**FORM NO.** 10-300 REV. (9/77)

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 NAME</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIC</td>
<td>Alhambra Theatorium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND/OR COMMON</td>
<td>Alhambra Theatre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 LOCATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STREET &amp; NUMBER</td>
<td>50 Adams Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY, TOWN</td>
<td>Evansville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICINITY OF</td>
<td>Eighth (Joel Deckard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNTY</td>
<td>Vanderburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 CLASSIFICATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
<td>OWNERHIPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING(S)</td>
<td>PRIVATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>BOTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
<td>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECT</td>
<td>IN PROCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEING CONSIDERED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 OWNER OF PROPERTY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>Alan N. Shovers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STREET &amp; NUMBER</td>
<td>305 Union Federal Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY, TOWN</td>
<td>Evansville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.</td>
<td>Vanderburgh County Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STREET &amp; NUMBER</td>
<td>Civic Center Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY, TOWN</td>
<td>Evansville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td>National Register - Determined Eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>26 May 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS</td>
<td>National Register of Historic Places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY, TOWN</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Alhambra Theater, situated at the northeast corner of Parrett Street and Adams Avenue, was built in 1913 by Louis Wallenberger and Henry Heilman. It housed, at that time, a 350 seat theater with cigar and confectionary shops in the front (Adams Avenue elevation).

The building comprises two sections: a facade block two stories high, three bays wide (approximately 50') and one bay deep; and theater extension three bays wide and three bays deep, divided by pilasters. The mass of the facade block was originally balanced by a marquise over the entrance to the theater which has since been removed. The walls of the facade are finished in yellow and brown brick with limestone trim. The brown brick is glazed and is used in the ornamental patterns such as in string courses, horseshoe-arched windows, and the header bond panels over the windows in the central bay. The walls of the theater extension are common brick.

The main elevation was originally divided into three voids on the first floor, a central recessed entrance flanked by shop windows of approximately the same dimensions. The arched glazing has since been removed and the first floor has been sheathed in limestone. The second floor bays contain compound window units, tripartite in the central bay and paired in the two faces of the end bays. The convex hipped roofs in the end bays are currently sheathed in asphalt or asbestos shingles, and the flat areas are presumably built-up roofing.
The Alhambra Theatre represents an important passage in Evansville's history in several regards. First, the building furnishes an important insight into the later work of one of the city's major architects. Next, the theatre presents one of the city's few examples of pre-World War romantic eclecticism. And last, the Alhambra symbolizes the ascendancy of motion picture entertainment in Evansville.

The "Alhambra Theaterium" was dedicated on Saturday afternoon, 27 September 1913, and designed by Frank J. Schlotter. A native of Evansville, Schlotter (1864-1943) began his architectural career in the local office of Reid Brothers. James and Merritt Reid (1851-1943 and 1854-1932, respectively) were nearing the peaks of their professional lives in 1882 when Schlotter joined them at the age of eighteen as an apprentice draftsman. After four years together, the Reids were on their way to San Diego and construction of the Hotel del Coronado, and Schlotter embarked his own career. (In 1896, Schlotter purchased the remains of the Reids's Evansville practice.)

Schlotter was not a stranger to architectural exoticism. The Moorish motifs of the Alhambra recall the horseshoe arches and pepper pot domes of his work from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Schlotter produced some of the most vivid Queen Anne residences in the entire city. Homes in the Riverside district (National Register, 1978) such as 606 S.E. First (1896) or 810 S.E. First (c. 1897) illuminate the origins of Schlotter's eclecticism. The domical belfry of his 1888 Hose House #10 was an even earlier example of Schlotter's fondness for bizarre forms.

