



Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. 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 an 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. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Ritz Theatre
 other names/site number KHRI # 021-366

2. Location

street & number 1145 N Military Avenue not for publication
 city or town Baxter Springs vicinity
 state Kansas code KS county Cherokee code 021 zip code 66713

3-4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

SEE FILE

Signature of certifying official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the State Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store (c.1880s-1926)

Social: meeting hall (unknown-1926)

Recreation and Culture: movie theater (1926-1950)

Commerce/Trade: restaurant (1957-1980)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store (1980-2006)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Work In Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Eclectic

Late Victorian: Italianate

Two-Part Commercial Block

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone

walls: Brick

roof: Rubber

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the current physical appearance of the property.)

Summary Paragraph *(Briefly describe the overall characteristics of the property and its location, setting, and size.)*

The Ritz Theatre building is located at the northwest corner of Military Avenue (HWY 69) and 12th Street (Route 166) in downtown Baxter Springs. (Figures 1 and 2) This building stands out as it is the tallest building on Military Avenue and is located at the busiest intersection in town. The three-story brick building, built in the years after the town's founding in 1868, originally functioned as a commercial property, with a dry goods and clothing store on the first floor and a social gathering space on the second floor. (Figure 4) The building was renovated, under the supervision of Joplin architect T. E. Martinie, in 1926 to function as a movie theater. (Figure 5) The building features a 30-foot-wide storefront area facing Military Avenue and it occupies nearly the entire lot with a length of 110 feet. Neighboring one-story buildings share a party wall with the building on the west and north sides.

Elaboration *(Provide a detailed description of the building's exterior, interior, and any associated buildings on the property. Note any historic features, materials, and changes to the building/property.)*

This two-part commercial block was constructed reflecting the Italianate style, with its tall, narrow upper-story windows and decorative brick cornice. (Figure 6) It has a flat roof with a parapet. The building was converted to a movie theater in 1926 and the exterior was modified to reflect its current appearance. The tall, narrow windows on

the east (front) façade were shortened and a row of eight 12/1 double-hung wood windows were installed just above the transom area. The original shed-roof overhang was removed from the east facade and replaced by a vertically oriented sign affixed to the upper story along with a flat-roofed marquee that hung above the entrance and projected over the sidewalk (Figure 7), but these features have since been lost. The storefront was removed allowing for a recessed entrance with a central ticket booth flanked by single pedestrian doors. The building has been painted since at least the mid-20th century. A new roof was installed in 2007.

When the building was used as a theater, there was an exterior staircase along the south façade that led up to the far southeast opening on the second story. The staircase can be seen in Figure 7, but it was removed many years ago.

The building sits on large sandstone blocks typical of commercial buildings erected during the late 19th century in Kansas. The exterior of the building is faced with painted brick and the walls are 16 inches thick. The cornice along the street-facing east and south facades features corbelled brick. The east (front) facade has a recessed first story with a central ticket booth with a single pedestrian door on either side. These elements were reconstructed based on careful deconstruction of later infill materials and shadows of previous features. The booth is constructed of glass blocks, glass, and concrete stucco. There is a row of eight 12/1 double-hung wood windows just above the transom area that runs nearly the full width of the 30-foot building. (These 1920s-era windows have recently been restored.) Below the cornice are three segmental arch (1/1 double-hung windows (partially remaining from the original building). The sills are made of stone.

Several openings along the south elevation were filled in over the years. Shadows of these openings are visible on the exterior. Just one opening remains today – a first-story pedestrian door at the far southwest corner. There is a small one-story section along the west end of the building, and it is adjoined by another one-story commercial building on its west side near the alleyway.

The north side of the building shares a party wall with the adjacent one-story building, and there are no visible openings on the upper story.

Interior

The two entrances at the east end of the building lead into a small lobby. Recent selective demolition has revealed features of the theater. A suspended ceiling was removed from the first-floor interior area near the entrance. An enclosed dog-leg staircase along the north wall of the lobby area has remained from the theater era. The companion staircase along the south wall, however, was removed in the 1950s and but has been rebuilt. Opposite the entrance doors at the west end of the lobby, where a wall once divided the lobby from the first floor of the theater, the new owners have erected a space for accessible restrooms.

A six-foot-wide hall along the north and south walls leads from the lobby, past the restrooms, into the auditorium space. This once-cavernous space was closed off with a shorter ceiling when used as a restaurant from 1957 to 1980. The sloping floor of the theater is extant below a level and later-installed wood-frame floor. The original theater floor slopes a total of five feet from east to west. At the time of nomination, the owners are in the process of removing these later partition walls, ceilings, and flooring. The stage and proscenium arch are intact, again behind later partitions and features that are being removed. The new owners have had to make repairs to the stuccoed walls in many areas, particularly along the north wall. And, as partitions are removed from the outer north and south walls, the theater's last paint scheme is being revealed.

The second floor retains still more integrity from the years it was used as a theater. All of the walls are original with no repairs needed. All of the windows have been cleaned, repaired, and painted. Both of the lobby staircases (on the north and south walls lead to a second-floor space that includes a small 3'x8' restroom, storage spaces, and an open and window-filled area along the front (east end) of the building that leads to another central staircase headed up into the theater's upper floor seating area.

The balcony is intact and in excellent condition, missing only its finishes and theater seats. The space is quite tall and spacious, and when the various later floors and partitions on the first floor have been removed the floor-to-ceiling height will be about 35 feet. The ceiling is clad in decorative metal tiles, measuring 2' x 2', left over from the original construction of the building. Only a few have needed to be replaced.

