

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. 70-00376  New  Supplemental  
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing  
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries  
 National Register Status: (any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE  
 Review & Compliance No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name H. Schroeder Building  
 other names/site number Field Site #: FS-030

**2. Location**

street & number 116 Chestnut Street  
 city or town Muscatine  vicinity, county Muscatine  
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original Town Block(s) 10 Lot(s) N18' S38' of Lot 6

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property	
	If Non-Eligible Property	If Eligible Property, enter number of:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____	Contributing _____ Noncontributing _____
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____
	_____ buildings	<u>1</u> _____ buildings
	_____ sites	_____ sites
	_____ structures	_____ structures
	_____ objects	_____ objects
	_____ Total	<u>1</u> _____ Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Architectural Data Base Number \_\_\_\_\_

Historical and Architectural Survey and Evaluation of the Downtown Commercial District 70-013

**6. Function or Use**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>02G04: Commerce/Trade/Restaurant/boarding house</u>	<u>02E08: Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store/Barber</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>05B: Late Victorian/Italianate</u>	foundation _____
_____	walls <u>03: Brick, 05: Metal</u>
_____	roof _____
_____	other _____

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A	Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B	Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C	Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D	Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Muscatine Address 116 Chestnut Street Site Number 70-00376  
City Muscatine District Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or grave.
- D A cemetery.
- E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

05: Commerce  
02: Architecture

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1865  check if circa or estimated date  
Other dates c.1906

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Architect \_\_\_\_\_  
Builder \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**  SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Deb Pohl, MHPC member & Jim Rudisill, City of Muscatine (R.L. McCarley, consultant)  
organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date May 18, 2005  
street & number 215 Sycamore telephone 563-264-1554  
city or town Muscatine state Iowa zip code 52761

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)**

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # \_\_\_\_\_ Frame/slot # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_  
Roll/slide sheet # \_\_\_\_\_ Frame/slot # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_  
Roll/slide sheet # \_\_\_\_\_ Frame/slot # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_

- See continuation sheet or attached **photo & slide catalog sheet** for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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<u>H. Schroeder Building</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>116 Chestnut Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

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## 7. Narrative Description

The three-story, one-bay building at 116 Chestnut appears to have been constructed around 1865, with the stamped metal façade added around 1906. The storefront appears to have been remodeled in the late 1950s or early 1960s, and it is recessed at an angle back to the entry. Large storefront windows have been modified to be smaller. The storefront entry and adjacent upper stories entry each have a transom window. The remaining storefront area is clad in permastone. The upper facade is clad in metal, possibly tin. The second and third stories are dominated by a two-story oriel window, integrated into the metal façade. The center window on each story is a large picture window with a transom window and the side windows have one-over-one-light double-hung sashes. Each of the oriel windows has a decorative cornice that extends across the width of the front. A decorative band is also located under each window and also extends across the entire front; the upper band has garland-like detailing while the lower band has rosettes. A pilaster is located on each side of the oriel window on each story. The pilasters appear to be decorative only. The pilasters on either side of the building and the parapet area above the third story is clad in pressed metal that simulates stone/concrete block. The façade is topped by a full-width pediment that extends above the parapet. The cornice extends over the front of the building and is supported by four brackets, two on the end and two in the middle. "H. Schroeder" is stamped into the metal front of the pediment.

The south side elevation is divided into three uneven bays by two chimneys that extend from the ground to about three feet above the roofline. Originally this wall was covered by an adjacent three-story building. The adjacent building was torn down sometime between 1928 and 1946, and replaced by a one-story block building that has also been torn down. The only openings on the south wall of 116 Chestnut are on the second and third stories, indicating these were apparently cut when the adjacent building was torn down. There are three one-over-one-light, double-hung windows on each story. On the second story, one window is located in the east bay, while two windows are located in the center bay. The third story windows are all located in the middle bay. The north elevation is a party wall with the adjacent building. The rear (west) elevation has three openings on the second-story level. A entry is located to the far right of the building. It appears to be historic panel door with a two-light upper half. The two openings to the left are both one-over-one-light, double-hung windows, but the window on the far left is only about half the size of the other. The rear of the building appears to be clad in galvanized tin sheets that have been painted.

