

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Holly Theatre

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 69 West Main Street

city, town Dahlonega

() vicinity of

county Lumpkin code GA 187

state Georgia code GA zip code 30533

() not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Richard Luce
Signature of certifying official

1-23-02
Date

W. Ray Luce
Division Director and
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Richard Luce 2/21/02
- determined eligible for the National Register _____
- determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- removed from the National Register _____
- other, explain: _____
- see continuation sheet _____

JR
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater/Cinema/Movie Theater/Playhouse

Current Functions:

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater/Cinema/Movie Theater/Playhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Moderne

Materials:

foundation	Brick
walls	STONE/Marble, Brick
roof	Concrete
other	Metal

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Holly Theatre was constructed in 1948 just outside the downtown commercial core of Dahlonega. In the 1930s, Mr. and Mrs. Randall Holly Brannon of Roswell traveled a circuit in north Georgia with a portable projector showing movies in small towns such as Dahlonega. By 1942, the volume of patrons caused the Brannons to purchase the Price building on the town square and convert it into a movie house. In 1946, the Brannons purchased a lot on Main Street to build a movie house. Designed and built by architect G.R. Vinson, the Holly Theatre was built in the Art Moderne style (photograph 1). The front facade below the marquee is faced with polished Georgia marble topped by two horizontal bands that continue the lines of the marquee. The marquee extends over the sidewalk and is surmounted with freestanding letters that read "HOLLY." The second story of the front facade is faced with unpolished marble (photograph 2). The main entrance opens into a small lobby with stairs to the balcony on the right and the main floor entrance to the left. The lobby floor is covered with nonhistoric marble tiles featuring the names of patrons who supported the recent revitalization of the theater (photograph 4). The main floor of the theater has seating on a sloped concrete floor. The stage in front has been expanded to accommodate live performances (photograph 7). The overhanging balcony and projection booth are at the rear (photograph 9). The lower walls and balcony rail of the theater are stuccoed while the upper walls are exposed brick (photographs 6-9). The walls were originally hung with the same fabric as the stage curtain. The interior is simply designed with few embellishments. Curved-back wooden seats on the main floor are original (photograph 9), as are the Art Moderne-style wall sconces along the side and rear walls. The stage curtain (photograph 6) provides dramatic effect in the otherwise simple decor. The entrance historically associated with African-American patrons still exists to the left of the main entrance. Just inside the door are the African-American ticket booth and the stairs leading to the balcony (photograph 5). Although no longer in existence, there was a wall dividing the balcony into white and African-American seating. The building has a full daylight basement and is constructed of reinforced concrete and masonry. There is no landscaping as the building occupies a majority of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

lot on which it sits.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Entertainment/Recreation
Social History and Ethnic Heritage/Black

Period of Significance:

1948

Significant Dates:

1948-Construction of the theater

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

G.R. Vinson-Architect and builder

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Holly Theatre was constructed in 1948 and remains the only movie theater in Lumpkin County. The theater is significant in the area of architecture as a good and intact example of a small town movie theater built in the Art Moderne style. Character-defining exterior features of the style include the geometric form of the building, the smooth surfaces of the front facade, belt courses, vertical emphasis, and the flat roofline. The interior includes the original curved-back wooden theater seats, overhanging balcony, stage curtain and fabric-covered walls, and Art Moderne wall sconces. It is significant in the area of entertainment/recreation as a good and intact example of a one-screen theater built for a small town in Georgia and locally as Dahlonega's only theater. The theater is also significant in the area of social history and ethnic heritage/Black for its association with segregation and African-American history in Dahlonega. The Holly Theatre is the only remaining landmark community building that once served as a joint public gathering place for both the white and black communities in Dahlonega. Separate entrances and the formerly separated balcony seating areas reflect the segregation of such public places.

