

Nick Turner  
The Grand  
LD 912

The Grand was built as a movie theater in 1938 as an anchor on Main Street, Ellsworth, Maine, to help rebuild the local economy after a fire devastated downtown. In 1975, the building was "saved" from demolition and renovated into a multi-use venue by a passionate community theater group led by director Harris Strong. The Grand has experienced many renovation projects through the Belvedere Fund at the Maine Community Foundation, The Davis Foundation, and the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation, helping to return it to its historic Art Deco design and The Grand is now on the National Historic Registry. But every year, repairs and maintenance is required to sustain its historic integrity, and it's never "cheap." The Grand required a storefront window replacement to the tune of \$17,000, and as successful as the organization has been at increasing revenue and bringing people downtown, that still hobbled the recovery progress after 18 months of being closed due to pandemic restrictions. Restoration support of historic buildings like the Grand is not only important to Maine communities but also to Maine's unique identity.