

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 Eureka Theatre

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 612 F Street not for publication N/A

city or town Eureka vicinity N/A

state California code CA county Humboldt code 023 zip code 95501

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ 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 ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

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): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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)

- [x] 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.
[x] 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 in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- [] 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.

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1939

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

David, William B., Architect

Moore and Roberts, Contractors

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10			3			5		
2				4			6		

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 Leslie S. Heald, Historic Preservation Consultant; Susie Van Kirk

organization _____ date 5 January 2009

street & number P.O. Box 568 telephone (707) 822-6066

city or town Bayside state CA zip code 95524

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 Eureka Concert and Film Center, DBA Eureka Theatre

street & number P.O. Box 363 telephone (707) 442-2070

city or town Eureka state CA zip code 95502

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.20503.

draft

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Eureka Theatre
Humboldt County, California

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SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The Eureka Theatre is an Art Moderne building of two theater floors, plus a basement and attic, covering a surface area of 14,220 square feet and including flanking, one-story shops. The property is located in Eureka, Humboldt County, California on the west side of F Street between 6th and 7th streets. The property is at the southern terminus of the F Street commercial district which extends northward through Old Town to Humboldt Bay's waterfront. Cubic, flat-roofed with concrete-stucco walls and structurally un-adorned, the building retains a high degree of integrity, retaining an exterior essentially unchanged from its original appearance in 1939. Standing high above the street is a stacked pylon with a 50-foot tall sign, EUREKA, projecting five feet from the building. Below is the outer lobby with a sweeping 50-foot long marquee canopy with a 12-foot sidewalk overhang. The two-sided V-shaped attraction board is the middle element between the vertical sign and the curving, sleek canopy. The outer lobby displays the decorative elements—colored tiles on the floor, wainscot and ticket booth; elaborate central light fixture; lighted display cases; and four sets of double, wood doors with half-circle, metal- framed panes of glass. The Theatre was brilliant and beautiful in blue and red neon light with EUREKA trimmed in a single tube of gold.

EXTERIOR

EAST ELEVATION

The Eureka Theatre's primary elevation is its eastern façade. It is highly embellished with Art Moderne elements that were originally highlighted with neon lights. This elevation consists of three levels; uppermost is a stacked pylon emblazoned with a vertical metal sign spelling out EUREKA; at the second floor level are the walls and windows of the owner's apartment; and on the street level there is a large round recessed space that includes the ticket booth and serves as a sort of outdoor lobby. In addition, there are two small storefronts, located to either side of this main entrance. The overall effect of this elevation is to draw the eye from a distance, with the vertical theatre sign almost pointing the visitor down to the entrance. A view of the pylon from the theatre's roof reveals that it is not the massive, rock-solid structure it appears to be from the streets, but rather an exterior shell resting on an open-work metal base.

The outer lobby has a wide opening to the street, but is recessed to create a circular enclosure with rounded walls on the sides and at the rear, four sets of double doors. The outer lobby features a tile mosaic floor which extends all the way from the sidewalk to the entrances. The curvilinear design in blue, white and red tile emphasizes the round shape of the space. The floor

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is designed with a low slope rising toward the doors. A low wainscot of maroon subway tiles runs along the walls. Two narrow bands of chrome tiles have been set in near the top and bottom of this wainscot. The walls are set with ten glass display cases that display movie posters. There are six cases on the walls of the inner lobby, three on each side, and four more on the sidewalk, two to either side of the lobby. Above the cases, the curved walls of the lobby have three raised plaster bands, further emphasizing the circular space. The ceiling is fitted with an elaborate light fixture which includes a large cylindrical fixture at the center and a flush circular band of lights that continues out to the street and along the underside of the marquee. The central fixture is a flush mounted cylinder of white and red glass surrounded by wide chrome bands. This light is set directly above the theatre's ticket booth. The ticket booth is octagonal in shape. It has a tile base, matching the wainscot of the side walls. The original etched glass panels have been lost, and all the openings are boarded over except for the front window which is currently fitted with Plexiglas. There is a small, rectangular pane of blue glass at the top of this ticket window which lights up when the theatre is open for business. Above the windows, bands of wood create more horizontal lines. The ticket booth is accessed through a flush, wood door on its rear wall.