Centered along the east wall at the top of the balcony is the projection room. There is a door on either side of the projection room (on the east wall of the balcony). The north door leads to a very small office/storage area, measuring 55" x 88". It has experienced some moisture damage. The north, east, and south walls are concrete

stucco and the west wall is concrete fiber board. It has one window on the east wall. The south door leads to a vestibule used as a restroom, probably for the projector operator's use, and provides access into the projection room. The walls are all concrete stucco, and there is a window on the east wall.

The projection room is very much as it was in the mid-20th century, although it did suffer a fire in the 1940s (see Section 8 for more information). The projection equipment is no longer there. The room is clad in metal on the ceiling and west (interior) wall. The east, north, and south walls are concrete stucco. The floor of the projection room is concrete and the door and one window have metal trim. This window had to be constructed of metal because of the fire hazards posed by early movie projectors, which burned long carbide sticks to produce the light for film to project to silver screen and put off a lot of heat and smoke. The theater required large ventilators through roof, and these are still intact.

Integrity

Although the building was built in late 19th century, it does not retain integrity from its earliest period when it housed the Cooper Dry Goods store and the second-floor meeting space. Instead, the building largely reflects the period from 1926 to the mid-1950s when it functioned as the Ritz Theatre. Later modifications to the façade have been removed and later modifications to the interior are currently being removed and corrected. National Register eligibility is certainly a possibility if the lower ceiling dividing the cavernous theater space is removed.

Summary

The three-story brick building originally functioned as a commercial property, with a dry goods and clothing store on the first floor and a social gathering space on the second floor. The building was renovated, under the supervision of Joplin architect T. E. Martinie, in 1926 to function as a movie theater. It remained a theater venue through 1957, when it was converted to function as a restaurant. The building has changed over time, but it retains sufficient integrity from the theater era to justify nomination to the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing)

- 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.
- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1926-1957

Significant Dates

1926-1957

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 grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Martinie, T. E. (architect, 1926)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance includes the years the building functioned as a movie theater (1926-1957).

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph *(Provide a summary paragraph that notes under what criteria the property is nominated.)*

The Ritz Theatre is nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of entertainment/recreation. The theater opened in 1926 in a converted three-story commercial building along Route 66 in downtown Baxter Springs. Built in the late 19th century, the building had previously housed John M. Cooper's Dry Goods and Clothing Store, and the upper floor had served as a gathering space for various social organizations. Under the guidance of Joplin architect T. E. Martinie, the building was converted to a theater in 1926 and functioned as such until the mid-1950s. It then functioned as the Blue Castle Restaurant from 1957 to 1980. At the time of nomination, the building is being renovated to reflect its former use as a theater.

Elaboration *(Provide a brief history of the property and justify why this property is locally significant.)*

Local Historical Context

Baxter Springs is located in the extreme southeast section of Cherokee County in Spring Valley township near the Kansas border with both Oklahoma and Missouri. It is a short distance west of Spring River and 11 miles southeast of Columbus, the county seat. Cherokee County has unique beginnings as it was so closely located to then-pro-slavery Missouri and Indian Territory during its formative years in the mid-19th century. Euro-Americans were settling in the area by the 1850s, but Cherokee County did not officially form until after the Civil War in 1867. The U.S. military built rudimentary posts in the area, which was along a route connecting Fort Scott, Kansas to the north with Fort Smith, Arkansas to the south.

Officially incorporated in 1868, Baxter Springs, was named for John L. Baxter, who settled 160 acres near the Spring River in 1849. During the Civil War the Union established Fort Blair where a noteworthy confrontation occurred with Confederate guerilla troops lead by William Quantrill. After the war, the budding community became the first frontier cattle town on the southern border of Kansas. Higher prices for beef in the north made it cost effective for Texas cattle raisers to drive herds north. In 1868 a stockyard association offering corrals, water and grazing area for 20,000 head of cattle was established. The cattle trade spurred a considerable amount of activity in Baxter Springs with the community growing to over 4,000 by 1870. One account describes that "at least 80 carpenters were working in Baxter Springs with a backlog of work at least two weeks for each worker." By the mid-1870s, railroads in Texas replaced the need for cattle drives north and the town's population quickly dwindled to a mere 800 by 1876. During the 1880s, the community promoted the health benefits of the springs for which the community drew its name and sustained itself by promoting a sanatorium and bath house that attracted many visitors.

The next building boom for the community would not occur until the early 1900s when lead and zinc mining took hold as the leading industry. As early as 1876, lead and zinc deposits were discovered in nearby Joplin, Missouri and Galena, Kansas. A historical account of Baxter Springs notes that, "The mining district was extended from Sunnyside to Lincolnville then to Hattenville; from there to Cardine, Pitcher, Treece, Hockerville, and lastly to the doors of Baxter Springs...the foremost town of the entire mining district."¹ This region of rich lead and zinc deposits located in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri became known as the Tri-State mining district.²

The Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad developed through the city in 1870, connecting it with Joplin and Kansas City and bringing considerable opportunity for business.³ The city eventually became the junction of two divisions of the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad.⁴ Later in the 1920s, U.S. Route 66 developed through the city.

¹ "City of Baxter Springs Older than Newspaper," *Baxter Springs Citizen*, 30 May 1946.

² Baxter Springs Historical Society, *A Pictorial History of Baxter Springs, Kansas* (Marceline, MO: Heritage House Publishing, 1994), 74.

³ William Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas, vol. 2* (Chicago: Andreas Publishing Co., 1883), 1161.

⁴ Frank Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopaedia of State History, vol. 1* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912), 160-162.

Once established, Cherokee County's population grew steadily and was heavily influenced by the surrounding mining industry at the turn of the 20th century. The U.S. Federal census recorded 11,038 residents in Cherokee County in 1870, with the population peaking in 1900 at 42,694 and steadily declining throughout the 20th century.