There does not appear to have been any major renovation effort since the 1906, except to remodel a storeroom and lower a ceiling in 1956 ("Permits For Remodeling and Building," Muscatine Journal Year-end Review, December 29, 1956, Sec. 3, p. 12). The storefront may also date to this period, though not specifically mentioned in this permit. Several storefronts throughout the downtown were remodeled similarly in this period.

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## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The H. Schroeder Building does not appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, or C. It does appear to be a contributing building to a potential downtown historic district.

Based on 1866 and later city directories, it appears W.A. Halter and his wife Catherine were occupying this building in 1866 and perhaps were its original builders. The Halters initially attempted to operate a grocery from the site, but soon discovered the street offered more of an economic opportunity as a tavern/restaurant and later as a boarding house. There were at least five similar taverns or restaurants within a half-block of each other on this street during the late 1800/early 1900s. The majority of buildings used for those activities remain on the street. The building's owners have attempted to keep pace with the changes in building appearance and use, and 116 Chestnut does provide one of the stronger efforts for that. Herman Schroeder, who owned the building for less than one year, upgraded the building by installing a pre-fabricated, sheet metal façade on the building, probably during 1906. This façade was attracting strong interest around the Midwest, partially because of the efforts of Mesker Brothers and other product manufacturers. Muscatine even had a resident metal façade producer, and it is possible he supplied the material for this project. No identifying marks can be seen on the façade however, so that speculation might not be accurate. The building at 303 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street provide a more elaborate example of these facades, and the storefront modifications detract less from the overall appearance. Other than the façade, the building itself does not offer any additional features to make it individually eligible for listing. The same is true for both individual and event significance. No documentation has been found to establish any significance for any previous owner or event at the site. There building therefore does not appear individually eligible under Criteria A, B or C.

Although not eligible for individual listing, the building does qualify as contributing to a potential downtown historic district. It falls within two historic contexts for the district: "19<sup>th</sup> Century Business and Industry" and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Business and Industry." The façade modifications in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century are uniquely contributing to this building and the district. Based on transfer records at the Muscatine County Courthouse, Herman Schroeder owned from January 8, 1906 to November 22, 1906. Since he appears to be the only H. Schroeder to have owned the property, it can be reasonably assumed the metal façade was installed by him during this time. The work was a major effort to upgrade the building and perhaps an attempt to create an improved image for the street. Though it appears he failed in the effort (city directories for that time indicate no storefront business and perhaps only one tenant was in the building between 1907 and 1911), this represents a trend throughout the district to update older buildings, particularly with the addition of oriel windows. The more elaborate metal façade on this building indicates the extent of the remodeling effort. This history contributes historically and architecturally to this potential historic district. Additionally, the series of businesses that operated here contribute historically to the commercial nature of this district.

W.A. Halter appears to have been the first occupant of a building located at this site, and perhaps the original builder. The 1866 city directory identifies him as operating a grocery on the "w.s. Chestnut 6 s of 2d." Halter was eventually listed as operating a restaurant at 116 Chestnut with his wife Katherine. The

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building was also used as their home, and he died there on January 22, 1899 after a short illness. According to his obituary, he was born in Lebanon, Pennsylvania in 1824 and came to Muscatine in 1874. At the time he died, he and his wife were operating the building as a boarding house (Muscatine Journal 1899, 1). His wife continued to operate the boarding house until she died on February 25, 1905. Her obituary identified her as one of the most well-known women of the community (Muscatine Journal 1905, 4). She had been born in France in 1827 and had come to Muscatine when she was 18. The couple had no children.

