

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Palmetto Theater
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 172 East Main Street not for publication _____
city or town Spartanburg vicinity _____
state South Carolina code SC county Spartanburg code 083 zip code 29306

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally.
(____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds _____ 3/5/96
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register _____
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register _____
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- removed from the National Register _____
- other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 4.12.96
Entered in the National Register

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private <input type="checkbox"/> public-local <input type="checkbox"/> public-State <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	Category of Property (Check only one box) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> district <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> object	Number of Resources within Property <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Contributing</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Noncontributing</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>1</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>buildings</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>sites</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>structures</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>1</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> </table>	Contributing	Noncontributing		<u>1</u>	_____	buildings	_____	_____	sites	_____	_____	structures	_____	_____	objects	<u>1</u>	_____	Total
Contributing	Noncontributing																			
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings																		
_____	_____	sites																		
_____	_____	structures																		
_____	_____	objects																		
<u>1</u>	_____	Total																		
Name of related multiple property listing Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) <u>N/A</u>		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>																		

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION & CULTURE Sub: Theater

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) <u>Moderne Movement; Moderne/Art Deco</u> _____ _____	Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation <u>Concrete</u> roof <u>Other: Built-up</u> walls <u>Brick</u> other <u>Stucco</u> _____ _____
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Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

_____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

_____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Significant Dates

1941

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Period of Significance

1941

Architect/Builder

Stillwell, Erle G.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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
- 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

Name of repository: S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>17</u>	<u>415100</u>	<u>3867720</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
_____	See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin E. Meek, AIA
organization Thomas Campbell Meek Architects, Inc. date 11 April 1995
street & number 162 East Main Street telephone (803) 583-1456
city or town Spartanburg state SC zip code 29306

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Dexter Cleveland, Trustee
street & number 156 Magnolia Street telephone (803) 585-7005
city or town Spartanburg state SC zip code 29306

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

Palmetto Theater
name of property
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
county and State

The Palmetto Theater, at 172 East Main Street in Spartanburg, was built in 1940 and is a one-story, rectangular plan brick building with a built-up roof on bow-string trusses and a stepped stucco facade. Exterior features include a large marquee, theater entrance recess and a separate shop storefront decorated in Carrera-glass panels in varying shades of blue. Interior features include double balconies, an entrance lobby and mezzanine restrooms featuring Terrazzo flooring laid in an intricate colorful pattern, decorative wall painting, large Art Deco light fixtures, and an Art Deco plaster screen surround. The ceiling, seating area, and stage have deteriorated due to rain and weather damage from holes in the roof.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Palmetto Theater
name of property
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
county and State

The Palmetto Theater, built in 1940, is significant for its technological advances and as an excellent example of the theater designs of Erle G. Stillwell (1885-1978), a Hendersonville, North Carolina, architect who specialized in movie theaters. Stillwell, one of the principals in the firm Six Associates, Inc., of Asheville, also designed ten other theaters in South Carolina in the 1930s and 1940s--in Anderson, Clinton (the Young Theater), Columbia (the Center, Five Points, Palmetto, and Ritz Theaters), Greenville (the Poinsett Theater), Greenwood, and Sumter).¹

The Palmetto Theater included the latest in design for its patrons, including state-of-the-art projection and sound equipment, air conditioning, and a staggered placement of seats so that no patron's view of the screen would be blocked by the patron sitting in front of them, and hard-of-hearing-aids and other aids for the disabled.²

Erle G. Stillwell was a native of Hannibal, Missouri. He attended the United States Naval Academy, the University of North Carolina, Cornell University, and the University of Pennsylvania. He also studied and traveled in England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Greece. Stillwell began his career as a draftsman in an architectural firm in Atlanta and went into private practice as an architect in 1916. In 1942, after 26 years in private practice, Stillwell became one of the principals of Six Associates, Inc., of Asheville. He was elected president of the firm in 1950. Stillwell became a member of the American Institute of Architects in 1916 and was named a Fellow of the AIA in 1942. He served the North Carolina Chapter of the AIA as Secretary-Treasurer (1917-1921 and 1934-37) and as President (1922-23 and 1942-44) and is the only member of the chapter ever elected to serve second terms in either office.³

¹Spartanburg Herald Journal (Spartanburg, S.C.), 10 August 1941; Six Associates, Asheville, N.C., "Corporate Qualifications," ca. 1940. Other Stillwell-designed theaters in the South ca. 1940 included those in Anniston, Jasper, and Selma, Alabama; Asheville, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Concord, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Goldsboro, Hendersonville, Hickory, High Point, Lenoir, Lexington, Monroe, Raleigh, Salisbury, Shelby, Valdese, Wilson, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Chattanooga, Kingsport, and Knoxville, Tennessee; Lynchburg, Virginia; and Bluefield, West Virginia.