National Register Criteria

The Holly Theatre is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for its role as the only theater to serve Dahlonega and the surrounding communities and under Criterion C as a good and intact example of a movie theater constructed in the Art Moderne style in a small Georgia town.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance represents the period in which the theater was constructed.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The theater is the one contributing resource on the property. There are no noncontributing resources on the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

****NOTE: The following history was compiled by Isabella T. Lynn, member, Friends of the Holly and Jorene Martin, Preservation Planner, April, 2000. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

The "Golden Age" of movies came to Dahlonega in the mid-1930s when Mr. and Mrs. Randall Holly Brannon of Roswell, Georgia traveled a circuit around North Georgia with a portable projector. These Saturday night movies, shown in the old high school auditorium, were an important social event that brought the entire community together. In 1939, the volume of patrons at these films encouraged the Brannons to purchase an old store on the downtown square and convert it into a small movie house. The first Holly Theatre, located in the Price Building, built, c. 1897, showed movies Monday through Saturday. The new theater featured new equipment and cool and warm air circulation. The first film shown on April 17, 1939, was "Stagecoach" starring John Wayne. The Holly offered a new movie every weekend at an admission price of 10 to 25 cents. In 1943, the Holly Theatre closed temporarily due to a fire which claimed the adjoining building.

By 1946, the Brannons realized that Dahlonega needed a new movie house to serve the community. They purchased a lot on West Main Street, hired architect/builder G.R. Vinson, C.E., of Atlanta, and began construction on what was to be a thoroughly modern movie house. Due to the continuing effects of World War II, construction of the theater was abruptly halted by the Office of the Housing Expediter, a Federal authority mandated to control all private construction in order to preserve the supply of building materials. Mr. Brannon had to receive permission from the War Department to use steel in the building by proving the building was necessary to the community and that the delay or refusal would send him into bankruptcy. Permission to resume the work was not granted until December, 1947.

When the new Holly Theatre had its grand opening on July 12, 1948, it did not disappoint. The capacity crowd of 600 was treated to a screening of "The Bride Goes Wild" starring June Allyson. The Brannons had given Dahlonega the promised thoroughly modern movie house.

For thirty years, 1948-1978, the Holly was a focal point of the community's social life. Children, young people, and family groups went to the movies. It was historically and continues to be the only movie theater in Dahlonega. It also served as the only theater in surrounding Dawson, White, and Union Counties and people came from Habersham and Hall Counties as well. It was the popularity of television that brought the "Golden Age" of movies to an end. By 1978, the operation of the Holly Theatre was no longer profitable. For a time after its closing the building was rented for brief periods for a variety of uses, but lack of maintenance began to take its toll.

A non-profit organization formed to buy the property, rehabilitate the building, and return the Holly to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

its role as the center of the community's social life. The widowed Mrs. Brannon agreed to sell the Holly Theatre to the Holly Theatre Community Center, Inc. in 1992. She supported the group through its organizing and initial fund-raising efforts before the formal sale. Since her death, other members of the Brannon family have continued to give encouragement, donating memorabilia and a collection of Mr. Brannon's business papers.

Active use of the facility began during the early phases of the rehabilitation project, some programs mounted specifically as fund-raisers for the Holly. Today the theater is been used for traveling theatrical productions, college productions, and local school programs.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Amerson, Anne Dismukes. "Dahlongega's Holly Theatre," North Georgia Journal. Spring, 2000.

Lynn, Isabella T. and Jorene Martin. Historic Property Information Form. July, 1996. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. With Supplemental Information.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued
date issued:
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.10 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 776632 Northing 3825044

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is the current legal boundary and is indicated on the attached map with a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the proposed nomination includes the property historically associated with the building including the alley on the east side of the building and the portion of the sidewalk over which the marquee extends.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Holly L. Anderson, National Register Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** October 26, 2001

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

name/title Jorene Martin, Preservation Planner and Isabella T. Lynn
organization Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center and Member, Friends of the Holly
street and number P.O. Box 1720
city or town Gainesville **state** Georgia **zip code** 30503
telephone (770)538-2626

- () consultant
- (X) regional development center preservation planner
- (X) other: Member, Friends of the Holly

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs



Name of Property: Holly Theatre
City or Vicinity: Dahlonega
County: Lumpkin
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: April, 2001

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 10: Front facade; photographer facing southeast.
- 2 of 10: Front facade and marquee; photographer facing south.
- 3 of 10: West facade and rear facade; photographer facing north.
- 4 of 10: Lobby; photographer facing southeast.
- 5 of 10: African-American ticket booth and balcony stairs; photographer facing southeast.
- 6 of 10: Main floor and stage curtain; photographer facing southeast.
- 7 of 10: Main floor and stage: photographer facing southeast.
- 8 of 10: Main floor and stage; photographer facing southeast.
- 9 of 10: Main floor seating and balcony; photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 10: Front facade; photographer facing southeast.



