

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

State Inventory No. 70-00964  **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 Muscatine Journal Building (#2)  
 other names/site number Field Site #: FS-085

**2. Location**

street & number 301 East Third 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) 58 Lot(s) 1

**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>02A05: Commerce/Trade / Newspaper</u>	<u>02A05: Commerce/Trade / Newspaper</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>06A: Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals / Beaux Arts</u>	foundation <u>10B: Concrete</u>
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08B: Asbestos / Rolled</u>
_____	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  
City Muscatine

Address 301 East Third Street

Site Number 70-00964  
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)

06: Communications

02: Architecture

**Significant Dates**

Construction date

1919  check if circa or estimated date

Other dates

1973 addition

**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 Maryrose and John Peterschmidt (Member and Volunteer) (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date February 12, 2005

street & number 215 Sycamore Street telephone 563-264-1550

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>Muscatine Journal Building (#2)</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>301 E. Third St</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

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## 7. Narrative Description

The Muscatine Journal Building is a single story brick and stone 50 by 134 foot structure that was built in 1919 in a Beaux Arts style. Most of the south, or front facing elevation is clad in stone, simulating a temple-front building with paired columns, entablature, and parapet. The façade is divided into three distinct, symmetrical bays by paired stone pilasters. The pilasters are flat cut stone with Corinthian capitals of carved stone. The west bay contains a large, fixed plate glass window partially covered with a shallow profile metal awning. The center bay contains a single entry with narrow side light windows and a shallow profile metal awning. The east bay contains a large, fixed plate glass window and awning identical to the west space. A wide band of stone with the incised letters THE MUSCATINE JOURNAL extends along the frieze above the columns. The cornice is slightly projected with a continuous dentil molding of cut stone. Above the cornice rises a stone and brick parapet, which rises to a slightly higher level at the center of the elevation in stone detail. The windows on this elevation are framed with modern, anodized aluminum. Recessed lights are mounted on the underside of the awnings.

The west elevation is brick, except for a continuous cap stone on the parapet and stone skirt at grade for the width of the west elevation. A soldier course of brick with a tie back course above forms a visual band from the stone band on the front façade to the rear of the building at the level of the frieze. There are eleven large windows and five small windows on the west elevation that have been replaced with glass block. A photo taken inside the building shortly after construction and published in the 1940 Centennial Edition of the Muscatine Journal clearly shows the original windows on the west façade to be metal framed, four by six fixed pane windows. A single entry is an aluminum framed door located at grade at about the center of the elevation. Four smaller, fixed modern windows are located above and to the right of the entry. A plastic sign is above the entry: JOURNAL.

The Journal expanded their facilities in the 1970's to publish a weekly trader paper. A portion of the east wall of the original building was removed to add a brick structure. The front elevation of the addition is set back from the front elevation of the original building by approximately 25 feet. This addition is about half the size as the original building, measuring 88 by 40 feet. The brick is similar in color to the original building, and it has dark aluminum framed windows. A concrete cap runs along top of the walls.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Muscatine Journal Building at 301 East Third Street does not appear individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B and C. It does, however, appear individually eligible under Criterion A. Additionally, it appears to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district.

The Muscatine Journal, as the only newspaper in Muscatine during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been a focal point for all citizens of Muscatine County as they look to be informed regarding subjects that affect their daily lives. In addition to the sensational and significant battle with Norman Baker, the Muscatine Journal has editorialized about local interest topics through the years and continues to do so responsibly. This is the building most strongly associated with the *Journal*, as they were only in their earlier extant

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building from 1903-1919 and have been in this building since 1919. Additionally, the construction of the new *Journal* building also falls within a significant period of Civic Pride and Accomplishment in Muscatine. During the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Muscatine went through a period of civic pride and accomplishment, which included constructing new and improved buildings in the downtown. Most of the public/social buildings were constructed on the north edge of downtown, along 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Street, including City Hall, Post Office, new Courthouse, new Jail, and Masonic Temple. With the location of the *Journal* building within a block of four of these buildings and the choice of architecture reflecting the architecture of many of these public/social buildings, this building is significant within this historic context. The architectural integrity of this structure is somewhat compromised by the revisions made to the large windows on the front and west façade, as well as the addition set back on the east side. However, the 1919 decorative “applied” front stone façade is intact, clearly continuing to reflect its Beaux Arts style. Thus, this building appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

Additionally, it appears to be a contributing building historically and architecturally in a potential downtown historic district. It falls within two historic contexts identified for the potential district: “Civic Pride and Accomplishment” and “20<sup>th</sup> century Business and Industry.” The Muscatine Journal building is significant for its business and communications contributions to the community, as well as directly reflecting the early 20<sup>th</sup> century period of civic pride and accomplishment.

