

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 Mountain Grove Bandstand

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Mountain Grove Town Square; proximate the corner of Main and Second Streets
city, town Mountain Grove in not for publication
state Missouri code MO county Wright code 224 zip code 65711

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
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

n/aNumber 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 Frederick A. BrunnerDate 12/12/88

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)

RECREATION & CULTURE/music facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE/music facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th Century movements

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls _____

roof Wood

other Stucco

Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The commercial and social center of the town of Mountain Grove is a one-block-square town square. The centerpiece of the town square is a stucco covered Craftsman style bandstand. The bandstand has integrity of location, feeling and association as it is still the focus of the town square, and because it continues to be surrounded by the objects and memorials which date from the period of significance or which continue themes from that period. The bandstand retains integrity of design and workmanship because except for the roof being recovered there have been no alterations in appearance or structure. The roof covering of the bandstand was composition and has been replaced with cedar shingles and a few pieces of decayed wood have been replaced with similar new wood, which is considered normal maintenance. Otherwise, the bandstand has near complete integrity of material. The roof could easily be recovered. In that the square still marks the business center of the town of Mountain Grove and is surrounded by local businesses the bandstand also retains substantial integrity of setting. The square contains other things, some of which contribute to the historic character of the place. The walkways, paved areas and concrete bordered decorative flower beds replicate in the same material those constructed in the period of historic significance. A number of benches are arranged along the walkways, some of an iron and wood type which are consistent with the period of significance.

Location

When Mountain Grove was incorporated in 1887 it contained two different parts, each relevant to its role as a trading center; as a result, the downtown area remained bi-polar. The railroad established the orientation of the town near the depot. The streets in the southern part of town run parallel to the railroad. To the north the town square provided a locus for the financial and mercantile functions of the town as well as a location for other community activities. The bandstand provides the focus for the square. The north section of town takes its orientation from the square itself and was laid out according to the cardinal points of the compass. First Street marks the division between these two sections of town. The two poles, square and depot, were linked by Union Street.

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

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1915

1915-1938

Significant Dates

1915

August 3, 1915

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

George F. Reed

Kirkpatrick Brothers

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

The Mountain Grove Bandstand is eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C; the significance of this property in relation to other properties lies within the areas of SOCIAL HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE when evaluated on the local level. The bandstand is uniquely capable of reflecting the social life of this Ozarks community and its surrounding environs. Dedicated during its construction in 1915 by Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall, the bandstand quickly became a social focal point and provided a venue for community events that were variously economic, political, military, musical and religious. It is also an important and early manifestation of the diffusion of the "Craftsman" or "Bungalow" architectural style in the Ozarks region; establishing a type and method of construction that represents a significant entity in the vernacular of regional building history. Although restoration and refurbishment have changed the nature of the bandstand's surroundings, the setting remains substantively the same in design, scale and function. The bandstand still possesses the ability to testify to the process by which place, setting, feeling and association materially reflect local social history and emerging design preferences in the first third of the 20th century.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than 1 acre

UTM References

A

1	5	5	6	5	5	4	0	4	1	0	9	2	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. David Quick, Art and Architectural Historian

organization Southwest Missouri State University date November, 1988

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MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

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Description of the Bandstand

The Mountain Grove Bandstand is a small square structure, gabled and symmetrical on each of its elevations. It is located near but slightly offset from the center of the town square.

The square platform of the bandstand is 14'3" on a side and is about 30" above ground level. It is surrounded by a pipe railing 10" in from the edge of the platform. The railing has a 2'10" entrance opening on the south side flanked by two stucco-covered posts capped by stone; it is approached by three steps. Within the platform just beyond the entrance is the inscription, "Kirkpatrick Bros. Contractors & Builders." The roof of the bandstand is supported by an 18" square column at each corner of the platform. Each post is capped by a 5" thick square of stone. The boxed lintels which rest on these stone-capped columns are 10'2" above the platform.

The principle construction materials are stucco over tile. The platform itself and the steps are poured concrete. Details including capstones and capitals are Carthage stone. The roof is frame construction. It has a wide overhang approximately 3' all around. The outside rafters are dropped to the horizontal at the ends, and are visually supported by triangular brackets from the corner posts and the centers of the pediments. The triangular brackets are constructed with joinery. The pediments in the four gable ends are stucco covered, supported by the 8" boxed lintels and trimmed by raking cornices. The ceiling is double-grooved tongue-and-groove boards. A newspaper article written before the structure was completed states that the roof was to be tile but a 1915 Sanborn map indicates a composition roof. There is no indication that such a tile roof ever existed. Likely, the bandstand was originally constructed with the composition roof as an economy measure.¹

According to a 1915 newspaper reference the structure was electrically illuminated from the time of its construction.² There are two fixtures on the underside of each lintel and one under each corner of the eaves. The south face of the corner stone is inscribed "Dedicated to the past and future bands who have and will make good." "Thomas R. Marshall, Vice President of the United States, 1915" is inscribed on the east face. Marshall was present for the cornerstone laying and dedicated the structure.³

Style

The bandstand's simplicity and all of the construction details point to a clear stylistic type. The wide eaves, the joined triangular brackets, the stucco finish, even the tile roof, although it was not used, indicate the "Craftsman"

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or "Bungalow" style, with a California character. As discussion in Section Eight indicates, 1915 is early for a consistent use of such a style in the Ozarks vernacular; but this building was at least "drawn up" by the Springfield architect, George F. Reed, who was then involved in the design and construction of a new Mountain Grove school building.

