

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Johnson, Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens, House
other names/site number Missouri State DAR Headquarters
Roslyn Heights, O-32

2. Location

street & number 821 Main N/A not for publication
city, town Boonville N/A vicinity
state Missouri code MO county Cooper code 053 zip code 65233

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	1 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic Resources of Boonville, Mo.

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *G. Tracy Mehan III*, Director

Date *3 August 88*

Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social: meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late-Victorian-Queen Anne, Romanesque

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Terra Cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY: The Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens Johnson House was constructed in 1895 at the south end of Main Street in Boonville, Missouri. Built as a private residence the three story building contains a full basement, a porte-cochere to the south of the house and a full length front entrance porch on the east facade. The house contains 18 rooms (including those in the basement), 52 windows, and eight fireplaces. Built in the Queen Anne style, this Victorian mansion contains elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque in the use of massive foundation blocks of Indiana limestone, the blocky decorative treatment of the red brick, and the gently rounded arches of the front porch. It also features the massiveness of proportion so common to this type of structure. Elements of Queen Anne architecture are the irregularity of the plan, the massing, and surface texture. Brickwork forms the decorative function normally provided by wood ornament on most Queen Anne structures. Towers, projecting porches, turrets and bays are also indicative of the Queen Anne influence as well as elements of cut, carved, molded and turned ornamentation. The Johnson House also possesses decorated chimneys and gabled parapeted wall dormers accenting the roof on each side. A circular tower on the northeast corner is topped by a conical roof with gable dormers and an iron finial. Wall surfaces are smooth red brick laid in the common bond pattern and embellished with white stone belt course and terra cotta panels. Indiana limestone is used in the tower, buttresses, and porte-cochere as well as the foundation; all windows have a plain stone lintel and lug sill. The Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens Johnson House retains a high level of integrity in terms of workmanship, materials, and design, in addition to its integrity of location and setting.

ELABORATION:

FRONT FACADE (EAST ELEVATION)

Outstanding features include a one-story hip roofed porch with pediment over a double leaf entrance and transom. Paneled front doors open from the front porch into a room-sized reception hall. The original storm doors have etched glass panes with the initials "WTJ" on each for Wilbur T. Johnson, the original owner. These doors open into a small entrance hall, and when left opened, flush with the entrance wall leading into the reception area, create one continuous wall. Moorish decorations embellish the doors in keeping with Moorish ornamentation found in the reception area. The hall has its original

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decorative floor tile and an oak grained wall treatment simulates paneled walls. The gasoliers on the porch are original. The modified Doric composition of the porch is accented by Doric pilasters, gutae, and a severely plain entablature and pediment. The three bay second story features plain brick windows and common bond brick; the east elevation's major decorative accents are found on the first and third stories. Three part windows with arcaded headers accent a third floor dormer while windows on the third floor of the facade tower are capped by stone in a sunburst design.

NORTH ELEVATION

Interesting features on the north elevation include an oriel window with a corbelled brick base and a one-story polygonal brick bay window. The second floor, as on the east elevation, has plain windows with stone lintels and lug sills. This elevation possesses a gabled dormer identical to the facade dormer. A corbelled brick chimney rises next to the tower.

SOUTH ELEVATION

The south elevation has a large chimney, a two-story bow window, and a secondary entrance which is afforded protection by a hip roofed porte-cochere. The porte-cochere has segmental arches with Moorish decorative elements which appear elsewhere in both the exterior and interior of the house. The gasoliers are original as is the brick sidewalk running along this facade. The two-story bow window contains diamond shaped brick imitating the wood decorative patterning of the Queen Anne style. The windows of the second floor match the rest of the elevations and the front facade. A third gabled dormer tops this facade. The large chimney repeats the design of the others in the decorative brick and corbelled top.

WEST ELEVATION

The back of the house is plain with a solid brick wall breaking for a gabled dormer with two windows at the top. The window treatment is identical to the other three sides and common bond is used throughout. This facade contains the only alteration to the exterior of the building. A back porch was destroyed by fire at some point in the past and was not rebuilt. A door leads to the basement from this facade.