After they died, the building apparently continued to be used as a boarding house for a few years and then was vacant for a short time. When the Halters operated the building as a boarding house, they were meeting the needs of single individuals and transient workers in the community. As economic conditions improved, the need for such housing decreased and a variety of other businesses used the building for their own special uses. One of these later occupants, rather than the Halters, would seem the most likely to have installed the sheet metal façade. The Halters were both elderly and had been operating the same restaurant/boarding house business for over 30 years. While the couple might have wished to add some spark to their building, under their situation, it would seem unusual for the elderly couple to have considered such a move. A new owner, however, would have been more likely to alter the building to make it more attractive for a new occupant. H. Schroeder, the name listed on the metal cornice of the building, apparently was Herman Schroeder.

Herman Schroeder bought the building from the Catherine (Katherine) Halter Estate on January 8, 1906 (Administrator's Deed Book 1, Page 163). City directories identify Schroeder as a laborer, and later directories indicate he became a foreman at Huttig. He is the only H. Schroeder associated with the building's ownership, although at least two other Schroeders did own the property later. Herman Schroeder only owned the property from January 8, 1906 to November 22, 1906, when he sold it to Wilhelmina Schroeder (relationship unknown) (Warranty Deed Book 38, Page 738). She later sold it to Ferdinand Schroeder (relationship also unknown) on November 13, 1915 (Warranty Deed Book 49, Page 523). Since Herman is the only H. Schroeder connected with the building, he likely installed the pre-fabricated façade as an enticement to potential renters in 1906, or in anticipation of selling the building. No other information could be found on Schroeder.

These sheet metal facades were popular around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The colored 1912 Sanborn map available at the Musser Public Library does not clearly indicate if the metal façade had been installed at this time. The brick building is correctly color-coded for brick, but the façade is colored yellow (frame) and it indicates a metal cornice is present. The 1919 color Sanborn does indicate "IR" for an iron front. Two popular manufacturers of such facades were the George Mesker Company of Evansville, IN and Mesker Brothers of St. Louis, Missouri. These companies provided pre-fabricated metal storefronts around the Midwest, which probably helped spark production by other local companies around the country. The Niver Iron Works of Muscatine was one of these local manufacturers, advertising cast and wrought iron building work by 1898 ("Niver Iron Works Co," December 7, 1898, 21). According to the 1897-98 city directory, its plant was located between the railroad tracks at Second and Spring Streets. The Niver Iron Works continued to operate into the 1920s. While the façade at 116 Chestnut no longer has any visible manufacturing nameplate, the detailing is not clearly distinguishable as a Mesker, so it

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seems more likely that it may have come from a local rather than regional supplier. Regardless of who the supplier was, the upper façade of 116 Chestnut is one of the most extensively renovated buildings using this material in the community. No historic photos of the building have been located, so its original features are unknown.

While the Schroeders owned the building, several businesses operated here. By 1911 the Pioneer Pearl Button Company was operating an office there, possibly on the second story or in the rear, since a restaurant and a barbershop were also listed at the site. Around 1919, W.H. Zeug began operating a bicycle and motorcycle repair shop in the building. This was one of multiple locations that he operated his shop over a period of years. He continued to run the shop there until 1927, when T.R. Truempy Auto Wrecking took over the building. The second and third floors were used as apartments during this time, although the tenant turnover appears to have been high.

Since the Schroeders owned the building, it has passed through several owners and occupants who have attempted to operate a business at the site. Few of the businesses have lasted for more than a few years, indicating the difficulty in overcoming either perceived or real economic roadblocks for the area. Chestnut Street, and specifically 116 Chestnut, provides a good example of the efforts 19<sup>th</sup> and 20 century businesses made to adapt and succeed in the economic climate of that period. The storefront was vacant by 1931 and remained empty until 1936 when the Salvation Army operated there. The Salvation Army expanded to include 118 Chestnut in 1938. The Salvation Army had used the building at 118 Chestnut earlier, and in 1939 it left 116 Chestnut and returned to operating just out of 118 Chestnut. After the Salvation Army left 116 Chestnut, the Hopkins Saw Shop located there. Fred Hopkins continued operating his shop at 116 Chestnut until 1946. A 1949 directory listing identifies the Muscatine Pearl Works Factory at the site, but by 1952 the building is vacant and remains vacant for the next few years. Tenants continued to occupy at least the second floor through this period.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Carlson, Jo Ann, ed. *Muscatine History Notes*. Volume 3. Muscatine, Iowa, Musser Public Library, 1997, p. 183.