Restoration of the Bandstand

Between construction in 1915 and complete refurbishment in the fall of 1986, the bandstand remained essentially unchanged except for superficial details such as recovering the roof and attaching a telephone and bell. The police had a phone attached to the structure before they adopted radio communication. The phone bell appears in the only early photo that could be found of the structure (photograph 8). This photo shows that the original light globes were gone then as well.

In the fall of 1986, loose paint was removed, all of the decayed wood in the roof structure was replaced and the structure was rewired. A comparison of photographs 3, 7, and 8 shows that relatively little actual wood was replaced in the process of refurbishment. The electrical fixtures were replaced with reproductions. The location of these as well as the accuracy of the reproductions was made clear by the bare wood which was found under what remained of all the original fixtures when they were removed. While there are no photos early enough to show the light globes, testimony from a person who remembers the bandstand in its early years indicates the shapes of the new globes are correct.⁵ The new globes are not glass, rather they are some shatterproof material. The roof was recovered with cedar shingles, although after this was done, it was discovered that a 1915 Sanborn map shows the roof material to be composition. The integrity of the structure is high as the only visible departure from the original design is the roof material. With the exception of the roof covering, the bandstand appears today as it did in 1915.

Sequence of Change in the Square

While the bandstand is now essentially as it was when it was constructed, the square, as should be expected, has undergone a process of change from the time it was laid out until the present, a process that was necessary in order that the square retain its original purpose as a focus for the lives and businesses of the people in the region. However, the major part of that change which is now visible took place during the period of the historic significance, from the construction of the current bandstand in 1915 until 1937. Today, the square retains most of the character of that period and is therefore important to the continued integrity of the location, setting, association and feeling of the bandstand.

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Today, the square is largely covered in lawn and large trees. The large trees may be the survivors of a number of memorial trees planted on past arbor days.⁶ Also a number of smaller trees have been recently planted to return the square to the heavier tree cover of its earlier state, as can be seen in the early photographs. The square is crossed by concrete sidewalks. It is also bordered by sidewalks and crisscrossed by diagonal sidewalks. An additional paved area is located adjacent to the bandstand as well. Much of the current paving was part of the recent refurbishment which included the restoration of the bandstand; however, it exactly follows that of the outline of the previous paving.⁷ Originally, the square was crossed by boardwalks; but the walks fronting the businesses on the square and those which crossed the square itself were the first in town to be paved with concrete, possibly slightly before the current bandstand was built.⁸ The remaining paving in the square followed, and discussion with a number of residents indicates that the complete form predates 1937 except for some turnouts for benches which were added piecemeal after the Second World War.⁹

A 1915 Sanborn map for Mountain Grove indicates no paved streets in town. A 1929 Sanborn map shows that at least some of the streets were paved around the square, but that very little was paved beyond the square itself. Union Street, the short street from the depot to the southeast corner of the square was the first street in town to be paved, with hand-mixed and hand-troweled concrete. The aggregate used was soft crushed limestone which soon dissolved away leaving an irregular surface. The concrete curbs around the square were next and the streets around the square were graveled. Fred Leach remembered that the hauler contracted for three inches of gravel but someone measured and he was really putting down about two. The paving of the streets around the square was done in 1923, Fred Leach remembers, because the contractor paid his crew with bad checks and that happened the year that Fred had been ill, 1923. As early photographs show, the great width of the streets around the square has remained unchanged from the time it was laid out, when teams with wagons could be hitched both facing the square and the buildings around it and still leave the room for passage (photographs 9 and 10). The hitching rail around the square itself remained until the Second World War.¹⁰

Aside from the bandstand the most prominent objects in the square are the war memorials. The First World War figure came first (photograph 11). It was erected by the General Leonard Wood American Legion Post shortly after the post was formed. The Wood Post was the second to be formed in Mountain Grove. The life-size figure is white marble and it stands facing east on a high base in the northwest quadrant of the square. The figure was carved in Italy; and when it arrived, it looked like an Italian soldier. Joe Rogers, the local stone cutter, recut parts of the figure to make it more like a doughboy, although he

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was unable to make a complete transformation. Fred Leach contends that the date for the World War One figure would have been between 1920 and 21. The World War One figure gave the approximately dozen remaining members of the Grand Army of the Republic the idea to erect a Union Soldier. According to Fred Leach, that was within a year, or at the most two, of the first figure. The life-size bronze Union Soldier stands facing south on a high base in the southeast corner of the square (photograph 12). When Joe Rogers was about to set the figure on its base, there was considerable controversy among the Grand Army Veterans as to if it should face north or south.¹¹

The triangular monument to the dead of the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam, located in the northeast corner of the square, came much later, of course. However, as can be understood, it is in keeping with a continuing theme in the square.

The square also contains three flower beds with concrete edges and a large amount of street furniture. The borders of the flower beds take shapes of a half-moon, star and circle. These are recent, but they reproduce beds which were constructed soon after the bandstand.¹² There are also many benches, some recent concrete ones and some much earlier ones of a common iron and wood type. There is also a new concrete drinking fountain with three jets at different levels. The fountain replaces an earlier iron one which was constantly in need of repair; and the earlier iron fountain replaced a pump and tin cup which was featured in more than one local story.¹³ While the current fountain is new, it represents the continuing use of the square.

The square itself is completely surrounded by business buildings, as it was soon after it was laid out. A 1902 Sanborn map shows only two vacant sites around the square. None appear on subsequent Sanborn maps. There have been, and continue to be, changes in these buildings and their occupants, although at least some of the buildings predate the bandstand.

