UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Schine's Holland Theatre

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OHIO, Logan

DATE RECEIVED: 11/01/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/18/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 01000561

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 12.18.13

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

NPS Form 10-900

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

01000561

RECEIVED 2280
NOV 01 2013
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Schine's Holland Theatre

Other names/site number: Holland Theatre (LOG-240-07)

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 125 East Columbus Street

City or town: Bellefontaine State: Ohio County: Logan

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national X statewide ___local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B X C ___D

Barbara Pewen — Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for Inventory & Registration — August 13, 2013

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Ohio Historic Preservation Office, Ohio Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

The Holland Theatre retains the historic appearance and integrity it possessed at the time it was listed in the National Register in 2001. The theatre's architectural and historic significance is still conveyed through the historic character-defining features, details, materials, and spaces as described in the original nomination.

Since the original nomination was prepared for the Holland Theatre the following changes have been made to the theatre building. The murals that existed on the far ends of the ceiling in the lobby have been restored. The theatre's interior ceiling has been painted the blue color as it was when it was built and the cloud machine has been reinstalled. The original lighting in the main theatre has been returned to the way it was before the multiplex theatres were created in the 1980s. Replacement parts for mechanical works on the two of the windmills along the walls have been installed and are now in working order. All of these repairs and renovation work has added to returning the Holland Theatre to its historic appearance and functioning as an atmospheric theatre.

The Schine's Holland Theatre in Bellefontaine, Ohio is significant at the statewide level. The early 20th century "atmospheric theatre" design of the Holland Theatre compares equally with the three atmospheric theatres in Ohio listed in the National Register at a state level of significance. These theatres include the Civic Theatre in Akron; the Palace Theatre in Marion; and the Palace Theatre in Canton, Ohio. The Holland Theatre stands out in comparison to these other statewide examples most notably through its Dutch atmospheric design, noted by the Theatre Historical Society of America, "as the only known example of this type in the United States." The theatre is the design of Peter M. Hulsken, a regionally-recognized architect from Lima, Ohio who designed thematic and atmospheric theatres throughout Ohio for the Schine Circuit Theatres, a national theatre chain operating in six states (Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania) during the early to mid-20th century.

During the 1920s the movie industry grew and expanded in popularity. With it came the development of a new wave of theatre construction, theatres designed specifically to show motion pictures. These theatres were designed to cater to a better audience experience in viewing motion pictures. Characteristics included all of the seats facing forward and often a single deep balcony to provide more seating all offering a better view of the flat screen. Typically these theatre designs were larger in their capacity than earlier performance-based theatres. As a result the theatre designs as they often doubled in their seating capacity traded the intimacy of live theatre with designs emphasizing size and grandeur. The movie palaces of the 1920s became richer in details and special effects with exotic decorating themes, organs, dramatic colored cove lighting, and the introduction of what became known as the atmospheric theatre. Atmospheric theatre designs transported movie-goers to fantastic foreign settings such as Moorish palaces, Mediterranean gardens, lovely outdoor amphitheatres, and quaint village settings. The character-defining atmospheric effect was the interior creating an outdoor setting complete with floating clouds projected onto the sky depicted upon the auditorium ceiling and pierced with pin-hole lighting to replicate stars.

One of the leading architects nationally attributed with the development of the fanciful atmospheric theatre design concept is John Eberson (1875-1954) from St. Louis, Missouri. Eberson designed some 100 theatres across the country including several key atmospheric theaters in Ohio communities.

A statewide examination of atmospheric theatres in Ohio identified nine known examples ranging in construction dates from 1926 to 1931. The following is short summary listed chronologically by known construction dates:

- The Palace Theatre located in Canton, Ohio is the earliest atmospheric theatre identified in the state. This venue opened November 26, 1926. It was designed by John Eberson with Spanish Moorish décor of a baroque garden setting with a twinkling star-lit night time sky. The theatre was closed in 1970 but was saved from the wrecking ball by a concerned community group. It remains open and hosts over 300 events per year. (NR: 79001949)
- The State Theatre was opened in Springfield, Ohio in November of 1927 as part of the Chakeres chain of theatres. The architect was Charles Dawley who worked from a design by John Eberson.

The design was semi-atmospheric with a Moorish style, but it had ceiling chandeliers instead of the cloud and star-lit sky ceiling treatment. This theatre was closed in 1990, but has since reopened and now shows silent movies and houses live entertainment.

- The Westwood Theatre in Lakewood, Ohio opened in 1927 as the Hilliard Square Theatre. This theatre was closed in 1988 and now stands empty. The historic integrity of interior is unknown.
- The Granada Theatre was opened in 1927 in Cleveland, Ohio. The architect for this structure was Jack Allen Bialosky. The theatre was closed in 1969 and was demolished.
- The Palace Theatre in Marion, Ohio, was opened on August 30, 1928 and was designed by John Eberson. It had a Spanish Moorish inspiration with a "magnificent garden-like setting under starlit skies." The Palace remains open and is a home for the performing arts and also shows movies. (NR: 76001486)
- The Akron Civic Theatre was originally Lowe's Akron Theatre and was opened on April 20, 1929. The architect was John Eberson and the theatre had a Moorish/ Mediterranean style with clouds floating across a sky blue ceiling. The theatre was restored in 2000 and is currently used for concerts and movies. (NR: 73001537)
- The Paramount Theatre is located in Toledo, Ohio and was opened on February 16, 1929 with a French Renaissance style. This beautiful theatre was closed in 1963 and torn down in 1965.
- The Andalaus Theatre was built in 1931 in Cincinnati. It was closed in 1958 and demolished in 1999.
- The Schine's Holland Theatre was opened in the small, rural community of Bellefontaine, Ohio, on February 12, 1931. This theatre was designed by architect Peter M. Hulsken and is the only Dutch inspired atmospheric theatre in the United States.