²Spartanburg Herald Journal, 11 August 1941.

³Southern Architect (April 1957), 16.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 7

Palmetto Theater
name of property
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
county and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Spartanburg Herald Journal (Spartanburg, S.C.), 10, 11 August 1941.

Six Associates, Inc., Asheville, N.C., "Corporate Qualifications,"
ca. 1940.

Southern Architect (April 1957).

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 8

Palmetto Theater
name of property
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
county and State

Verbal Boundary Description

All that lot of parcel of land on the northwest corner of East Main Street and North Liberty Street in the City of Spartanburg and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point at the inner edge of the sidewalk at the intersection of North Liberty Street and East Main Street and running thence along the north side of East Main Street S. 75-15 W. 50-07 feet to a point; thence N. 14-45 W. 136 feet to a point at the inner edge of the sidewalk on Dunbar Street; thence N. 75-15 E. 46.15 feet to an iron pin at the intersection of the sidewalk on Dunbar Street and North Liberty Street; thence S. 16-25 E. 136 feet to the point of beginning and being more particularly shown on plat for W.E. Burnett Estate, et al. by H. Stribling dated November 1, 1945 and recorded in Plat Book 14, page 20, R.M.C. Office for Spartanburg County, South Carolina.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property is restricted to the building and its immediate setting.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 9

Palmetto Theater
name of property
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
county and State

The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property:	Palmetto Theater
Location of Property:	172 Main Street, Spartanburg Spartanburg County, S.C.
Name of Photographer:	Martin Meek
Date of Photographs:	February 1995
Location of Negatives:	S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.

1. Front elevation, looking north
2. Interior lobby area, looking south
3. Interior lobby area, looking south
4. Interior seating area, looking north
5. Deco lighting, looking east
6. Rear elevation, looking south
7. Rear elevation, looking south

Historic Photographs of Erle G. Stillwell, Architect:

8. Photo by Barber Photographic, ca. 1955
9. Photo by Barber Photographic, ca. 1955

D U N S A R

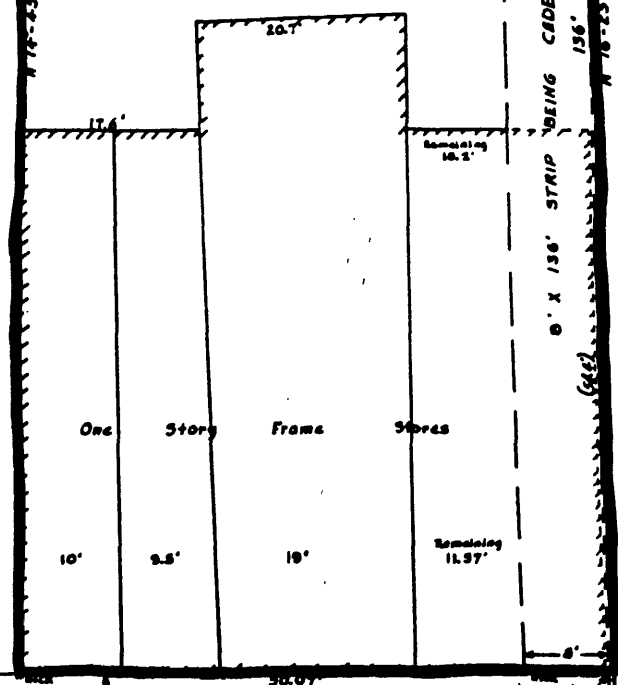
20-

EX PARTE
H.E. BURNETT EST. INC.
AND
T.P. SIMS EST.

PALMETTO
THEATER
[PROPERTY AS SHOWN
ON 1938 PLAT
BEFORE THEATER
WAS BUILT IN
1941]



J. J. C U D D
former Melker Amos Building



N. L I B E R T Y S T.

AUG. SMITH CO. STORE

SURVEY
PROPERTY OF
H.E. BURNETT EST. INC.
AND
T.P. SIMS EST.

CITY OF SPARTANBURG, S.C.
NOV. 1-1928
H. STRIBLING, ENG. & SUR.
SCALE 1 INCH = 10 FEET

E . M A I N

S T

Registered, Certified & Examined May 5th 1938 at 9:42 a.m.