On either side of the Theatre is a small shop, one located at its northeast corner and identified as 610 F Street. It features a recessed entry, plate glass windows facing the street and on both sides of the entry, aluminum bands around the windows, short walls (originally tiled like the theatre, but now a painted surface) between the windows and the sidewalk, an entry door consisting of a large pane of glass in a wood frame and a mail slot, a transom crossed with horizontal bars, and a row of wood-framed, horizontal windows above the shop's flat roof, also with horizontal wooden bars.

This shop is 13 feet across the front. The upward-sloping entry is recessed five-and-a-half feet from the sidewalk and the wall below the front windows varies in height one to two feet to accommodate the topography. The south front window measure five feet across and the north front, three feet. The transom, which opens, is crossed by two horizontal wooden bars, an arrangement repeated above the flat roof where three continuous bars extend across four, wood-framed, horizontal windows. These windows and the transom can be opened using a long pole to operate the latch mechanism; the windows supported, when open, by little chains.

The shop at the southeast corner, 618 F Street, repeats those identifying features of the northeast corner shop: recessed entry, plate glass windows, large, glass-paned door in a wood frame, aluminum bands around the plate glass windows, transom with horizontal bars, and the row of horizontal windows above the shop's flat roof.

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The recessed entry is level with the sidewalk and contains the exterior apartment door, located on the north wall of the entry, as well as the shop door. Both doors are wood-framed with large panes of glass and below the glass, mail slots. The plate glass display windows, arranged in four angled sections, are all located to the south of the entry. The first window (2 feet) angles from the door, the second (4½ feet) angles to the front window, this third window extends across the front of the shop (8 feet) and the fourth window (5 feet) is in the south wall at the corner of the shop. The shop is 14 feet wide. Two horizontal bars cross the transom; three such bars extend across the four, wood-framed, horizontal windows above the roof. All of these windows opened originally and required a long pole to operate the latch mechanisms.

NORTH ELEVATION

The north elevation of the theatre is largely obscured by a row of storefronts that stretches the entire block of 6th Street (408-426 6th Street). Behind these single store storefronts one can see the large mass of the auditorium. The plain concrete wall surface is relieved by six large recessed panels, which give the effect of a wide cornice above, supported by the simple pilasters that create the recessed spaces. In one of these spaces, double metal fire doors lead from the auditorium's balcony out onto the roof of the adjacent storefronts. Toward the east end of the building, the large auditorium mass gives way to the lowered rooflines above the lobby spaces. While most of the north elevation is painted concrete with visible board forms, the eastern end has been coated with smooth stucco to give it a more refined appearance. The north side of the theatre's pylon is visible on this elevation, but it is described above with the main, eastern elevation.

WEST ELEVATION

The western elevation is largely a tall, unadorned concrete wall, with the board forms clearly visible. Four full length rectangular pilasters, two at the corners and two evenly spaced toward the center alleviate the flat wall surface. A wide concrete chimney is at the center of the wall. A wide projecting band across the top of the wall forms a sort of simple cornice. At the base of the wall, there are two window wells to light the basement as well as a large concrete air intake housing on the south side of the chimney.

SOUTH ELEVATION

The southern façade of the theatre building is largely unadorned. It can be divided into two sections, the long, tall rectangular mass that houses the auditorium, and the shorter, stepped mass

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at the east end which houses the storefronts, lobby, apartment, and office space. Like the west elevation, the main auditorium mass of the south elevation has a flat, wide band at the top of the wall that forms a sort of cornice, then long, rectangular pilasters that divide the remaining wall surface into six recessed compartments. Views of this wall are blocked by buildings on neighboring parcels.

Some decoration has been applied to the southern elevation near its eastern end, where it borders on the property occupied by the Morris Graves Museum. This portion of the building is stepped to create a variety of geometric forms and levels. At the first level there is a plain board formed concrete wall. An abstract mural from the adjacent museum is installed on this surface. A new fire alarm box is located here just west of the mural. Above this single story wall, the building steps back to allow for the deck associated with the apartment. The office can be seen at the west end of the deck and the apartment sunroom to the east. The office is a later addition, and its walls are constructed of concrete block. Both the office and the sunroom are a few feet shorter than the wall of the main living area of the apartment, which rises at the back of the deck. Smooth stucco has been applied to the eastern portion of this wall, as well as to the sunroom walls and the walls of the storefront at 618 F Street, obscuring the board form marks and giving them a smooth appearance. This area is adjacent to the theatre's pylon and the main theatre entrance.

