

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Midland Theater

other names/site number New Tackett Theater; Fox Midland Theater

2. Location

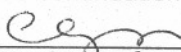
street & number 212-214 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Coffeyville [N/A] vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Montgomery code 125 zip code 67337

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 ☐.)

 12/23/07  
Signature of certifying official/Title Christy Davis/Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(See continuation sheet for additional comments ☐.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet ☐.
- ☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register  
See continuation sheet ☐.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.
- ☐ removed from the  
National Register
- ☐ other, explain  
See continuation sheet ☐.

Signature of the Keeper

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Midland Theater  
Montgomery County, KS

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria**

☒ **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**

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**

Architecture

Recreation/Culture

**Periods of Significance**

1928 to 1955

**Significant Dates**

1928

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Henderson, Clare A.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

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**9. Major Bibliographic References**

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**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☒ Other:

Name of repository: Coffeyville Public Library

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Montgomery County, KS

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property less than 1 acre**UTM References**

A. Zone Easting Northing  
15 267319 4102100

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[ ] 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.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Kristen Ottesen, Architectural Historian and Elizabeth Rosin, Partnerorganization Historic Preservation Services, LLC date June 2004street & number 323 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 112 telephone 816-221-5133city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64105**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 City of Coffeyvillestreet & number P.O. Box 1629 telephone 620-252-6108city or town Coffeyville state KS zip code 67337

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Midland Theater  
Montgomery County, Kansas

## SUMMARY DESCRIPTION STATEMENT

The Midland Theater, located at 212-214 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas, is a two-story, brick two-part commercial block building with a terra cotta façade. The building, which is approximately 140 feet deep and 50 feet wide, was constructed in 1928 as part of a commercial corridor in the historic center of Coffeyville. It exhibits the general form, configuration, and elaborate architectural detailing of the movie palace property type that appeared in commercial districts across the United States mainly during the inter-war years of the early twentieth century. The Spanish/Mission Revival styling of the theater reflects Moorish influences. The distinctive features include a curvilinear gable, archivolt trim over a central Palladian window, and quatrefoils and blind arcades on the façade. The building has a concrete foundation and solid masonry walls. Arched steel bow trusses support the roof. With the majority of its character-defining stylistic features and original exterior materials intact, the Midland Theater retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

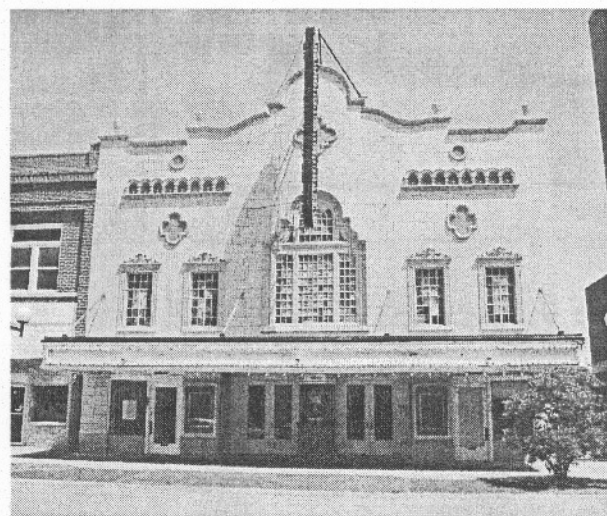
## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### SETTING

The Midland Theater is on a commercial strip on the west side of Coffeyville's historic downtown. It sits in the center of the block on the north side of the street. To the east of the theater is a narrow lot, which archival research suggests has historically been vacant. On the other side of the lot is the former Hotel Dale, a six-story brick building that is now used for housing. West of the theater is the Alamo Building, a brick two-part commercial block. The theater directly abuts the concrete sidewalk on the front (south) and an alley and surface parking lot on the rear (north). A row of historic commercial structures faces the theater from across 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

### EXTERIOR

The Midland Theater's primary (south) façade presents a broad, flat, symmetrical plane that has five vertical bays divided horizontally into three levels: the ground floor; the second-story fenestration; and the upper wall ornamentation. Gleaming white glazed terra cotta tile covers the primary (south) façade. Laid in a running bond, the terra cotta resembles ashlar masonry.