¹ Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 22, 1915. "Sanborn," 1915.

² "The receipts of the evening (band concert) were in the neighborhood of \$30.00 and will be used for putting lights in the bandstand now being erected in the square. Mountain Grove has material for the best band in the Ozarks." Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, August 26, 1915. Note: the band was performing while the bandstand was being built; again the possibility is that the old bandstand was still standing.

³ Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, August 5, 1915.

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- 4 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 22, 1915.
- 5 Fred Leach, "Taped Interview," January 22, 1987, Mountain Grove.
- 6 Leach.
- 7 Jerrett Conkin, member of the committee which refurbished the square.
- 8 Fred Leach, "Interview," October 2, 1987, and Lorin (Diz) Kirkpatrick, "Interview," January 22, 1987, Mountain Grove. Lorin's father and uncle were the cement contractors who built the bandstand and did a great deal of the concrete work around the town. Fred Leach suggested that the sidewalks might have been paved as early as 1913.
- 9 Jerrett Conkin and Bob Peterson, Recreation Director, Mountain Grove, were present for the discussion October 2, 1987.
- 10 Leach, October 2, 1987. Bob Peterson remembers that as a boy, just before the Second World War, he was injured against the hitching rail.
- 11 Leach, January 22, and October 2, 1987. Fred Leach remembered that when the Union Soldier was to be set up the local members of the Grand Army of the Republic got in a major argument over if the statue should fact north or south. The argument went on for days with the "old boys" standing guard until Fred's wife's father, Edward Wheeler, who had been a confederate soldier, said, "Face it north, tha's the way you blue bellies were run'n every damn time I saw ye."
- 12 Kirkpatrick and Eunice Poe, "Taped Interview," January 22, 1987, Mountain Grove. Mrs. Poe remembered from her youth that children loved to balance around the borders of the flower beds.
- 13 Both Leach and Kirkpatrick told of a new local doctor who made himself unpopular by repeatedly smashing the unsanitary cup. High school class rivalries would take place in the square and one time when the town marshal tried to break one up, the high school girls held him under the pump. Basil Summers, Mountain Grove News Journal, Tuesday, March 25, 1982.

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INTRODUCTION

...Every traditional public square has served several ends; marketplace, a place of business and a place of informal sociability and amusement, a place for pageantry....It was, and in many places still is, a manifestation of the local social order, of the relationship between citizens and between citizens and the authority of the state. The plaza is where the role of the individual in the community is made visible, where we reveal our identity as part of an ethnic or religious, or political or consumer-oriented society,... Every traditional public space, whether religious or political or ethnic in character, displays a variety of symbols, inscriptions, images, monuments, not as works of art but to remind people of their civic privileges and duties--... John Brinckerhoff Jackson¹

In 1915 the town of Mountain Grove had three accepted public gathering places: the school, the train depot, and the town square. The square was the most important of these due to its central location in the business district, because a wide range of activities could take place there, and because there was space for a large number of people. Most importantly, however, it was considered the place to gather and people normally went there in the evening in good weather even if no event was scheduled. When the current bandstand was completed in 1915, it immediately took its place in the square with a longstanding tradition as a public gathering place. The Mountain Grove square was more than simply a gathering place for the townspeople; it served a fairly broad local region as well, because Mountain Grove was the principal county trading center. The square was more important, for instance, than the courthouse square in Hartville, the county seat. Hartville was a smaller, less accessible town without a railroad and, in terms of the region, its square served largely as the location of county government. To explain the significance of the Mountain Grove bandstand we need to consider it in two different but related contexts: as a physical object with formal architectural character and as a significant place around which certain elements of community life are organized.²

Architectural Significance

The bandstand clearly conforms to an architectural type. The stucco cover, the broad eaves, and the simple mortised triangular brackets are all "Craftsman" style or "Bungalow" features which were first popularized by numerous plan books, mail order plans, and periodicals in the period between about 1905 and the First World War.³ These styles were associated with a kind of agrarian ideal as for instance in the writing of Gustave Stickley; they also had

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"western" or "California" associations. It is surprising that this style should be used in a building dating from 1915 in a small Ozark town because these features, parts of an essentially domestic style, do not become regular features of the "builders vernacular" in the Ozarks until the twenties and thirties. This pre-war use of the type implies a designer who is knowledgeable in current architectural literature. We know that the plans for the bandstand were drawn by George F. Reed, a Springfield, Missouri architect, who designed the new Mountain Grove School which was also built in 1915 but which no longer exists.⁴

If we consider the Craftsman style in the context of Mountain Grove we must do so primarily in terms of domestic architecture and this is appropriate as it developed primarily as a domestic style. In Mountain Grove, the majority of the Bungalow-type structures which most closely parallel the bandstand, those with stucco or partly stucco-covered exteriors, broad eaves, and square, often stucco-covered, porch posts, occur in areas which had not yet been developed at the time of the construction of the bandstand. If we look at the 1929 Sanborn map we see the plans of many such bungalow structures which still exist along Dorris Avenue and along old Highway 60 east of Greene Park, or west of the original town and north of Springfield Street (now called 9th Street). We can see from the 1915 Sanborn map, on which the bandstand appears, that Dorris Avenue has not yet been constructed and that these areas have not yet been subdivided. Only occasionally do bungalow structures occur in the earlier additions to the town, where they would most likely represent infill between earlier construction; the compact floorplan which might represent the bungalow rarely appears on the earlier Sanborn maps. While there has been no study of the style in the Ozark region per se, information from the wider region does tend to bear out the hypothesis that the building of many bungalows in Ozark towns is a phenomenon of the 1920's and 30's. For instance, in the survey conducted for the University Plaza project in Springfield, Missouri all the Bungalow and Craftsman buildings surveyed postdated the First World War except one, 320 Dollison, which appears on the 1910 Sanborn map of Springfield, and that one had some atypical features such as round porch columns.⁵ Lynn Morrow, in his paper for the 1982 Missouri Conference on History, "Louis Miller: Master Craftsman and Folk Artisan of Southeast Missouri," indicated that Miller did not really begin using the Bungalow type until 1909. The type became popular within his work from 1910 until the War.⁶

