

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Eugene Field School

other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 403 Glendale Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Park Hills [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Francois code 187 zip code 63601

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
[X] 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 [ X ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ]  
nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally.

( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

*Mark A. Miles*

*07/25/05*

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the 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  
See continuation sheet [ ].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

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

Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, Missouri

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	1
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		
			buildings
			sites
			structures
			objects
		1	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
 EDUCATION/school  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
 VACANT  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 LATE VICTORIAN  
 OTHER: Eight Room School  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
 foundation CONCRETE  
 walls BRICK  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 roof ASPHALT  
 other LIMESTONE  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, Missouri

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

**B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

Property is:

**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**

EDUCATION

**Periods of Significance**

1907-1955

**Significant Dates**

1907

1911 ca.

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

# \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, Missouri

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property approximately 2 acres

**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	718260	4192425			

C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Karen Bode Baxter, Architectural Historian; Matthew Cerny and Mandy K. Ford, Research Associates

organization Karen Bode Baxter, Preservation Specialist date July 8, 2005

street & number 5811 Delor Street telephone (314) 353-0593

city or town St. Louis state Missouri zip code 63109-3108

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Park Hills Properties, L.P. c/o James K. Maddox

street & number 111 North Main St., P.O. Box 68 telephone (573) 448-3000

city or town Clarkton state Missouri zip code 63837

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Description

#### SUMMARY

The Eugene Field School, at 403 Glendale Street in Park Hills (St. Francois County) Missouri, is a two-story (plus basement), hipped roof, red brick, raised concrete foundation, school building. The original building, completed in 1907, forms the north, front wing and an early addition, probably completed by 1911, form the south wing and base of the T-shaped plan. It is located north of the downtown area, at the corner of Glendale and Field Streets, with the façade facing north toward Glendale. The building sits on the east end of a triangular shaped lot on a hillside, with three sides of the property surrounded by parking lots and landscaping. The school building retains a high degree of historic integrity, especially on the exterior since the replacement entry is the only alteration. On the interior it retains its original classroom configuration and walls, but many of the original details are hidden behind office partitions and dropped ceilings that were added in 1978. There is a noncontributing, modern, metal, 3-car garage located at the southwest corner of the property that is the process of being removed as part of the current historic rehabilitation project. The surrounding area consists primarily of residential housing units, mainly one and two-story homes.

The Late Victorian design of the school was a popular choice in the early twentieth century for educational and institutional buildings. The symmetry of the design, molded brick belt courses, arched openings, and polychromatic brick detailing distinguish this school building as one of the community's most prominent designs. The most defining characteristic, however, is the distinct horizontal divisions created by the pronounced belt courses along the sill lines of both floors and the segmental arched lintels of the second floor windows. The restrained detailing and symmetry of this school building reflect its utilitarian purpose as well as the working class nature of the community in which it was built.

#### EXTERIOR

The north façade has three primary bays, with a projecting center bay. The round arched opening in the center bay serves as the main entry and although the door opening has been modified, it still retains its distinctive brick detailing with three sections of beige brick inlaid with the red brick to form the base of the arch and the keystone. The outside edge of the arch is also outlined in beige brick. On each side of the arch is a lantern to provide additional lighting. Above the arched entryway are two 6 over 1, doublehung, wood sashed windows flanking a 9 over 1, doublehung, wood sash window which share a continuous limestone lintel but have separate stone sills. Connected to the lintel and extending to the roofline is a wood post, which historic photos indicate once continued through the roofline and acted as a flagpole. The bays on either side of the entry bay are identical, with four windows that are vertically aligned on the first and second floors, and the basement. The first and second floor windows are 9 over 1, doublehung, wood sash windows with single-light transoms, limestone sills, and segmentally arched lintels, which have alternating sections of beige and red brick. Additionally, beige brick is used to create a belt course continuous with the sill lines of each floor and above the lintels of the first floor windows. These belt courses continue across the center bay as well. The basement windows are 6-light, wood-framed, center pivot windows covered by security screens. All of these windows have segmentally arched lintels and concrete sills. The walls of the basement level are concrete block, creating a high watertable line.

The two story south wing, which forms the leg of the T-shaped plan, was apparently added shortly after the original north wing was finished in 1907, possibly as early as 1911, but it cannot be dated because of the loss of all school records and newspapers from this era. When it was added, the masonry work of the original, north wing, was carefully matched and the details, such as brick banding and polychrome lintels were carefully matched. The original entry was retained on the north side of the school as was the interior configuration with the central hallway and staircase flanking the classrooms of the north wing, simply adding two additional classrooms at the back of this hall.

The west elevation is divided into two primary sections, divided where the later addition connected on the south side of the building, and had an even later a one-story extension on the far south end. The north section has five bays of vertically aligned windows. The first and second floor windows replicate the pattern and detailing of those on the first and second floor of the façade, including the continuation of the belt courses. The basement windows on the north end and the center

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Description (continued)

bays replicate the basement windows on the façade. The property slopes downward, exposing more of the concrete block basement as the building progresses southward. This is evident in the two bays on the south end of this north section, which have 6-panel, wood doors that are hidden from view by an attached fiberglass panel lean-to. The building recesses one bay to the east and this narrow wall is penetrated at the basement level by a segmentally arched lintel and concrete sill with a 6-light, pivot window located under the north half of the lintel. The belt courses do not continue along this narrow section of the building, except to wrap the outer corner.

