

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 15 1980

MAY 27 1980

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building and Madison Theater

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

36 Park Avenue West

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Mansfield

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

17-John Ashbrook

STATE

Ohio

CODE

039

COUNTY

Richland

CODE

139

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☒ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☒ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Madison Township Memorial Association

STREET & NUMBER

36 Park Avenue West

CITY, TOWN

Mansfield

STATE

Ohio 44902

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office, County Administration Bldg.

STREET & NUMBER

50 Park Ave. East

CITY, TOWN

Mansfield

STATE

Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Ohio Historic Inventory

DATE

February 1979

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Ohio State University Mansfield Campus

CITY, TOWN

Mansfield

STATE

Ohio

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

—EXCELLENT

—DETERIORATED

☒ UNALTERED

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☒ GOOD

—RUINS

—ALTERED

—MOVED DATE _____

—FAIR

—UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building and the Madison Theater is a complex of two joined structures which are located on the major east-west street in downtown Mansfield. The buildings are closely bordered by commercial structures. Directly east is the twelve story Farmer's Bank Building, while to the west are a series of smaller two story commercial buildings. At the rear is a narrow alley and parking lot.

The Memorial Building is the earlier of the two structures. It is a three story masonry building, faced with rock faced sandstone and topped with a large steeply pitched hip roof. It is Richardsonian Romanesque in style. The building is nearly square in plan and has a sixty foot frontage along Park Avenue West. A massive tower on the southeast corner is the dominant feature of the building. Beneath the tower is the main entrance porch, reached by a broad flight of stone steps through a large round arched opening. The arched opening is repeated along the front of the building by two similar sized openings filled with large plate glass windows. The second floor features a series of large rectangular windows of great height spaced closely together. The third or attic story features a Palladian window in the gable end at the Southwest, arched window openings on the corner tower and a shed dormer window in the center. The exterior has been sandblasted and aluminum storm windows have been added. Otherwise the building's exterior has been well preserved.

On the first floor, the entrance leads into an octagonal foyer with a domed ceiling. A series of doors leads into several spacious parlors on the first floor which are used for small meetings and as reading rooms. To the north of the foyer is a large open stairway with ornate oak woodwork. The second floor has very tall ceilings and houses the largest meeting room in the building. This meeting room occupies well over half the floor and has a shallow barrel vaulted ceiling. The floor also has a kitchen and storage areas. The top floor, located under the massive hip roof, is a single open space filled with display cabinets and memorabilia. Much of the display is of a military nature, but there are also extensive natural history and archeological collections. The museum is presently closed to the public. The basement, which has been remodeled in recent years, houses a township meeting room, organizational meeting rooms and storage.

The Madison Theater is a large art deco structure constructed with reinforced concrete. It occupies the site of an earlier opera house, which was constructed with the Memorial Building. Most of the Madison Theater lies concealed behind the Memorial Building. Only a low one story wing extends along the east end of the Memorial Building, sandwiched between it and the bank building, to form a twenty foot frontage along Park Avenue West. The theater front forms a high parapet of buff colored brick and limestone and supports a large vertical marquee in addition to the traditional canopy-type theater marquee. These marquees, which have been well maintained and still have sequential lighting, are a major exterior attraction. The remainder of the theater's exterior is simply finished with exposed concrete.

Inside, a long theater lobby, recently redecorated in the art deco style, extends to the theater itself, located behind the Memorial Building. The auditorium is oriented with the stage at the rear with rear lobbies on the first and second floors. The first floor lobby features a series of Egyptian-like arches with cloud-like fresco work on the walls and ceiling. The second floor lobby is a grander space, however, with a tall spacious ceiling and ornate plasterwork. It leads into large men's and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building and Madison Theater, Mansfield, Richland Co., OH

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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women's lounges, each in a good state of preservation with their original furniture intact. The auditorium is a large cavernous space, seating about 1500 people altogether, with a main floor and a large balcony. The proscenium arch is rectangular and is ornamented by rich assortment of angular designs, possibly Mayan in inspiration and typical of the art deco period. Plaster relief work, accented by gold leaf, highlights the walls and ceiling of the auditorium. A large rosette is in the center of the ceiling, but this auditorium does not possess a large chandelier. An orchestra pit is located in front of the stage, which is quite shallow. It has sufficient height for flying scenes. Alongside the stage are a series of small dressing rooms on several levels and below the stage is the boiler room for both buildings.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1888-89; 1929-31

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Oscar Cobb, Chicago; John Eberhard,
N.Y.C.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Madison Theater and the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building constitute a major architectural landmark in downtown Mansfield that also has a rich history as the setting for an impressive display of memorabilia, a meeting place for veterans groups, and as a major public assembly hall that has held live shows and films. These two connected buildings were constructed with public funds and remain a valuable resource for the people of Mansfield and Richland County.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building was conceived as a monument to Civil War veterans that would also function as a place for public gatherings and to house the newly formed public library and museum. The Memorial Building was to be patterned after Toledo's recently completed structure which was hailed as the first of its kind in the country, not only a beautiful monument to the honored dead, but of material benefit to the city. A special act of The Ohio Legislature and the approval of a \$40,000 bond issue by the voters in 1887 enabled this building to be constructed. Oscar Cobb, who had recently designed Wellington's ornate town hall and opera house, was the architect for the building. Dedication ceremonies were held in the opera house on October 2, 1889. The rear portion of the building was an opera hall which seated 1,100 people. The revenues derived from rental of the opera hall were sufficient to cover the expenses of the veterans' organizations, the public library, the museum and other functions housed in the front section. In fact, a sizeable surplus was built up.