Cherokee County Population ⁵	
1870: 11,038	1920: 33,609
1880: 21,905	1930: 31,457
1890: 27,770	1940: 29,817
1900: 42,694	1950: 25,144
1910: 38,162	1960: 22,279

Today, Baxter Springs has a population of just over 4,000.

John M. Cooper & the Cooper Dry Goods and Clothing Store

Civil War veteran John Milton Cooper moved from New Salem, Illinois, to Baxter Springs, Kansas, in 1868. He farmed, was a successful businessman who owned lead and zinc mines, and served as a member of the city council and mayor of Baxter Springs. Cooper was a charter member of the Galena Mining and Smelting Company, which laid out the town of Galena. His John M. Cooper M. & M. Company owned 3,000 acres of mine fields including the Blue Bird Mine, Early Bird Mine, Southern Mine, Muncie Mine, Big Elk Mine, and the Tar Creek Mine.⁶

Cooper built this building at the northwest corner of Military Avenue (US Route 66) and West 12th Street to serve as the location for his dry goods and clothing store, which he opened in the 1880s. An article published in the January 11, 1926 edition of the *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald* called this building a "famous landmark," noting that "many of our most prominent citizens were once employees of the pioneer firm of J. M. Cooper and Company." These included Ed Hiatt, Fred Barlett (postmaster), and others who "spent many days in the old store, measuring calico, pumping coal oil and weighing prunes and dry salt meat."⁷

Cooper died November 18, 1914 and was interred at the Baxter Springs Cemetery. Several years after his death, in the mid-1920s, the building was renovated to function as a theater. Prior to the renovation, the first floor of the building was occupied by Ed Hiatt's dry goods and shoe stock business. Several organizations, including the Grand Army of the Republic, the Security Benefit Association, and Degree of Honor, used the second floor as a meeting space, but had to vacate when renovations began in early 1926.⁸

Entertainment in Baxter Springs

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, there were several places of entertainment in Baxter Springs including the opera house, the library hall, College Chapel, and a large airdome on Military Avenue. The airdome seated nearly 1,500 people and hosted vaudeville acts, movies, and large gatherings and celebrations.

The earliest movie theater was a nickelodeon located in a storefront at 10th and Military.⁹ In the early 1900s, the Elite Theater was located in the middle of the block on Military Avenue between 11th and 12th streets. In 1918, H. Garber built a new theater on West 11th Street, also called the Elite Theater. The Majestic Theatre operated in Baxter Springs as early as 1919.¹⁰ In 1926, the Ritz Theatre opened after extensive remodeling of the Cooper Mercantile building, and in 1927 the Reddy Drug Store and Elite movie theater (on Military Avenue) were torn down

⁵ Historical Census Browser. Retrieved 28 July 2014 from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/>.

⁶ Nathaniel T. Allison, *History of Cherokee County, Kansas, and Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co., 1904), 249-250.

⁷ "Remodeling of Cooper Building Effects Many," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, 11 January 1926.

⁸ "Remodeling of Cooper Building Effects Many," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, 11 January 1926.

⁹ A nickelodeon was an early motion picture theater where a film or variety show could be seen, usually for the admission price of a nickel. Elizabeth Rosin, "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas" National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2004), E38.

¹⁰ *Baxter Springs Citizen*, 19 October 1919.

for the new Baxter Theater. The movie houses closed in the 1950s after a new drive-in theater opened on the south edge of town in 1953.

Baxter Springs underwent considerable change, as did many Kansas towns, after World War II. By the 1950s there were several new businesses and institutions in town including a new, up-to-date hospital, Yellow Freight business, McCartney Manufacturing, Root Manufacturing, and King Louie (made bowling shirts and jackets). The Bible College was full with students from all over the country.

Conversion of Cooper Building to the Ritz Theatre

Cooper's building was converted for use as a theater in 1925 and 1926, and the transformation was documented in period articles published in the *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald* and movie industry publications. The *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald* reported that Joplin architect T. E. Martinie was in charge of the project to convert the building into a theater. The project included the installation of a ventilation system and a heating system, and the theater curtains were reported to be "works of art."¹¹ The same newspaper article notes the existence of a marquee "over the front walk" as an "object of beauty" ... "of the latest and most approved design." The theater reportedly had "the very latest type of Wurlitzer theatre organ."¹² The Yale Theatre Supply Company was outfitting the theater with "416 upholstered seats, according to J. H. Toler of the Yale Company."¹³ Other issues of the magazine and the *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald* note that the Ritz was originally operated under a lease by Clare A. Rehm.

The theater officially opened on April 30, 1926, showing "The Ancient Highway," distributed by Paramount Pictures.¹⁴ A packed house heard music from "Mrs. Roy Brooks, organist of the Victory theatre, Rogers, Ark., also owned by Mr. Cooper."¹⁵

The Baxter Springs Cultural Heritage Center and Museum has documented movie bills from 1929 advertising Greta Garbo in "The Single Standard," and Joan Crawford in "Our Modern Maidens." (Figures 8 and 9) The Ritz was advertised as "Baxter's Popular Playhouse," and "where your money buys both courtesy and comfort with entertainment." (Figure 9) The theater was still booming in 1940 when "Young Tom Edison," with Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter, and George Bancroft was shown. (Figure 11)

The theater suffered a fire on July 8, 1944. According to the *Joplin Globe*, "the interior of the projection booth and a machine were damaged when a film being shown at the Ritz theater broke and exploded." It went on to report that "the fire was prevented from spreading by the quick work of Robert Stone, projection operator, who closed the windows and the door of the booth to smother the flames." The crowded theater was emptied calmly and local fireman assisted in bringing the flames under control.¹⁶ The fire was also noted in the July 15 issue of *Boxoffice*.

