

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUN 19 1984

date entered JUL 19 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Island Falls Opera House

and or common Pettengill Building

2. Location

street & number Patten Road and Sewall Street N/A not for publication

city, town Island Falls, N/A vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county Aroostook code 003

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 Gregory and Donna Knapp

street & number Route 2

city, town Island Falls, N/A vicinity of state Maine 04747

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Aroostook County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Houlton, state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? N/A yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Island Falls Opera House is a large L-shaped structure, three-and-one-half stories high with a gable roof. Constructed of wood with clapboard siding, the building has a gable roof and granite foundation. The tall double-hung sash have two-over-two lights.

Exterior ornamentation is minimal, consisting chiefly of corner pilasters, cornice returns and a porch with chamfered posts and a spindle-work frieze. On the south, east and west elevations of the main section the gable end contains a tripartite window in a Palladian motif. These windows mark the location of the theater, which fills the upper two stores. On the east and south sides are store fronts with original panelling and plate glass.

On the first floor of the main section is the general store and the entrance hall to the opera house. In the former is wood counters and shelving, while the latter includes a ticket booth. The theater has a stage, rows of seating and a balcony with a projection booth containing equipment dating from the 1920s. The walls are painted with scenic panels and stencilling done in the 1920s.

In the ell behind the main section is the living quarters for the owners of the building. These rooms contain original oak woodwork around the doors and windows. There is also a staircase with an elaborate newell post and a decorative arch enframing the entrance to the parlor.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1894 **Builder/Architect** Levett Peters and Henry Baldwin

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This very large structure is typical of the kind of multi-purpose buildings which used to exist commonly in many of Maine's smaller communities but which have now virtually disappeared. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries traveling entertainment groups, revivalists and speakers appeared regularly in small town "opera houses" or theatres such as the one in this building (which later became a movie house). Also combined in these structures, such as this one, were stores and often a dwelling or two. The Island Falls Opera House is important as a survival which speaks of rural town life a century ago.

Mr. Columbus Lamb Pettengill, a lumberman from Vanceboro moved to Island Falls in 1893. The following year, with his son he built a general store with a hall on the second floor. Within a year or two the residential wing was added. The land was bought from W. W. Sewall, and as was the case with most of Sewall's deeds, it stated that the land would revert to the grantor if any intoxicating beverages were sold on the premises within the next one-hundred years.

The Opera House was the home of all local and travelling entertainments, balls, lectures, and revival meetings. These included the Gale and Hatch Revival Meetings, H. Price Webber's Boston Comedy Company, Gladys Klark, Chautauqua, the Ethel May Shorey Company, Tinker's Orchestra, and even the Bowdoin Glee, Guitar and Mandolin Club.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Nina G. Sawyer, Island Falls, Maine (1872-1972). Portland, 1972.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1/2

Quadrangle name Island Falls

Quadrangle scale 1:625000

UTM References

A

1	1	9
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 Zone Easting

5	5	1	6	5	1	0	1	0
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 Northing

5	1	0	9	1	5	0	1	5	1	0
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B

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 Zone Easting

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 Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 14, Lot 27

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 Frank A. Beard, Historian/Roger G. Reed, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date May, 1984

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

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 *Carol S. Feltman*

title J.H.P.O. date 6/8/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Allores Byers Entered in the National Register date 7/19/84
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration _____