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NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8/86)  
Utah Word Processor Format (02731)  
(Approved 10/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

AUG 16 1989  
NATIONAL REGISTER

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. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name CASINO THEATRE  
other names/site number Star Theater

2. Location

street & number 78 South Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Gunnison N/A vicinity  
state Utah code UT county Sanpete code 039 zip code 84634

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> objects
			<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register -0-

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

*W. S. M. A.*

Signature of certifying official  
Utah State Historical Society

August 2, 1989  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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 and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

*Beth Boland*

9/22/89

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register. \_\_\_ See continuation sheet

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.

\_\_\_ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater

RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)Materials  
(enter categories from instructions)

<u>LATE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH</u>	foundation	<u>concrete</u>
<u>CENTURY REVIVALS: Beaux Arts</u>	walls	<u>brick</u>
		<u>stucco</u>
	roof	<u>unknown</u>
	other	<u>other: ornamental plaster</u>

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Casino Theatre, constructed in 1912, is a two-story Beaux Arts style two-part commercial block. Minor modifications have been made to the interior and the facade, particularly the storefront, but the building retains its architectural integrity overall.

The theatre is a rectangular building oriented with its narrow end facing Main Street. It is abutted on either side by two-story commercial buildings. It has a parapet roof that slopes toward the rear. The side and rear elevations are simple brick walls devoid of ornamentation. The symmetrical facade is elaborately decorated with Beaux Arts style features. These include large fluted columns supporting arched pediments, a heavy cornice decorated with modillions and dentils, and floriation and bas-relief cherubs. There is a large round arch over the central entrance flanked by round arched windows on the second story.

The building has a deeply recessed central entrance flanked by small commercial spaces on either side, and on the interior there is a large auditorium with a stage on the main floor and a four-room apartment and projection room in the front section of the second story (see floor plan, figure 1). Access to the upstairs is by way of an enclosed stairway in the adjacent building on the south. There is also a ladder well providing access to the projection room from the main floor. An addition to the rear was made in 1918-19 to expand the stage area. Dressing rooms were constructed in a basement area under the stage at that time.

Additions and alterations to the facade include the removal of two winged Victories over the second story windows (see 1921 photograph), partial enclosure of the recessed entrance, alteration of the storefronts on either side of the entrance, and the removal of urns from the parapet and other minor decorative features on the facade. Most of these changes were probably made in 1936, when the theatre was remodeled. At that time the restrooms were added and the seating was replaced. Other minor changes have been made to the theatre over the years, but nothing substantial.

(doc 04641)

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:      nationally      statewide   X   locally

Applicable National Register Criteria   X   A      B   X   C      D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)      A      B      C      D      E      F      G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>Architecture</u>	<u>1912-1936</u>	<u>1912, 1915</u>
<u>Entertainment/Recreation</u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>1918-19; 1936</u>
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown/unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Constructed in 1912, the Casino Theatre is locally significant as the best example of "high style" architecture in Gunnison and as the first and only theatre constructed in the town. It is the only example of the Beaux Arts style in the town, whose Main Street consists primarily of modestly styled commercial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The theatre was used for both movies and live productions, serving for decades as the principal center of commercial entertainment in this small southern Utah community.

In June 1912, Sims M. Duggins acquired property on Gunnison's Main Street with the purpose of erecting an "opera house." Razing of the old adobe building on that lot in October 1912 allowed the construction of the theatre to begin. Though not fully completed, the theatre opened for business on January 13, 1913.<sup>1</sup> Improvements were made to the building over the next several months, including the installation of chandeliers and other lighting on the interior and the addition of an ornamental band of rosettes at window-top height on the exterior. The local newspaper noted that "Manager Duggins . . . is determined to spare no expense in making the Casino one of the most attractive amusement halls outside Salt Lake City."<sup>2</sup> Still lacking at that time, however, were the columns and statuary on the facade and stage facilities on the interior. The "elaborate ornamental front" was added in July 1915,<sup>3</sup> and a rear addition was built c. 1918-19, expanding the stage area for live performances. At that same time a basement was excavated under the stage to accommodate dressing rooms.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to its primary purpose as a theatre, the building was also designed to accommodate commercial and residential uses (see figure 1). Two small commercial spaces were located on either side of the central, recessed entrance of the theatre. These housed a variety of businesses over the years, including a

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barber shop, grocery store, confectionery, brokerage office and millinery shop. An apartment was located on the second floor at the front of the building. Sims Duggins and his wife, Emily, lived there until her death in 1917. He continued to live there until his death in 1928. His second wife, Lydia, whom he married in 1918, lived in the apartment through the late 1930s, when she moved to California. The only other known occupant of the apartment was Miss Lu Nielsen, manager of the theatre in 1940-41.