Three of Miller's plans were published in Building Age in 1916.⁷ Miller was working in the Arcadia Valley some distance from Mountain Grove in an area that served as a vacation spot for people from St. Louis. This area had a more cosmopolitan and stylistically more advanced character than Mountain Grove. All this is consistent with Anthony King's discussion of the popular spread of the bungalow throughout the United States in the 1920's.⁸

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As The Oberlin Book of Bandstands confirms, we expect lighter, more decorated Victorian styles for bandstands and associate them with the Victorian "gazebo."⁹ While there is no systematic study of the bandstand in the Ozarks, no person with whom I discussed the question could think of another example of a Craftsman style bandstand in the area, and a number of knowledgeable people volunteered that it was unique in their experience.¹⁰ However, there is a large octagonal stucco-covered bandstand in Hannibal, Missouri. The Victorian norm and the bungalow instance is telling, as it underscores the 1915 date. We associate the brightly uniformed town band with the entertainments of the 1890's and the first decade of this century.¹¹ The eve of the First World War seems late; a town should already have its bandstand by that time. Mountain Grove did have an earlier bandstand; photographs show it as a Victorian Stick Style affair of two stories and octagonal plan, certainly the "gazebo" type. A similar two-story octagonal bandstand still exists in Hermann, Missouri. The earlier Mountain Grove Bandstand was located at the intersection of the square's walkways (photo 9). A very early photo shows that it was in the square by sometime in the 1880's, possibly in time for Professor Baker's brass band (photo 10). The current bandstand is just a few feet northwest of the center of the square and it seems reasonable, though not demonstratable, that this was because the original bandstand continued to function while the current one was under construction.¹² If this were so it would be another indication of the importance of the entertainments which took place in the town square.

In summary, the Mountain Grove structure has architectural significance, because it is a late example of a bandstand which was built to replace an earlier building with the same function. It conforms to the Craftsman or Bungalow style, and as a Bungalow style bandstand does not conform to normal expectations for bandstands. While the building is late for a bandstand, it is early for a Bungalow style building in Mountain Grove or the Ozarks area.

SOCIAL HISTORY

The town of Mountain Grove grew as a trading center along a railroad which followed the high ground across southern Missouri. Its initial development fronted the railroad corridor and was the product of two promoters, Joseph Fisher, who owned the depot site, and Issac Lane, who owned property immediately north of the depot where the developing town's streets and square would be platted. To develop his holdings Fisher sited a rectangular town plat (1882) immediately adjacent to the depot and gave this short-lived venture in town founding the name of Fyan.

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In 1882, Dr. Issac Lane bought the land north of Fisher's depot oriented holdings, and laid out streets and a square which was located along the southern edge of his property adjacent to the land owned by Fisher. The square was Lane's answer to Fisher's Depot.¹³ Early in 1883, Lane offered lots for sale and gave others to businesses which would locate around the new square.¹⁴ There was an area of brush and trees on the north part of Fisher's property between the new square and Fyan which obscured the square from the railroad and the depot. One of the tales of the early history of Mountain Grove is of the "nipping frost" which killed all this growth one night and left it cut off as if by an axe.¹⁵ The importance of a visual and an actual link between the two loci of the town, railroad and square, was recognized early. The short street connecting the southeast corner of the square to Fyan Street and the depot came to be called Union.¹⁶ Evidently, it was Doctor Lane who understood that the town's success depended on providing space and a focus for the rural people to come to town to trade conveniently. Both the depot, the transportation link, and the square, the central business location, were essential for Mountain Grove to grow as a trading center, and the importance of the two would remain linked until the railroad discontinued regularly scheduled service.

Immediately businesses from "old town" relocated around the square and new ones were established.¹⁷ Mountain Grove reapplied for a charter in 1886 and was established in 1887 to include Fyan, Lane's addition and old town.¹⁸ By 1888, the combined community had a population of about 1,300 and was the largest community in Wright County, which had an overall population of 15,000.¹⁹ While the growth of the other towns in the area and the county itself stagnated after about the turn of the century, Mountain Grove continued to grow. Today the town has a population of about 4,000, while that of the county is just over 16,000.²⁰

By the time the town was incorporated in 1887, most of the earlier community businesses had located near the town square. In this era the square was bare ground and the wide streets around it were mud, but there was a hitching rail which completely encircled the square. Such a rail would be a feature of the square until about the time of the Second World War.²¹ The streets remained dirt until they were first graveled and then paved in the early 1920's.²² People still alive remember the problem of stumps in the streets of Mountain Grove.²³ Between the official founding of the town and the present bandstand's construction (1915) the square was used as a local commons. By the turn of the century (and possibly earlier) a wooden two-level, octagonal, Victorian-styled bandstand made its appearance in the heart of the square (photograph 10). The square was transformed from an irregularly defined open space to a space of public significance; by 1915 the community determined a new

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bandstand was to be located a few feet northwest of the older structure, thus providing continuity to the emergence of the square as a significant social focal point.