It was during the 1930s and 1940s, in particular, that the Ritz advertised its shows in newspapers throughout the region, including the *Miami Daily News-Record* and the *Joplin Globe*. This may have had something to do with the theater's management, which by 1941 was overseen by Commonwealth Theatres Inc. of Kansas City. Commonwealth Theaters, Inc., was one of the five major movie chains operating in Kansas.¹⁷

By the early 1950s, there were several drive-in theaters in the area. Louis Stein opened the Twilite Drive-In on Route 66 south of Baxter Springs in 1953. He also opened drive-ins at Parsons and Columbus. The Crescent Drive-In Theatre was south of Galena on Highways K-12 and 166, according to advertisements in from 1954 and 1955 issues of *Galena Sentinel-Times*. The Tri-States Drive-In was located at Joplin and was advertising in the *Joplin Globe* by 1953. The popularity of drive-ins likely contributed to the closing of the various traditional theaters in

¹¹ "Ritz Theatre to Open Friday Night, April 30," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, 29 April 1926.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ben Shlyen, ed., *The Reel Journal: The Film Trade Paper of the Southwest* (Kansas City, MO: Associated Publications, 10 April 1926), 16. The May 3, 1926 edition of the *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald* reported that the theater contained "346 opera chairs in the parquet and 167 in the balcony making a total of 507 [sic]."

¹⁴ "Ritz Theatre to Open Friday Night, April 30," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, 29 April 1926.

¹⁵ "Ritz Theatre Open to Full House," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, 3 May 1926.

¹⁶ "Fire Damages Machine and Booth in Theater," *Joplin Globe*, 9 July 1944.

¹⁷ O. K. Mason of Wichita founded the Commonwealth Amusement Corporation in the late 1920s, and it grew to control theaters across the Midwest through the mid-20th century. By 1950, the company operated 70 indoor theaters and 15 outdoor theaters throughout the region. Rosin, E44.

Baxter Springs and other area communities. The Ritz Theatre building was sold in 1957 to be remodeled and operated by Ralph and Francis Adams as a restaurant known as the Blue Castle Cafe.¹⁸

The building was extensively remodeled to function as a restaurant. According to the newspaper reports, which corroborate what has been found more recently in the building, a new ceiling was installed, creating a full second story space. That second-floor space was rarely used for anything beyond storage and office space, and has remained sealed up. The restaurant's kitchen was along the south wall toward the rear (stage area). The stage area along the west end of the building was used for a private dining room.

The building had various owners during the years 1980 to 2006, hosting a church, briefly, and then two floral shops. In 2007, Ronald and Judy Puckett purchased the building to begin the process of restoring it back to a theater.

Summary

The Ritz Theatre is nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of entertainment/recreation. The theater opened in 1926 in a converted commercial building along Route 66 in downtown Baxter Springs. The building had previously housed John M. Cooper's Dry Goods and Clothing Store, and the upper floor had served as a gathering space for various social organizations. Under the guidance of Joplin architect T. E. Martinie, the building was converted to a theater in 1926 and functioned as such until the mid-1950s. At the time of nomination, the building is being renovated to reflect its former use as a theater.

¹⁸ "Ritz Theatre Building Sold," *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*, undated (approximately March 1957).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Allison, Nathaniel Thompson. *History of Cherokee County, Kansas, and Representative Citizens*. Chicago, IL: Biographical Publishing Co., 1904.

Baxter Springs Citizen.

Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald.

Baxter Springs Historical Society. *A Pictorial History of Baxter Springs, Kansas*. Marceline, MO: Heritage House Publishing, 1994.

Blackmar, Frank W. *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, vol. 1*. Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912.

Cutler, William. *History of the State of Kansas, vol. 2*. Chicago: Andreas Publishing Co., 1883.

Galena (KS) Sentinel-Times.

Joplin (MO) Globe.

Miami (OK) Daily News-Record

Rosin, Elizabeth. "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas" National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2004.

Shlyen, Ben, ed. *The Reel Journal: The Film Trade Paper of the Southwest*. Kansas City, MO: Associated Publications, 10 April 1926.

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Baxter Springs Heritage Center & Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Latitude & Longitude Coordinates

1	<u>37.023786</u>	<u>-94.735526</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude			
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The nominated property includes the building and land on the parcel described as follows: ORIGINAL PLAT BAXTER SPRINGS, S29.2 E121.9 LOT 6 BLK 8.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes the land historically associated with the Ritz Theater.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ronald L. and Judy K. Puckett
organization _____ date _____
street & number 3003 Edgewood Avenue telephone 620-856-3504
city or town Baxter Springs state KS zip code 66713
e-mail judypucket@emargmail.com

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Ronald L. and Judy K. Puckett
street & number 3003 Edgewood Avenue telephone 620-856-3504
city or town Baxter Springs state Kansas zip code 66713

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Ritz Theatre
City or Vicinity: Baxter Springs
County/State: Cherokee/Kansas
Photographer: Martin, Sarah J.
Date: 30 July 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 14 Street-facing elevations (south/side and east/front), camera facing NW
- 2 of 14 East façade showing adjacent building, camera facing W
- 3 of 14 South (side) and west (rear) facades, camera facing NE
- 4 of 14 East façade, main entrances and ticket booth, camera facing W

- 5 of 14 East façade, ticket booth, camera facing W
- 6 of 14 Interior, entrances on east wall, camera facing E
- 7 of 14 Interior, first floor, east wall of theater with later framing partially demo'd to show historic paint scheme, camera facing S
- 8 of 14 Interior, first floor, south edge of proscenium arch with later ceiling framing partially demo'd
- 9 of 14 Interior, staircase landing on second floor, camera facing SW
- 10 of 14 Interior, second-floor windows added during the 1920s conversion of building into a theater, camera facing SE
- 11 of 14 Interior, upper-floor of theater, showing impact of later addition of first-floor ceiling, camera facing W
- 12 of 14 Interior, upper-floor, historic light fixture hanging from center of auditorium
- 13 of 14 Interior, upper-floor of theater auditorium, showing projection room at back of theater, camera facing E
- 14 of 14 Interior, projection room interior, camera facing W