In the days before the advent of television, in towns large and small, often the motion picture theatre was the hub of activity in a community and it served as a community meeting place. Such a venue was established in Bellefontaine, Ohio, in 1931 when the Schine Brothers of the Schine Circuit Theaters, with their architect Peter M. Hulsken of Lima, Ohio built the Holland Theatre. Though this was at the beginning of the Great Depression, community leaders saw this venture as a source of civic pride and hope for a better future for their community. It served to draw the farmers from the surrounding area into town on Friday nights and was a boon to the local economy. The Holland's brightly lit marquee shown out to a better future.

The Holland Theatre was different from all of the atmospheric theatres in Ohio. Not only was it built in a small, rural community, its design was unique. Designed by architect Peter M. Hulsken, a native of the Netherlands, the auditorium was inspired by his Dutch birth place. The design remains a one of a kind with no other Dutch atmospheric theatre known in the United States. The outside of the theatre boasts a stepped gable front and the Dutch cross bond pattern of bricks which would look at home on the streets of Amsterdam. The inside of the auditorium has a ceiling that looked like an evening sky, with twinkling stars and moveable clouds. The walls are adorned with a façade of windmills (whose sails

rotate), canal houses with lighted windows, and tulip filled window boxes. Shields from Dutch cities decorate the proscenium arch and the balcony and two majestic lions guard the stage. Nowhere else is a theatre known that transforms a small town in Ohio into an old street scene in Holland.

The Holland Theatre, like most old movie houses, fell on hard times with the advancement of technology. The Holland saw many owners, all of which tried to meet the needs of the public, with changes to the theatre. It was multiplexed in an attempt to compete with the newer theatres. Through it all the changes were made with respect to the theatre's design and the integrity of the design was maintained. In 1998 the Holland was closed as a movie house. It was feared that the Holland would fall to the wrecking ball.

In 1999, with the help of many concerned citizens and a group of gifted local junior high students, the wheels were set in motion to reopen and restore this beautiful structure. The Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc. was formed and with their hard work and the support of the community, even in this time of financial hardship, the Holland is thriving as a venue for the performing arts and a home for the visual arts. The fact that the Theatre is being restored and is active is a testament to the importance and historical significance of the Holland. It remains a vital cog in the heart of this small rural community. The Holland is a monument to our past and a significant part of our future.

Additional bibliographic sources:

Maddox, Diane, editor. *Built in the U.S.A, American Buildings from Airports to Zoos.* (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1985).

Maddox, Diane, editor. *Master Builders, A Guide to Famous American Architects*. (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1985).

Myers, Theodore B. "Palace Theatre," Marion, Marion County, Ohio. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1975.

Simmons, David. "Palace Theatre," Canton, Stark County, Ohio. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1978.

Wallace, William V. "Akron Civic Theatre," Akron, Summit County, Ohio. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1973.

Additional research conducted by Kristine Swisher, Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.

REC'D BY OHPO DEC 1 2 2000

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

ENTERED 5-25-01

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

REFNUM 01000561

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 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 (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Schine's Holland Theatre

other names/site number Holland Theatre (LOG-240-7)

2. Location

street & number 125 East Columbus Street n/a ☐ not for publication

city or town Bellefontaine n/a ☐ vicinity

state Ohio code OH county Logan code 091 zip code 43311

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Barbara Pavey Dept. Head Planning, Inventory & Registration April 16, 2001

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Ohio Historic Preservation Office -- OH SHPO

State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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:) Additional Documentation Approved

Carson N. Beall 12/18/13

Schine's Holland Theatre
Name of Property

Logan, OH
County and State

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	-0-	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	-0-	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/office building
WORK IN PROGRESS/theater

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/OTHER/Dutch Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Poured concrete
walls Steel frame with brick veneer
roof Membrane roof
other N/A

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Schine's Holland Theatre
Name of Property

Logan, OH
County and State

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.)

- ☐ **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.

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1931

Significant Dates

1931

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Peter M. Hulsken, architect, Lima, OH
Hoseler Bros., contractors, Tiffin, OH

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

_____

Schine's Holland Theatre
Name of Property

Logan, OH
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	265730	4471300
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

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 Jeffrey Darbee, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Benjamin D. Rickey & Co. date December, 2000

street & number 593 South Fifth Street telephone (614)221-0358

city or town Columbus state OH zip code 43206

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.