On Tuesday, August 3, 1915, the Honorable Thomas R. Marshall, Vice President of the United States (Wilson Administration), took part in the cornerstone laying ceremony for the bandstand which was under construction. According to the August 5 edition of The Mountain Grove Journal, Marshall "dedicated the structure to 'the average man,' as he said that during his travels he had seen many monuments dedicated to great men, but none to the average man, and as music is something that all can enjoy, he felt that it was fitting to so dedicate the proposed structure."

In his book, Ozark Baptizings, Hangings, and Other Diversions, Robert Gilmore argues that the integrating experience of performer and audience, which fills a human need, was often provided in the Ozarks by home or community made entertainments.²⁴ In Mountain Grove the principal, locally created, entertainment was musical. Jacqueline Barbe, a former editor, surveyed the paper for references to uses of the bandstand in the years 1915, 1925, 1935, and 1945 and found information which underscored the importance of the bandstand and the square for the life of the community. The Saturday evening band performances which took place in the summer months were not normally mentioned; however, when one was to be missed that was mentioned.²⁵ We also find that while the town bands were comprised of local volunteer musicians, the leaders were paid, and sometimes would come from out of town. The expenses of the summer series were met jointly by the city and the Chamber of Commerce, and businesses stayed open late on Saturday night until after the concerts.²⁶ Mountain Grove residents often mentioned the "Musical Grays." According to Fred Leach, Lew Gray led the town band for years and his children were all musicians in it.²⁷ In 1915, an L. W. Gray contributed the cornerstone for the bandstand, and in 1925 an L. W. Gray is mentioned in the paper as band director.²⁸ In the later thirties, Edwin Fite, a local high school music teacher, created a band of his students for the Saturday summer performances.²⁹ The bandstand was not large enough for the concert band that Fite organized, so the musicians also had chairs on the lawn and later a wooden platform was built for them.³⁰ During the 30's people would drive their cars to the square early before the performance so they could park diagonally facing the square. They would listen, seated in their cars, and applaud by blowing the car horn.³¹ The Saturday concerts were not the only times a band might perform in the square. The town band might be featured on a program for a special occasion, as for instance, before a Memorial Day address.³² Band jubilees were sometimes held in which a number of bands from the region would perform, and other local bands such as the "boys and girls" band or the high school band might also sometimes perform in the bandstand.³³

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MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

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Nor were band concerts the only public events which made use of the bandstand; local testimony indicates it was the normal platform for local politicians in good weather.³⁴ In 1925, the city council agreed to allow the use of the square for union (interdenominational) church services Sunday evenings in July and August. The newspaper account included the admonition, "a person who gets up during a church service and goes clumping down the aisle would be considered deficient in good breeding. The person who disturbs an open-air union service by cranking up his car and hustling around the square with a lot of rattling honks and splutterations belongs in the same class."³⁵ In later years, union services in the square were regularly mentioned in the paper, and in more recent times denominational meetings and revivals would also be held in the square.³⁶ For many years the square was the location of the Tri-County Fair, and the bandstand and the band were used.³⁷ Mountain Grove is in the southeast corner of Wright County adjacent to both Texas and Douglas Counties. The Tri-County Fair location indicates the importance of the town as a regional center and the square as a focus for the rural population.

Rural people would drive to town, hitch to the rail, and while the children played in the square, their parents would conduct their business in the establishments around the square. Many of the trees in the square were planted as memorials. These trees would have provided a welcome shade for those in town for market, or to attend some event in the square. However, the square was not an unmixed blessing; horse manure and flies were a problem.³⁸ In 1915, the newspaper stated that the square was more inviting since the lower branches had been trimmed and the grass raked.³⁹

Local residents stated that during both World Wars the square and the bandstand were used for bond rallies and during the First World War it was used for Red Cross auctions.⁴⁰ Troop trains used the rail line and people would go down to watch them pass. Stella Brooks, in high school during the First World War, remembered "They used to let all the girls out of school so we could go get apples from the fruit station to give the soldiers when they came through on the troop trains."⁴¹ Others remembered that sometimes the trains would telegraph ahead that they were stopping and the band would turn out and the troops would march to the square.⁴² A 1917 issue of the Mountain Grove Journal reported, "13 Pullman cars of soldiers stopped enroute from Iowa to Texas. They marched to the square and were treated to cigars and apples. The men expressed their appreciation and said we had treated them better than any stop on the trip."⁴³ When news of the armistice came on the railroad's telegraph, a celebration began in the square which would go on most of the night; a bonfire was started and everyone's hat went into it.⁴⁴

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Undoubtedly the significance of the square and bandstand have been affected by the changing structure of community life in the modern era. The patterns of social interaction and traditional entertainment in Ozark communities have been impacted by the technological advances in communication, transportation and economy that have prevailed in the post-World War II time frame. While it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the significance of the square, and its most significant feature, the bandstand, diminished in importance, it is at least possible to suggest that the social forces that lent it significance changed dramatically. In an almost uniform pattern throughout the Ozarks region the areas of entertainment, economy (with infusions of state and federal assistance), communication and transportation (especially the extension of highway networks) were undergoing dramatic change from the late 1920s up through the 1940s. To restrict the relevant period of significance to a specific date is difficult as no other logical date other than this general period of transition is apparent; thus an arbitrary date of 1938 is chosen for the end of the period of significance for the purposes of this nomination. It should be noted the bandstand and square still function as a significant entity; as is witnessed by the recent rededication of the bandstand by then presidential aspirant Vice-President George Bush (April 22, 1987). During World War II, the bandstand continued to be the location of bond rallies and to date continues to be the centerpiece of a wide variety of community functions and entertainments. These functions have not been confused with significance, however, and the end of the period of significance, beginning in 1915, is bounded by the current 50 year limitation placed on National Register eligibility.

