

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

State Inventory No. 70-00990 **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 American Petroleum Company Gas Station
 other names/site number Field Site #: FS-108

2. Location

street & number 101 Walnut 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) 15 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:	
	Enter number of:	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____ buildings	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____ sites	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____ structures	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____ objects	_____	_____ objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____ Total	<u>1</u>	<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

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>14D07: Transportation/Road-Related/Gas Station</u>	<u>02A08: Commerce/Business/Laundry (dry cleaners)</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
_____	foundation _____
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08A: Asphalt/Shingle</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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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 101 Walnut Street

Site Number 70-00990
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

Significant Dates

Construction date

1940 check if circa or estimated date

Other dates

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 Jim Rudisill, Muscatine Planning & Community Development Coordinator (R.L. McCarley, Consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date February 23, 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>American Petroleum Company Gas Station</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>101 Walnut Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

7. Narrative Description

The one-story, brick and concrete block building at 101 Walnut was constructed in 1940 by the American Petroleum Company of Davenport. It sets in a corner lot that formerly was located at the junction of Iowa Highway 92 and U.S. Highway 61, the main east-west/north-south highways through the community. The lot was also located just below Muscatine's High Bridge, where Highway 92 crossed the Mississippi River. The bridge operated from 1891-1973 and was torn down after the Norbert F. Beckey Bridge was constructed upriver. One of the stone pillars from the High Bridge is preserved as a local landmark in Riverside Park, just across Mississippi Drive (formerly Front Street) from 101 Walnut.

An advertisement for the service station in the Muscatine Journal's May 31, 1940 Centennial Edition shows the south and west elevations of the structure. The original building is a cross-gabled structure with a stepped parapet gable located along the main block's west and south elevations, and this profile is retained. The building measures 26' in width and 58' in length. The west gable wing contains the service section of the station and its west elevation contained two service door openings. The office portion apparently is located in the south wing. There is a door in the west elevation of this wing just south of where the two wings junction. South of this door is a large storefront window. On the south wing's south elevation is a large storefront window, a smaller window and a door (Advertisement For Opening, *Muscatine Journal Centennial Edition*, May 31, 1940, Section 6, p. 25).

The current building has a north wing that extends beyond the cross-gable wing. This wing is not seen on the 1946 Sanborn map, and it may have been constructed around 1965 when the concrete outbuilding on the site was built. The service station's original garage doors and office entrance door have been filled with concrete block. Currently, the west gable elevation consists of a small window and a larger storefront window. A glass entrance door with transom is now located on the west elevation in the southwest corner of the building, south of the original office entry. A storefront window is located adjacent to the entry door. On the south wing's south elevation is only a small window, and a Burke Cleaners sign. Smaller windows are located around the building. All windows and doors are non-historic. A brick chimney is on the east side. There are no other distinguishing architectural features on the building, which is currently used as a dry-cleaning business.

There is also an accompanying one-story concrete block building located at 101 Walnut. This building is a simple, gable-roofed, 30' x 38' rectangular structure that was built in 1965. Its construction date and lack of any significant architectural or other qualifying criteria make it a non-contributing building to the site.

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The American Petroleum Company Gas Station appears potentially individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A within the context of the automotive industry in Muscatine. Additional work needs to be completed on this historic context to fully assess the significance of this gas station. However, it does appear to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district.

The gas station represents a significant turning point in the 19th and 20th century transportation and business history of Muscatine. Gas stations appeared in the early 20th century in Muscatine with the advent of the automobile. This particular form of the “house with bays,” which also incorporated service bays, appeared in the 1920s and 1930s. This gas station is a late example of this style, constructed in 1940. According to city directories, there were approximately 60 separate filling stations and tire shops that operated throughout Muscatine between 1927-1939 and would pre-date the American Petroleum station at 101 Walnut. Though service station still exist at many of these address, only four retain a building that dates before the post-World War II period: 111 Mulberry (1933), 1206 East Second Street (c.1942), 506 Mulberry (c.1941), and 600 Mulberry (c.1941). All but 600 Mulberry continue to be used as filling stations. However, none of the four exhibit the building style of 101 Walnut with the stepped parapet. Though the fenestration has been modified, the overall scale and design of the building remains intact. The small later side addition is clearly differentiated from the original building with the change in materials. Thus, the American Petroleum Company Gas Station appears potentially individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. Additional work needs to be completed on the historic context of the automotive industry in Muscatine to fully assess the significance of this gas station.

Finally, the American Petroleum Company Gas Station appears to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district. It falls within one historic context identified for the historic district: “20th century Business and Industry.” It sits at the bottom of the Walnut Street corridor, which saw substantial traffic coming over High Bridge onto this street. This station sat just under the end of the bridge, and additional historic businesses along this corridor are found in the 200 block. While this gas station is a block removed from these other extant businesses, it is historically linked by this corridor. Additionally, it is near the rear of several businesses along E. 2nd Street.