In 1908, the public library moved to new quarters in a separate building on Mulberry Street. On the night of February 10, 1929, a disastrous fire swept the opera house, leveling it and damaging other nearby buildings. Two people were killed by collapsing walls in what was Mansfield's worst fire. Fortunately, a heavy fire wall prevented the front section of the building from suffering more than minor damage. Almost immediately, work began on rebuilding the opera house. John Eberhard, prominent New York theater architect, furnished the plans for the \$172,000 art deco structure. It was completed in 1931. Named the Madison after the township's name, this theater proved to be a successful operation.

The museum on the third floor, long an attraction, not only for its collection of battle flags and memorabilia from the Civil War, but for its extensive display of historical material on Richland County, was finally closed in 1955 by the state fire marshall. The collection still exists but is not open to the public. In recent years, both the theater and the memorial building have experienced a decline in their use. Active work on restoration of the theater is well underway and plans are being discussed for future use of the memorial building that will give it a public use. In the past, the buildings were the center for public entertainment and enrichment. Now, these historic buildings have potential for revitalizing the downtown by serving as a focal point for cultural and entertainment activities.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mansfield Daily Shield and Banner, Oct. 3, 1889, p. 3.
Stanfield, Virgil, "Mansfield That Was", News Journal, Aug. 23, 1970, p. 5E.
Duff, William A., History of North Central Ohio, 1931, vol. 1, p. 502.

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Mansfield North, Ohio

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 371950 4512880

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

E

G

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D

F

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property consists of lot 131 of the original town plat of Mansfield. Located on the lot are two buildings which share two common walls.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Steven McQuillin, Regional Preservation Officer

ORGANIZATION

Ohio State University Mansfield Campus

DATE

June 1979

STREET & NUMBER

1680 University Drive

TELEPHONE

(419) 755-4011

CITY OR TOWN

Mansfield

STATE

Ohio 44906

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

David L. Rusk

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

4/3/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/21/80

ATTEST:

William H. Bratman
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

5.13.80

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

SOLDIERS and SAILORS MEMORIAL BUILDING and MADISON THEATER
Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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date entered MAY 27 1980

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The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building is an excellent example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, the only major non-religious building in downtown Mansfield which is constructed in this style. Its rock face sandstone walls provide a color and texture which differentiate this building from its surrounding commercial structures, which are largely of brick with smooth planar surfaces. The profile of this building, with its tall corner tower, three part facade and large hip roof, towers above most of its neighbors and contrasts with their flat roofs. The memorial building has its principal floor above the street level and is reached by a broad flight of steps into an entrance portal beneath the corner tower. It also has no display windows like its neighboring commercial buildings. Thus the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building achieves the status of a visual landmark because of its unique physical characteristics which contrast with surrounding buildings.

While the Madison Theater has the most limited frontage of any building in the downtown, it is one of downtown Mansfield's largest buildings and is its best example of Art Deco architecture. The front, which consists of a marquee with entrances below and a stepped parapet above, is finely crafted but not particularly monumental. Instead, the grandeur and lavish ornamentation is reserved for interior spaces such as the lobbies, restrooms and auditorium. This building is one of the last of the grand movie palaces to be built in Ohio and is an extremely rare example of contemporary Art Deco design, as opposed to more traditional architectural detailing found in most theaters of this era. It remains one of the very few large theater buildings to be built in a medium size Ohio city.

These two buildings are nominated together because they are physically connected, are under the same public ownership, and have a history of operation as a joint center for public meetings, displays and office space. Structurally, the two buildings are joined along two walls. For fire safety reasons, no interior connections exist. They share the same mechanical systems. The buildings were constructed with public funds and are operated jointly by a public board for various community and social functions. Historically, the Madison Theater replaces a large auditorium on the same site which was built as part of the memorial building complex, but was destroyed by fire in 1929.

Property

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building and Madison Theater

State

Oh - Richland

Working Number

4-15-80 1145

TECHNICAL

Photos

3

Maps

1

CONTROL

HISTORIAN

1888-89 Richardsonian ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
Romanesque Memorial Building and the accept
companion 1929-31 art deco theatre (which Braham
replaced the original [presumably Richardsonian] 5.13.80
theatre which burned - are major downtown
landmarks formed a major downtown complex
for entertainment and educational facilities.
Deco theatre is under restoration.