The 1889 *Portrait and Biographical Album of Muscatine County* notes that “This excellent paper dates its beginning from Oct. 27, 1840, when it made its first appearance under the name of the Bloomington Herald, with Hughes and Russell, editors and proprietors, John Russell being its controlling spirit.” It went through several editors, and in November 1847 John Mahin entered the office as an apprentice, at the age of thirteen years. In 1849, Noah M. McCormick came from St. Louis, revived the paper, and changed its name to the *Muscatine Journal*. He sold it to Jacob and John Mahin, father and son, in July 1852. John Mahin assumed sole charge of it in 1857, and continued as manager without change of proprietors until January 1866. On Jan. 1, 1879, the name and style of the “Journal Printing Company” was adopted, with John Mahin, President; J.B. Lee, Treasurer, and A.W. Lee, Secretary. The company was incorporated soon after (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Muscatine County* 1889: 608). Throughout the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the *Journal* acted as the voice of residents of Muscatine, taking the side of prohibitionists in perhaps the longest and loudest argument of this period.

After working for the paper for over 50 years, John Mahin retired in 1903. In January 1903, A. W. Lee (former employee and nephew of Mahin), W. L. Lane and H. M. Sheppard purchased the stock of the Journal Printing Company. After leaving for Chicago in 1889, A.W. Lee (John Mahin’s nephew) decided to become publisher himself in 1890, buying an Ottumwa, Iowa, newspaper. Lee conceived a formula to acquire a number of newspapers to be controlled by one “family” but remaining directly under local control. In 1899, he gained controlling interest in the *Davenport Times*. After buying the *Muscatine Journal* in 1903, he and his associates bought the *La Crosse Tribune* in Wisconsin and the *Hannibal Courier-Post* in Missouri in 1907. He also sent his nephew, Lee P. Loomis, who had been city editor in Ottumwa, to become managing editor in Muscatine. Unfortunately, he soon became ill and died, instructing E.P. (Emanuel Philip) Adler to take over as head of the company. Under Adler’s leadership,

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the company continued to flourish, acquiring the *Davenport Democrat* in 1915 and Madison's *Wisconsin State Journal* in 1917 (Richman 1911, Volume 1: 393-397; Lee Enterprise, Inc. website: [www.lee.net/aboutlee/history.shtml](http://www.lee.net/aboutlee/history.shtml)).

Lee P. Loomis continued as managing editor into the 1910s. The *Journal* continued to require more space for its growing business. In 1919, a new brick structure was built at 301 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to provide ample accommodations for the various departments being designed specifically for newspaper occupancy (Muscatine Journal, May 31, 1940). Lee P. Loomis was publisher of the *Journal* when the first issue was printed at 301 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street on December 1, 1919. Loomis continued as publisher for a number of years, until he became business manager of the *Globe-Gazette* in Mason City, Iowa, after its acquisition in 1925. He would go on to publisher in 1931 and launched Lee Enterprises' first radio station in 1937. After E.P. Alder died in 1949, Loomis became president of Lee Enterprises, continuing to be based in Mason City (Lee Enterprise, Inc. website: [www.lee.net/aboutlee/history.shtml](http://www.lee.net/aboutlee/history.shtml)).

