

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

# 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 Old Hoosier Theatre

and/or common Old Theatre Building

## 2. Location

street & number Cheapside and Ferry Streets  not for publication

city, town Vevay  vicinity of Switzerland congressional district Ninth

state Indiana code 018 county Switzerland code 155

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Status   | Present Use                                       |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied                    | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process         | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted             | <input type="checkbox"/> government               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted           | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial               |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                          | <input type="checkbox"/> military                 |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                   |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> park                     |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence        |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific               |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation           |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                   |

## 4. Owner of Property

name Fiddlin' Joy Sibcy and Arthur E. Sibcy

street & number Rt. 3

city, town Madison  vicinity of Switzerland state Indiana 47250

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Switzerland County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Vevay state Indiana 47043

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites & Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date August, 1980 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 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 Old Theatre Building is located at the corner of Cheapside and Ferry Streets in the old Ohio River town of Vevay, and faces northeast. The entire body of the building measures 40 feet by 80 feet. It was built in 1837 in the Federal style, and has a Renaissance Revival arcade at the street level which was probably added in the 1880s.

It is a three story brick structure, with the ground level arcade being constructed of dressed limestone. The arcade is six bays across the front, and features four double wooden doors and two large plate glass windows with arched fan lights above. The two stories above each have six beautifully proportioned window openings with heavy stone sills and lintels. The windows all have the original pulleys and wooden frames. Many of the original old hand blown glass window panes are still intact, each six over six doublehung sash, with white pine frame construction. The top of the facade is finished with fine projecting decorative brick work.

The south side of the building faces the river and Cheapside. The stone arcade continues around the corner to delineate another double door entrance on this side of the structure. There is another door providing exit from the second floor with evidence of fire escape steps originally of wood, and later of cast iron. The cast iron steps have been moved to the Vevay Newspapers office on Market Street. There are also four windows (two on either side of the door) at the second floor level matching the windows on the facade. At the third level are three more windows and at the west end a large service door with original wooden pulleys to raise materials from the street level.

A stepped parapet wall forms the roof line on the south and north sides of the building. There are two of the original copper and stained glass lamps on the south side and two on the front. Nine more were found in the basement to be reinstalled.

A one-and-one-half story concrete block addition is attached to the rear. The rear of the building has three exits on the brick structure, two at ground level and one on the third floor and two exist from the cement block structure. There are seven chimneys. The north side of the building contains no openings. At the second and third floor levels there are indications of hook-ins which supported original frame buildings, adjoining.

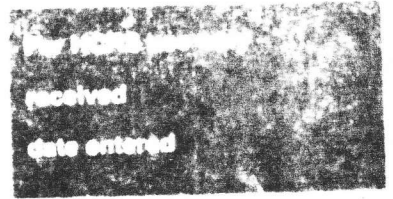
The building has a hand cut limestone foundation supporting the walls, which still shows the original chisel marks. There is a full basement under the building. There are two coal chutes leading in from the south side. At the front of the building in the basement are the original stone steps which led to the street. There are two window wells with ornate iron grates from which can be seen the early slab stone sidewalks which have been covered with concrete.

The first floor inside was remodeled in the 1920s when made into a theatre. It has a sloping wooden floor to the stage. The curved stage opening, rising two stories, is made of yellow poplar. The walls have the original paint and stenciling from the 19th century. There is a massive wooden staircase in the front leading up to the horseshoe shaped balcony which is suspended from trusses on the third floor. There is a 40 by 20 foot space at the front of the third floor that was used by Shaw as his offices. The third floor baseboards and window housings are decorative and made of cherry wood, as are the huge supporting trusses.

The present owner purchased the building in 1978. It was in a state of disrepair and deterioration, having been unused since 1955, and suffering extensive roof, rear wall, and water damage. At the present time the exterior of the building has been completely stabilized with rebuilding and tuckpointing of the back brick wall, installation of a completely new roof and gutter system, rebuilding of the parapet walls and chimneys, and repairing and restoration of all windows at the second and third floor levels. The building is in the process of being completely restored on the exterior and interior to its original condition as a theatre.