INTERIOR--FIRST FLOOR

The reception hall has a semi-circular bay that is the base of the tower. The attenuated windows have a trabeated millwork entablature. A spindle frieze canopy highlighting this area is a product of the Industrial Revolution and

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repeats the Moorish details (stars and moons) found elsewhere in the house. A fireplace of oak with unusual rope columns and an ornate mantel shelf is located next to the staircase. An embossed lion's head is behind the swinging coal basket, the only one of this type in the house. Each of the eight fireplaces in the house feature a different color tile around the firebox which sets the tone for the room. Each mantel is also different. The shape of the stairs is both functional and elegant. Built in a geometric design, the stairway features built-in seats at the base and landing where there is a large stained glass window with another oak spindle frieze canopy. Stamped medallions in the newel posts and the cutout motifs on the balustrades are also typical of the period. The dado of the reception hall and staircase have linocristo walden, a pressed paper. A chair rail with brass buttons on a miniature hobnailed background complete the decoration. All doors throughout the house are solid wood and all hinges are sculptured brass. Three sets of pocket doors divide each of the main rooms on the first floor. Hardwood floors are found throughout the house.

In the southeast parlor is a hand painted ceiling with a festoon of flowers, the only one of four frescos left in the house. The frescoes were painted by an unknown artist who lived with the Johnson family for three weeks when the house was first completed. The fireplace in the parlor is mahogany and has decorative embossed tile and a brass panel in a floral pattern behind the fire grate. The original dining room and library have polygonal bay windows. The library (now used for dining as well) has a fireplace mantel of mahogany with blue elaborately detailed embossed tile. The opening of this fireplace has a decorative brass molding, but not the embossed firebox panel. The original chandelier dating back to 1895 hangs in the room. The original dining room features spindle bent wood framing the polygonal windows and a plate rail. The fireplace has brown embossed tile in a fruit pattern and the mantel is oak with ornate carving and glass shelves for display areas. The chandelier in this room is also original.

The kitchen is modern and was redone several times since the back portion of the mansion suffered damage in the fire that also destroyed the rear porch. A butler pantry and bathroom (originally maid's room) complete the first floor. Stairs lead directly from the porte-cochere to the second floor where another stairway leads immediately to the third floor ballroom. Stairs to the basement are located under this porte-cochere staircase.

INTERIOR-SECOND FLOOR

The second floor originally contained bedrooms and a sitting room for Wilbur and Rhoda. The Johnson bedroom includes the second floor of the tower, again with a spindle frieze canopy overhead, pocket doors and a spindle canopy over one door

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in the adjacent sitting room. A similar fireplace to those downstairs with pink embossed tile featuring angels and flowers accents this room. Adjoining the sitting room is another bedroom which has a polygonal bay window. The fireplace has gold tile with an embossed wheat design. This room was the bedroom of Martha S. Johnson, daughter of Wilbur and Rhoda. A small dressing room is attached to one side of the bedroom. In a letter, Martha relates how she usually slept on a narrow bed in that dressing room because the house was continually so full of company that her big room was required for the guests. Across the hall is the third bedroom which was used by the Johnson's son, Wilbur T. Johnson, Junior. The fireplace in this room features embossed red, swirling stars. A hallway door separates the front three bedrooms from the bedroom of the housekeeper located in the rear, the bathroom and the original linen closet (now another bathroom). The stairs from the porte-cochere also enter immediately behind the door so it is possible to go to the ballroom without disturbing the family. All woodwork on this floor features bull's-eyes in the corners.

INTERIOR--THIRD FLOOR

The third floor is the ballroom and adjacent cloak room. The ballroom is believed to have spring floors of hardwood, the height of elegance for the late 19th century. The spring movement helped the dancers float over the floor. The final fireplace found in this room is cast iron. The third story tower contains four windows and built-in sitting, while the three dormers provided places for the musicians and tables during parties. The woodwork is plain millwork with bull's-eyes. The adjacent cloak room contains the original cloak closet, complete with original wallpaper and storage bins for top hats. A dumb waiter at one time went from this room down to the kitchen for food and other necessities.

INTERIOR--BASEMENT

The basement has been finished in modern times, conforming to the shapes of the upstairs rooms. All original foundation walls have been maintained and exposed. A modern concrete floor was poured by the Christus family during the 1960's and a modern catering kitchen, utility room, den, Daughters of the American Revolution archival room, and bathroom are on this level.

ALTERATIONS AND CHANGES

The house has been refurbished in 1959, 1961 and 1983. Each time work was done to maintain the structure and update electrical and plumbing systems. The maid's room and a linen closet have been turned into bathrooms. The kitchen has been modernized. The basement now has a concrete floor; originally the house

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had a dirt floor basement. Otherwise, the house is as it was originally constructed, even with many original lighting fixtures.