The two story, south wing of this west elevation again replicates the 9 over 1 window pattern and detailing along the first and second floors, with only a minor variation in the spacing of the windows. The far north window mimics the spacing seen on the north section, but the windows on the remaining six bays are much closer to one another. The basement level is almost completely exposed along this section and it is also divided into seven bays. The north end bay has a 6-panel, wood door penetrating the concrete, but only the second, fourth, and sixth bays from the north have recessed, 6 over 6, doublehung, wood sash windows.

The western two-thirds of the south elevation is void of penetration on the first and second floors and is attached to a one-story extension at the basement level. The belt courses from the west elevation continue along this south elevation. The east one-third of the building has three bays of vertically aligned windows, with a round, metal fire escape attached to the west window on the second floor and extending down to the ground. The first and second floor windows replicate the 9 over 1 windows and detailing on the other elevations. The basement windows have segmentally arched lintels and the east window retains its original 2 over 2, double-hung, wood sash window with a metal screen, but the west and center windows have been filled in with a stucco finish.

The east elevation is also divided into two primary sections, basically matching the west elevation with the south wing recessed one bay from the north section and the fenestration pattern matching that on the west. The basement windows are also similar with a 6-light, pivot window at the south end, but the other windows have all been filled in with a stucco finish. The narrow wall along the north section is void of penetration. The north section of this east elevation is identical to the north section on the west elevation.

### SOUTH EXTENSION

The one-story brick extension, attached on the south elevation of the building is actually the raised stage area of the auditorium that continues into the basement of the main building. The parapeted roofline aligns with the belt course that extends along the sill line of the first story of the main part of the building. This one-story section has four bays with the three bays directly to the south of the main building having similarly detailed, segmentally arched window openings with lintels of alternating beige and red brick, but the openings form shallow niches filled in with stucco finish. Below the windows, the wall surface changes from brick to concrete. In the south bay on the west side of this section is a plain wood door, also with the alternating beige and red brick segmentally arched lintel. Its south elevation is an unadorned brick wall and the east elevation has four bays that replicate the stuccoed window openings on the west elevation.

The one story extension was added to the school after its original construction (based upon physical details on the building). It is only accessible through a single door in the basement of the school (because of the slope of the land) and from a west side entry. The section of the auditorium in the main building, as well as this addition apparently had a level floor originally but the interior has been modified with a steeply pitched, poured concrete floor sloping toward a small stage and it now has a dropped acoustical ceiling. Efforts to date this addition and its original configuration/use have not succeeded due to the loss of all school records when the school districts were consolidated. Even interviews with people who attended the school shed no light on the age of this extension, but it matches closely the original brick in color as well as the window detailing.

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

Narrative Description (continued)

### INTERIOR FEATURES

The interior of the building is laid out with a central hallway that leads to a double entry dogleg staircase up to the second floor on the north end of the building. The stairway opened up into a central hallway on each floor, with four rooms off the center hall on both the first and second floors. The original configuration remains although the interior of each classroom has been partitioned into offices since 1978. The original square newel posts, brackets along the open stringer staircase, and turned balusters remain. There is an original five-light, decorative transom in the office along the stairway landing. Much of the original plain cap trim and three member trim is still intact, although currently obscured above dropped acoustical ceilings and sheetrock layered to the walls. Even some of the original five-panel wood doors remain.

### ALTERATIONS AND INTEGRITY ISSUES

Even though the building was renovated in 1978, many of the original features are still intact, including the original multipaned sashed windows, although they are severely deteriorated. On the exterior, the concrete foundation walls are painted white, but the brickwork retains its original polychrome finish. The central arched entry has been modified from its original 4-light, paneled, wood doors with sidelights and transoms to vinyl sheathing penetrated by two 9-light, 2-panel, steel replacement doors, offset from one another to allow ADA access to the building, but historic photos and the retention of the interior archway provide a blueprint for their replacement. A ramp and wooden handrail were added on the interior, although the original stairs were left intact beneath (and visible inside the storage closet in the basement). Partition walls were added to subdivide the rooms into smaller offices and clinic space, within the original classrooms and dropped acoustical ceilings were added, although most of the original trim was left in place. The boiler heating system was removed and the building converted to forced air heat with furnaces on each floor. The basement still retains the public restrooms, meeting rooms, and the extension includes the gymnasium, with an elevated stage at the south end. The building is currently starting an certified historic rehabilitation project utilizing state and federal historic tax credits to convert the school into senior housing, which will remove the modifications made in 1978, repair the damaged interior trim, as well as rebuild the front entry while converting each classroom into an apartment.