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

accept
Braham
5.13.80

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up

Federal Register Entry

2.3.81

Send-back

Re-submit

Entered

MAY 27 1980



1. Soldiers & Sailors Mem. Bldg. & Madison Theater
2. Mansfield, Ohio
3. Steven McQuillin *Richland OH*
4. June 1979
5. M-OSU
6. Southwest corner, looking northeast
7. SSMBMT-1

2/3

MAY 27 1980

APR 15 1980



1. Soldiers & Sailors Mem. Bldg. & Madison Theater
2. Mansfield, Ohio
3. Steven McQuillin
4. June 1979
5. M-OSU
6. Theater front, looking north
7. SSMBMT-2

Richland Co.

1/3

MAY 27 1980

APR 15 1980



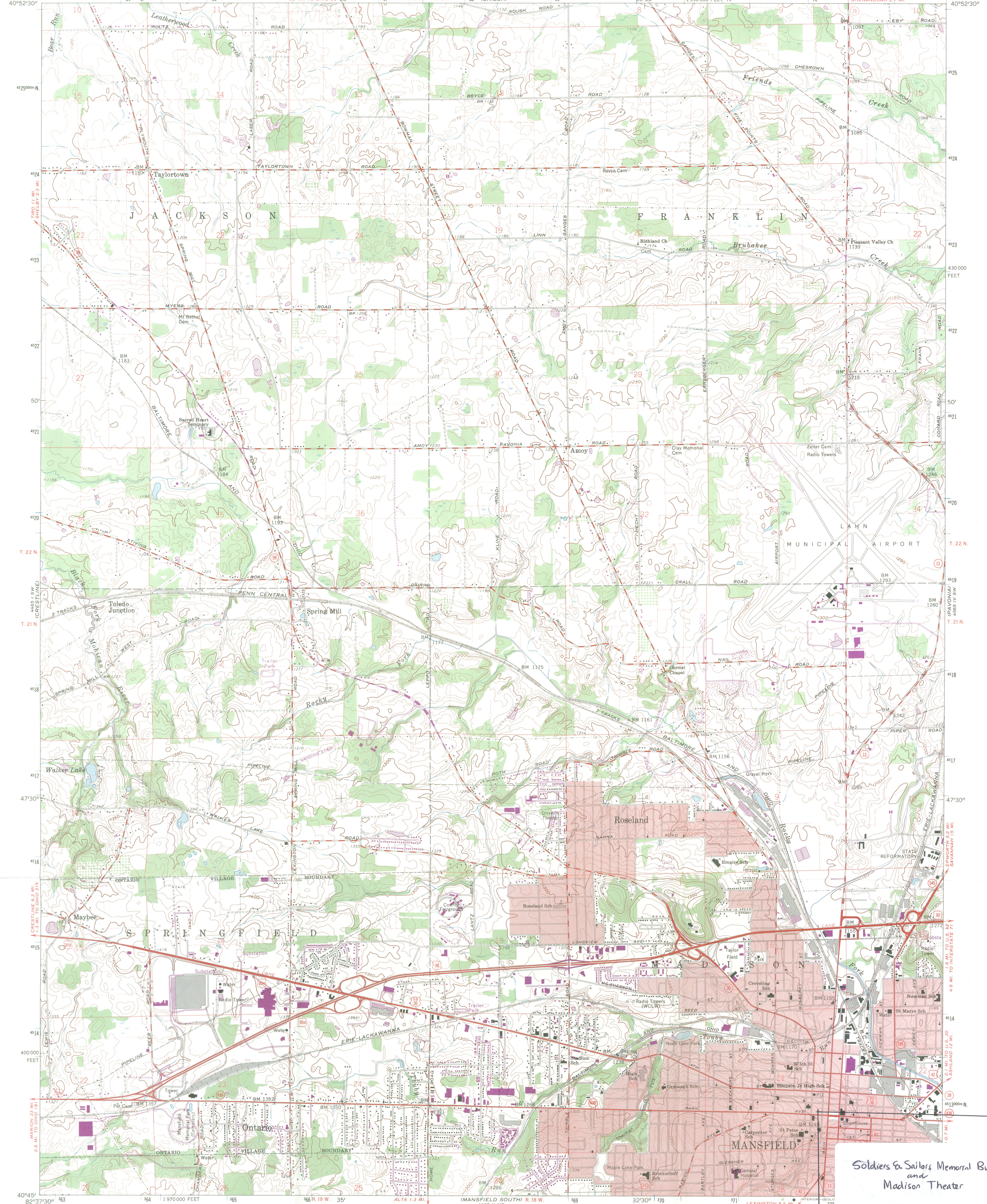
1. Soldiers & Sailors Mem. Bldg. & Madison Theater
2. Mansfield, Ohio
3. Steven McQuillin
4. June 1979
5. M-OSU
6. Theater interior, looking toward stage
7. SSMBMT-3

Richland co

MAY 27 1980

APR 15 1980

3/3



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE OHIO

Date Entered MAY 27 1980

Name

Location

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building and
Madison Theater

Mansfield
Richland County

North Sandusky Street Historic District

Tiffin
Seneca County

Also Notified

Honorable Howard M. Metzenbaum

Honorable John H. Glenn, Jr.
Honorable John M. Ashbrook
Honorable Delbert L. Latta

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. David Brook
The Ohio Historical Society
Interstate 71 at 17th Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211

NR

Byers/bjr

6/4/80

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