S.M. Duggins was an active businessman and promoter in the Gunnison area. He moved to Gunnison in 1911 at the age of 50 and immediately became involved in establishing an electric generating plant for the town. He was manager of that operation for a time. In addition to owning and operating the theatre, Duggins also owned the Gunnison Co-op (located next to the theatre), Casino Motors, and an auto garage and service station.<sup>5</sup>

The Casino Theatre was the first and only theatre built in Gunnison, a central Utah farm town with a population of about 1,300 during the early twentieth century. There was an opera house in the town for a short time in the turn-of-the-century period, but it apparently closed down about the time the theatre opened.<sup>6</sup> The Casino Theatre has been used primarily for movies during its eight decades of operation, though live performances were an important attraction as well, especially during the years following the the 1918-19 stage addition. The Duggins family owned the building until the 1940s but managed the theatre only until the mid-1930s. It was managed by Russell Anderson from 1934-36, C.E. Huish from 1936-c.1940, and Lu Nielsen 1940-41. Huish, who operated a number of theatres throughout Utah, made a number of changes to the building, as described in the local newspaper as follows.

Approximately \$5000 will be expended in completely remodeling the Casino, according to Mr. Huish. It is planned to change the front of the building to be in keeping with a modernized show house. The foyer is also to be changed and made into an attractive entrance, the styling to be equal to many of the houses in larger cities.

Within the interior of the building many changes are to be made. The stage settings that have been used are to be discarded and draperies are to be substituted. The orchestra pit is being changed to allow more room and the old chairs throughout the building will be replaced with new seats of the velour type. Rest rooms for women and men are to be installed at vantage points, and both will be modern and convenient.

Mr. Huish announced that he would install a wide range sound of Western Electric type, which is proclaimed the

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best operating in Southern Utah.

The name of the theatre is to be changed to "Star Theatre," and in front of the building will be a large neon sign.<sup>7</sup>

Because of the physical alterations to the building and the change in name that took place in 1936, that date is used as the ending date for the period of significance.

The theatre was operated by Cyrill E. Andersen and his family from 1941 until 1974. Mr. Andersen continued full-week operation of the movie business until the mid-1950s. After that time the movie operation was reduced to three or four nights a week. After the death of Mr. Andersen, the theatre was closed down completely for some time. In April 1974 the Andersen children sold the theatre to Max Curtis of Aurora, Utah. The Curtises opened with part-week movie schedules, which they maintained until selling the theatre to Ernest M. and Dawn S. Larson in December, 1981. The Larsons have tried full-week movie scheduling but now run it only three nights per week.

The Casino Theatre is one of a number of distinctively styled theatres constructed in Utah cities during the 1910s and '20s. Though the statewide context on theatres is not fully developed, field observations indicate that theatres were usually among the most elaborate examples of architecture in their communities. This is true for small towns like Gunnison as well as large cities. Examples include the Empress Theatre in Magna (1917, National Register 1985), the Egyptian Theatre in Ogden (1924, Natl. Reg. 1978), and the Orpheum (1905, determined eligible 1982) and Capitol (1912-13, National Register 1976) theatres in Salt Lake City.

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<sup>1</sup>The Gunnison Gazette, January 10, 1913, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., May 2, 1913, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., July 23, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>The construction date of the rear addition is based on mortgages taken out in November 1918 (\$10,500) and June 1919 (\$5,500). It is also verified by Paul Julius Duggins, grandson of Sims M. Duggins, who recalls watching the construction as a child of 5 or 6 years old. He was born in 1913.

<sup>5</sup>"Prominent Citizen Dies Following Brief Illness," Gunnison Valley News, January 5, 1928, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>A Mr. Johansen built a "house for entertainment" in Gunnison in 1896. See These Our Fathers: A Centennial History of Sanpete County, 1849-1947 (Sanpete County, Utah: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1947), p. 158. It was apparently the same facility that was listed as an opera house in Utah State Gazetteer up until 1912-13.