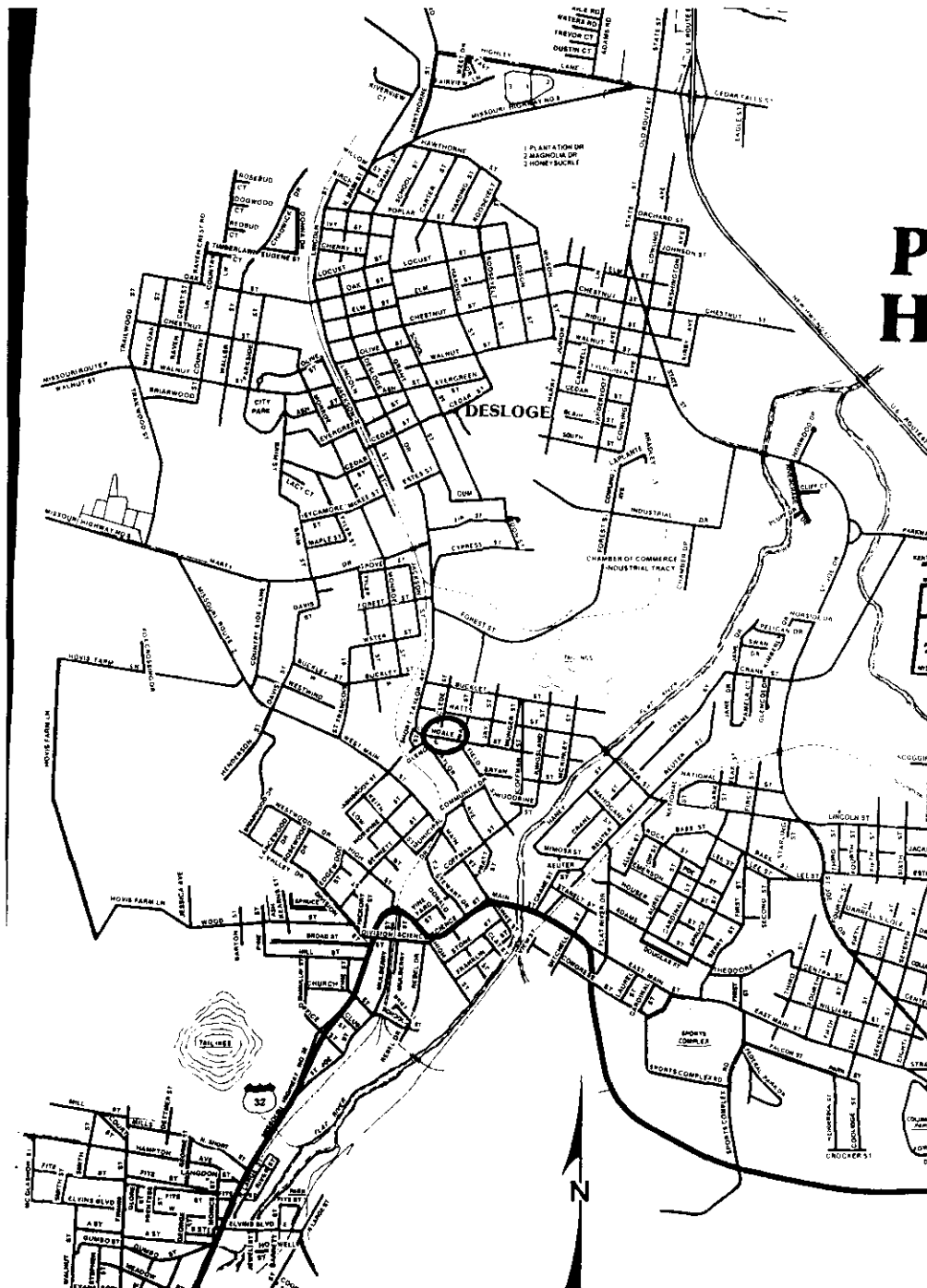
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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