Over the years of operation at this location, the *Journal* became actively involved in many community issues. For example, in the early 1930s a controversy arose concerning the paper's right to news, involving a local entrepreneur and cancer cure charlatan, Norman Baker. Mr. Baker was born in 1883 and spent his early years in Muscatine. As a young man he had started a road show as a mind reader, in which he and a young lady named Madame Pearl Tangley, read the minds of their audience. In 1914, Baker returned to Muscatine, where he began the manufacture of a calliophone, on which he claimed patent rights. In 1920, Baker's calliophone business ended, destroyed in a fire that razed the Old Mill Barn. Some suspected that he set the fire to collect on a \$30,000 insurance policy. He then opened a business on Second Street, selling a correspondence art course. Due to the success of the course, he moved to a larger facility in the 700 block of East Second Street and added a service for tinting black and white pictures with color. In 1924, he began operation of a 5,000 watt radio station on a hill on East Second Street overlooking the Mississippi River. He called the station KTNT, which stood for "Know The Naked Truth". He also launched a newspaper and a magazine in 1929. Norman Baker used these media to broadcast his personal philosophies on any and all subjects. In that same year, he recruited a doctor from southern Illinois and began an institution called the Baker Institute, where he claimed to have a cure for cancer. Although many people believed in Baker's treatments, many others thought he was a fraud, giving false hope to cancer victims. Many local merchants prospered while the Baker Hospital was in business during the Depression years, due to the influx of patients and their families to Muscatine. The American Medical Association sued Baker many times, with Baker counter-suing the A.M.A. 12 times. The Muscatine Journal covered a countersuit by Baker in February 1932 that was held in Davenport, Iowa, in which the verdict was returned in favor of the A.M.A. In a follow-up editorial, the Journal agreed with the verdict, saying: "It will ever be a mystery to many of those who attended the Davenport trial that the Baker Institute has been allowed to operate in a civilized commonwealth." (*Muscatine Journal*, March 4, 1932) Throughout the period in which the Baker Institute was in operation, the Muscatine Journal, its writers, editors and staff was a favorite target for Baker's wrath. He felt that the Journal was conspiring with the A.M.A. to discredit his cancer institute and his radio and publishing enterprises. In May 1930, Baker conducted a "radiothon" on KTNT, against the Journal. He spoke for nearly seven hours, railing against the Journal, trying to persuade readers to cancel their subscriptions to the Journal. He announced during the "radiothon", the formation of his new newspaper, the Midwest Free Press (Fowler

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1987: 60). Baker left Muscatine in 1934, but returned in 1936 for a short time to run for the Senate. He was defeated. He then moved to Arkansas, creating a new hospital, then moved to Mexico, where he operated a 150,000 watt radio station. In 1940, Baker was found guilty of mail fraud and spent four years in Fort Leavenworth Prison. Norman Baker died of jaundice in 1958 and was buried in Muscatine. There were eleven people at his service. The pallbearers were junior college students who had been hired to perform that function ("Man in Purple carved niche in local history," November 1983, 1).

The *Journal* continues to publish at this location and remains affiliated with Lee Enterprises, Inc. The *Journal* is delivered to nearly 8,200 homes Monday through Saturday, and the Post, its sister shopper publication, is delivered every Tuesday to nearly 16,000 households. Today, Lee Enterprises, Inc. is based in Davenport, Iowa, and its operations encompass 21 daily newspapers, 73 weekly newspapers and specialty publications, 9 network-affiliated television stations, and 7 satellite television stations. In January 2005 they announced plans to acquire Pulitzer, Inc., a St. Louis based newspaper conglomerate with 14 daily newspapers and over 100 weekly newspapers. They are projected to become the fourth largest U.S. newspaper publisher in terms of dailies owned and seventh largest in circulation, growing from 44 to 58 daily newspapers in 23 states, with new total circulation of 1.7 million daily and 2.0 million Sunday (Lee Enterprises, Inc. website: <http://www.lee.net/newsreleases>).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1859-1959. Available at the Musser Public Library.

Fowler, Gene and Crawford, Bill. *Border Radio*. Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1987.

Lee Enterprises, Inc. website: [www.lee.net](http://www.lee.net)

"Man in Purple carved niche in local history," *Calumet*, Student newspaper of the Muscatine Community College, November 1983, page 1.

*Muscatine Journal*, March 4, 1932, page 4

*Muscatine Journal Year End Edition*, December 31, 1929, page 3

*Muscatine Journal Centennial Edition*, May 31, 1940, pages 2, 14 and 22

*Muscatine Journal 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, September 28, 1965, page 1

*Portrait and Biographical Album of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: Acme Publishing, 1889.

Richman, Irving B. *History of Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1911.

Sanborn Map Company. "Muscatine, Iowa," Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1907, 1912, 1919, 1928. Accessed online at: [Sanborn.umi.com](http://Sanborn.umi.com)

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Related District Number \_\_\_\_\_

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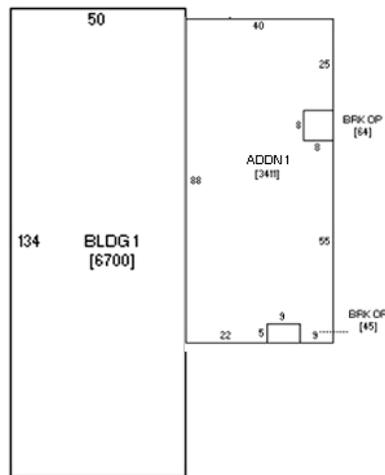
301 E. Third St  
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Muscatine  
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## Location Map



## Plan (from assessor's office)



(front - 3<sup>rd</sup> St)

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## Historic Photograph



Photograph appearing the *Muscatine Journal Centennial Edition*, May 31, 1940

## Photograph of structure (digital image)