Figure 1: Contextual Aerial Image, Google 2014

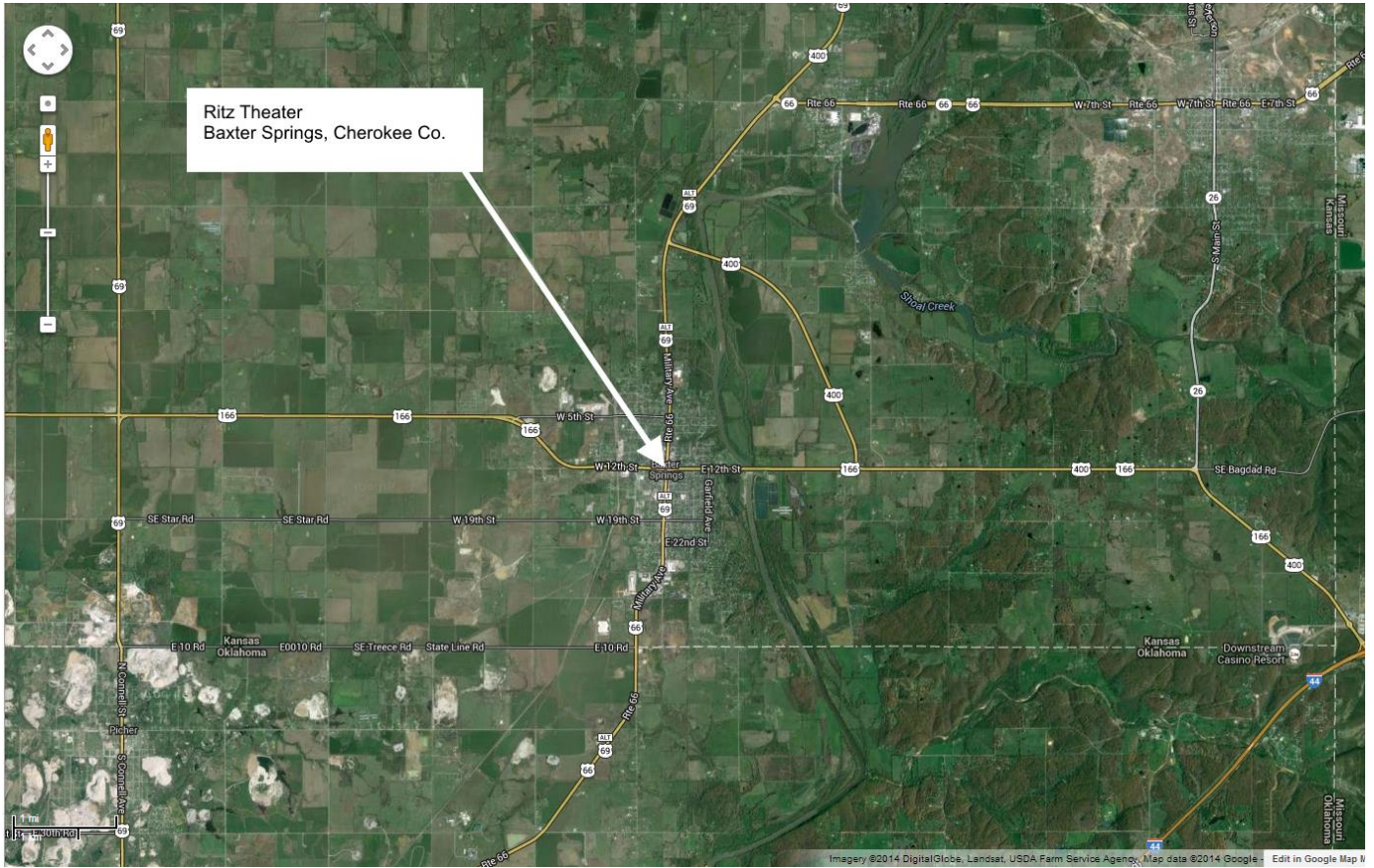


Figure 2: Close-in Aerial Image, Google Earth 2014

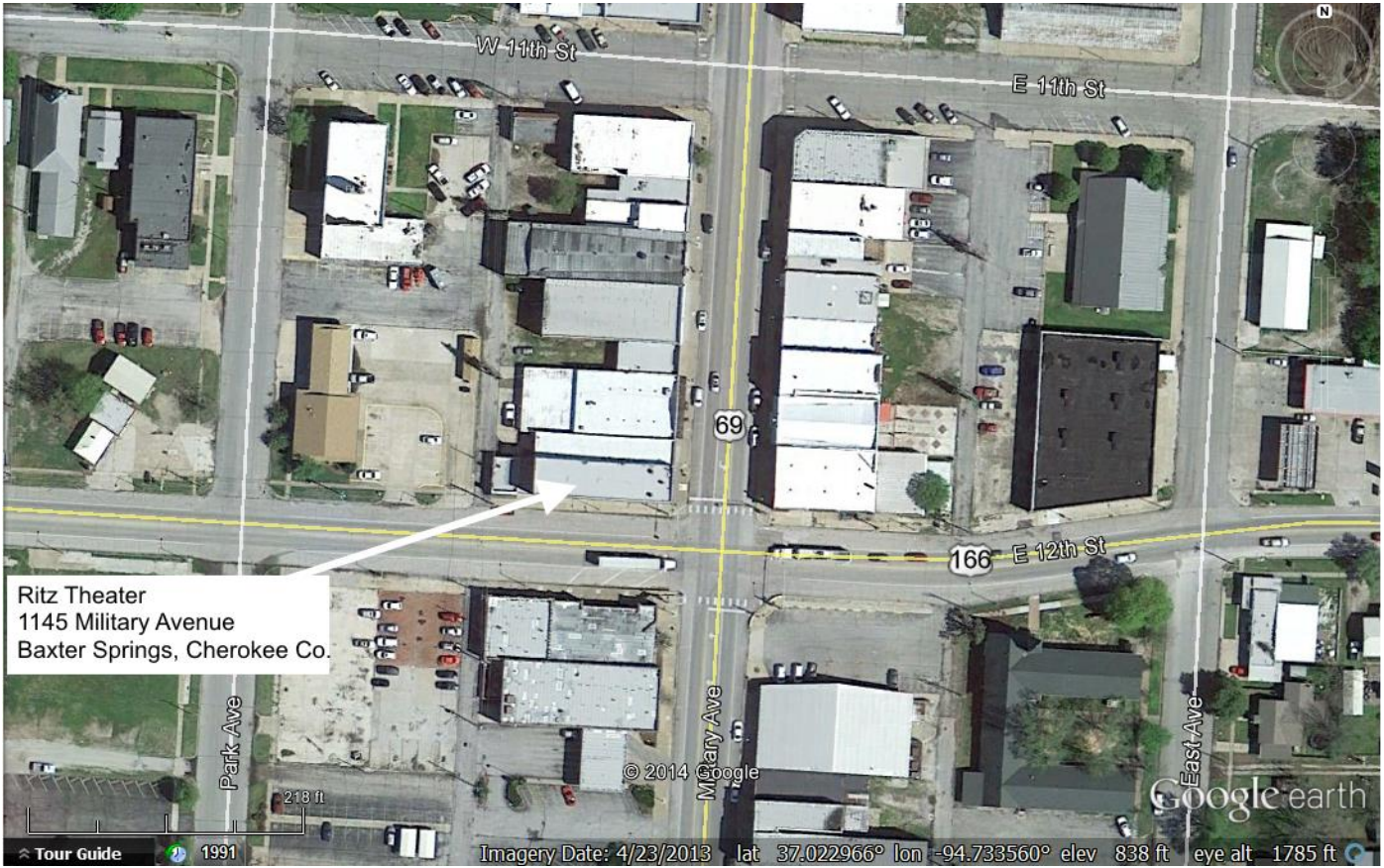


Figure 3: Plat map of Baxter Springs, Kansas, noting location of Ritz Theatre lot/block. Source: *Plat Book of Cherokee County, Kansas*. Missouri Publishing Co., 1902. Accessed online at: <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/209386>