Map of City of Park Hills, MO  
Locating Property





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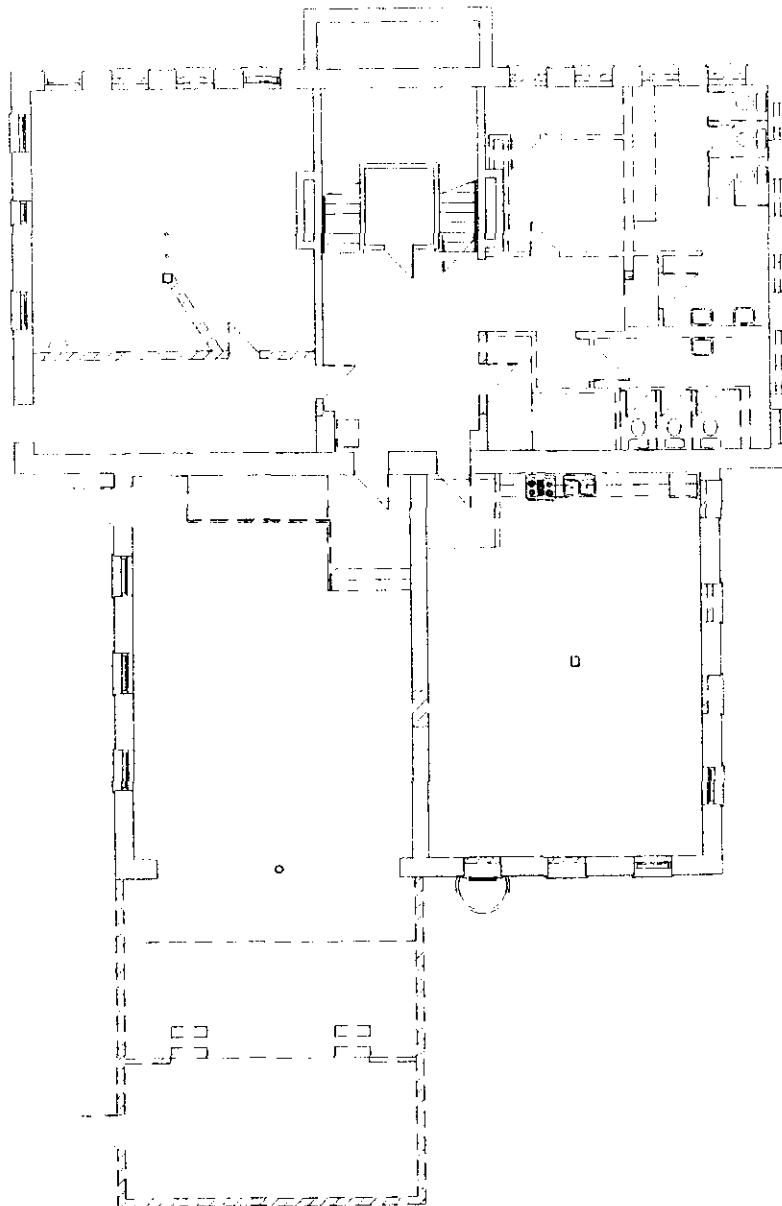
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

Courtesy of Stark Wilson Duncan Architects Inc.  
Kansas City, MO

Current Floor Plan  
Basement Level



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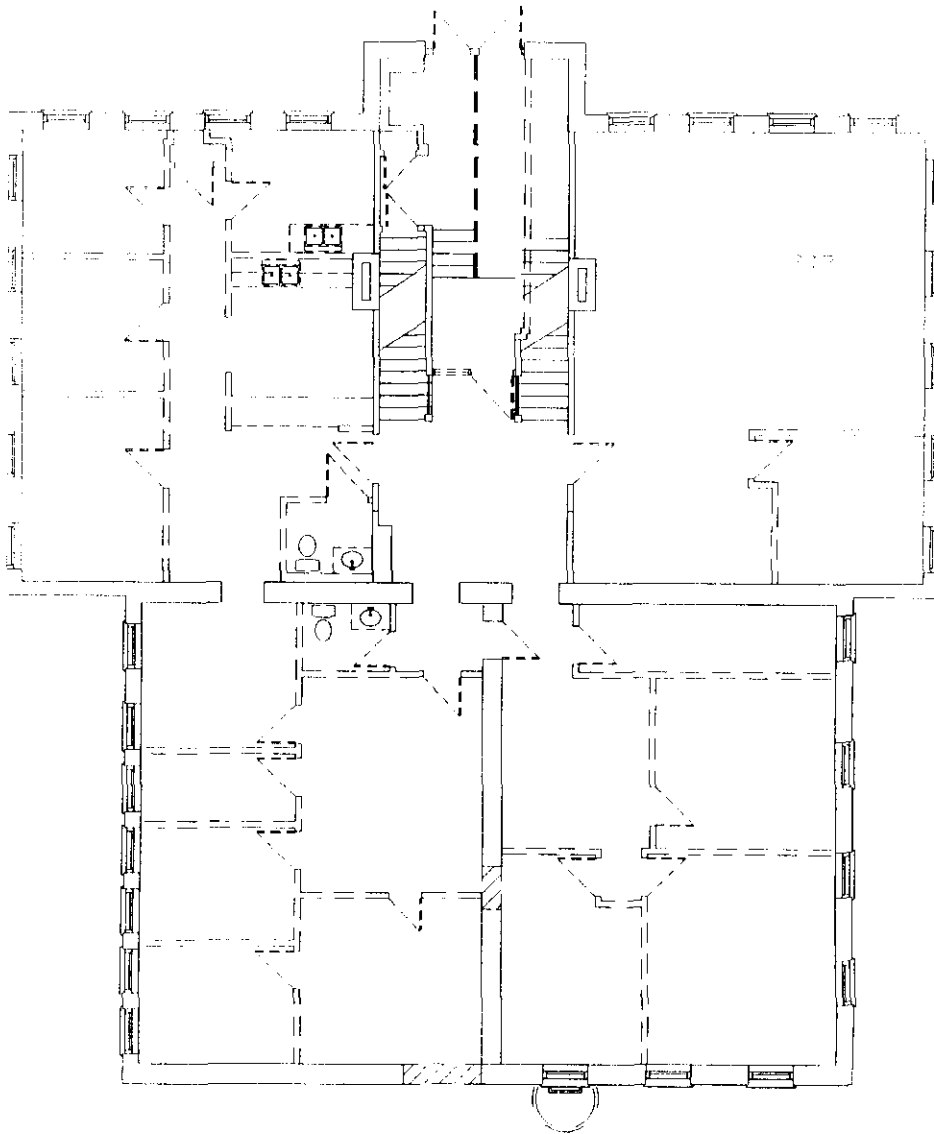
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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

