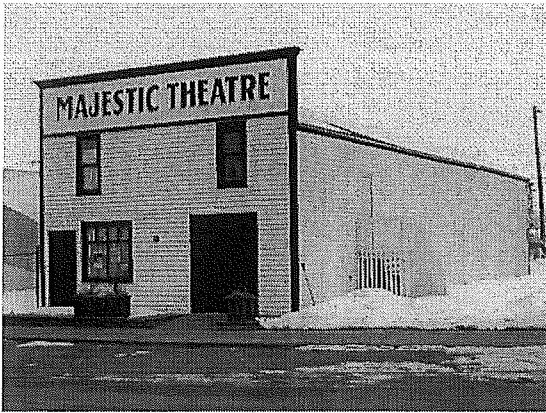


5112 50th Street

Majestic Theatre



Description of the Historic Place

The Majestic Theatre is a one and one-half storey theatre with clapboard siding, a front-facing gable roof, and boomtown front with a signboard reading "MAJESTIC THEATRE". It is located on Main (50th) Street near the northeast edge of Bashaw's commercial district.

Heritage Value

The Majestic Theatre is significant for its association with still and motion picture entertainment in Bashaw, and for its Boomtown design.

The Majestic Theatre is an important building in Bashaw for its association with still and motion picture entertainment. Town founder Eugene Bashaw partnered with Mrs. Ella Wing to build the theatre in 1915, and in addition to numerous community functions it hosted travelling magic lantern shows. The theatre was sold to Tom Stranatka in 1921 and converted into a silent picture house renamed "Majestic Theatre, Home of Good Pictures". The theatre showed films such as *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Mysterious Rider*, and *Jesse James*, and introduced Bashaw residents to American popular culture and the cult of the cowboy. The theatre had difficulty paying taxes in the 1920s but the Secretary Treasurer of the Town of Bashaw filed caveats for tax recovery on the property, ensuring that the theatre would continue to serve as a community hub. The theatre was bought by John Malaniuk in 1928 and was sold shortly thereafter to J.R. Whitney, who used it primarily as his real estate office but would occasionally show films in the building. In 1930 the Roman Catholic Church purchased the building to use as a social service centre. J.R. Whitney bought the theatre a second time in 1940, and then modernized it to accommodate the new technology of motion picture entertainment. When Joseph Dick purchased the Majestic Theatre in 1946 he renamed it the "Dixy", and the theatre continued to provide cinematic entertainment to the people of Bashaw and the surrounding area until 1984.

Highway 21 Heritage Inventory

The Majestic Theatre is an important part of Bashaw's built heritage for its Boomtown design. Boomtown architecture is more commonly associated with the 1900s and 1910s in Alberta, but it continued to be a popular style for commercial buildings well into the mid-twentieth century. The boomtown front increases the building's presence on the street and provides a large surface area for signage. The Majestic Theatre is believed to be the last remaining Boomtown style theatre in Western Canada. Its wood frame construction and inherently rural 'frontier' design were practical and visually familiar to local residents. The building had a flat floor with moveable wooden chairs so that it could host dances as well as magic lantern shows, travelling theatre, silent films, and eventually films with sound. The building has received numerous renovations since it was first constructed, particularly when it was given a stucco finish between 1940 and 1944, and when the front façade received a Moderne facelift sometime between 1946 and 1951. In 1998 the Friends of the Majestic Theatre was formed to restore the building to its pre-1930s condition – a task completed in 2004. Bashaw's Majestic Theatre was designated a Registered Historic Resource by the Province of Alberta in 2000, underscoring its significance to the town of Bashaw, and to the province as a whole.

Character Defining Elements

The character defining elements as expressed in the form, massing, and materials of the 1915 one and one-half storey Majestic Theatre include:

- The front-facing gable roof
- The massing
- The location on 50th Street, near the core of Bashaw's commercial area

5112 50th Street

Majestic Theatre

Description	One and one-half storey theatre with clapboard siding, a front-facing gable roof, and boomtown front with a signboard reading "MAJESTIC THEATRE".
Significance Criteria	A: Theme – Still and motion picture entertainment in Bashaw C: Design – Boomtown
Context	Located on Main (50 th) Street near the northeast edge of the commercial district in Bashaw. Built in 1915 and opened as a movie theatre in 1921.
Period of Significance (POS)	1915 – Present
Character Defining Elements (CDEs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The front-facing gable roof ▪ The massing ▪ The location on 50th Street, near the core of Bashaw's commercial district
Integrity Criteria:	The overall integrity of the building is satisfactory, although the exterior was restored between 1998 and 2004.
1. Location	The location of the building has not changed.
2. Design	The design of the building has been returned to its pre-1930s incarnation through a major restoration project.
3. Environment	The environment, or surroundings, has not changed significantly over the years.
4. Materials	The authentic materials of the building have been returned to their pre-1930s incarnation through a major restoration project.
5. Workmanship	The workmanship of the building is authentic to its pre-1930s period.
6. Feeling	The feeling of the building and site has not changed.
7. Association	The associations of the building have not changed.