ENVIRONMENT

This detached residence sits on a high embankment at the northwest corner of Main and Walnut Streets, facing east onto Main. A stone retaining wall delineates the yard. The porte-cochere and a two-car red brick garage of modern date are reached by a circle drive from Walnut Street, now concreted and following the path of the original drive. A non-contributing garage sits to the rear of the lot and is not visible from the front. The brick of the garage blends well with the mansion and every attempt has been made to have the building conform to the site. The rear lawn was professionally landscaped during 1974-75.

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2. Steven Mitchell, Item 8
National Register Historian and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Program
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Date: September 26, 1989
Telephone: 314/751-5376

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1895

Significant Dates

1895

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY: The Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens Johnson House, 821 Main Street, is significant in the area of ARCHITECTURE as a virtually unaltered example of the Queen Anne architectural style (see "Historic Resources of Boonville, Missouri: Additional Architectural Contexts--Queen Anne Residences"). Its elaborate massing, projecting wings and bays, complex hip roof with lower cross gables, and textural variation represent most of the distinctive elements of the style.

ELABORATION: Secure in their importance as a county seat and riverport, the citizens of Boonville resisted the railroad mania which infected most of Missouri before the Civil War. In 1868, Boonville belatedly acquired a branch line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and, in 1893, the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad upgraded its branch, constructed through Boonville in 1873, to a main line. Although the reluctance of the citizens to court the railroads had deferred the town's prosperity in the perceptions for some, W.F. Johnson and his sons, Wilbur T. and W. Morris, were sufficiently confident in the persistence of the town to embark on a manufacturing venture which was uncommon outside of St. Louis. In 1886, W.F. Johnson and Sons, a shoe manufacturing company was founded. (See "Historic Resources of Boonville--Railroad Era, 1870-1924").

In 1895, Wilbur T. and Rhoda Johnson, who were married in 1892, were secure enough to consider constructing a house at 821 Main Street. In 1907, the Johnsons sold their shoe factory to a St. Louis firm and both Wilbur T. and W. Morris Johnson became salesmen for St. Louis shoe companies. In 1923, the Johnson family sold the house, which remained a private residence until 1983, when it was purchased by the Missouri State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution for their state headquarters.

☐ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Abstract of property, in the possession of the Missouri Society, Daughters of the American Revolution at their headquarters, 821 Main Street, Boonville, Missouri.

1883 Howard/Cooper Counties History.

Friends of Historic Boonville. "Historic Resources of Boonville, Missouri." Friends Office, P. O. Box 1776, Boonville, Missouri 65233.

Historic Sites Map of Cooper County, 1976.

"Illustrated Historical Atlas of Cooper County," Central Map Co., 1897, p. 60.

Johnson, W.F. History of Cooper County, Missouri. Topeka: Historical Publishing Company, 1919.

☐ See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

Friends of Historic Boonville
DAR Headquarters in Boonville

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 1 5 5 2 3 3 4 0 4 3 1 3 2 8 0
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots Number One (1) and Two (2), of Block Number Two (2), of Jacob Wyan's Addition to the city of Boonville, Missouri, each fronting Sixty (60) feet on the West line of Fifth Street (Main), and extending westwardly in uniform width (180) feet to an alley.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the single parcel of land that is occupied by the property and its immediate surroundings. The legally recorded lot lines that have been historically associated with the property retain integrity and form the limits of the boundary.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Maryellen H. McVicker, Item #7

organization Daughters of the American Revolution date May 5, 1989

street & number 821 Main Street telephone 816-882-3141

city or town Boonville state Missouri zip code 65233

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Johnson, Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens, House**

City or Vicinity: **Boonville**

County: **Cooper County** State: **MO**

Photographer: **S. Mitchell**

Date

Photographed: **April 1989**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 11. View from E
- 2 of 11. View from E
- 3 of 11. View of upper stories from E
- 4 of 11. View from SE
- 5 of 11. View from SE
- 6 of 11. View from SW
- 7 of 11. Detail of S elevation, view from S
- 8 of 11. Detail of porte-cochere, view from SE
- 9 of 11. View from NE
- 10 of 11. Missing
- 11 of 11. Garage, view from SE



