INTERIOR

FIRST FLOOR

Foyer

The theatre's foyer is relatively small and narrow, measuring 27' x 5'9", but contains numerous Art Moderne design elements, which make it a significant interior feature. Four, double, wood doors lead into the foyer. The flat wooden doors each hold a half-round window, set so that each pair of doors appears to have a central round window. The original etched glass has been removed from these windows and replaced with plain, clear lights. The doors also feature original handles made of long vertical cylinders of brass and a bakelite-type plastic in yellow and red bands. These four exterior doors align with four interior doors of the same design, but these interior doors include the original etched glass (excepting one half window on the north), which features a leaping horse, shooting stars, and the planet Saturn, in a Moderne motif repeated elsewhere in the theatre. The interior of the foyer has a heavily embellished ceiling, with heavy banded crown moldings merging into wide bands of plaster that line the edge of the ceiling. These ceiling moldings surround a long narrow recessed light fixture which extends the width of

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the foyer. The foyer walls have a simple baseboard. The floor is covered with a newer, blue-gray industrial type carpet.

Lobby

The grand lobby is perhaps the theatre's most elaborate space and a significant interior feature. It is roughly oval in shape, but it has numerous entries, exits, and other interrupting features that do not make the room's shape immediately obvious. However, the curvilinear shape of the room is emphasized by the ceiling and wall moldings. The elaborate ceiling molding features three wide, low relief plaster bands which follow the curves of the room. Below these, there is a wide, banded wall molding which also wraps around the room and further emphasizes its curvy, horizontal quality. Below the moldings, the walls have a flat, painted plaster finish, with a simple baseboard at the bottom.

At the center of the lobby, running from above the foyer to the main entry to the auditorium, there is an elaborate light fixture containing rectangles of colored glass, mostly in white and red colors. The panes of glass are set in four long bands that run from above the entry doors, along the ceiling and down to the door to the auditorium, creating a sort of overhead pathway that leads the visitor straight to the auditorium entry. The colored panes are repeated in two heavy columns which flank the auditorium entry. These attached columns include the wide wall moldings seen around the lobby above a framework of curved colored glass which is lit from inside the columns. The bases of the columns are vented. The large light fixture and the columns frame a recessed, mahogany-paneled entry which leads into the theatre's auditorium. Two narrow white painted moldings run from the lighted columns across the mahogany paneling to the double entry doors, continuing the lines of the muntins that divide the top two column lights. The doors themselves are flat, and paneled in the same wood as the entry. Two other, smaller wood paneled doors lead off the sides of the entry hall, accessing unfinished storage space behind the columns.

To either side of the large columns there are curved stairways that lead to the upper lobby. The two lowest steps wrap around the curved interior stair wall, creating the impression that the stairways spill down into the lobby. The far sides of the stairway are flanked by the curved lobby wall. A half pilaster has been added to the wall at the base of the stairs to create a niche for displaying objects. The niches are backlit by a light fixture set into the wall. These fixtures feature six horizontal panes that wrap the corner of the stair wall and the side corridors. The niches currently contain two ceramic vases which appear to be original to the theatre. Both stairs also have their original curved chrome railing.

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The side entries to the auditorium are located to either side of the stairs. Both entry halls are curved (in opposite directions), as they lead into the theatre. The paired doors to the auditorium are flat, wood doors, with the same red and yellow plastic and brass handles seen in the foyer and lobby. Both side halls include access to unfinished storage areas located under the stairways. Each hall also includes an original glass case that would have held a fire hose. The square cases are set into the wall, surrounded by wooden moldings and opened by a thumb latch. The words "Hose Reel" are etched into the glass.

At the north and south ends of the lobby, there are wide openings that lead to the theatre's restrooms. The side walls are curved at each of these openings. The restrooms themselves are described below.

A concession stand is located in the northeast corner of the lobby. It was enlarged and remodeled in the 1952 when the theatre experienced a \$30,000 renovation, and again in 1978. Replacing the original, Moderne stand, the present concession stand is geometric in design, in contrast to the curvilinear original. Above the concession stand, the ceiling has been dramatically lowered to distinguish the space. The ceiling has two levels, creating the impression of two volumes of space hanging above the stand. Small round can lights are set into the ceiling. Significantly, the suspended ceiling obscures the original wall and ceiling moldings in this area, but they are still extant behind this addition. The angular candy counter is finished in red, white, and blue Formica as well as wood paneling. Behind the concession stand, small mirrored tiles have been applied to the wall.