street & number P.O. Box 524 telephone Miles Armentrout 937-593-2010

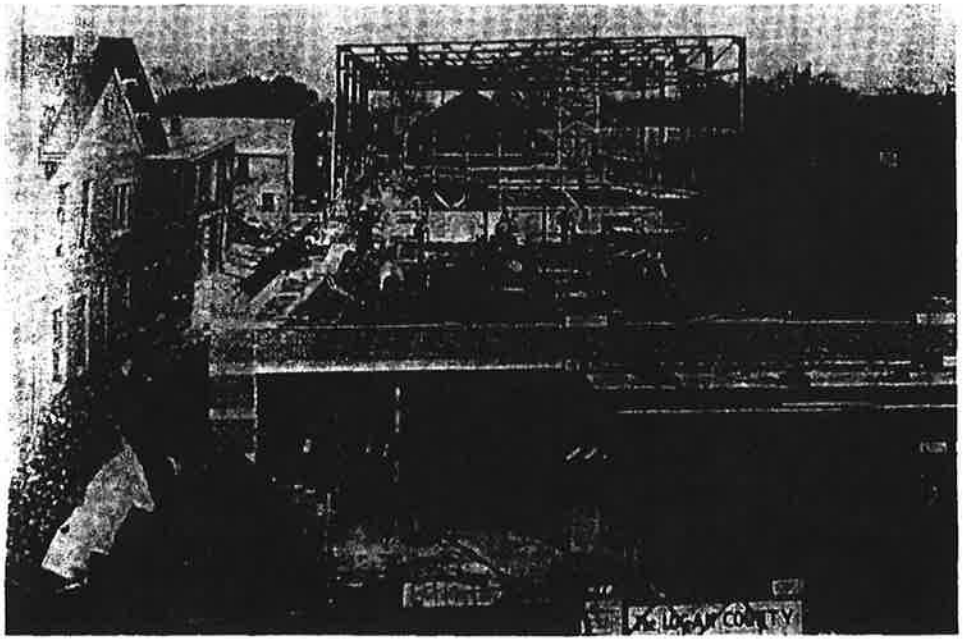
city or town Bellefontaine state OH zip code 43311

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

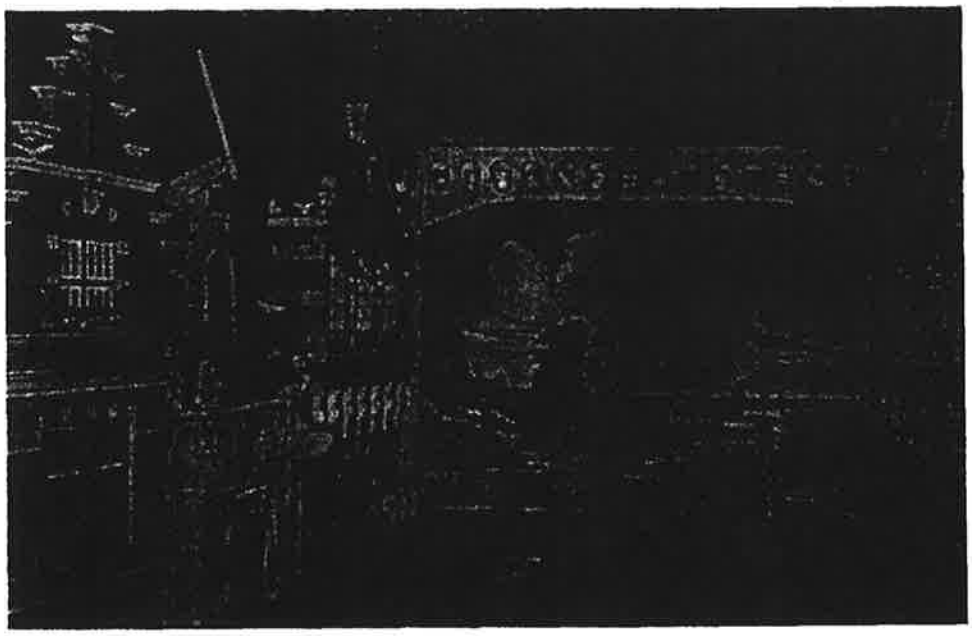
Schine's Holland Theatre was completed in 1931 as a unique type of "atmospheric" theater. Such theaters were popular in the early 20th century, striving to create the feel of an exotic, faraway setting through the use of small twinkling lights set in a dark blue ceiling, to simulate a starry night sky; "cloud machines" that projected images of moving clouds on the ceiling; and the use of architecture and artifacts of Spanish, Moorish, or Italian derivation to simulate village squares, old courtyards, or ancient city streets.

Unlike all other atmospheric theaters, Schine's Holland Theatre employed a Dutch motif described as "Dutch atmospheric." According to the Theatre Historical Society of America, it is the only known example of this type in the United States; it was the work of Peter Hulsken, an architect from Lima, Ohio, who was born in the Netherlands.

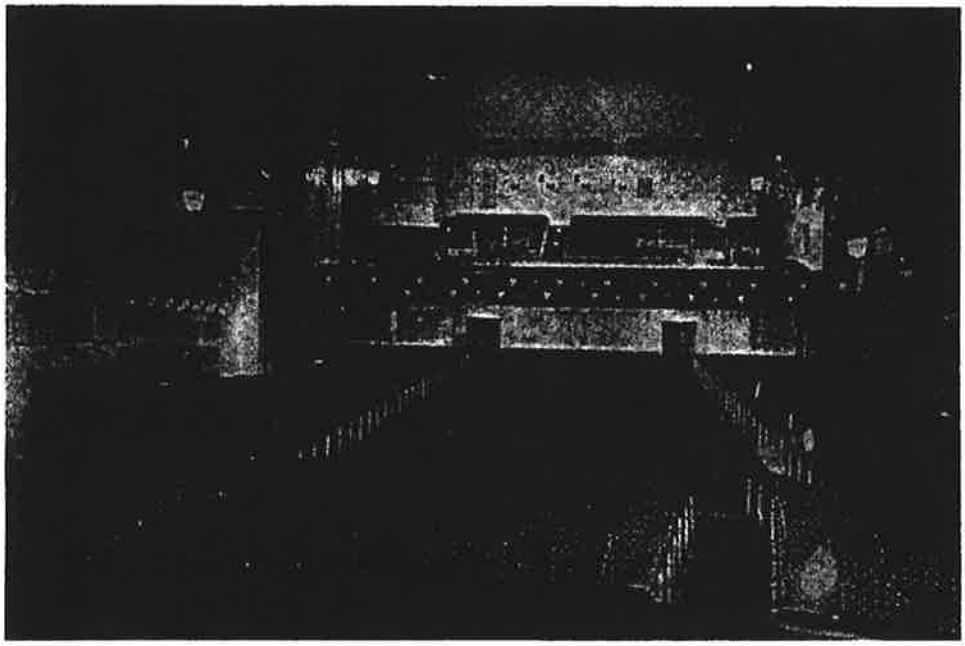


In the summer of 1930 construction was well underway on the new Holland Theatre in downtown Bellefontaine. This view looks north from Columbus Street and shows the steel framework of the auditorium in the background. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)

