Kathick Andrews</u>	date <u>4/16/80</u>
Chief of Registration	