At the southeast end of the lobby, there is a small modern freestanding bar. Behind this bar are two doors which lead to small storage spaces.

Men's Restroom

The men's restroom, located on the north end of the lobby just past the concession stand, is a significant interior feature. The original glass and chrome MEN sign is located above the entry. Just inside the open entryway there is a sort of mini-lobby. This small lobby is oval in shape and has a simplified version of the ceiling and wall moldings seen in the lobby. There is an Art Deco light fixture in the center of the space. This fixture hangs from two chrome bars and is composed of a half-cylinder of blue and white glass bands, while the ends of the cylinder are embellished with a half-disc of white and red (possibly plastic). On the north wall of the lobby there is an original large round mirror in a chrome frame flanked by two sconces. These Art Deco style sconces have chrome hardware and a frosted glass circle shade. In addition to the main entry,

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three doors lead off the men's room lobby. A door at the west end of the space leads to a small room used for concession storage. On the southeast, a narrow door leads to the concession stand, and on the east is the door into the restroom area.

This eastern door enters into a washroom containing three original enamel sinks. This room was noted as the "Smoking Room" on the building's original plans. There is an original mirror mounted in a wood frame on the north wall of the washroom. The room features cutaway corners on all four sides, giving it a semi-oval shape. The floor is covered in a travertine tile laid in a criss-cross or herringbone pattern. The tiles are brown and tan, and the room includes a brown tile baseboard. A marble threshold is located between the lobby and washroom.

A door on the south side of the washroom leads into the restroom proper. The restroom contains two Standard brand urinals and three stalls. Two stalls contain what appear to be original toilets, while in the third stall, the toilet has been removed. The stalls are made of wood with heavy metal hinges and appear to be original. The restroom has a wainscot of horizontally laid subway tile in yellow and brown shades.

Women's Restroom

The women's restroom, located at the south end of the lobby, is a significant interior feature. Like the men's restroom, it has a three-room arrangement, but with a different layout of fixtures and a somewhat more elaborate design scheme. Like the men's restroom, the women's restroom includes an outer lobby that is open to the main lobby. The original chrome and glass WOMEN sign is located above the entrance to the women's lobby. The women's lobby is identical to the men's in shape and features the same ceiling and wall moldings and half-cylinder light fixture. It also has identical sconces and circular mirror on the south wall. Unlike the men's, however, the east and west walls have been treated with a fluted plaster texture. A door at the west end of the women's lobby leads to a storage space. On the east, a second door leads into a special inner lounge or powder room.

The small powder room is round in plan with its circular shape emphasized by the heavy ceiling and wall moldings. There is a cylindrical light fixture of white glass with red accents. A mirror and bench have been built in to the east wall of the powder room. Built-in panel lights flank the mirror. This room and the outer women's lobby are carpeted in the same purple and red carpet as the main lobby.

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A door on the north side of the powder room leads into the restroom proper. The room contains two original wall sinks on the south wall and three wooden stalls, all with their original toilets. The stalls are the same design seen in the men's room. The walls have a tile wainscot of blue and pink tiles. The floor is covered in small square tiles, with a blue border surrounding a yellow center.

Auditorium

The large auditorium, measuring 80 x 100, is a significant interior feature. Originally there were 1,300 seats on the main floor and an additional 400 in the balcony. The ceiling is 35 feet high. In 1978, this space was divided to create a triplex. However, the theatre is currently being restored to its original configuration, and the grand space is once again open. The triplex resulted in the loss of a few original features, but this space is still remarkably intact.

The high ceiling has a recessed center portion with five surrounding bands gradually stepping down to meet the wall surface. These bands bear their original painted surface, with the two interior-most bands gold, the middle band blue, and the two exterior bands gold. Four of the original six chandeliers still hang. These large Art Deco chandeliers consist of a large, flat cylinder with a large finial dangling beneath. They appear to be brass with white and blue glass. The two chandeliers, which were removed, are currently in the building in storage awaiting restoration. Four louvered metal vents have been added to the ceiling.

The walls of the auditorium are clad in their original purple sound board set between horizontal chrome bands. However, in most areas, this original surface has been covered with brown curtains added in the 1970s. On the lower level, there are three Art Deco wall fixtures on each side. Some of these lights are white and blue while others are white and purple. Just below the light fixtures there is a belt course of purple sound board framed by narrow chrome bands. Below this belt course the walls have a smooth plastered surface.