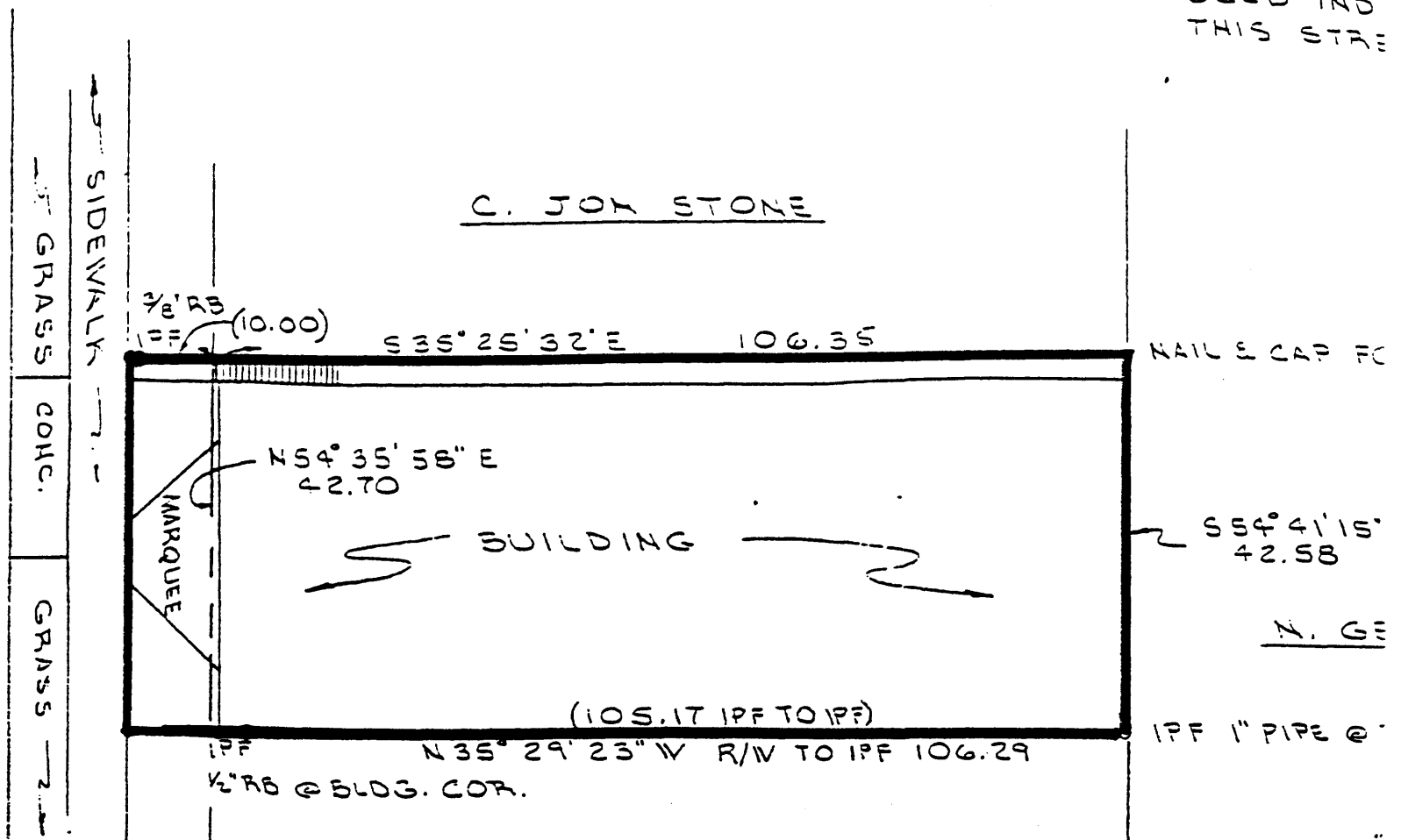
Holly Theatre
Dahlonega, Lumpkin County, Georgia
Lumpkin County Tax Map D-11, City of Dahlonega
National Register Boundary: **————**
Scale: 1" = 100'
North: ↑

Holly Theatre
 Dahlonega, Lumpkin County, Georgia
 Site Plan
 National Register Boundary: 
 Scale: 1" = 20"
 North: 