*Midland Theater*

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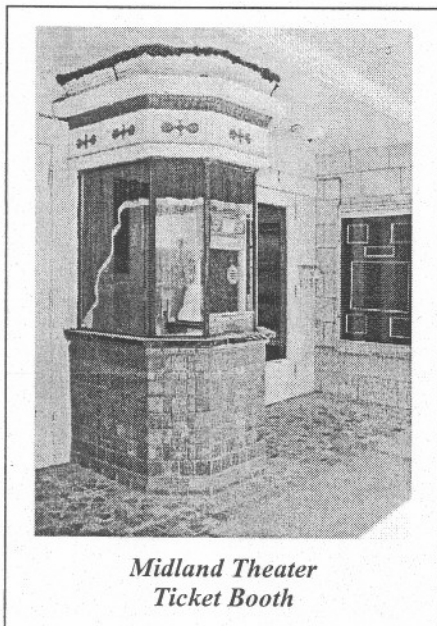
Midland Theater  
Montgomery County, Kansas

A curvilinear parapet wall features a central raised section and four finials. The upper portion of the wall features an arrangement of two blind arcades with blue backgrounds in the first, second, third, and fourth bays. Above each of the arcades is a roundel and below is a quatrefoil. Centered in the central (third) bay is a larger quatrefoil. The original architectural plans indicate that electric light bulbs illuminated the arcades. The roundels have terracotta-colored centers and the quatrefoils have blue and terracotta-colored centers.

At the second-story level, two single steel-framed windows flank each side of a large wood-framed Palladian window centered in the façade. The top of the window mimics the curvilinear parapet above. The Palladian window's central fixed sash has sixty-three lights; the two flanking sashes each have twenty-seven lights; and the window's upper arched sash has twenty-eight lights. Each of the smaller single windows features a pair of operable casement sashes topped by a fixed transom. Each of the casement sashes and transoms has eight lights. Pink and green textured opalescent glass fills all of the windows.

At the center of the primary façade, above the Palladian window, a large vertical sign projects from the wall. The red metal sign has the name "Midland" spelled in lights.

Between the first and second stories, a large, narrow metal canopy projects over the sidewalk. Its ornament includes incandescent lights and a pressed metal ceiling.



The ground level features a central ticket booth flanked by recessed theater entrances and storefronts on the east and west ends of the façade. The matte-glazed ceramic tiles that decorate the floor of the entrance and the lower wall of the ticket booth enhance the Moorish/Spanish Revival style of the building. The paired wood doors in each entrance have full-length glazed panels. Mounted movie poster display cases are on the east and west walls perpendicular to the theater entrances. Each storefront features a single, fully glazed door and, in the outermost bay, a large window opening containing a fixed sash with a single glazed pane.

The east, north, and west brick walls are unadorned. A single steel door at the north end of the east elevation provides access to the backstage area. At the first and second stories, each end of the north elevation contains single steel doors that open to the backstage area. A stepped parapet caps the north wall. Ductwork



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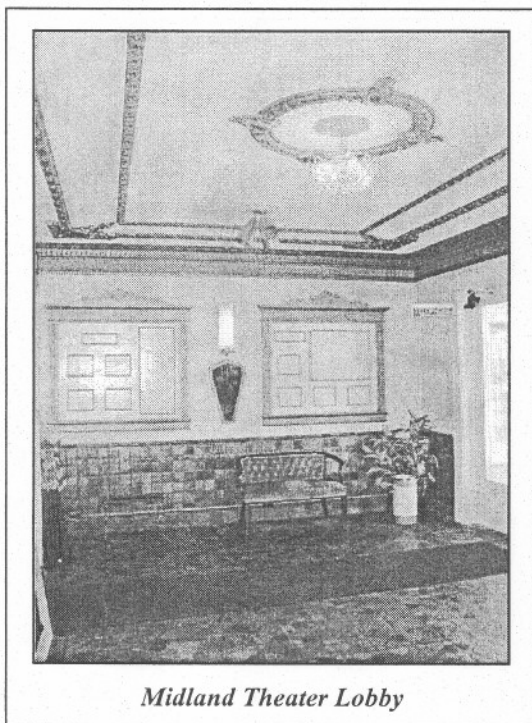
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Montgomery County, Kansas

for the mechanical equipment punctuates the west wall. The mechanical equipment sits on the ground adjacent to the west building wall.

**INTERIOR**

The plan and finishes of the Midland Theater reflect the typical layout of a grand movie palace of its era. Located directly inside the entrance, the foyer retains most of its original materials and features. The floor and wainscot of the lobby feature the same tile as the ticket booth and entrance floor outside. Plaster cornices, moldings, and a crystal chandelier ornament the ceiling. Gold-framed, pedimented display cases hang on the plaster walls above the wainscot. A triple set of double-leaf, paneled wood doors lead from the foyer into the lobby.