The walls of the auditorium are also notable for their three large murals. Above the stage is a projecting proscenium arch painted with a large mural entitled the "Three Muses." This mural features three sculptural figures seated on the steps of a Greek temple. Below the mural, there is a belt course of two chrome bands flanking cream painted plaster. To either side of the stage, there are large murals of a man and rearing horse in front of skyscrapers and trees. These murals were reportedly designed on the theme "Dream of a Greater Modern Humboldt" (*Humboldt Times* 3 March 1939). The two paintings have the same subject, but the stances of the man and horse are slightly different in each. A small red light located in the southern mural was used to

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alert an assistant when a new film reel needed to be brought up to the projection booth. Gold paint is visible on either side of the wall murals.

The stage is located at the west end of the auditorium. The original concrete stage was very narrow, measuring 10 feet in depth and 40 feet in width. On either side of the stage's curved front were 10-foot wide wings and curved concrete steps leading down to the floor. Recently, wood framing has been added to widen the stage. The original concrete steps still exist below this wood framing. Wood steps lead down at the north and south ends of the stage. The familiar red and purple carpet has been applied to the stage. The current red velvet curtain with cream fringe was added in 1950s. However, the original, peach-colored velour curtain is still in place behind the "newer" curtain. The current movie screen measures 40 feet wide and 20 feet tall. The frame dates to 1952, but the screen material was replaced in 1978.

The floor of the auditorium slopes gently down toward the stage. It is painted concrete, with the red and purple carpet laid in the three aisles. The theatre's seats are all original. The metal seats are upholstered in striped red velvet, and the back is bound with a chrome band. The seats have light wood arms featuring a carved scroll design. The seat bottoms are retractable in typical theatre fashion. At the end of each row, the last seat has a metal side panel painted white with a vertical red stripe and small louvered vent at the bottom.

SECOND FLOOR

Upper Lobby

The upper lobby is smaller and less elaborate than the main lobby, but it still includes numerous Art Moderne features and is a significant interior feature. The two sets of stairs that curve up from the downstairs lobby meet on a central landing, then a single, wider set of five stairs leads east to the upper lobby. A low scalloped wall runs along the top of the stairs, topped by a curved chrome rail, with a very sinuous effect. On all other sides, two steps lead up out of the lobby, so it has a sunken feeling. The lobby is roughly elliptical in shape, and features a triple band of ceiling moldings. However, there are no wall moldings. Two large round chandeliers of white and blue glass illuminate the space. These are similar to the fixtures found in the auditorium, but they are smaller and lack the large drop finial.

Across the eastern end of the lobby, the ceiling is lowered to create a sort of hallway. Two large round columns support this lowered ceiling. The columns create three spaces for entering this hall area. Against the eastern wall of this space, there is a very large mirror in a molded wooden

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frame. The mirror has an etched geometric design emphasizing horizontal lines. The mirror is flanked by the same sconces seen downstairs in the men's restroom lobby. Doors to men's and women's restrooms lead off this hallway, as does a small door on the east wall, which enters the owner's apartment.

At the north and south ends of the upper lobby, two steps lead up to corridors that lead to the theatre's mezzanine. Curved side walls embellish these entries. Newer metal wall fixtures have been installed just above each entry. The corridors to the mezzanine are curved and slope upward. Both are lit by original flush mounted half cylinder light fixtures of chrome and frosted glass. The northern corridor has a Hose Reel box on the east wall.

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SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The Eureka Theatre meets National Register Criterion A at the local level in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for associations with theater development, an important theme in Eureka's development from the early days of the town's settlement. The City of Eureka's theater history—opera houses, storefront theaters, and dual-purpose theaters for vaudeville and films—continued in 1939 with the construction of the Eureka Theatre, an ultra-modern, neon-brilliant movie theater. The Eureka Theatre also meets National Register Criterion C at the local level in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of a theater designed in the Art Moderne style. Built for George M. Mann, the Eureka Theatre represents this popular and very modern design constructed as the Depression began to ease and prior to World War II.

ENTERTAINMENT AND THEATER HISTORY

Although Humboldt County was a last frontier for Euro-American settlement, beginning in the spring of 1850, and has throughout its life been considered a backwater place, entertainment and formal venues for music and performances were early amenities. Opera houses, pavilions, and halls were constructed for both local and imported entertainment and with the completion of the Ingomar Theater in December 1892, a new era of first-class theaters and quality theatrical performances from San Francisco was initiated. Vaudeville, comedy, comic opera, and minstrel shows were among the local fare, along with serious theater productions.