The Muscatine High Bridge had been constructed in 1891 and local highways had been constructed along routes that led to that structure. Business development along Front Street received a boost from these new transportation routes, helping to expand the riverfront’s historic business and industrial activities. One of those expanding business activities centered on personal vehicles and buildings such as the filling station at 101 Walnut. The history of the 101 Walnut filling station, however, began even before its construction.

The American Petroleum Company originated in Davenport in the lubricating oil business in 1925. At the time the Muscatine Journal published its Centennial Edition in 1940, the American Petroleum Company had more than 50 stations and employed more than 100 people in the area. The company opened its

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first station in 1927 at 114 Walnut in Muscatine. A second station opened later at 930 Grandview Avenue. The company announced the first station would be moved to its new location at 101 Walnut in the 1940 Centennial Edition and would open on June 1 (“American Petroleum Company,” *Muscatine Journal Centennial Edition*, May 31, 1940, Section 6, p. 25).

City directories and the 1928 and 1946 Sanborn maps confirm the construction of the service station in this period. The 1938-39 Muscatine City Directory includes a reference to a residence along Front Street in that area, a report confirmed from the 1928 Sanborn map. Starting in 1941-42, 101 Walnut is identified as the address for the American Petroleum Company, rather than the Front Street address used for the residence. The 1946 update of the 1928 Sanborn map also shows both dwellings described in the 1928 Sanborn map are gone. In their place is a rectangular building with the north end slightly wider than the south. The building is labeled as a filling station with three gas tanks and it faces Walnut Street.

Construction of the filling station around 1940 would have been around the 50-year anniversary date for the High Bridge and APC might have used that period to highlight its expansion into that area. The use of vehicles by Americans was growing and communities around the country were experiencing a major expansion of services catering to those consumers. Muscatine was no different and locating a filling station at the intersection of one of the major accesses into the community was a logical step by APC. This 20th century business development mimics the business developments that occurred in Muscatine during the early settlement and into the 19th century along major transportation routes.

Early gas stations reflected residential architecture to “blend” into communities, as gas companies expanded from pumps in commercial areas to the neighborhood gas station. Specific designs were developed by companies to market their image as well as reflect their surroundings. The gas stations expanded in the 1920s and 1930s from simple gable-roof “house” structures to the “house with canopy” and the “house with bays” to incorporate additional services offered. By the late 1930s and 1940s, the attractively styled gas station evolved into the “oblong box” focused on a streamlined appearance with larger glass windows and smooth panels, such as terracotta or porcelain enamel panels (Jakle & Sculle 1994: 137-146).

The design of the American Petroleum Company Gas Station in 1940 reflects the “house with bays” gas station. With its cross gable form and stepped parapets, it suggests the revival cottage architecture of the 1920s and 1930s. The cross gable form, with the service bays in a front facing gable, is a typical form of this type of gas station. The inclusion of the service bays reflects the growing incorporation of this aspect of the business into gas stations, perhaps spurring the move from the 1927 location to this location. The earlier station appears to have been located in an earlier commercial building, adapted to a gas station with the addition of a pump in front. The construction date in 1940 places this gas station towards the end of this period of construction for this form.

While a number of gas stations existed throughout Muscatine in the 1930s and 1940s, few of these historic buildings have survived. According to city directories, there were approximately 60 separate filling stations and tire shops that operated throughout Muscatine between 1927-1939 and would pre-date the American Petroleum station at 101 Walnut. Though service station still exist at many of these

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address, only four retain a building that dates before the post-World War II period: 111 Mulberry (1933), 1206 East Second Street (c.1942), 506 Mulberry (c.1941), and 600 Mulberry (c.1941). All but 600 Mulberry continue to be used as filling stations. However, none of the four exhibit the building style of 101 Walnut with the stepped parapet. Only 111 Mulberry represents the early brick styling of these stations.

The American Petroleum Company Gas Station was still operating in 1959. The companion cement block building appears to have been constructed around 1965, and the north addition to the station likely dates to this time as well. The service station remained in operation as a filling station until 1973. The 1974 & 1975 city directories list the Import Clinic at the site. Mr. Jim's One-Hour Dry Cleaning was listed in the 1975 directory with the Import Clinic. Currently, it is used by Burke Cleaners.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Advertisement for Opening - "American Petroleum Company," *Centennial Edition - Muscatine Journal*, Muscatine, IA, May 31, 1940, Section 6, p. 25.

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

Jakle, John A. and Keith Sculle. *The Gas Station in America*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1994.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester: *A Field Guide to American Homes*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

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.