The Holland Theatre measures 66 by 220 feet and is located on East Columbus Street, just east of Main Street, the primary commercial artery in downtown Bellefontaine (pronounced "Bell-foun'-ten"), Ohio. Bellefontaine is the seat of Logan county, with a population of about 12,000, and the theater has a typical small-city setting (photo 1). While Main Street still has a fairly intact streetscape of continuous building facades and storefronts, the immediate setting of the Holland is more diffused, with newer buildings and parking lots having replaced many older structures. The Logan County Courthouse (NROHP, 1973) is located just to the south and west, across Columbus Street (photo 5), and nearby is the First Concrete Pavement in the United States (NROHP, 1974). Directly across Columbus Street is a modern low-rise commercial building. A contemporary bank building is just west of the theater, and to the east a much-altered commercial



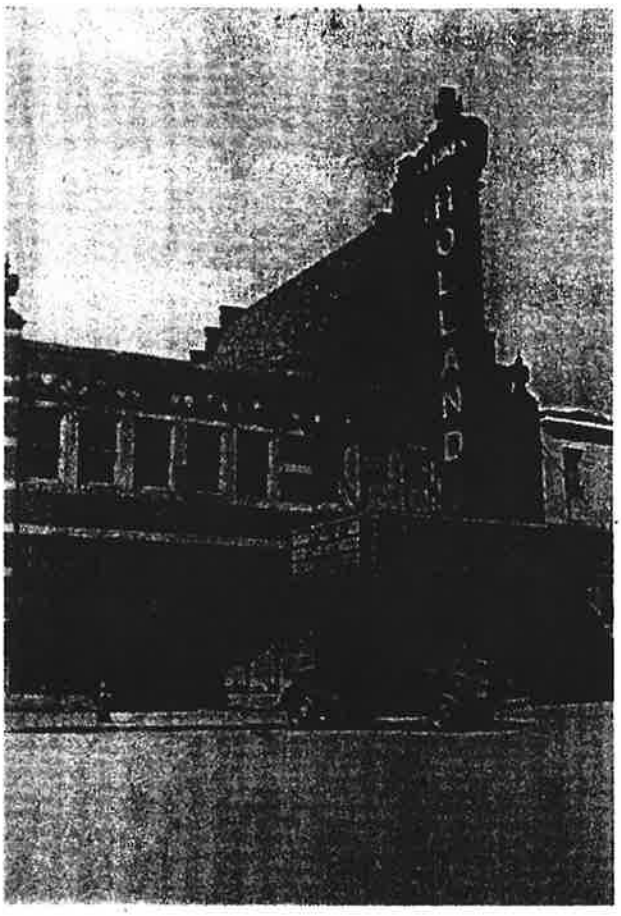
The completed theater is shown in this view looking north from the balcony. The decor included working streetlamps, rows of tulips, and windmill vanes turned by electric motors, as well as a scene of the Netherlands painted on the stage curtain. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)



Looking south from the stage of the completed theater, the Holland's "Dutch village" effect continued back past the front edge of the balcony. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)

building abuts the east wall of the theater's office/lobby block (photos 1-4). (This building is on a separate land parcel and is not included in this nomination.) Paved parking lots surround the theater's auditorium on the east, north and west (photos 2, 5, 6, and 7). The high, steeply-pitched gable roof and stepped gable of the office/lobby block make the Holland a distinctive part of its streetscape.

The Holland's design was the work of Peter Hulsken, an architect from Lima, Ohio. Hulsken practiced in Lima for some 40 years and designed schools, courthouses, industrial structures, banks, and fraternal lodge buildings. He also designed several theaters for The Schine Circuit Theatres, builders of the Holland.



Shown here in the late 1930s or the 1940s, the Holland had a very distinctive profile in downtown Bellefontaine. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)

The Holland's primary facade is on the south, along Columbus Street (photo 3). The building has a steel frame structure with a brick exterior wall. The brick in the front office/lobby block is laid in alternating header and stretcher courses, while that in the auditorium block is laid in common bond. The south elevation has two bays and an asymmetrical composition. The left bay contains two commercial storefronts on the first floor, with a band of five one-over-one windows on the second floor. The right bay contains the recessed theater entrance and a stairway to the second floor, with a band of five windows on the second floor. The second floor windows open into the

complex of offices once used by the Schine organizations as its Ohio headquarters. Above the right bay rises a distinctive stepped gable. This element strongly reinforces the Flemish, or "Dutch," design of the theater, together with the three piers that define the two bays; the arched bands of alternating brick and stone over the windows; the stone bands on the piers; the carved stone cartouches atop the piers; and the stone copings on the steps of the gable (photos 8, 9). The steeply-pitched slate roof is another distinctive element of this part of the building; it has a rear stepped gable which is mostly concealed from view and is much less ornamented than the front gable (photo 7).