*Midland Theater Lobby*

Immediately north of the foyer, the lobby spans the width of the building and contains the concession stand, stairs to the mezzanine, and doorways to the auditorium. The doors accessing the auditorium flank the concession stand centered on the north wall, directly opposite the doors leading in from the foyer. The original theater design did not include a concession stand; its sleek modern lines and brushed metal and glass materials suggest a construction date in the 1940s. The lobby floors are carpeted, with the exception of the area directly in front of the concession stand, which is tiled. The plaster walls are pink. In the center of the lobby ceiling, where a chandelier once hung, is a thirteen-foot square opening to the second story.

Staircases on the east and west ends of the lobby ascend to a mezzanine, which contains the men's and women's restrooms and spaces that originally housed an office and a storage room. Carpet covers the mezzanine floors and the plaster walls are pink. Stairways to the balcony flank

the men's and women's restrooms on either end of the mezzanine. To the front (south) of the stairs, above the lobby and the storefronts, a wall separates three rooms from the mezzanine. These three rooms were originally a large single ballroom and two doorways on either side of the mezzanine allowed direct access from the mezzanine into the ballroom. The ballroom has hardwood floors.

The auditorium features double aisles on the ground floor and a large double-tiered balcony with curved boxes that extend outward toward the stage along the side walls. The concrete floor slopes downward toward the stage from the back of the auditorium. Carpeting covers the aisle areas. The stage, enlarged to

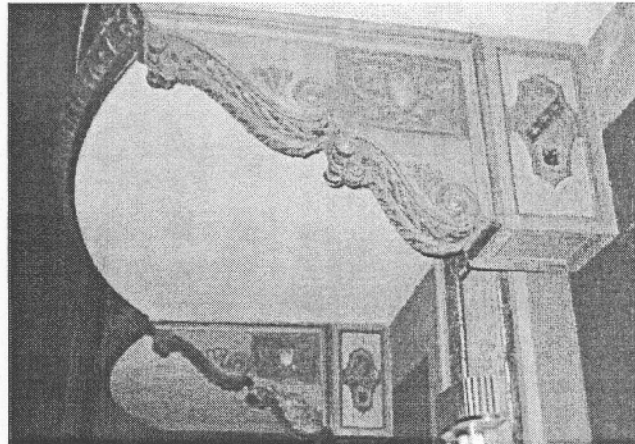
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accommodate live performances, now covers the original orchestra pit. Ornamental plaster embellishes the walls and proscenium where they meet the stage floor and ceilings. Notations on the original plans suggest that the architect chose the plaster design from a pattern book. The plaster ornamentation includes a central ceiling medallion where a large chandelier hung; large brackets below the side boxes; ornate cornices; medallions and moldings around the balcony; and moldings outlining the pilasters between the bays on the walls.



*Ornamental Brackets under the Balcony*

Original lighting includes circular art glass shades under the balcony and the crystal chandelier in the lobby. It is not clear whether the wall sconces in the auditorium are original. Some original exit signs remain throughout the building.

The basement, which originally housed mechanical equipment, is on the north end of the building, under the stage.

#### INTEGRITY

The Midland Theater continues to reflect its historic function as an entertainment venue. The building retains its original form, plan, proportions, scale, and massing. All of its historic character-defining elements and original materials remain intact on the exterior, including the terra cotta, doors, storefronts, ticket booth, and the multi-light windows. Although some of the historic finishes have been damaged or replaced, the interior generally retains its original configuration, design, and materials. The division of the ballroom and the installation of the concession stand compromise the building's original configuration, although both changes are reversible. The appearance of the concession stand suggests that it was a 1940s addition. As such, it is a historic alteration that reflects the evolution of the movie industry and contributes to the significance of the property. The Midland Theater retains a high degree of integrity and clearly communicates its historic associations and feelings as an entertainment venue.



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Montgomery County, Kansas

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Midland Theater at 212-214 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas is significant under National Register Criterion A for the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION and under Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE, as documented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas." The Midland Theater has direct associations with the historic context "Historical Development of Public Entertainment in Kansas, 1854-1954," developed as part of the MPDF and meets the MPDF registration requirements. Constructed in 1928 on one of Coffeyville's main commercial thoroughfares, it is an excellent example of the movie palace property type constructed throughout Kansas and the United States primarily during the inter-war years of the early twentieth century. The Moorish influences incorporated into the high-style Spanish/Mission Revival exterior and the rococo treatment of the interior reflect the elegance, grandeur, and fantasy of the movie palace era. While the use and form of many similar theaters were often drastically altered for other commercial endeavors when more modern movie houses opened in their vicinity, the Midland Theater is intact. Its proposed reuse as a live performance and movie theater is compatible with its original function. The period of significance for the Midland Theater begins with its construction in 1928 and ends in 1955, the fifty-year threshold for National Register eligibility.