<sup>7</sup>Gunnison Valley News, July 23, 1936, p. 1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Gunnison Gazette, (Gunnison, Utah) 1911-1920s.
Gunnison Valley News, (Gunnison, Utah), 1920s-1970s
These Our Fathers: A Centennial History of Sanpete County, 1849-1947. Sanpete County, Utah: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1947.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): See continuation sheet
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
X recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # UT-76
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
X State Historic preservation office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other
Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 0.21 acres

UTM References

A 1/2 4/2/9/3/4/0 4/3/3/3/9/8/0 B / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
C / / / / / / / / / / / D / / / / / / / / / / /

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning 39 feet 5 inches N of the SE corner of Lot 1 Block 15 Plat A, thense N 47 feet 7 inches, W 144 feet, S 87 feet, E 29 feet, N 39 feet 5 inches, E 1.15 feet to beginning (theatre lot).
Also beg 32 ft. 1 in. N of the SE corner of Lot 1 Blk 15 Plat A Gunnison city Survey; thence N. 6 ft 6 inches, W 33 feet, S 6.5 feet, E 33 feet to beginning (1/2 interest in staircase)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the legal description of the theatre property which has been associated with the building historically.

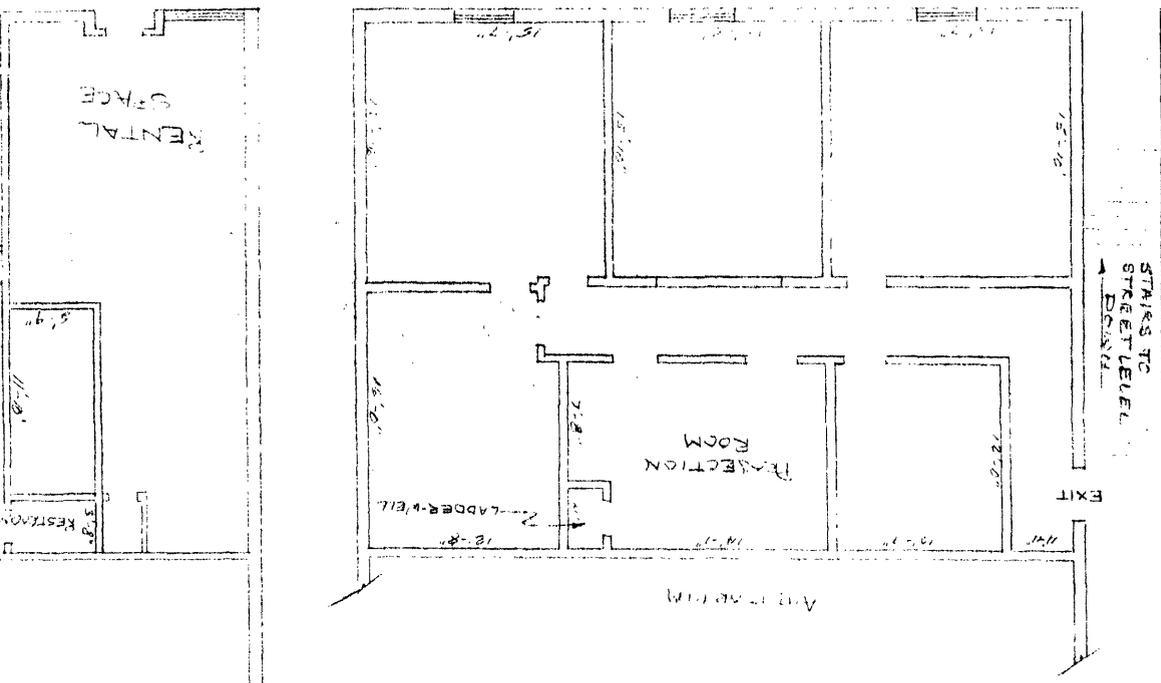
See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dawn S. Larson; Roger Roper/Historic Preservation Coordinator
organization N/A; Utah State Hist. Society date May 1989
street & number ; 300 Rio Grande telephone ; (801) 533-6017
city or town ; Salt Lake City state Utah zip code 84101