220 HERZOG, NO
 IS EXTENDED TO

RIGHT OF
 VERIFIED
 90' BUT A
 PB 11 P 22
 SIDEWALK
 DEED IN
 THIS STR

C. JON STONE



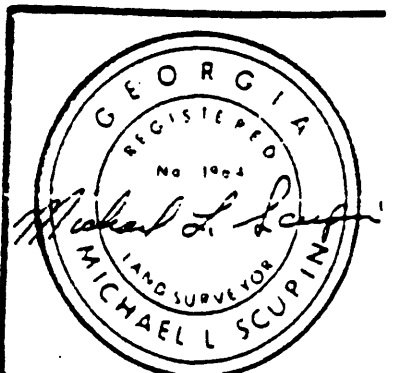
C. JON STONE

RIGHT OF WAY AS SHOWN ON PLAT
 BY J. C. BARNES & RECORDED WITH
 DEED TO BRAKON PROPERTY

**(I HAVE CONSULTED THE HUD-FIA FLOOD HAZARD
 MAP, AND THE PROPERTY SHOWN HEREON IS NOT
 LOCATED IN A DESIGNATED FLOOD HAZARD AREA**

**THIS MAP OR PLAT HAS BEEN CALCULATED FOR CLOSURE AND
 IS FOUND TO BE ACCURATE WITHIN ONE FOOT OR
 5/8 OF AN INCH.**

