

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

 SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS
1 NAME

HISTORIC Goldenrod Showboat

AND/OR COMMON Goldenrod Showboat

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Showboat Landing, 400 N. Wharf Street

CITY, TOWN St. Louis

 -- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Missouri

 VICINITY OF
 CODE 29

 COUNTY St. Louis
 CODE 510
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 type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input 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 Frank C. Pierson, President, Goldenrod Showboat, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER Showboat Landing, 400 N. Wharf Street

CITY, TOWN St. Louis

VICINITY OF

STATE Missouri

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Assessor's Office, City Hall

STREET & NUMBER Room 114, 12th and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN St. Louis

STATE Missouri

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic Sites Survey

DATE 1967

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service, 1100 L Street NW

CITY, TOWN Washington

STATE D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE Moving struc-
ture last moved 1937

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Goldenrod 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 Goldenrod has been altered to accomodate 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	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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 1909-1937 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Pope Dock Co., West Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

Showboating was a means of bringing dramatic and musical 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 Goldenrod 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 Goldenrod 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 Goldenrod continues to specialize in old-time melodrama, entertaining thousands each year.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Donevan, 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.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	7 4 5 3 5 0	4 2 7 8 9 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Goldenrod Showboat is not permanently moored. It may in fact be moved from its present site in the near future. The boundaries, therefore are defined by the dimensions of the showboat. For the past 38 years the boat has been moored approximately 800 feet south of Eads Bridge, St. Louis, on the west bank of the Mississippi (see map B labelled "Hydrographic Survey, Mississippi River," and dated Sept. 8 & 9, 1966.)

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

Stephen Lissandrello, Landmarks Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, NW

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Designated: Dec 24, 1967
 Boundary Certified: 2/15/77
 date

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

DATE

2/15/77