In contrast to the facade of the office/lobby block of the building, the rest of the Holland's exterior is extremely plain and unadorned. None of the facade treatment is carried around the corner on the west (photo 4), and the entire auditorium block has no windows, just some ventilation louvers and exit doors.

When completed, the theater had both a suspended entrance marquee and a projecting lighted vertical sign above the marquee. Both are now gone (photos 3), the vertical sign at some time in the 1960s and the marquee at some later date. A ticket booth once stood in the recessed entry but also was removed at an unknown date.

The two commercial spaces in the left bay have been altered from their original appearances (photos 3 and 10), with changes to the storefronts, entrance doors, and interior finishes. The entry lobby runs along the east side of the first floor and is reached by three sets of double doors in the recessed entry (photo 11). To the left of these doors, a single door leads to the stairway to the second floor offices (photo 12). The corridors and offices on the second floor are of a very plain design, with little ornamentation (photos 13 and 14). This area retains its original circulation pattern, ceiling heights, doors, and windows.

The entry lobby retains its original flat ceiling, ceiling beams, poster cases, slate floor, recessed blind arches, and ornamental medallions (photo 15). The the entry lobby floor slopes upward from the entrance and enters the main foyer at that space's far eastern end. The foyer is a barrel-vaulted space (photo 16) that has retained its original volume, though its finishes have been altered. On the north wall of this space, a flight of stairs leads through double doors to the paired balcony stairs, while wide rectangular openings at either end of the north wall lead into the auditorium. The original decor in the foyer included wainscoting in simulation of a Dutch "great hall," with reproductions of Dutch Masters paintings, end wall lunettes, and the coat of arms of

Holland over the balcony stairway. All these elements have been either removed or painted over, with the exception of the wainscoting, which has been painted but is otherwise intact.

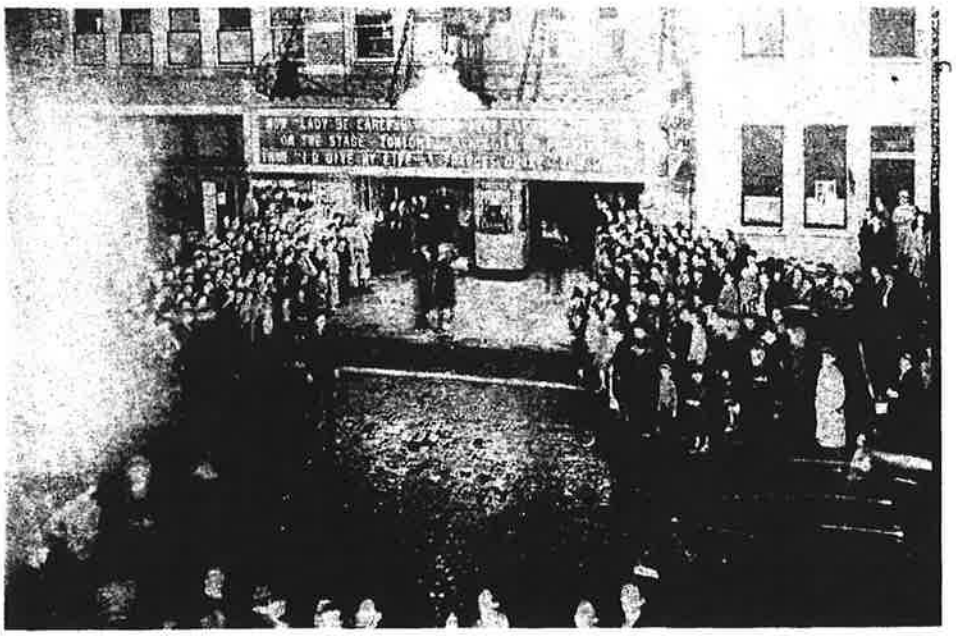
The 1000-seat auditorium (400 in the balcony, 600 on the main floor) is the Holland's most compelling space. Although it has undergone numerous changes (it was "multiplexed" into 5 theater spaces in the late 1970s, and the cloud machine has been removed), it retains major elements such as the Dutch village architecture on the side walls (photos 17, 18, 19); Art Deco aisle standards on the seats (photo 20); and painted heraldic panels on the face of the balcony and around the proscenium (photos 17 and 21). The 1970s multiplex partitioning is being removed by the current owners (photo 22). These walls separated the balcony from the rest of the auditorium, so when the work is done the entire space will be returned to its full volume. The projection booth survives, somewhat altered, above the rear wall of the balcony (photo 23).

The architect for the Holland, Peter Hulsken, was born in the Netherlands and chose a design distinct from that of any other atmospheric theater. The auditorium was intended to give the viewer the sense of walking down the street of a Dutch village. The architect drew the designs for the various building facades from his own knowledge and experience of actual buildings, including his birthplace. He even copyrighted the design, on November 15, 1930.

Working back from the proscenium, the first three facades are the same on both walls; the first facade is based on a building in Veere in the Netherlands; the exitways are designed after a gate in Eukhuizen and are surmounted by windmills with motorized vanes that slowly turn; and the next facades, which have stepped gables, represent Hulsken's birthplace in Arnhem. The other facades, which vary in design, are drawn from other cities. The effect is further carried through by means of lighted windows in the "houses," dimly-lit streetlamps on the building walls, and rows of tulips that are perennially in bloom. Lions in various regal poses provide appropriate security, as do ornamented "city walls" that extend up into the balcony, topped by parapets and copings and ornamental urns.

Now nearing its 70th birthday, Schine's Holland Theatre has endured some unfortunate changes but has survived remarkably intact; its primary ornamental elements have retained a high degree of integrity; and it stands as an intriguing and unique monument to the era of the movie palace.

