Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

8a2B Drama: Theaters

UNITED STATES DEPARTN IT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Washington

FOR NPS CLE ONLY RECEIVED

D.C.

	' NOMINATION F		ENTERED CORNE	
SEET	NSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO TYPE ALL ENTRIES C	COMPLETE APPLICABL	LE SECTIONS	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
NAME				
HISTORIC Gol	denrod Showboat			
AND/OR COMMON GOL	denrod Showboat			
LOCATION				
STREET & NUMBER	Showboat Landing, 400	N. Wharf Street		
CITY, TOWN			NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	ICT
St. I	ouis	VICINITY OF		
STATE	-	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Misso		29	St. Louis	510
CLASSIFIC	ATION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	ENT USE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	XOCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
X_STRUCTURE	ВОТН	_WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDEN
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	X_ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	XYES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATIO
		_NO	MILITARY	_OTHER:
OWNER OF	FPROPERTY			
NAME Frank C.	. Pierson, President,	Goldenrod Showboa	t, Inc.	
street & NUMBER Showboat	t Landing, 400 N. What	rf Street		
city, town St. Loui	İs	VICINITY OF	STATE Mis	ssouri
	OF LEGAL DESCR			
COURTHOUSE.				
REGISTRY OF DEEDS,	ETC. Assessor's Office	e, City Hall		
STREET & NUMBER				
	Room 114, 12th a	nd Market Streets		
CITY, TOWN	St. Louis		state Mi	issouri
REPRESEN	TATION IN EXIST	NG SURVEYS		
TITLE				
	ic Sites Survey			
DATE	re pries purvey			
1967		x_FEDERALS	STATECOUNTYLOCAL	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS	Historic Sites Surv	ey, National Park	Service, 1100 L S	Street NW
CITY, TOWN		· /	STATE	



CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

__EXCELLENT

__DETERIORATED

__UNALTERED

_ORIGINAL SITE

XGOOD _FAIR __RUINS
__UNEXPOSED

X_ALTERED

x_moved date_Moving structure last moved 1937

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The <u>Goldenrod</u> Showboat was built in 1909 for W.R. Markle, the most successful showboat owner of the era. It was the largest showboat ever constructed, measuring 200 x 45 feet. The exterior was plain by contemporary standards, but its interior was lavishly decorated. The stage, 40 x 25 feet, faced an auditorium 162 x 40 feet seating 1400 people. Five thousand lights illuminated the theater, and full length mirrors exaggerated the size of the room. Gilt, friezes, red valour draperies and bright carpets helped reinforce the illusion of opulence.

In recent years the <u>Goldenrod</u> has been altered to accommodate smaller dinner theater audiences. About one-third of the original auditorium has been partitioned off to serve as buffet and bar. Seats have been removed from the forward half of the truncated auditorium and replaced with small tables and chairs. Air conditioning and heating ducts have been installed in recent years.

The exterior is less altered. The open porch at the bow has been enclosed to serve as a ticket office. Several years ago it became necessary to place the boat inside a steel barge in order to keep her afloat. The old hull, however, is still intact.

The most serious problem is the constant peeling of the exterior paint, caused by heavy pollution. This is one factor in the present management's decision to consider moving the Goldenrod to another berth below the city in the near future.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	X_THEATER
1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
X_1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		
SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1909 – 1937	BUILDER/ARCH	Pope Dock Co.	, West Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

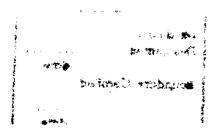
The <u>Goldenrod</u> Showboat was built in 1909 and was the largest, most elaborately decorated showboat ever constructed. The <u>Goldenrod</u> was docked at St. Louis in 1937 and continues to operate as a theater specializing in the traditional melodrama of the late showboating period.

Showboating was a means of bringing dramatic and muscial entertainment to frontier families who lived along the great rivers of Middle America. The institution of showboating flourished during two great eras. The first began in the 1830s and ended with the outbreak of the Civil War. The second era began in the 1870s and continued into the 1920s.

It was during the second great period of showboating that the <u>Goldenrod</u> was built, in 1909. It was the largest showboat ever constructed, and drew large crowds across some fifteen Midwestern States each season.

Showboating reached its peak around 1910, when 21 boats plied the waters of the Mississippi basin. In 1928 there were 14, and 5 in 1938. Motion pictures, increased mobility, and the Great Depression contributed to the decline.

In September 1937, the <u>Goldenrod</u> docked at Locust Street landing in St. Louis. Rapidly diminishing support from smaller towns prompted the owners to remain permanently in the city. Today the <u>Goldenrod</u> continues to specialize in old-time melodrama, entertaining thousands each year.



9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRA IICAL REFERENCES

Donovan, Frank Robert, River Boats of America, 1966.

Graham, Philip, Showboats: The History of an American Institution, 1951

McDermott, John D., "The Goldenrod, Missouri," special report, Historic Sites Survey, 1967.

State Code County Code STATE CODE COUNTY CODE **CORM PREPARED BY** **READ STATE Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service TREET & NUMBER 100 L Street, NW 202-523-5464 TYOR TOWN **TOR TOWN THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE Historic Preservation Officer for the National Register and certify that it has been of valuational Park Service **TORIONAL STATE Historic Preservation Officer for the National Register and certify that it has been of valuational Park Service **TORIONAL STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER **CODE COUNTY CODE COUNTY CODE CERTIFICATION THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE LOCAL VALUE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: NATIONAL STATE AND	LITM DECEDENCES			
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