During the process of nomination preparation a wide range of local informants were interviewed. These interviews reinforced the prevailing view that the bandstand is a significant artifact in the town's history.

Every person interviewed emphasized that the square with its bandstand served a social function; no matter what the formal reason for people gathering in the square, it provided the occasion for people to renew acquaintances, to gather news and gossip, to court, and to be involved in the other human activities of which a community culture is composed. This would be particularly true for the inhabitants of the region who depended on the square both as a focus for business and a locus for entertainment but who did not have as much day to day chance to keep up with their acquaintances. The larger significance of the bandstand in the Mountain Grove town square is that it provided a place for community activities, be they entertainment or part of the economic and social business of the wider community in which the trading city is a part. It also provided a focus for community feelings. In the past the square met these local and regional needs, and together with the railroad and the depot acted for, and symbolized, the community's connection with the wider world.

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- ¹ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, Discovering the Vernacular Landscape, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 17-8.
 - ² For a summary of the functions of the town square see: David T. Stephens and Alexander T. Bobersky, "The Town Squares of the Western Reserve: a Perspective from the Late Twentieth Century, Pioneer America Society Transactions, Vol. X, 1987, p. 53-58.
 - ³ For accounts of the bungalow in the United States see: Clay Lancaster, The American Bungalow, 1880-1930, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985) and Chapter 4, Anthony D. King, The Bungalow: the Production of a Global Culture, (London, Boston, Melbourne: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).
 - ⁴ Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 22, 1915.
 - ⁵ Robert Flanders, Suzanne Harris and David Quick, A Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed University Plaza Project, City of Springfield, Greene County, Missouri: 1981. Center for Archaeological Research, 1981, p. 178.
 - ⁶ Lynn Morrow, "Louis Miller: Master Craftsman and Folk Artisan of Southeast Missouri," unpublished paper presented to the 24th Missouri Conference on History, 1982. Draft copy retained by David Quick.
 - ⁷ Morrow, Personal Communication.
 - ⁸ King, p. 148-49.
 - ⁹ S. Frederick Starr, Editor, The Oberlin Book of Bandstands, (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987).
 - ¹⁰ These people include James Denny of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and Lynn Morrow, Public Historian, both of whom have wide experience in the field of the Missouri built environment.
 - ¹¹ Starr, p. 30-36.
 - ¹² This suggestion was made by several townspeople including Carl Swensen, a member of the committee for the restoration of the square.
 - ¹³ Strange as it may seem one source contends that Lane got the idea for the square from Washington, D.C., Lena M. Gladden, "Dr. Lane Patterns Mountain Grove after Washington, D.C.," Mountain Grove News-Journal, Thursday, June 24, 1982.

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- 14 Mountain Grove Makes Good: 100 Years of Progress, 1882-1982, Centennial Year booklet, 1982, n.p., Robinett, p. 32.
- 15 The Mountain Prospect, May 25, 1883. Reprinted in a special edition of the Mountain Grove News Journal, Thursday, June 24, 1982.
- 16 Interviews: F. Leach and L. Kirkpatrick.
- 17 Mountain Grove Makes Good, n.p.
- 18 Goodspeed Publishing Co., History of Laclede, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright...and Dent Counties, Missouri, Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889. Reprint, 1974, p. 416.
- 19 History, Goodspeed, p. 418.
- 20 1980 census figures.
- 21 Several of the elderly residents whom I interviewed remembered the rail.
- 22 Interviews: F. Leach and L. Kirkpatrick.
- 23 Interview: F. Leach.
- 24 Robert K. Gilmore, Ozark Baptizings, Hangings, and Other Diversions: Theatrical Folkways of Rural Missouri, 1885-1910, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984).
- 25 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, May 14, 1925; August 8, 1935.
- 26 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, May 21, 1925; May 23, 1935; June 6, 1935; July 18, 1935. Leach and Poe.
- 27 Interview: F. Leach.
- 28 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 29, 1915; May 21, 1925. A 1947 photo of 8 of "The Musical Grays" was published in Mountain Grove News-Journal, Thursday, March 4, 1982.
- 29 Interview: Ruth Peebles; Ruth was a member of this summer band while she was in high school.

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- 30 Interviews: R. Peebles and C. Swensen.
- 31 Interviews: R. Peebles and C. Swensen.
- 32 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, September 2, 1915; June 4, 1925; April 26, 1945.
- 33 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, February 5, 1925; April 30, 1925; June 4, 1925; April 26, 1945.
- 34 Nearly all of the interviewees mentioned this.
- 35 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 9, 1925.
- 36 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, July 12, 1945; July 12, 1945.
- 37 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, October 7 and 14, 1915; October 1, 1925; October 3, 1935.
- 38 Interviews: F. Leach and L. Kirkpatrick.
- 39 Mountain Grove Journal, Thursday, October 7, 1915.
- 40 Interviews: L. Kirkpatrick and E. Poe.
- 41 Mountain Grove News Journal, Thursday, May 13, 1982.
- 42 Interview: E. Poe.
- 43 Mountain Grove Journal, December 6, 1917.
- 44 Interview: L. Kirkpatrick.