Courtesy of Stark Wilson Duncan Architects Inc.  
Kansas City, MO

Current Floor Plan  
First Floor



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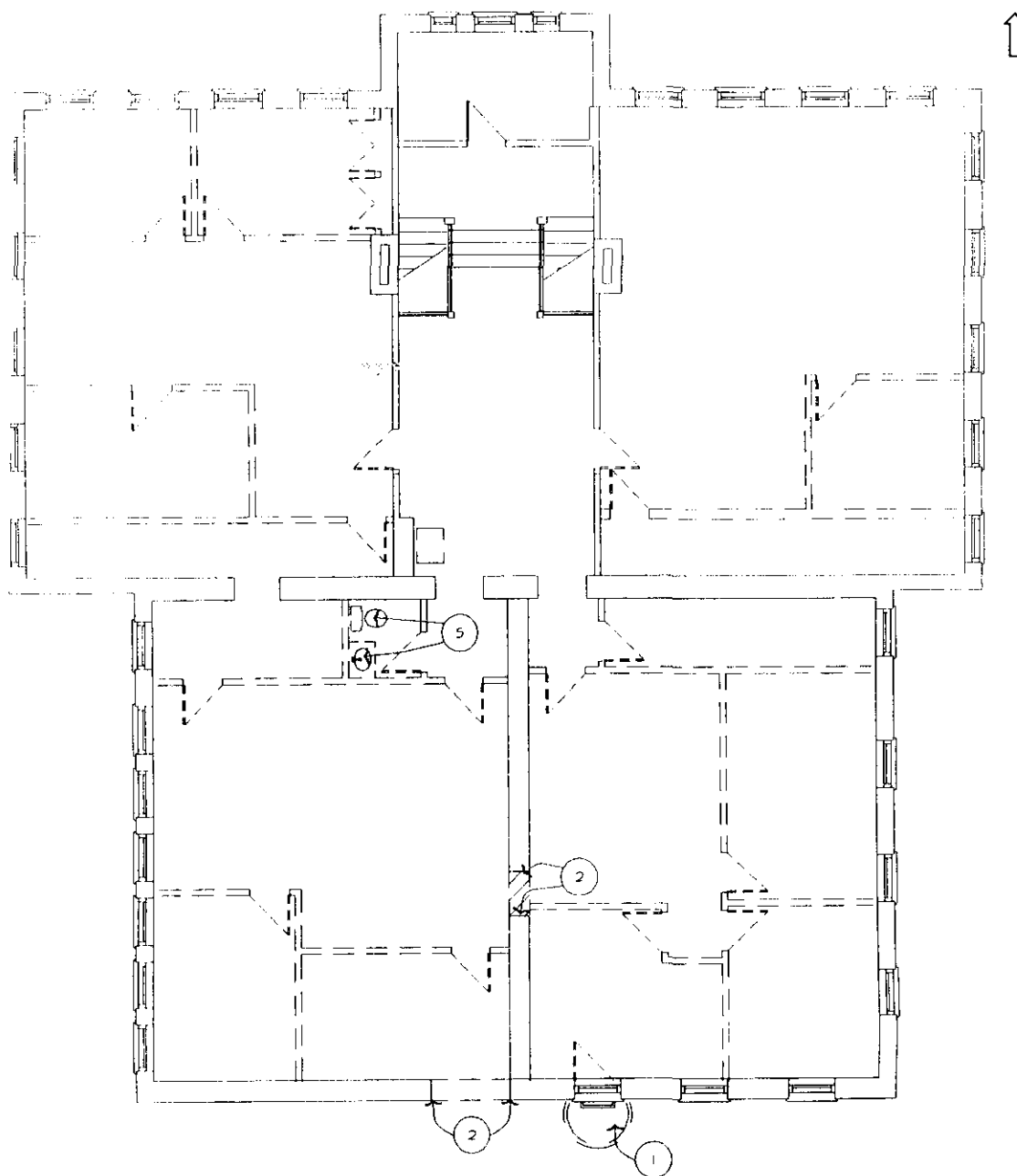
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