The first "moving pictures" in Eureka were shown at the Ingomar in 1899. For the next several years, local halls showed what were described as moving pictures, but these were bonus features associated with live performances which continued to be the primary drawing card to local theaters well into the 20th century. Storefront conversions into theaters for both live performances and moving pictures was the norm. The first exception was the Rialto Theatre, constructed in 1918, which was specifically built as a theater for live stage productions and moving pictures. The State Theatre, constructed in 1920, showed moving pictures and, in fact, was the first place Eureka experienced the "talkies" in 1929, but in early years, imported vaudeville, local performances, and community events were equally important. The Rialto and the State were dual-purpose theaters, not movie theaters; Eureka had to wait another twenty years for that kind of theater.

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Hard on the heels of the Depression, theatre magnate George M. Mann, who owned and built theaters from Dinuba, California to Klamath Falls, Oregon, correctly anticipated that Humboldt County was eager for new entertainment opportunities. His shrewd business sense served him well and he constructed successful theaters in Eureka's neighboring towns of Fortuna and Arcata in 1938 and the following year, the Eureka Theatre. Its streamline Art Moderne architecture, brilliantly lighted by red, blue and gold neon, was new and innovative, the kind of glitz that a Depression-weary public appreciated. The movies were recent releases, providing Eureka citizens with the same entertainment enjoyed by urban patrons in San Francisco. Built as a modern, state-of-the-art movie theater, the Eureka Theatre was the culmination of the community's theater history of opera houses, converted storefronts, and dual-purpose stage and film theaters. The Eureka Theatre marked Eureka's entry into the world of movie theaters and its Art Moderne architecture, preserved with great integrity and artistry, conveys that significance.

EUREKA THEATRE

The *Standard's* announcement in 1937, "Magnificent New Structure to House hotel and Theatre: Redwood Theatres, Inc. to Erect Palatial New Building at Sixth and F" (Humboldt *Standard*, 3 June 1937) heralded construction of Eureka's first new theater in almost two decades and was seen as a major component in the "general wave of prosperity" that was sweeping through Eureka during the late 1930s. The construction of a modern theater building fit into the campaign waged by the local press and business leaders to modernize Eureka, to shake off the effects of the Depression, and invest in a prosperous future.

Bids were solicited for construction of the Eureka Theatre and business block in March 1938 (Humboldt *Standard*, 18 March 1938). In this announcement, the new play house was described as "modern," "best adapted to the entertainment world," and equipped with "ultra-modern fixtures and equipment." The original plans for the property at 6th and F streets included a five-story hotel with 162 rooms, private baths, modern elevators, bar and fiesta room for dancing and entertainment, banquet room, coffee shop, and more so that guests would receive the best in food and service (Humboldt *Standard*, 3 June 1937). However, at some point between that announcement and the call for bids nine months later, the hotel was dropped and the focus was on the theater and the business block.

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Construction of the new theater began in the summer of 1938 under the direction of Moore & Roberts, a San Francisco contractor employed by Mann to build other theaters (Humboldt *Standard*, 12 April, 4 June 1938; Richard Mann, personal communication 23 Oct 2008), utilizing modern design, building practices and materials. As construction neared the end point with interior finishing and installation of equipment in high gear, the local press reported, "Eureka is assured the most modern theater in the state in every detail" (Humboldt *Standard*, 30 Jan 1939). As opening night drew near, the *Standard* reported on the progress of final details – installing the heating and ventilating systems, drying the plaster, painting and decorating, hanging the lighting fixtures, laying 700 yards of carpeting, adding the mirrors and furnishings in restroom lounges, tiling the outer lobby, installing the projectors and equipment, and very importantly, erecting the 21-by-28-foot Walker White sound screen (Humboldt *Standard* 20, 22, 23, Feb 1939).

The Eureka Theater was a beautiful, ultra-modern movie theater when constructed in 1939 and was an expression of optimism and confidence in Eureka and Humboldt County as they pulled out of the Depression. As such, the Eureka Theatre is associated with the development of the local entertainment industry and demonstrates the importance of the entertainment industry in the community.