Schine's Holland Theatre is qualified for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as a unique variant of the "atmospheric theater" popular in the early 20th century. Opened in 1931, the Holland is the only known 20th century theater in the United States designed in a "Dutch" motif. It retains a high level of integrity that strongly communicates a sense of the time and place in which it was created.



This 1936 view, which shows either a special event or a movie premiere, gives a sense of the Holland's importance in the social and economic life of Bellefontaine. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)

Schine Circuit Theaters -- Background History

The Holland, which is located just east of the principal north-south commercial street in downtown Bellefontaine, Ohio, was built and operated by The Schine Circuit Theatres. This chain owned some 150 theaters in six states (Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Ohio,

and Pennsylvania) during the early and middle 20th century. The company located its theaters in small- and medium-sized cities, often owning two, three, or more theaters in a single city.

The Schine theater empire was founded by two brothers, J. Myer (1891-1971) and Louis W. (1893-1956) Schine. Arriving as boys from Latvia in 1902, the Schine brothers settled with their family in Jamestown, New York, and immediately began their working lives. Myer took a job as a mill hand, while Louis worked as a railroad "candy butcher" on trains in and out of Buffalo.

As young adults, the brothers at first took different paths. Louis joined the army in 1914 when World War I broke out, and Myer purchased a nickelodeon in Syracuse, New York. that same year. Finding that attendance and revenues were far less than anticipated, Myer was about to leave the entertainment business when he learned of a theater for sale in Gloversville, New York, a small town some distance east of Syracuse. Though the theater, called the Hippodrome, turned out to be the converted upper floor of a Masonic temple, Schine completed the purchase from the owner, Harry King. King was a former vaudeville performer who would stay with the Schine organization until his death in 1965.

Myer Schine renovated the makeshift theater and re-opened it as the New Hippodrome; he was rewarded by almost instant success. Upon his return from the army in 1918, Louis joined Myer in the business, and very quickly the brothers built their theater empire through leases and acquisition of individual theaters and whole theater chains, as well as by construction of new theaters in promising locations. A new theater the Schines built in Gloversville, the Glove, included office space that became the headquarters for the entire operation.

The Schine Circuit Theatres eventually had about 150 theaters in six states. New York had the largest number, with 28 in the Albany Division and 41 in the Buffalo Division. The Ohio Division had the next highest number, a total of 30 theaters; Pennsylvania had about 20; Kentucky had 17; Maryland had 11; and Delaware had three. The Schine chain was known for introducing innovations such as intensive training for theater managers, something offered by few other theater chains; it was among the first to install sound equipment and, later, Cinemascope; and, according to Myer's son, the Schines were among the first to install concession stands, the result of Myer's having noticed a pushcart vendor outside his Gloversville theater selling snacks to arriving patrons. Myer served on the board of Universal Studios, and famous actors frequently were seen visiting in Gloversville.

The Ohio Division included 30 theaters in 16 Ohio cities; nearly all of these cities were county seats: Ashland, Athens, Bellefontaine, Bucyrus, Delaware, Fostoria, Kent, Medina, Mt. Vernon, Norwalk, Piqua, Ravenna, Shelby, Tiffin, Van Wert, and Wooster. Athens had three Schine theaters; and, except for Medina, Norwalk, and Shelby, all the others had two.

Of the two in Bellefontaine, the Strand and the Holland, the Holland was the only one built by the Schine organization. The Strand still stands on South Main Street south of the courthouse and is in use as a retail space by a flooring company.

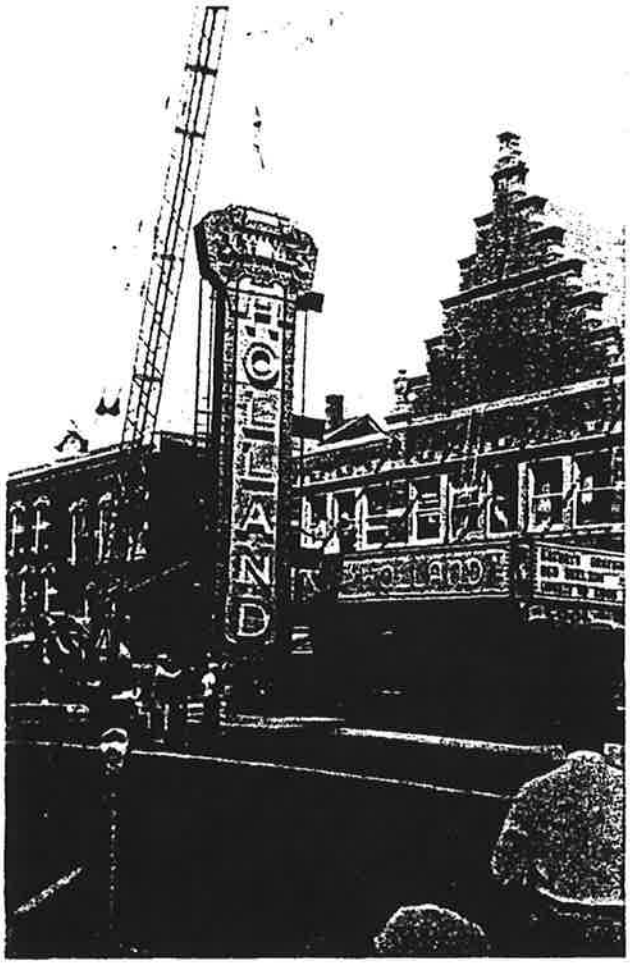
Early in 1930, the Bellefontaine Chamber of Commerce was occupied with trying to get a new theater built in the city. The Chamber was unable to reach agreement with various theater promoters until Myer Schine stepped forward and offered to build the theater. Working with the speed characteristic of construction projects of the time, the contractor, Hoseler Brothers of Tiffin, had the building ready for occupancy On February 12, 1931.