Courtesy of Stark Wilson Duncan Architects Inc.  
Kansas City, MO

Current Floor Plan  
Second Floor



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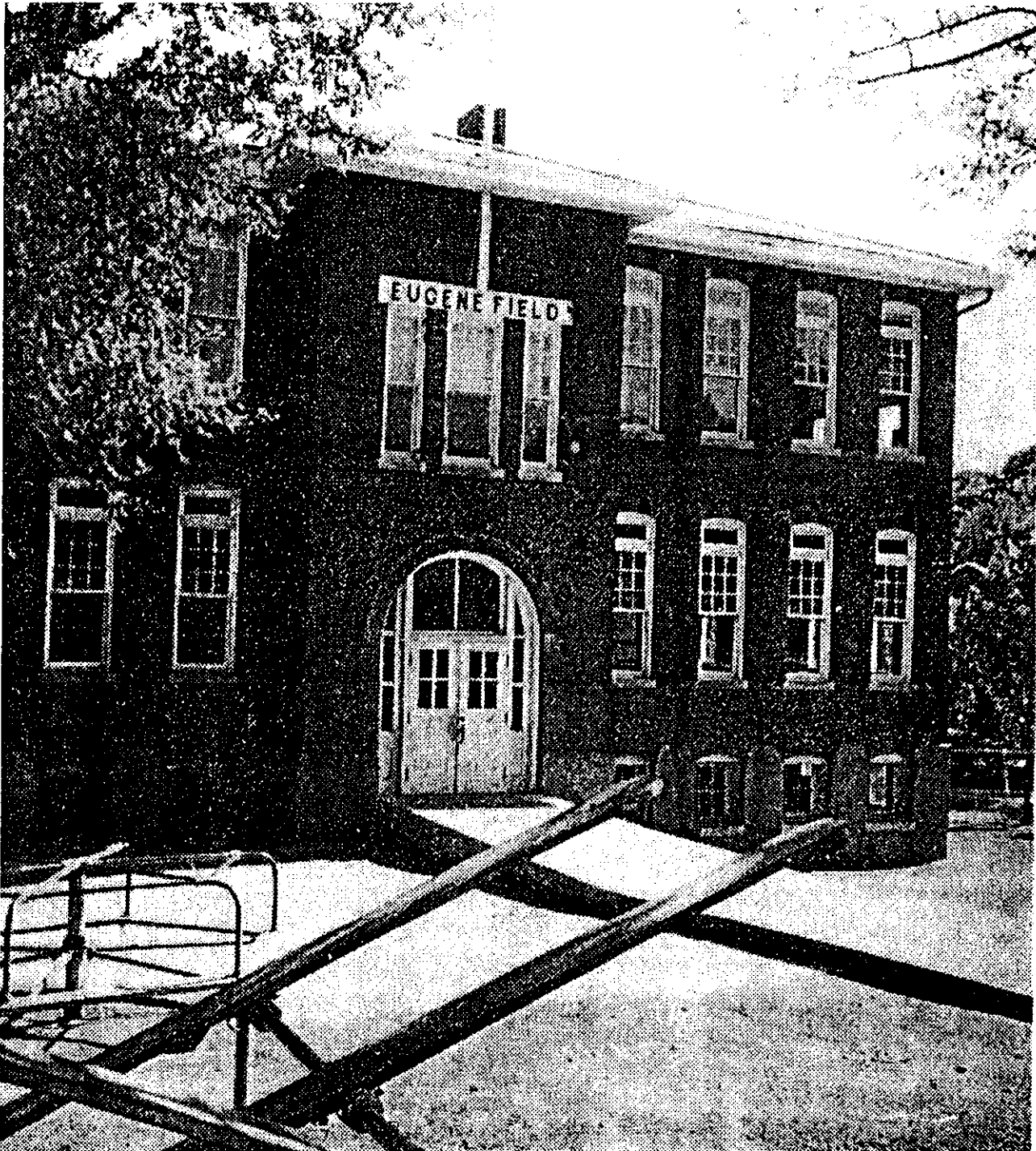
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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

From *A Living History of Flat River* by Bob McHenry

Eugene Field School, circa 1953



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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

From *St. Francois County Pictorial History* published by Russell Cannon

Emerson School, circa 1930s



The date is unknown of this photograph of students at the Emerson School on Emerson Street in Flat River.



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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### SUMMARY

Built in 1907, the Eugene Field School is locally significant under Criterion A: Education for its role in furthering the education of children in Flat River, Missouri during the first seven decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is the last remaining historic schoolhouse in the community of Park Hills, which is the result of a recent merger of Flat River and three other small communities: Ester, Elvins and River Mines. Located in the heart of southeast Missouri's lead belt, the Eugene Field School was built in response to the severe overcrowding of local schools, brought about by an influx of workers and their families who moved into the area for employment with the local lead mining companies. Although Eugene Field School is one of the most imposing buildings in what had been Flat River, its simple, functional design is suggestive of the working class ethic dictated by the economic activity in Missouri's top lead-mining area during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The period of significances from its opening as a schoolhouse in 1907 through 1955, the arbitrary 50-year cutoff date for National Register listing.