ART MODERNE ARCHITECTURE

A modern architecture appropriate for a nation struggling through and recovering from the Depression, Art Moderne reflected change and technological innovations. It was a hopeful, sleek architecture that showed confidence in scientific advances and new materials. Communities across the United States embraced this design for commercial and industrial buildings in an all-out rush to be modern—modern in transportation, housing, civic buildings, commerce—the country wanted to be modern and...streamlined.

Art Moderne buildings are asymmetrical and essentially cubic with smooth stucco wall surfaces, curved corners, and horizontal emphasis, all of which would allow airstreams to flow around them—streamlined—like airplanes, ships, and automobiles of that era. Roofs are flat without cornices or eaves. Glass blocks are often employed on wrap-around corner windows. Windows and doors are trimmed with aluminum or stainless steel bands, also used for railings and balusters. Horizontal wall grooves and lines and horizontal balustrade elements continue the streamline effect.

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The Eureka Theatre is cubic, flat-roofed, and stuccoed, but it is not asymmetrical. Horizontal features are emphasized in the bars across the clerestory above the storefronts and also on their door transoms. Horizontal elements are applied to the wall at the second-level windows. The sweeping marquee, rounded at the front and divided into sections, is marked with horizontal lines, also found on either end of the marquee. Metal bands trim the windows and doors of the storefronts. A sense of flowing streamline is conveyed by the curvilinear entrances into the outer lobby and the lobby itself, along with the ticket booth. Ornamentation is minimal, limited to bands of colored tiling on the outer lobby entrances and its interior, plus outer lobby floor tiles. The equine-and-celestial theme etched into the blue glass of the entrance doors and found on interior wall decoration were a modern art form. An original piece of this work will provide an example for restoration. The marvelous curving staircases with horizontal metal balustrades and the swirling wall and ceiling moldings of the inner lobby attest to the architect's streamlining intent. The auditorium wall murals display skyscrapers, imparting an out-of-this-world, futuristic theme, but carrying out the builder's vision: "Dream of a Greater Humboldt."

The 1939 Eureka Theatre is one of only a handful of Art Moderne buildings and the only Moderne theater built in Eureka. An Art Moderne facade was applied to an existing building at 704-724 Fourth Street (1940). Dr. Sam Burre built two Art Moderne residences, one at 2505 G Street and an apartment at 2400 H, both in 1940. This architecture was utilized on two school buildings, the Eureka High School Industrial Arts Building at 1915 J (1939) and Jefferson School, 1000 B (1941). Lincoln School on Harris Avenue is similar to Jefferson School and probably dates to the same time period. The two other notable Art Moderne theaters in Humboldt County are the Fortuna Theatre on Main Street, Fortuna, built for George Mann and opened in early 1938 and the Arcata Theatre on G Street, Arcata, also built for Mann and opened at the same time.

Other Eureka buildings of the late 1930s and pre-war, which were considered Modernist when they were constructed, but not distinctively Art Moderne include: Franklin School, 901 Myrtle Avenue (1940); a one-story stucco house, 202 West Clark (1936); Marshall School, 2104 J (1941); and a commercial building at 600 E (1938).

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Verbal boundary description:

APN 001-111-002

Boundary Justification

This is the parcel historically associated with the Eureka Theatre.

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Section number Photographs Page 1

1. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: East elevation
Looking: West
2. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: East and south elevations
Looking: Southwest
3. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: Carnegie Library and Eureka Theatre
Looking: Northwest
4. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: East elevation
Looking: West
5. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: Southeast corner
Looking: Northwest
6. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: Outer lobby, east elevation
Looking: West
7. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: South elevation
Looking: Northeast

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8. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 15 July 2007
View: West elevation
Looking: Skyward
9. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 26 Aug. 2007
View: North elevation
Looking: South
10. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 11 July 2007
View: Inner lobby
Looking: North
11. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 15 July 2007
View: Auditorium
Looking: West
12. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 11 July 2007
View: Upper lobby
Looking: North
13. Photographer: Leslie Heald
Date: 11 July 2007
View: Apartment living room
Looking: West

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14. Historic Photograph

Date: c. 1940s

View: Carnegie Library and Eureka Theatre

Looking: North down F Street

15. Historic Photograph

Date: 1946

View: East elevation

Looking: Northwest

16. Historic Photograph

Date: Unknown

View: Auditorium and stage

Looking: West

17. Historic Photograph

Date: Unknown

View: Auditorium and balcony

Looking: East