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1856-present. Available at the Musser Public Library.

"Death of W. A. Halter," *Muscatine Journal*, January 23, 1899, page 1

Deed records, Muscatine County Recorder's Office, Muscatine County Courthouse, Muscatine, Iowa.

"Got Mesker?" website, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Springfield, IL. Resources online include brief history, identification guide, and 1904 Catalog, Accessed online at <http://www.illinoishistory.gov/ps/gotmesker.htm> in June 2005.

"Mrs. K. Halter Passes Away," *Muscatine Journal*, February 25, 1905, page 4.

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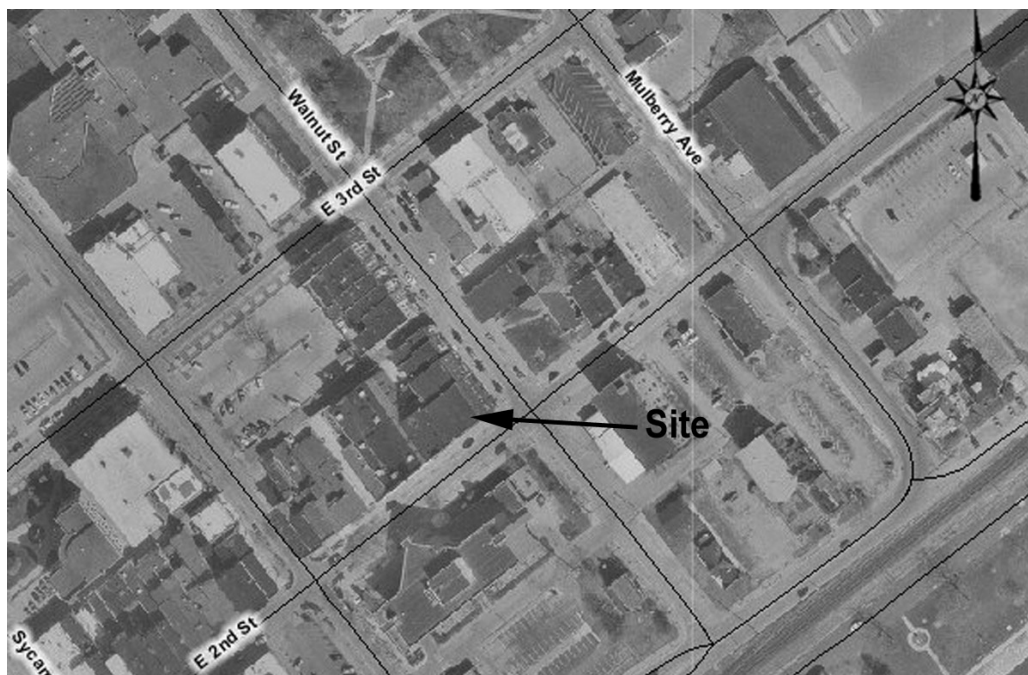
Muscatine  
County

116 Chestnut Street  
Address

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Sanborn Map Company, New York. Maps of the City of Muscatine dated September 1883, August 1888, October 1892, August 1899, December 1905, February 1912, July 1919, March 1928 and June 1946.

## Location Map



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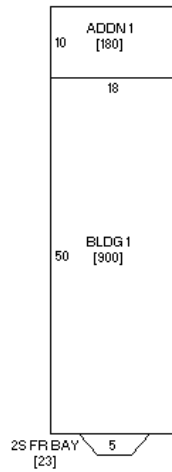
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## Plan (from assessor's office)



(front - Chestnut)

## Photograph of building (digital image)

