

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 1 1979
DATE ENTERED DEC 6 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Bushy Theatre
AND/OR COMMON

Church of Christ

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Washington and Second
CITY, TOWN

---NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

McAlester
STATE

--- VICINITY OF
CODE

003

COUNTY

CODE

Oklahoma

40

Pittsburg

121

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Church of Christ
STREET & NUMBER

Second and Washington
CITY, TOWN

STATE

McAlester

--- VICINITY OF

OK

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Pittsburg County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN

STATE

McAlester

OK

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey

DATE

1979

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

OK

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This large brick structure with white trim has stood at its location since the 1,2. turn-of-the-century. Very little of the exterior has changed other than the usual patching of the roof and replacement of mortar. The exterior front is organized into three units - two pavilions and a recessed entry way. A string course runs around the attic level, and heavy lintels emphasize the paired windows.

The interior is still striking even though some alterations have been made. There were two lobbies, one at ground level and one at the first balcony level. The upper lobby has been closed off but the lower lobby is much as it was. The original brass light fixture hangs in the center of the room. Several sets of doors led from the lobby into the theater. A delicate fresco is still seen on the ceiling of the lobby and the sloping floor remains. The side rooms off the lower lobby are now used for different functions and no longer have the same character they originally did.

The interior of the theater proper is classical in style, dominated by Ionic themes. Some alterations have been made - the orchestra pit has been covered, the proscenium stage has been made shorter and more narrow, and the ceiling has been lowered to hide the original second, or "Jim Crow," balcony. However, the original features remain beneath the modern alterations. The seats on the orchestra floor have been replaced by pews; the original seats remain in the first balcony. 3.

Outstanding original features of the interior include two boxes with their 4,5. supports, and an ornate molded frieze of foliage motifs accented by small faces. 6. This frieze runs around the perimeter of the lower floor. The boxes are formed of triumphal arches with Ionic columns at each end; a pediment and entablature with a curved parapet enclose the top of each box. The boxes are supported by Ionic columns on each end; the middles are supported by caryatid figures. 7.

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 checked="" 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 1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT R.H. Busby

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Busby Theater was the largest theater between Kansas City and Dallas. All large shows and the great names of the theater stopped here on their tours. De Wolf Hopper, a famous dramatic actor, once said "it is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen; it is hardly equaled...". It stands today almost exactly as it did then.

Colonel R. H. Busby was a general sales agent for the coal department of the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad. He was the builder of the Busby Theater, the Busby Hotel and the Busby Office building. All three of these buildings were easily reached from the others, either by underground tunnels or by walkways. The original cost of the theater was \$10,000 and it seated 1,650 people.

It was used as a theater until 1933 when the Church of Christ purchased the structure for \$2,300. The Church carried out the alterations but tried to save as much of the original appearance as possible. The essential character of the theater remains, and its ornate interior reflects the munificence of the coal boom days.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview, Bill Ballard, McAlester, Oklahoma, March 16, 1979.
 McAlester City Directory 1913; 1916-1917.
 McAlester Golden Anniversary Celebration, pamphlet, published by the City, 1949.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Under 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME McAlester, OK

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5'

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,5 2,4,7,3,0,0 3,8,6,8,9,7,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Diane Everman, Supervised by Dr. Annetta L. Cheek

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Oklahoma Historical Society

March, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Oklahoma State University

(405) 624-5678

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Stillwater

OK

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST

Sally Golden
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

Bill Groome
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

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Shawnee Daily Herald. May 17, 1907. Page 1, column 1-2.

Indian Journal (Eufaula). September 26, 1913. Page 2, column 6.

Cherokee Messenger. June 16, 1905. Page 2, column 2.

Indian-Pioneer Papers. Oklahoma Historical Society. Paul D. Busby Questionnaire.
Vol. 77, Page 350.

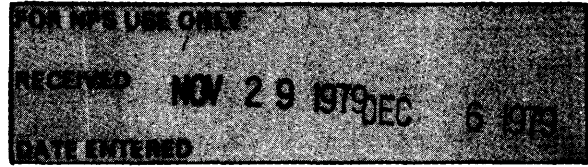
Indian-Pioneer Papers. Oklahoma Historical Society. Isaac Jackson interview.
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CONTINUATION SHEET Busby Theatre ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Legal Description: Lot 1 of Block 319