The audiences in attendance at the opening of the Alhambra, however, took the theatre's alien look in stride. Movie theatres sought to create a total environment of escape and entertainment, and theatre designers such as John Eberson (1875-1954) developed a specialty in the 1920's by producing an architecture of fantasy and atmosphere.
### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY</th>
<th>less than one acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUADRANGLE NAME</td>
<td>Evansville South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTM REFERENCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 116 4 5 0 2 9 4 4 2 0 1 5 8 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZONE EASTING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 116 7 7 1 1 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E 116 7 7 1 1 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodsell's Enlargement, Block One, western 75 feet of lots 45, 46, 47, 48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### FORM PREPARED BY

**NAME / TITLE**

Laurie R. Hammel, Joan Marchand, and Douglas L. Stern

**ORGANIZATION**

Department of Metropolitan Development

**DATE**

25 May 1979

**STREET & NUMBER**

Rm. 304 Civic Center Complex

**TELEPHONE**

(812)426-5487

**CITY OR TOWN**

Evansville

**STATE**

Indiana

### STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

**THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:**

NATIONAL ___  STATE ___  LOCAL X

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**

Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

**DATE**

10-1-79

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

**DATE**

10-1-79

**ATTEST:**

**KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

**DATE**

9-20-79

**CHIEF OF REGISTRATION**

GPO 921-803
The Alhambra would be built of "buff and dark brown mission brick" along the lines of "a Moorish castle." The roof would be surmounted by two domes in "Arabian style," and the interior would be carried out "in keeping with the Moorish design." The folding seats, pressed metal ceiling, and scounces combined to evoke a sense of faraway places.

The speedy construction of the Alhambra may have set a record. The announcement of Schlotter's plans was made in late March of 1913. One month later, a rendering of the facade was published, and on 25 May 1913 the awarding of the contract for construction was reported. The contractors, Scarborough & Davis, broke ground soon after for the $18,000 building. In late June the newspaper declared that the Alhambra was "rising quickly" and added that the optimistic owners, Louis Wollenberger and Henry Heliman, planned a mid-July opening. Despite its taking another two months to complete, the Alhambra's 120-day course of construction was nevertheless remarkable.
Property: Alhambra Theatre
State: Ind. (Vanderburgh)
Working Number: 8-15-77

TECHNICAL
Photos: 3
Maps: 1

CONTROL
OK 8/16/79
HISTORIAN

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
Despite alterations, main section of theatre persists. Locally significant.
Accept
Brahma
9-17-79

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER
Inventory
Review

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF
Accept
Brahma
9-17-79
BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up
Federal Register Entry
Send-back
Re-submit
Entered
Enterered

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Alhambra Theatre
50 Adams Avenue
Evansville, Indiana
Photographer: Nancy J. Long
Date: 1978
Negative: Dept. of Metro. Development
Facade, facing north
Photo # 1 of 3

AUG 15 1979
Alhambra Theatre
50 Adams Avenue
Evansville, Indiana
Photographer: Douglas Stern
Date: January 1979
Negative: Dept. of Metro. Development
Interior, general view
Photo # 2 of 3

AUG 15 1979
Alhambra Theatre
50 Adams Avenue
Evansville, Indiana
Photographer: Douglas Stern
Date: January 1979
Negative: Dept. of Metro. Development
Detail of theatre seat
Photo # 3 of 3

Vanderburgh Co.
OCT 1 1979

AUG 15 1979
August 13, 1979

Dr. William J. Murtagh
National Register of Historic Places
Heritage Conservation & Recreation Services
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

Please find enclosed a National Register nomination for the Alhambra Theatorium in Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Indiana.

This nomination has been reviewed at several meetings of the Indiana State Professional Consulting Committee, and it is unanimously recommended.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
Joseph D. Cloud
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure
### ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**STATE**  **INDIANA**

**Date Entered**  **OCT 1 1979**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alhambra Theatre</td>
<td>Evansville, Vanderburgh County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCurdy Building (Sears, Roebuck and Company Building)</td>
<td>Evansville, Vanderburgh County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greyhound Bus Terminal</td>
<td>Evansville, Vanderburgh County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Also Notified**

- Honorable Richard G. Lugar
- Honorable Birch Bayh
- Honorable H. Joel Deckard
- State Historic Preservation Officer
  Mr. Joseph D. Cloud
  Director
  Department of Natural Resources
  608 State Office Building
  Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

NR Byers/bjr 10/3/79

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.