122.6 FT. TO
 R/W CHURCH ST.

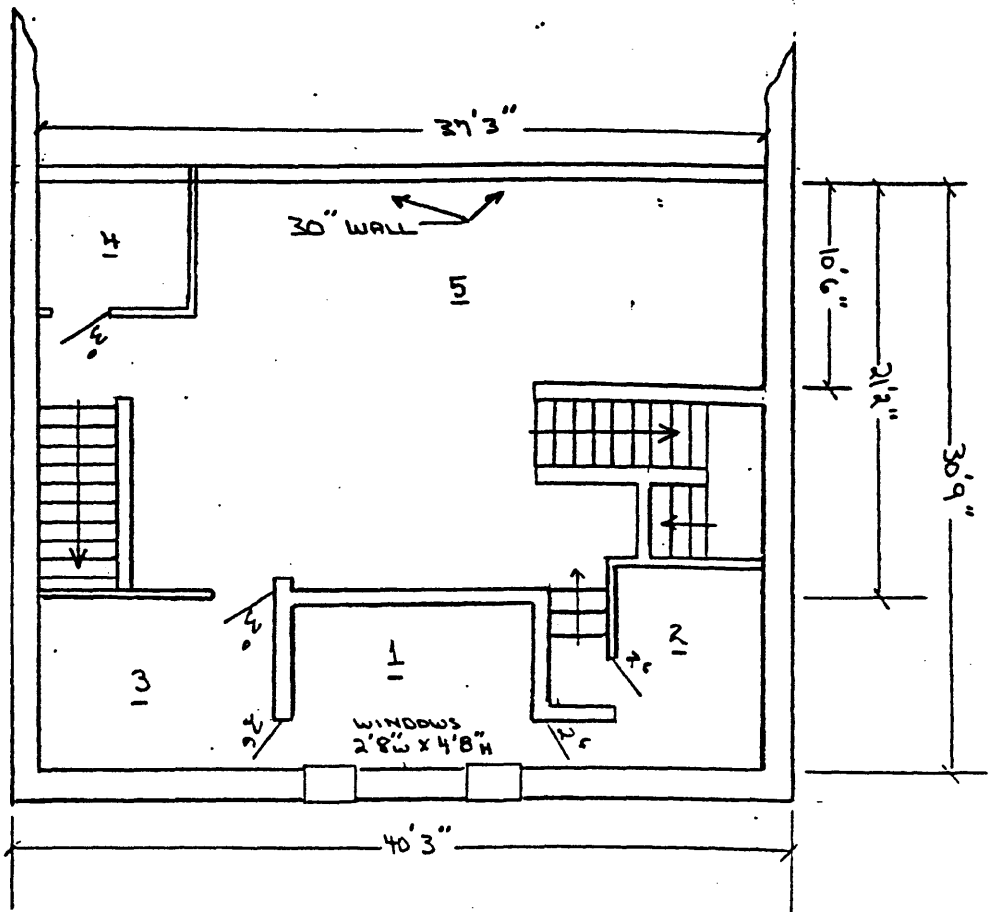


HOLLY THEATER BALCONY

- 1. PROTECTION ROOM
- 2. MEN'S RESTROOM
- 3. STORAGE
- 4. STAGE LIGHTING CONTROL ROOM
- 5. SEATING

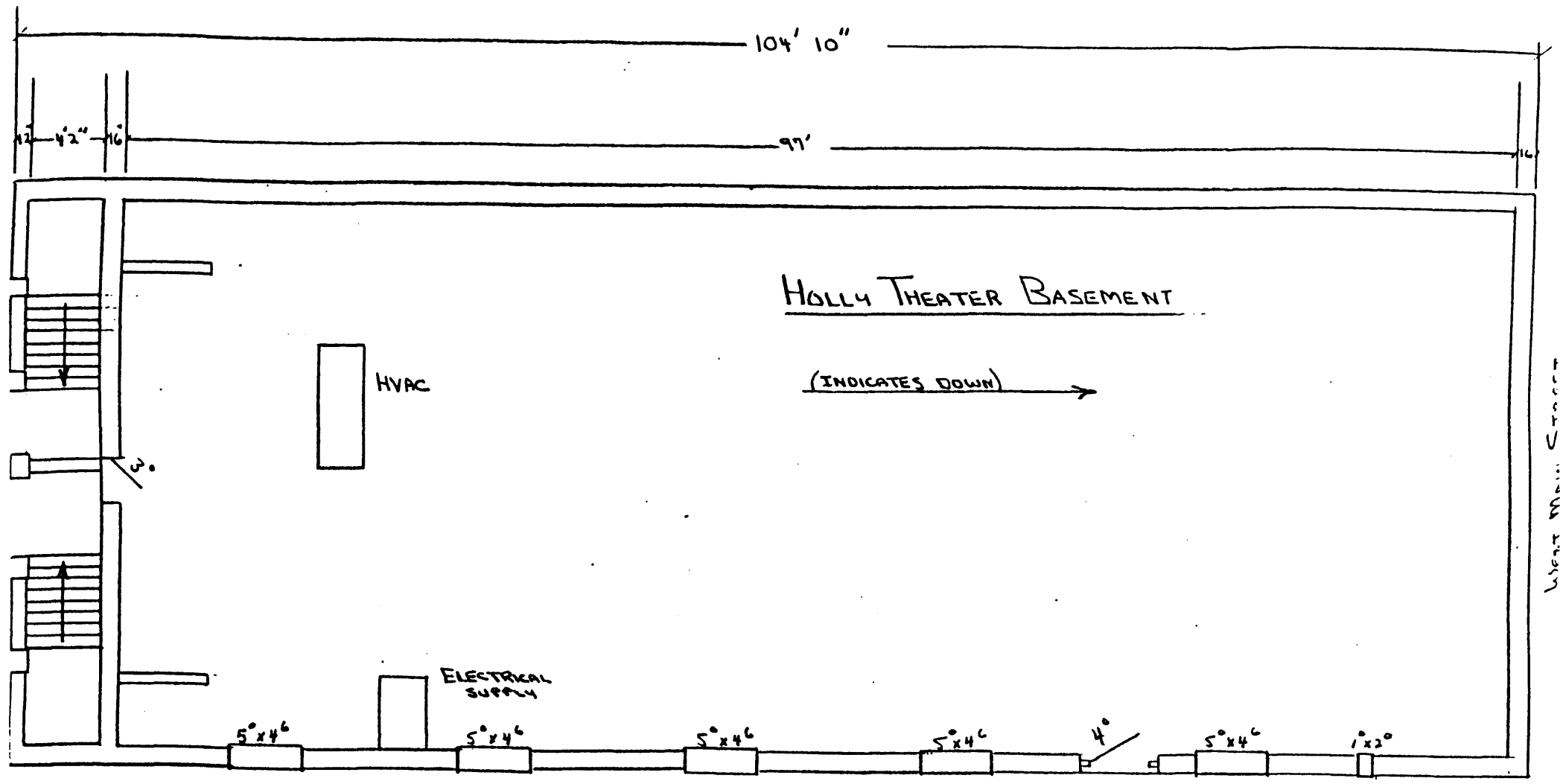
(INDICATES DOWN) →

(MAIN FLOOR)



WEST MAIN STREET

Holly Theatre
Dahlonega, Lumpkin County, Georgia
Floor Plan-Balcony
Scale: See dimensions on plan
North: ↖



Holly Theatre
 Dahlonega, Lumpkin County, Georgia
 Floor Plan-Basement
 Scale: See dimensions on plan
 North: ↙