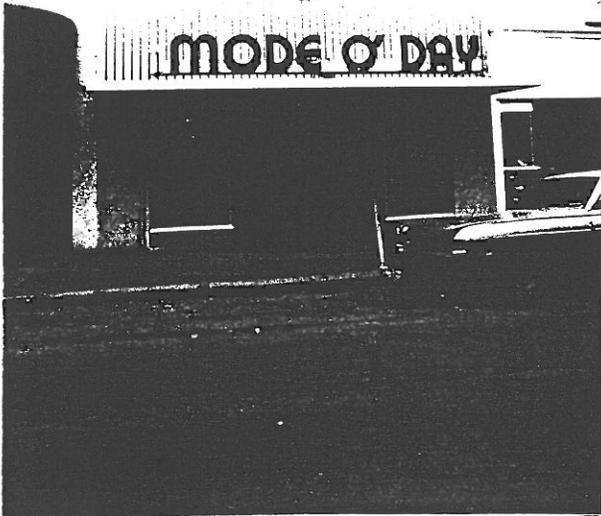


STATE OF OREGON INVENTORY
OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
State Historic Preservation Office
Oregon State Parks, Salem, OR 97310



County Linn
Ranking _____
Name
(Common) Mode O'Day Store
(Historic) Gem Theatre
Address 644 Main Street
Present Owner Mary Beasley
Address 31230 Old Santiam Highway
Original Use Movie Theater
Date of Construction c. 1905
Map Reference Number 75

Physical description of property and statement of historical significance:

The Gem Theatre is one story tall with a narrow, rectangular floor plan and a flat roof. The facade has a recessed entry in the center featuring double aluminum frame glass doors and on each side large single-light display windows set above a low glazed tile wall. There is a flat metal awning and the parapet is clad with metal siding.

The original facade featured a marquee with geometrical moldings. Beneath the metal cladding remains a round arch that spans the facade and is surrounded by floral terra cotta. At the parapet there was a large cartouche and a cornice with dentils.

History

The first theater in Lebanon known as the Empire Theater was a small wood frame building located here. The current reinforced concrete theater was built at the turn of the century and was owned by Montague, one of Lebanon's early mayors. In 1921 R Kuhn who had been managing the Kuhn Theater here purchased the building from the Montague estate with Joel C. Mayer for a sum of ten thousand dollars. Kuhn later built the Kuhn Theater on the adjacent property to the south and the old theater was renamed the Gem Theatre. Vaudeville acts and silent films were presented in both theaters. "Cap" Kuhn was a captain in the Salvation Army. He donated much time to charitable organizations and was active in community affairs.

Recorded by Heritage Investment Corporation, 813 SW Alder, Portland, OR 97204 (228-0272)
Allen, McMath-Hawkins, Architects, 213 SW Ash, Portland, OR 97204 (228-5154)

Initials _____ Date _____

Sources consulted:

1. "City Property Changes Hands", Lebanon Express, March 23, 1921.
2. Interview with Frank Grove, May 12, 1984.
3. Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1892, 1913, 1946.
4. Historical photos from the Photography Emporium.

MODE O' DAY

30%
OFF