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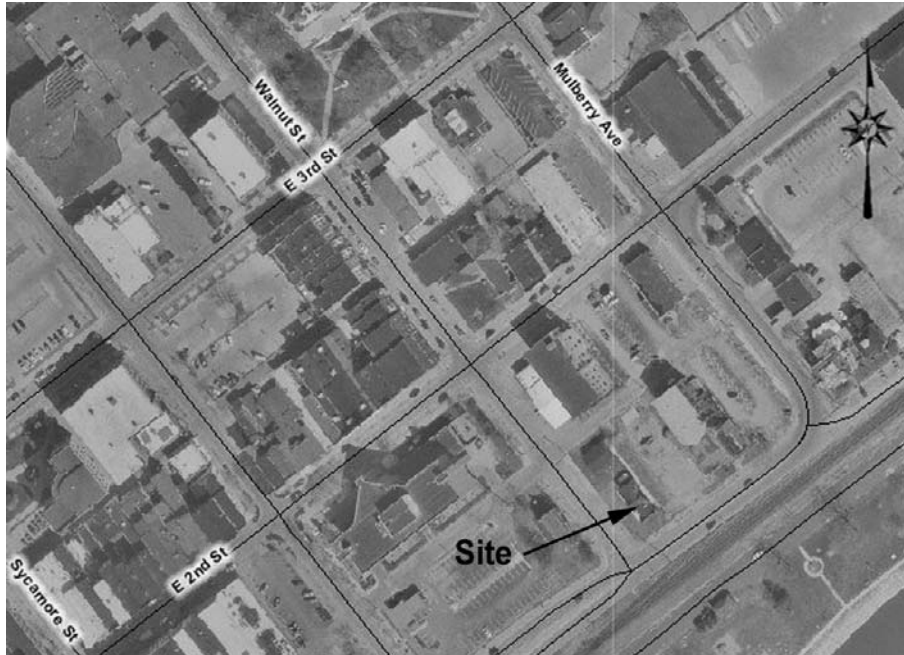
American Petroleum Company Gas Station
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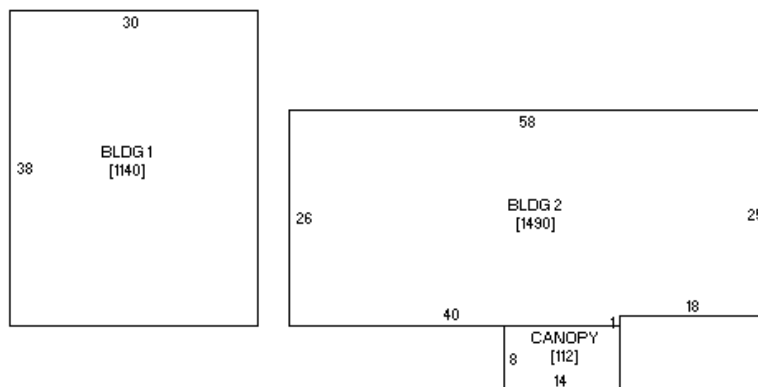
101 Walnut Street
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Muscatine
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Location Map



Plan (from assessor's office)



(front – Walnut)

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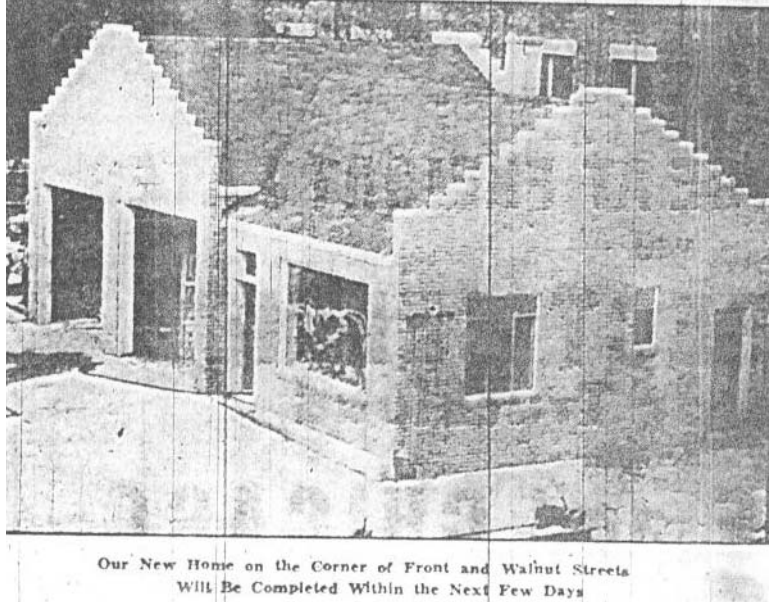
American Petroleum Company Gas Station
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Historic photograph of building



*Advertisement for Opening - "American Petroleum Company,"
Centennial Edition - Muscatine Journal, Muscatine, IA, May 31, 1940, Section 6, p. 25.*

Photograph of building (digital image)