Peter M. Hulsken, Architect

Peter M. Hulsken of Lima, Ohio, was the theater's architect. He was born in 1881 in Arnhem in the Netherlands and attended the Royal Academy in Amsterdam and graduated from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He came to the United States in 1905 and worked in the office of Albert Kahn in Detroit, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1915. Hulsken worked in Lima for 40 years, until his death at 67 in 1949, the result of complications from a fractured hip suffered in a fall. Northwest Ohio did not have a large number of architects in the early 20th century, and Hulsken was among the most prominent. He designed numerous public and private buildings, several of them theaters for the Schine organization. In addition, he was architect for Otis Hospital in Celina (NR 11/25/80), and in Lima was responsible for the 1914 Thomas Building; the BPOE #54 of 1947; the Ohio Theatre (a Schine theater); the 1909 Eagles' Lodge; and the St. James Flats.

Hulsken apparently intended that his work on the Holland should be the most memorable, or perhaps the most personal, of his theater work. The unique design he developed for the building, and particularly for the auditorium, carried the Dutch theme out in a way that contained both historical references -- depictions of actual buildings he himself knew, including his birthplace -- and bits of whimsy such as the guardian lions, the whirling windmills, and the undying tulips.

Of the 30 Schine Circuit theaters in Ohio, the Theatre Historical Society of America has identified 4 that had been demolished as of early 1999, in Ashland, Delaware, Tiffin,



An unfortunate occurrence was the mid-1960s removal of the Holland's original sign. The marquee was removed by a later owner in the 1980s. (Source: Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc.)

and Van Wert. In addition, one has recently been demolished in Fostoria. Of the others, a few are known to be in fair or good condition; some are used as theaters or cultural centers (Ashland, Delaware, Norwalk, Tiffin), while others are in other commercial uses (Bellefontaine Strand, Shelby, Van Wert). Still others are deteriorated or fire-damaged, and the status of the rest is not currently known.

The Schine organization operated the Holland Theatre until 1966, after which time it was operated as a movie theater by various owners until the mid-1990s. The current owner acquired the theater in late December of 1999. The Holland is now in the hands of a non-profit owner whose sole purpose is to restore as much of the theater's missing character as possible and to make the building into a cultural center for its community. The Holland is fortunate also that it has survived with so much of its original design, materials, and finishes intact. It still impresses the viewer as much as it did on opening day. It was built as a small-town theater serving a local market, but it was unique in 1931 and it is unique today.

9. Bibliographic References

History of the Holland Theatre, Bellefontaine, Ohio. Undated typescript incoporating information from the February 11, 1931 Special Edition of the Bellefontaine *Examiner* and other data about the Holland Theatre.

Noonan, Karen C. "The Golden Era of J. Myer and Louis W. Schine and the Schine Circuit Theatres," *Marquee,* n.v., n.d. (*Marquee* is the journal of the Theatre Historical Society of America.)

Noonan, Karen C. *Schine Theater Listings.* Tabular list dated February 8, 1999 containing locations and status of all Schine Circuit theaters except those in Pennsylvania, giving city, condition, and other data.

Personal interview with Jerry Pennell, Holland Theatre archivist with Logan County Landmark Preservation, Inc., December 7, 2000.

Various issues of the Bellefontaine (Ohio) *Examiner* and the Sidney (Ohio) *Daily News*, between 1996 and 2000.

10. Geographical Data

Boundary Description:

Situated in the County of Logan, in the State of Ohio, and in the City of Bellefontaine, Township of Lake, and bounded and described as follows:

PARCEL I: Being all of Lot Number one Hundred Sixty-Three (163) as the same is known and designated on the recorded plat of said city.

PARCEL II: Being part of Lot Number One Hundred Seventy-Two (172) in the City of Bellefontaine, Ohio. Beginning at the northwest corner of Lot No. One Hundred Seventy-Two (172) in the City of Bellefontaine; thence south along the west line of said lot, 143.7 feet; thence east parallel to East Columbus Avenue, 11.0 feet to a point; thence north parallel to the west line of said lot, 143.7 feet to the north line of said Lot No. 172; thence west along the north line of said Lot No. 172, 11.00 feet to the place of beginning.

PARCEL III: Being part of Lot Number one Hundred Seventy-Two (172) in the City of Bellefontaine, Ohio: Beginning at a point in the north line of said Lot No. 172, 11.0 feet east of the northwest corner thereof; thence south parellel to the west line of said lot, 143.7 feet to a point; thence east 12.0 feet, parallel with East Columbus Avenue, to a point; thence north 143.7 feet, parallel to the east line of said lot, to a point in the north line of said lot; thence west along the north line of said lot, 12.0 feet to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes all of the land associated with the Holland Theatre during the period of significance.

Photo Log

The following information is the same for all photos:

Photographer:	Jeffrey Darbee
Address:	Benjamin D. Rickey & Co. 593 South Fifth Street Columbus, OH 43206
Date:	Fall, 2000

Exterior Views

1. Looking northwest from Columbus and Madriver streets. The Holland's step-gabled office/ lobby block is at left; auditorium is at right. Red and white two-story building, white one-story building with shutters, and one-story brick building at right are not included in this nomination.