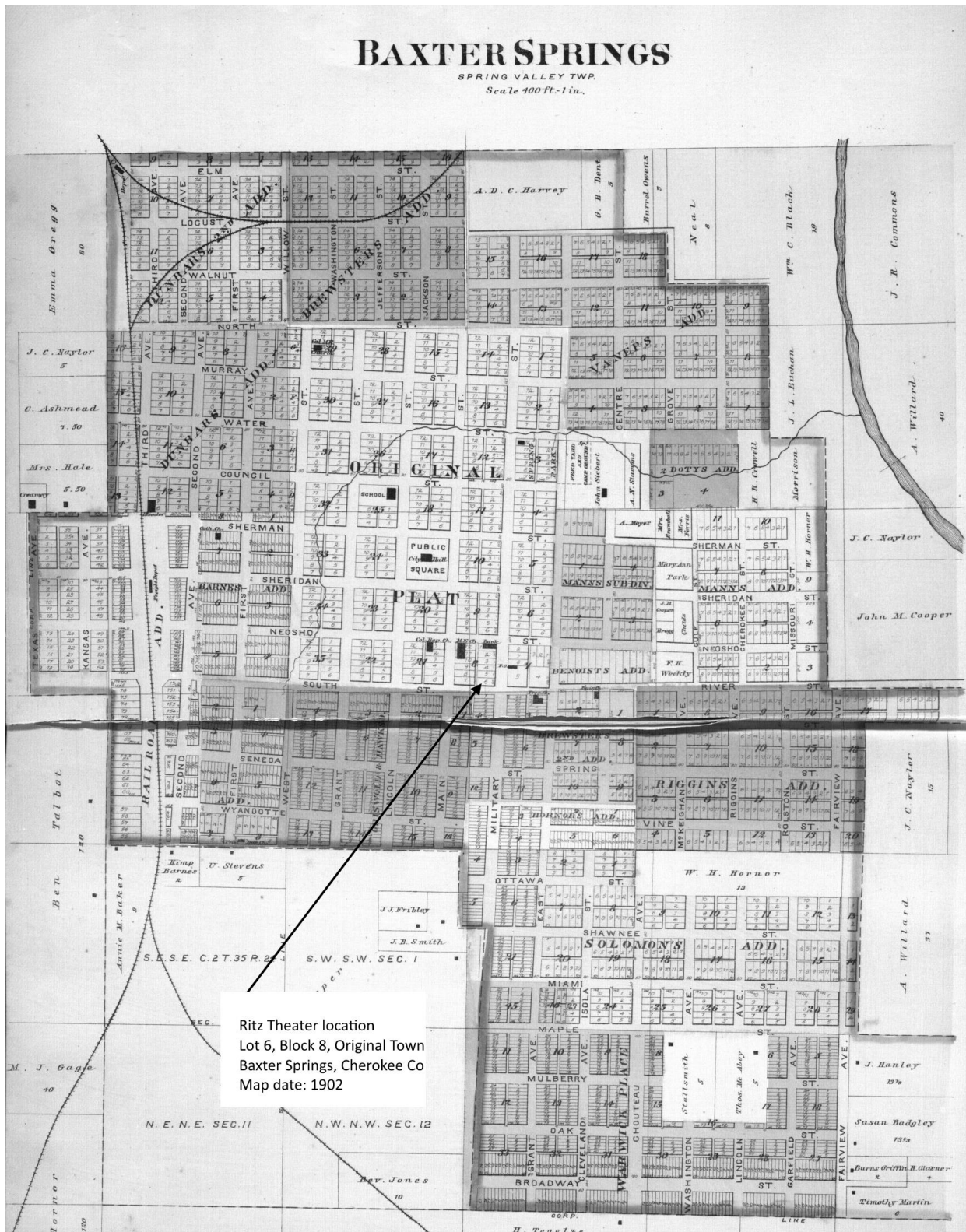


Figure 4: 1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Theater building lot 6, block 8.

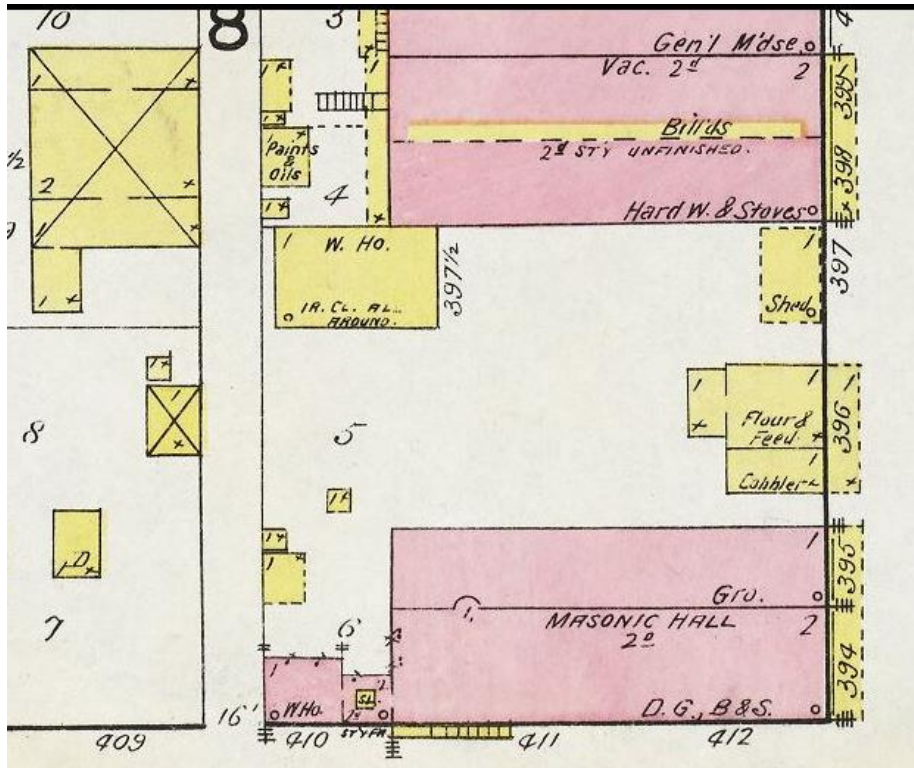