### LEAD IN FLAT RIVER

The discovery of lead in southeast Missouri was the key component in the region's development. The first French settlers saw eastern Missouri as a leading source of lead, with its mining beginning on a small scale as early as 1725.<sup>1</sup> Around 1800, the possibility of becoming rich digging lead spurred what came to be known as the "lead rush." Even as early as the late 1790s, because of the economic potential in the area, the surrounding communities of Farmington (now the county seat of St. Francois County), Bonne Terre, and Potosi (now the county seat of Washington County directly to the west) had been established. All of these communities are within a fifteen mile radius of Flat River, in the heart of this lead mining district. Flat River's settlers arrived in 1821 from Washington County, directly to the west. At this time Flat River burgeoned along the old road between Farmington and Potosi, the two towns which made up the axis of Missouri's lead belt. Early settlers utilized Flat River for encampments, but the area soon began to resemble a village.<sup>2</sup>

Although the fertile land provided ample farming, mining also quickly became a principal industry, emerging from what started as an activity which farmers engaged in on the side. In 1821, the year that Missouri joined the Union, several of the earliest Flat River settlers acquired their farmland from the United States,<sup>3</sup> and these early farmers were an important component in the emerging lead mining industry since they would allow share mining on their farms. In 1804, Moses Austin wrote about Flat River, "Poorer people mined after crops were harvested in the fall and until time to plant in the spring. Some land owners allowed share mining. They took 9/10 of the ore and allowed miners 1/10."<sup>4</sup> In this way, lead mining activity increased in the mid-nineteenth century, and the reputation of the region grew in importance, especially because of the metal's usefulness during the Civil War.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the Civil War, large mining corporations began to dominate lead mining in the area and, as a consequence, began to dominate the life of settlers as well. Flat River was organized around the St. Joseph Mining Company, which opened upon purchasing 946 acres in St. Francois County on March 24, 1864. Local histories point to the central role of these mining companies in the town's development, including the construction of local schools, proclaiming that "St. Joe established order in the town,"<sup>6</sup> a charitable description of a company town. This company leased out property in the central business district and in residential areas, controlling much of the property as the primary landlord in town. It also exerted a significant influence on the shape and scope of municipal government. In addition, it effectively controlled the social character of the community through such mechanisms as deed restrictions that barred the sale of intoxicating liquor or dynamite since violations of these requirements would revert the property back to the mining company.<sup>7</sup>

Although the St. Joseph Mining Company eventually became the dominant company, many early companies (including Doe Run Lead Company formed in the 1880s, Desloge Consolidated Lead Company established in 1887 and Federal Lead Company opened in 1900) were essential to the development of Flat River and Park Hills, drawing miners and their families to the communities and contributing directly to growth in these towns. The Doe Run Lead Company rivaled the St. Joseph Mining Company for many years.<sup>8</sup> In 1889, drillers connected with the Doe Run Company developed a technique to reach the deep strata of lead below Flat River, allowing them to mine 125 feet deeper than any existing mine which

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

provided the opportunity for a broad range of development. The surrounding mining towns grew rapidly in the late nineteenth century as a result.<sup>9</sup> The relatively high wage scale continued to draw workers to the area to work in the area at the turn of the century, but in 1901 and 1902, severe labor shortages plagued the rapidly expanding mining sector in southeast Missouri,<sup>10</sup> but this increased population created a demand for more and better schools in Flat River.

At the turn of the century, Flat River was purported to be the largest unincorporated town in the United States, which is indicative of the problems that would face the young school district in Flat River, when demand far exceeded their financial capacities to provide school buildings. The Saint Louis Smelting and Refining Company as well as several other local business leaders opposed and blocked attempts to take the necessary steps to incorporate, apparently in part due to the concerns about property tax assessments,<sup>11</sup> which would have helped fund the school system. Saint Louis Smelting and Refining Company owned huge swaths of land to the north and north east of Flat River proper.<sup>12</sup> In fact, an article in the *Farmington Times* suggested that tax assessments on lead mines in Flat River were ridiculously low, noting that in 1907 just one million dollars was assessed from the three major mining companies combined, but "reduction mills of just one of these lead companies cost about \$3,000,000. Imagine...the value of one lead mine alone beneath the company's \$3,000,000 mills."<sup>13</sup> A city of Flat River comprehensive plan, published in 1982, tracked numerous derailed attempts at incorporation during this period of mining company dominance. In 1895 the town first incorporated, but this charter was lapsed. Another attempt was made in 1901, but again the charter was allowed to end. A third try in 1908 lasted only a year. Finally in 1934, the town reincorporated and remained an independent community<sup>14</sup> until 1994 when it joined with the smaller towns of Ester, Elvins, and River Mines to become Park Hills in an effort to provide a stronger and more viable community support structure.<sup>15</sup>

In 1910, at the height of the labor influx, the population of Flat River was reported at 5,112.<sup>16</sup> The population trends in St. Francois County leveled off by the 1940s. Flat River itself reported a population of 5,401 in 1940, and it would never reach that peak again, and would level off at around 4,500 for the next four decades.<sup>17</sup> As lead mining had created the population boom that created the town, the decreasing mining activity in the mid-twentieth century also resulted in this population stagnation. St. Joseph's essentially consolidated all the other mining companies into its company and was the only mine operating in the city by the 1930 s. It would stay open until the 1970 s when the industry ended in St. Francois County.<sup>18</sup>

### LEAD LEADS TO BETTER SCHOOLS?

If the mining industry discouraged municipal incorporation because of municipal tax assessment, it took a privatized interest in promoting the development of public education. Perhaps they were compelled to fill a void created from the lack of a civic government. So when the school districts organized in the community, they were usually at least partially bankrolled by private mining companies constructing schools on land they donated. As early as 1868, a group of citizens established School District Number 61 in the Flat River area and a one-room log school building was constructed on land donated by mining companies in Flat River. This remained the only school building until 1880 when the school relocated to nearby Esther, across the river, with students meeting in a large wood framed Methodist Church building.<sup>19</sup>