## PROPERTY HISTORY

Built in 1928 from plans by architect Clare A. Henderson of Coffeyville, the Midland Theater was the idea of John Tackett, its proprietor, and Glen W. Dickinson of Lawrence, Kansas, who founded Dickinson Theaters in 1920. On July 10, 1926, the *Coffeyville Daily Journal* reported that Dickinson had leased the earlier Tackett Theater at 8<sup>th</sup> and Maple Streets as well as "the new theater building, which will be erected on the Tackett lots, just west of the Hotel Dale."<sup>1</sup> The article stated that the new "Grand Theater" would be built to Mr. Dickinson's specifications. However, two years later, when the theater opened in September 1928, the *Coffeyville Daily Journal* did not mention Dickinson in its description of the opening of the New Tackett Theater.<sup>2</sup>

John Tackett was a well-known Coffeyville resident. Born in Pittsville, Missouri on August 31, 1874, Tackett came to Coffeyville in 1890 with his mother and three siblings. The year they arrived, Tackett and his mother opened a photography studio. Tackett gained national notoriety in 1892 when he photographed the Dalton Gang raid in Coffeyville. He later collaborated with Emmett Dalton and wrote,

<sup>1</sup> "Dickinson Leases Tackett Theaters," *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, July 10, 1926, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

<sup>2</sup> "New Tackett Theater to Open Monday Night," *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 15 September 1928, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

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filmed, produced, and distributed a movie about the famous raid that starred Dalton. Involved in the arts, he played in the Tackett Orchestra (a band of three performers) and taught dance classes. Among his students was a young Will Rogers.

Tackett's theater career began when he managed the Perkins Opera House in the Plaza Building in Coffeyville. Later, he built several theaters including, the Tackett Theater (also known as the Auditorium Theater) at the southeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Maple Streets; the Airdome at the northeast corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Maple Streets; and an airdome for African American patrons at the northeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Streets. He also ran a vaudeville theater on Union Street. In 1924, when Coffeyville was under a blue law, which prohibited theaters from running shows on Sundays, Tackett built a theater in South Coffeyville on the Oklahoma state line, just three miles to the south.<sup>3</sup> The New Tackett Theater (later the Midland Theater) appears to have been John Tackett's last movie house venture. He died on March 31, 1956 at the age of 81.

The Midland Theater lot contained a dwelling until at least 1923, when the Coffeyville commercial district began pushing west.<sup>4</sup> When the New Tackett Theater opened in 1928, it joined the City's three existing movie houses: the Columbia Theater, the Lyric Theater, and the Tackett Theater. With seating for twelve hundred patrons, the New Tackett Theater was the largest movie theater in Coffeyville. Built for \$80,000, the theater featured brick, steel, and tile construction that was touted as safe from fire and panic. The canopy across the front of the building was one of the largest in the Midwest and featured the name "New Tackett's Theatre." The lavish auditorium had plush carpeting, upholstered seats, crimson and gold draped fabrics, tapestries on the walls painted with a Spanish motif, and crystal chandeliers. It offered the newest movie technology, including Vitaphone (amplified orthophonic music); modern heating, cooling, and ventilating systems; a sixteen-by-twelve-foot silver sheet screen made especially for Vitaphone and Movietone productions; a \$15,000 Wicks nine-manual pipe organ; electric lighting; two of the latest Simplex movie projectors; and spotlights controlled from the projection booth.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Tackett incorporated a ballroom into the theater as "a throw-back to the days when the dancing and playhouse occupied the same building." He believed his ballroom was the first in any theater in the country.<sup>6</sup> Located at the front of the building on the second floor, draperies, artistic lighting, and an ornamental drinking fountain decorated the ballroom, which measured twenty-five feet by fifty feet.

<sup>3</sup> "Pioneer Photographer, John B. Tackett, Dies," *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 1 April 1956, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1923), Kansas City: Kansas City, Missouri Public Library [database online]; available from <http://proxy.kclibrary.org:2269/>; Internet; accessed 19 May 2004.