2. Looking northwest at south elevation of office/lobby block; red and white commercial building and adjacent parking lot are not included in nomination.

3. Looking north at south elevation.

4. Looking northeast at south elevation and west side along alley.

5. Looking south along alley on west side of the Holland. Flyspace and stage area of auditorium are at left center.

6. Looking southwest along east side of auditorium.

7. Looking southwest at rear of office/lobby block at south end of building.

8. Looking east along south elevation of building.

9. Detail of south elevation, showing stepped gable and stone trim. Steel supports for vertical sign are still visible in center of facade.

Photo Log, cont.

Interior Views

10. Looking south from rear toward front of eastern commercial space, first floor.

11. Looking north; main entry doors to theater are on right; door to second floor offices is at left.

12. Looking south down main stairs from second floor to entry door.

13. Looking south in main corridor, second floor office area.

14. Looking north in westernmost office area, second floor.

15. Looking north from entrance doors into lobby, first floor.

16. Looking east from west end of foyer, first floor. Stairs to balcony are at left.

17. Looking north in auditorium at stage area, altered when theater was multiplexed in late 1970s. Current owner is removing these alterations.

18. East side wall of auditorium. Stage is at left, edge of balcony at right.

19. West side wall of auditorium. Balcony is at left, stage is to right.

20. Detail of aisle standard.

21. Detail of balcony face; current owner is removing drywall partitioning to re-open balcony.

22. Looking northeast from upper corner of balcony. Removal of partitioning from 1970s multiplexing is underway at left to re-open balcony to rest of auditorium.

23. Looking east in projection booth, south end of balcony.

Schine's Holland Theatre
Bellefontaine, Logan Co, OH
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OHIO
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

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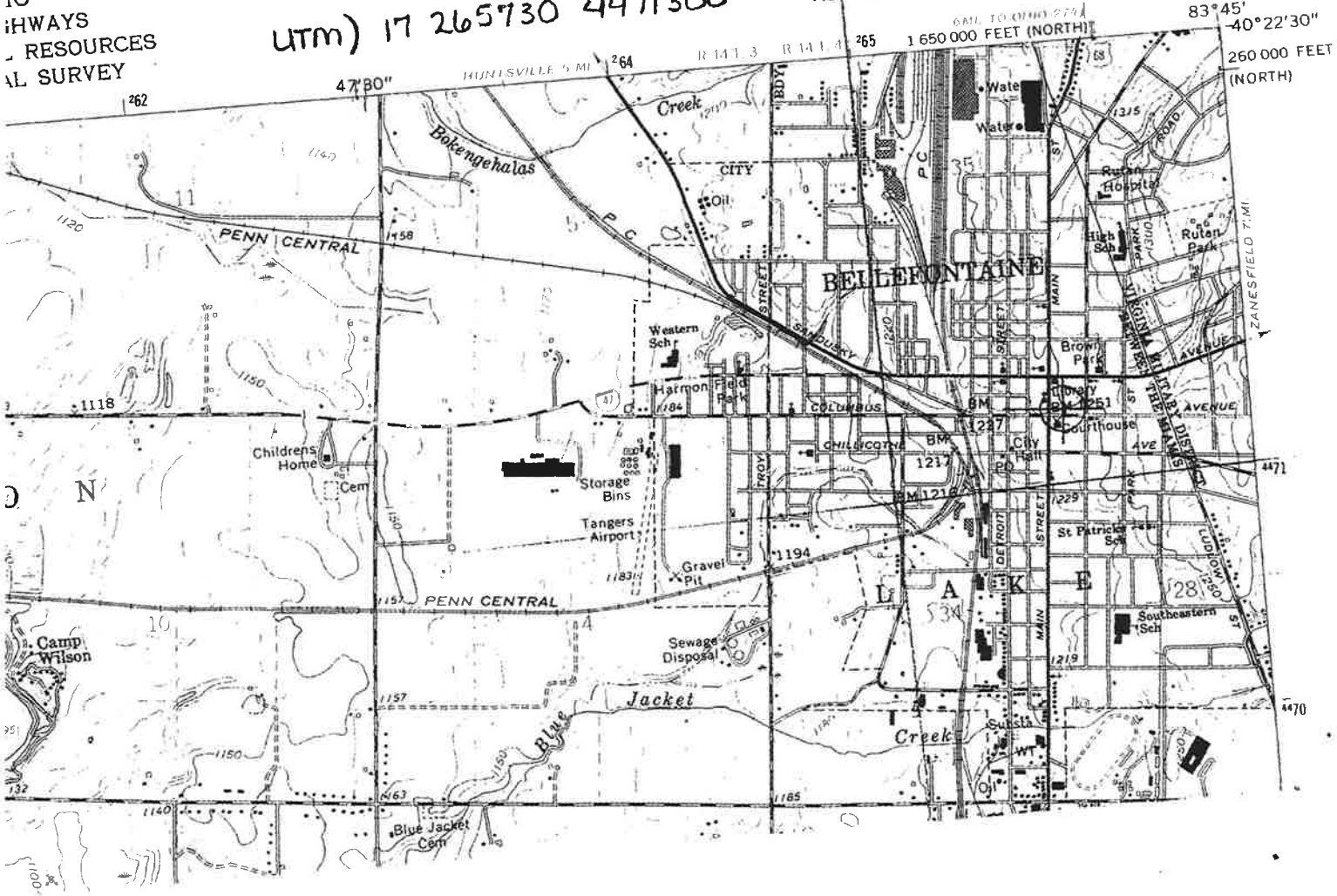

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