Figure 5: 1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – Theater building lot 6, block 8.

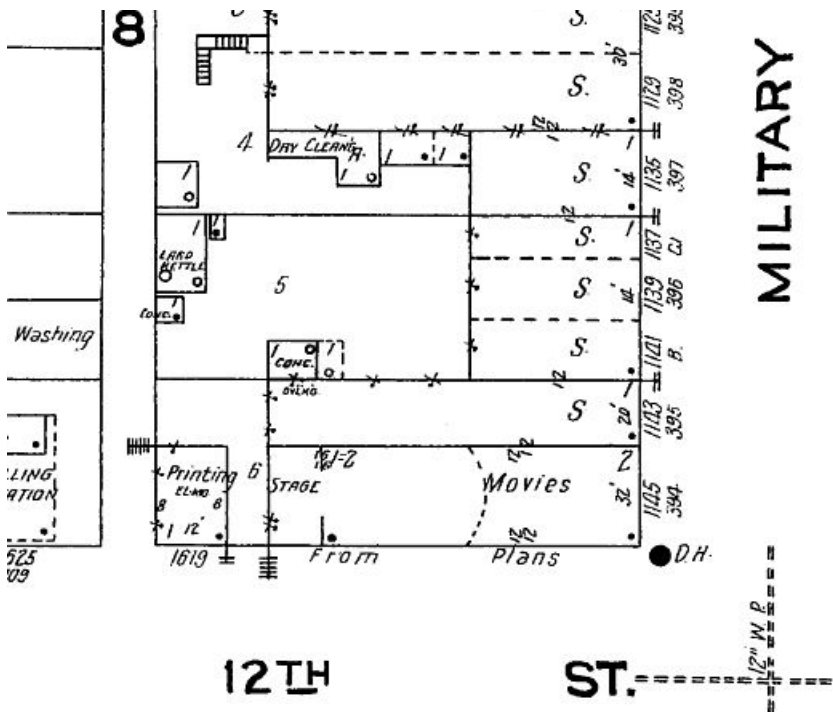


Figure 6: Cooper Dry Goods, 1145 N Military Avenue, Baxter Springs. Ca. 1900.