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Section number 9 Page 2

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The area is bounded by a rectangle, 23 feet on its north and south sides and 28 feet on its east and west sides. The southeast corner of which is 75 feet from the curb of North Main Street on the west and 93 feet from the curb of Second Street on the north in the town square park of Mountain Grove, Missouri. This area encompasses the bandstand and the remainder is covered with concrete paving. As the discussions in Sections 7 and 8 indicate, the remainder of the town square is historically consistent with and important for the bandstand, but these remaining areas of the square have been altered enough in material and detail to lack as high a level of integrity as the bandstand.

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2. Hugh Davidson
Preservation Planner and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Date: November, 1988
Telephone: 314/751-5377

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Photographic labels for Mountain Grove Bandstand, Mountain Grove Town Square,
Mountain Grove, Wright County, Missouri.

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711

David M. Quick

January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing northwest, Southeast corner, Park, Civil War Monument on left.
#1

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711

David M. Quick

January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing southwest, Northeast corner, Park, 2nd World War and 1st World War
Monuments on right.
#2

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711

David M. Quick

January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing north, South Elevation.
#3

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MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711
David M. Quick
January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing west, East elevation.
#4

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711
David M. Quick
January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing south, North elevation.
#5

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND
Mountain Grove Town Square
Mountain Grove, MO 65711
David M. Quick
January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing east, West elevation.
#6

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MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

Mountain Grove Town Square

Mountain Grove, MO 65711

David M. Quick

January, 1987

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Facing north, south elevation, restoration in process.

#7

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

Mountain Grove Town Square

Mountain Grove, MO 65711

Photographer: Unknown

Date: Circa 1950's

Negative location : David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Copy of old photograph of the Bandstand taken facing north. Note crowd.

#8

MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

Mountain Grove Town Square

Mountain Grove, MO 65711

Photographer: Unknown

Date: Circa 1905

Negative location: David M. Quick
Art Department
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri 65804

Copy of a print of an old photograph of the Square and original Bandstand taken facing southeast. Note horses and wagons.