<sup>5</sup> "New Tackett Theater to Open Monday Night," *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 15 September 1928, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

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Midland Theater  
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Less than a year after it opened, the Fox Corporation operated the theater and changed its name from the New Tackett Theater to the Midland Theater. Manager Glen Carroll installed a new twenty-four foot "flasher sign" and flashing lights around the marquee, as well as new equipment to accommodate talking picture technology.<sup>7</sup>

The Fox Corporation owned and operated three theaters in Coffeyville (the Midland Theater, the old Tackett Theater, and the Ismo Theater) until 1953 when the United States Supreme Court banned film company monopolies. Fox sold the Tackett Theater and a short time later closed the Ismo Theater due to declining attendance.<sup>8</sup> The Fox Corporation, which was later acquired by the National General Theater Corporation, ran the Midland Theater until 1960 when they sold it to Talmadge ("Tal") and Pearl Richardson.<sup>9</sup>

When the Richardsons bought the Midland Theater, the theater's prior owners had already sold the organ; filled the orchestra pit with cement; removed the chandeliers; converted the ballroom into offices and a storeroom; eliminated the box seats; reduced seating capacity; and installed a concession stand. However, the ticket booth, lobby, auditorium, and balcony retained their original configuration and the majority of their original finishes.<sup>10</sup> After Tal Richardson died in 1976, Pearl continued operating the theater until her death in 1998. During this time, she worked to restore the theater to its original condition. After Pearl's death, the City of Coffeyville purchased the Midland Theater. The City of Coffeyville is raising money for the theater's restoration as a venue to host live performances and movies.

## ARCHITECT

Little is known about Clare Henderson, the architect of the Midland Theater. An article from the opening of the theater mentions C. A. Henderson as the architect.<sup>11</sup> His name also appears on the architectural plans, which show a marquee displaying the name "Grand Theater." Clare A. Henderson's obituary states that he practiced architecture in Coffeyville from 1904 until ill health forced him to leave his practice in 1948. He designed two city hall buildings and Skinner's funeral home, which according to his obituary was "the first brick building constructed in Coffeyville."<sup>12</sup> There is no mention of the theater in his obituary.

<sup>7</sup> *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 13 August 1929, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

<sup>8</sup> "Gene Neely, Fifty Years of Elegance: The Story of the Midland Theater," 1979, TD, p. 8, City Clerk's Office, Coffeyville, Kansas.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>11</sup> *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 15 September 1928, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.

<sup>12</sup> "C.A. Henderson, Pioneer Architect, Dies Early Today," *Coffeyville Daily Journal*, 20 July 1949, Coffeyville (Kansas) Public Library.



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Midland Theater  
Montgomery County, Kansas

The Midland Theater bears a striking resemblance to the Booth Theater in Independence, Kansas, which was developed by the Dickinson Theater Group and designed by Carl and Robert Boller's Kansas City, Missouri firm Boller Brothers in about 1927.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the floor tile in the Midland Theater's lobby matches the tile in the Granada Theater in Kansas City, Kansas, which is another Moorish/Spanish Revival design completed by the Boller Brothers in 1928. It is unknown if Henderson knew or worked with the Boller Brothers prior to designing the Midland Theater or if his design was simply inspired by the work of the other architecture firm.

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<sup>13</sup> The Booth Theater is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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**GEOGRAPHIC DATA**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Osborn's First Addition, East 25' of Lot 13, West 26.15' of Lot 14, Block 3, Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

This nomination includes the parcel of land that is historically associated with the resource.

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

Photographer: Kristen Ottesen  
Date of Photographs: May 2004  
Location of Negatives: Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

**Photograph  
Number**

**Camera View**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1.  | Front (south) façade                   |
| 2.  | Front façade, view to the northwest    |
| 3.  | Streetscape, view to the northeast     |
| 4.  | Rear elevations, view to the southwest |
| 5.  | Marquee and sign, view to the west     |
| 6.  | Ticket booth and entrance              |
| 7.  | Lobby, view to the southwest           |
| 8.  | Foyer, view to the west                |
| 9.  | Concession stand in the foyer          |
| 10. | Mezzanine, view to the west            |
| 11. | Front (north) of the auditorium        |
| 12. | Rear (south) of the auditorium         |
| 13. | Brackets under the balcony             |
| 14. | Sconces on the auditorium side walls   |

Midland Theater  
Coffeyville,  
Montgomery Co.,  
Kansas

UTM Reference:  
15/267319/4102100