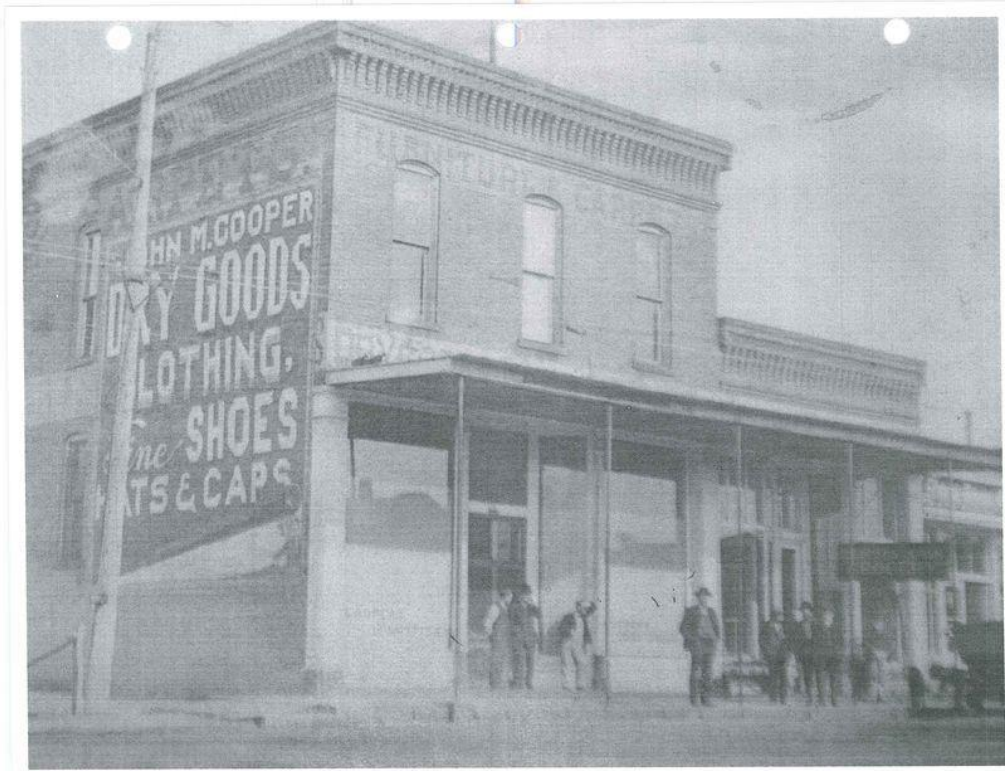


Figure 7: Ritz Theatre, 1145 N Military Avenue, Baxter Springs. Ca. 1940-45 (?).



Figure 8: 1929, *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*.


RITZ THEATRE

"Baxter's Popular Playhouse"

Today and Tuesday

The Incomparable Greta

Her most fiery romance!



GARBO

in

"THE SINGLE STANDARD"

With NILS ASTER


Like a jewel in a setting of gems, Garbo's unique fascination shines through this fiery romance!
Never has the flaming Greta Garbo appeared to better advantage. Her languorous beauty, her fiery love-making—
—shines all here in this new triumph!

IS THERE A SINGLE STANDARD In Love for Men and Women?

WEDNESDAY

PEP!

RED HOT YOUTH AT ITS ZIPPIEST PACE! YOU'LL RAVE OVER THIS GREAT PICTURE!



COLUMBIA PICTURES presents

The COLLEGE COQUETTE

with RUTH TAYLOR, WILLIAM COLLIER, Jr.

Directed by EDUARD SEIDENBERG

with RUTH TAYLOR, WM. COLLIER, Jr., JOBYNA RALSTON

Figure 9: October 7, 1929, *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*.

Ritz Theatre
BAXTER'S POPULAR PLAYHOUSE

Monday and Tuesday Only
THE BIG METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER SUPER-PRODUCTION THAT TOOK BROADWAY BY STORM

"OUR MODERN MAIDENS"



With
Joan Crawford
Douglas Fairbanks Jr.
and an
All-Star Cast.
Better than
"Our Dancing Daughters"

YOUTH—
FRIVOLITY—

Unusual Situations — It Will Startle You!

Wednesday



DENNY
That's My Daddy
A FRED NEWMAYER Production
A UNIVERSAL SUPER-COMEDY

Never Lie to a Speed Cop!
Denny did—and his resulting troubles will make your ribs jostle each other in glee!
THE OCEAN ROARS
So will you when you see "That's My Daddy"

Figure 10: Ca. 1920s advertisement, *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*.

Ritz Theatre
12th and Military
The latest and best in Photo Plays



Where your money buys both courtesy
and comfort with entertainment.

Watch for the Sign



Phone 114

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Figure 11: 1940 advertisement, *Baxter Springs Citizen and Herald*.

**Rural Box
Holder**

Sec. 562, P. L. & R.
U. S. Postage
1c PAID
BAXTER SPGS., KAN.
Permit No. 29

The RITZ Theatre

15c Till 7:30

FRIDAY ONLY, APRIL 12
Frankie Darro and Marjorie Reynolds in
"Chasing Trouble"

SATURDAY ONLY, APRIL 13
The Three Mesquiteers in
"Pioneers of the West"

SUNDAY and MONDAY, APRIL 14 and 15



Thrown out of school! Jeered as the village nitwit! Fired from his first job! Laughed at by all! The Wizard of Menlo Park invents new ways of getting into trouble!

Mickey **ROONEY**
Young
TOM EDISON
with **GEORGE BAINTER • BANCROFT**
Virginia Weidler • Eugene Pallette.

SUNDAY FEATURE STARTS 2:20 - 4:42 - 7:00 - 9:25

FRI., SAT. and SUN., APR. 19, 20 and 21
Spencer Tracy and Hedy Lamarr in
"I Take This Woman"

Always Plenty of Short Subjects

National Program & Printing Co