#9

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MOUNTAIN GROVE BANDSTAND

Mountain Grove Town Square

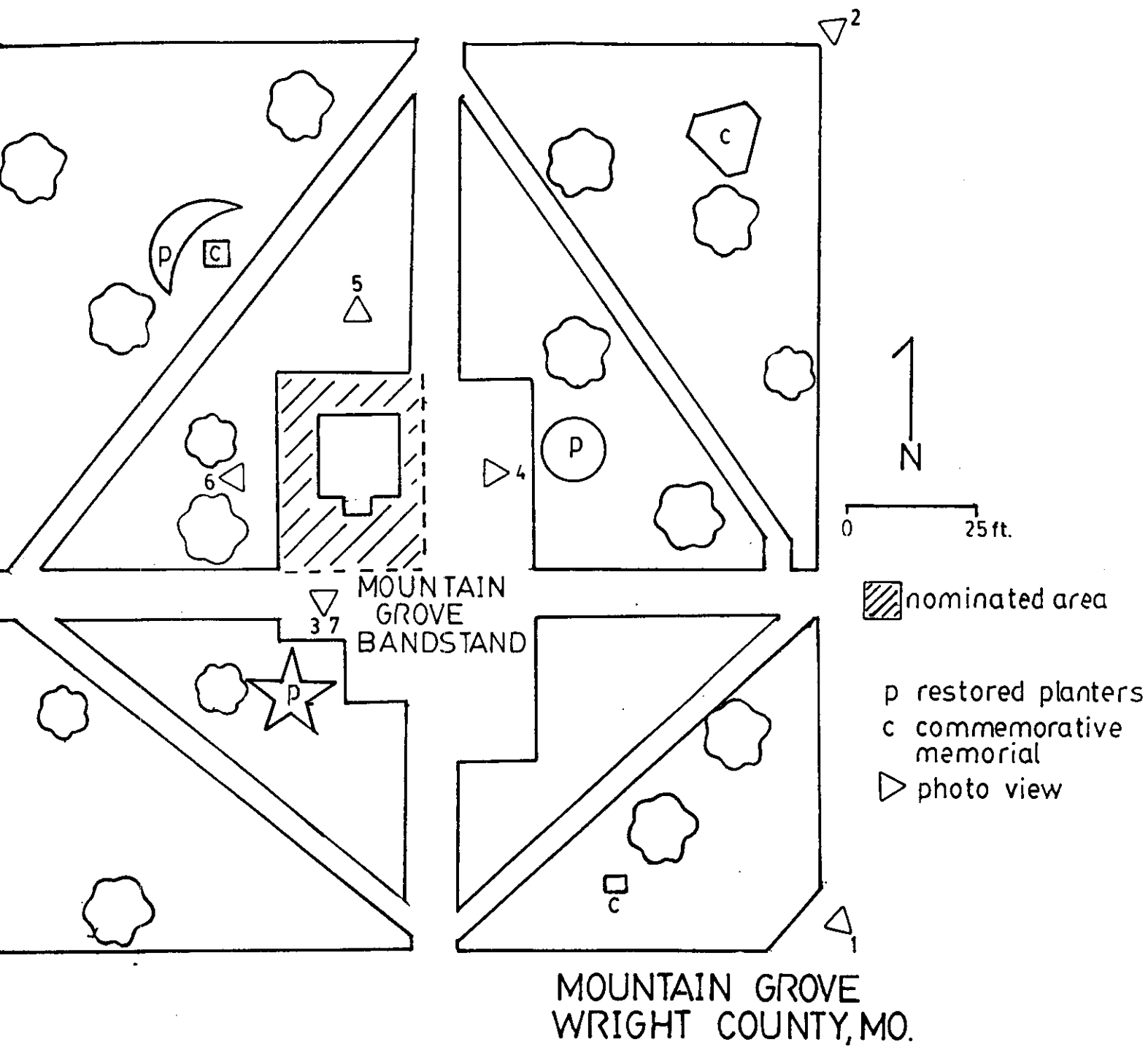
Mountain Grove, MO 65711

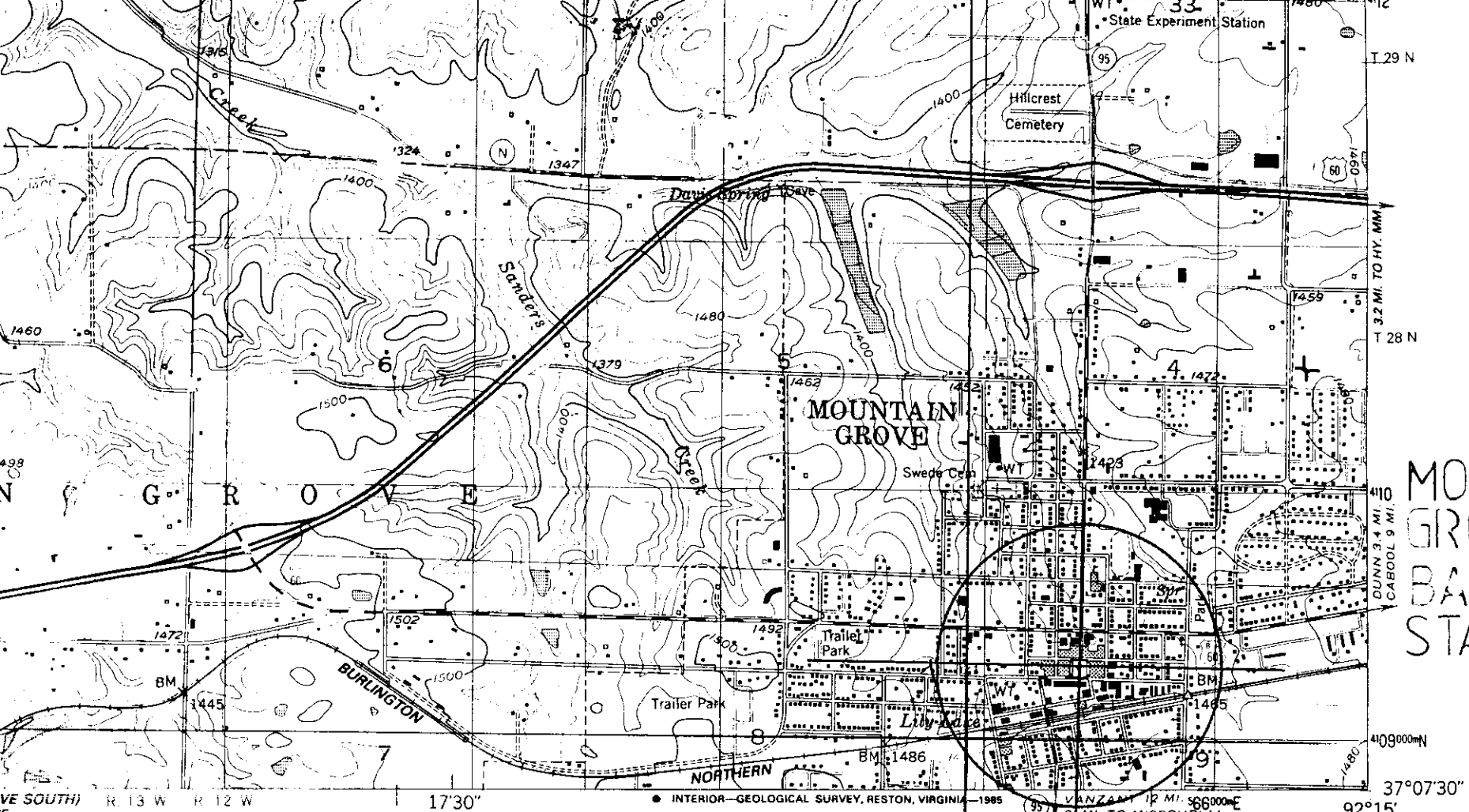
Photographer: Unknown

Date: Circa 1885

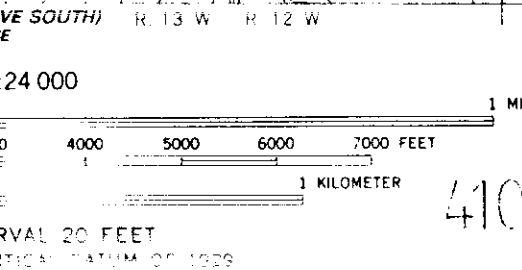
Negative location: David M. Quick
 Art Department
 Southwest Missouri State University
 Springfield, Missouri 65804

Copy of a print of old photograph of Square and original Bandstand (lower center), taken facing northeast. Note treeless condition of the Square.
#10





MOUNTAIN GROVE BAND-STAND



WRIGHT COUNTY, MO
15/565540mE
4109270mN



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route State Route

MOUNTAIN GROVE NORTH, MO.
NE/4 MOUNTAIN GROVE 15' QUADRANGLE
37092-B3-TF-024

1951
PHOTOREVISED 1985
DMA 7558 III NE-SERIES V879



