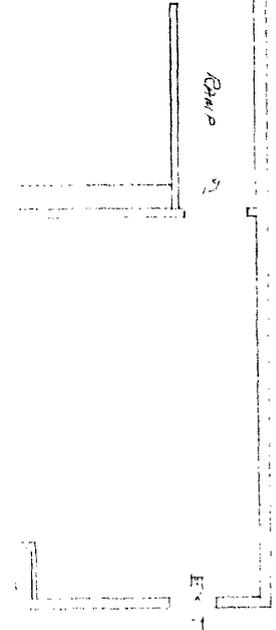


UPPER LEVEL



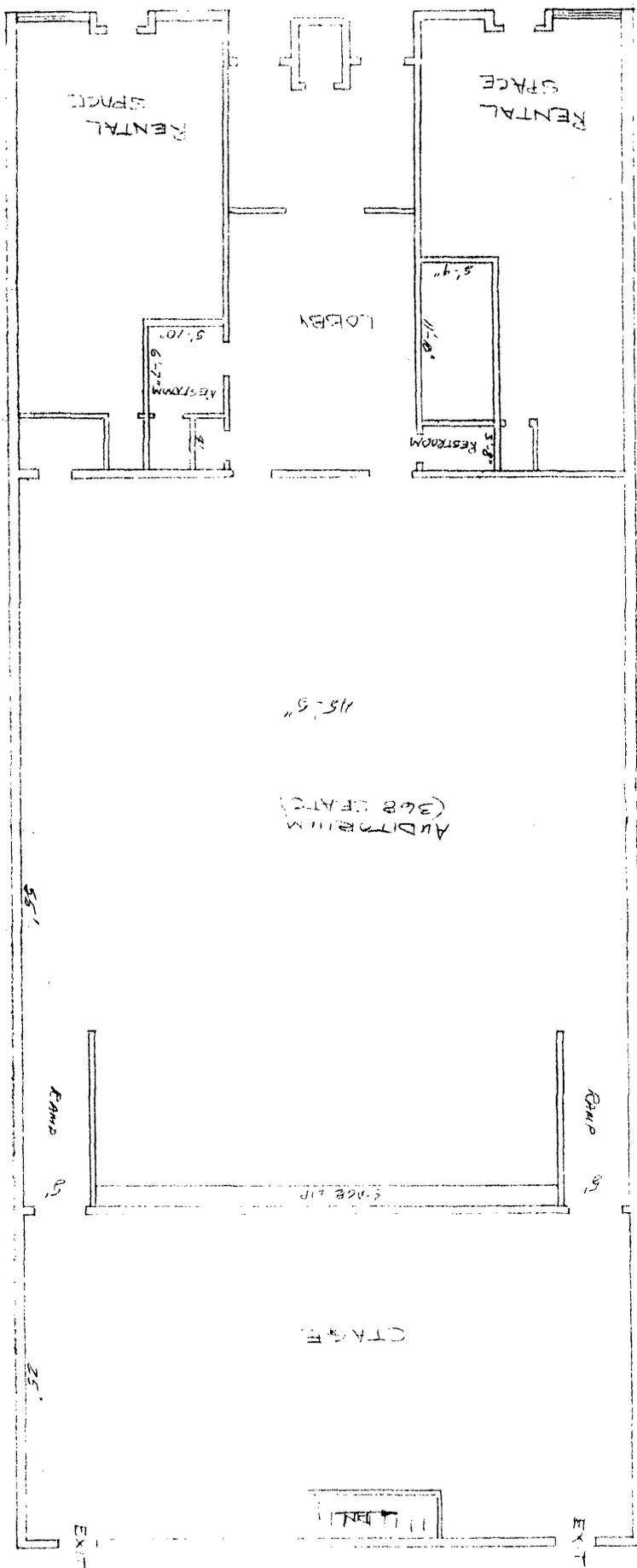
CASINO THEATRE  
 (SINK THEATRE)  
 GUNNISON, Sanpete County, Utah  
 3 of 3

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APPROVED	DATE
	3-31-81
ST	

GROUND LEVEL



CASINO THEATRE  
(STAR THEATRE)  
EDMONT, SOUTHWEST QUARTER, ALBANY  
1 of 3

11  
S  
A  
E

BASEMENT LEVEL