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Old Hoosier Theatre

Item number 7, Description

Page 1

One of three town wells is at the left corner of the property. The well is 380 feet deep and was used from 1945 to cool the building. The property has never been hooked up to the city water system and the old well still serves as the main water supply for the building.

# 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/            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music               | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian       |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation     |  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)    |  |

Specific dates 1837

Builder/Architect Culbertson and Plew

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Old Theatre Building is significant as one of the earliest commercial buildings in the town of Vevay. It is one of the few buildings in Vevay which still retains its early appearance, few changes having been made except for the arcade, probably added in the 1880s, and the rear addition.

Vevay was settled around 1800 and became a town in 1813. The building is considered a key building in the downtown area. The Old Hoosier Theatre is located at the corner of Cheapside and Ferry Streets, one-half mile from the Ohio River. Ferry Street was the main thoroughfare for traffic from the river until 1979, when the Vevay-Ghent Ferry service was discontinued because of the new Markland Dam bridge. The building, when constructed, was at the center of waterfront activity. The original site contained three buildings: a three story brick structure, a livery stable (no longer in existence), and a blacksmith shop located in the rear (still in excellent condition and now in use as a tobacco barn). The latter two are not part of this property at the present time.

In its early days the building was used as a produce and general store, featuring tin ware, insurance and liquor. This was the second liquor license held in Vevay, the first being the Armstrong Tavern on Market Street. It was also the first Post Office in Vevay, which remained in the building while owned by the Ku Klux Klan from 1919 to 1926, when Minor Bakes bought it for use as a theatre. It served as a movie theatre from the time of silent movies until it closed in 1955, and live performances were also held here. This building also housed the offices of Vevay Newspapers for several years. Joseph Malin, saddle maker, had his first saddle-making operation in this building, and later moved to Madison, Indiana, to receive world-wide acclaim for excellently crafted saddles. In 1813 this land was auctioned off by James Dufour to a person "abroad," which turned out to be Gallatin County, Kentucky. From August 29, 1860, to 1910 the building housed Shaw Enterprises (William and Linda Shaw first owned it, and then it passed to Alfred Shaw, their son). It was then owned by the Ku Klux Klan.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

History of Dearborn, Switzerland, and Ohio Counties, Indiana. Chicago: Weakley, Harraman and Co., 1885, pp. 990-1128.  
 Vevay Newspapers throughout history  
 Courthouse Records  
 Dufour, Perret. The Swiss Settlement of Switzerland County, Indiana. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Collections, Vol. XIII, 1925.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Vevay South, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

|      |   |   |         |   |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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B 

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| Zone |  |  | Easting |  |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

C 

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| Zone |  |  | Easting |  |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

D 

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| Zone |  |  | Easting |  |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

G 

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| Zone |  |  | Easting |  |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

H 

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|      |  |  |         |  |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  | Easting |  |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Southern 40 feet of Lot 135 of the Original Plat of Vevay.

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 Fiddlin' Joy Sibcy

organization Fiddlin' Joy's, Inc. date October 30, 1980

street & number Post Office Box 72 telephone  

city or town Vevay state Indiana 47043

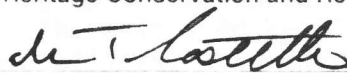
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 1-18-82

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

1961 L.S.W.  
(BENNINGTON)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Old Hoosier Theatre  
Vevay, Indiana  
UTM Reference:  
16/668000/4290280

STATE OF  
KENTUCKY GEO  
UNIVERSITY

85°07'30"

VERSAILLES 28 MI  
MOOREFIELD 6 MI

660 000 FEET (IND.)

460 000m E. R 3 W

57  
MT STERLING 3.5 MI

36 688  
VEVAY

4190000m N

4788  
4789  
450 000 FEET  
(IND.)

T 2 N