Around 1895, the school district relocated back to Flat River, primarily due to the population influx created by additional mining companies and production in the immediate vicinity. On April 2, 1901, coinciding with the severe labor shortages and influx of immigrant labor, business and community leaders, especially from the mining companies, organized the Flat River school district and began to address a need for more schools.<sup>20</sup> By 1902, the district had four schools: a 2-room building at Elvins (a small nearby mining community); 2-room schools in the east and north wards (both built in 1901); and a 4-room building (built in 1895 on the future site of the Domestic Science Building, which now serves as the school administration building).<sup>21</sup> These buildings were all wood frame structures, with between two and six rooms. The largest was Flat River Public School, a four room building which took on a two room addition in 1903.<sup>22</sup>



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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

Although the Flat River School District had quickly provided four school buildings, a major fire took place at Flat River Public School (the six room, wood frame structure) in 1904 during which students were reported jumping out of the windows for safety. This coupled with the increasing school population at the turn of century, when workers were flooding into the community, to create even more overcrowding in the Flat River schools. By 1906, Flat River's school population had mushroomed to 1,109 students and by 1911 it reached 1,354.<sup>23</sup> With encouragement from the mining companies, another flurry of school construction began, this time buildings of solid brick, which would be less prone to fires and healthier, better lit and ventilated environments for the school children.<sup>24</sup>

The first focus of the building campaign was the construction of high school facilities. The Doe Run Mining Company, a leading employer in the local mining industry, came forward and donated land, their "picnic grounds" property, in 1904 for a new school, and the new brick school building became Flat River's first high school, called Central School, utilizing funds raised from a \$20,000 bond issue.<sup>25</sup> On April 3, 1906, voters agreed to a proposition to erect the School of Domestic Science on the site of the recent school fire, next to the new high school. St. Joseph Lead Company constructed this \$15,000 brick building, which was finished in 1907 and maintained the property for one year. Although research found in the 1927 newspaper attributed the school to be of the benefice of St. Joseph Lead Company, many later histories would credit Doe Run Lead Company with this construction. At any rate, the Domestic Science Building is of fireproof in construction,<sup>26</sup> a detail that illustrates the district's desire to provide safer, healthier schools.

But these new buildings did not completely solve the overcrowding issue and left the grammar school students in the wood frame buildings. Concurrent with the private efforts by the mining companies, the Flat River School District issued a series of bonds to raise funds for construction of two new brick ward schools to replace the frame schools of the east ward and north ward. The old north ward school would be sold on October 3, 1907, having been replaced that year by the first ward school that was built of brick and named the Eugene Field School. Within two years, the second ward school was constructed on Emerson Street to replace the wood frame east ward school, which was sold to Sinclair Oil Company. This new, brick east ward school, opened in 1909, was named Emerson School in 1912.<sup>27</sup> The final structure to be constructed during this phase of district growth was the Junior High School, which was financed by \$25,000 bond in 1911. It is the only Flat River school for which both the contractor, the McCarthy Construction Company, and the architect, H. H. Hohenschild, are known.<sup>28</sup>

The two new ward schools, Eugene Field and Emerson, remained open into the 1960s. In recent years, the Eugene Field School has been used by a community service agency but the Emerson School was torn down in the 1970s. The historic Central School was torn down in the 1990s and replaced by a modern lunchroom. The only other historic school district building is the Domestic Science Building, which was never used as a traditional schoolhouse. Instead, it was used for a vocational training program.<sup>29</sup>

Since the population did not change drastically during the middle decades of this century in Flat River, and the school system now had adequate, well built and safe school buildings, this stable population continued utilizing these buildings until the 1960s, when the school consolidation movement began to result in school closings. Both Emerson and Eugene Field closed in the 1960s, and by 1978 Eugene Field was being used by a local social service agency as its offices. Unfortunately, these historic structures began to be torn down in the 1970s, beginning with the Emerson School. The historic Central School was torn down in the 1990s for a modern lunchroom. The Domestic Science Building is still in use, greatly modified, as the school administration offices, but the junior high school is no longer standing. As such, the Eugene Field School is the last remaining historic school building in Flat River, as well as all of Park Hills.<sup>30</sup>

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

#### EUGENE FIELD SCHOOL

After the school fire in 1904, local pressure mounted to build safer school buildings, as well as larger buildings to accommodate the growing school population. In 1907, the north ward became the first in Flat River to get a new brick grammar school building. The new building, with its four classrooms (two on each floor) was an imposing brick edifice in the triangular shaped wedge within the residential area on the north side of Flat River. In a practice common for smaller and rural school districts, Flat River either utilized standardized plans or the same architect's designs for both Eugene Field and Emerson schools since historic photos of Emerson show that its façade was identical to Eugene Field although the front section of Eugene Field School is five bays deep, while Emerson's was only four bays deep. The Eugene Field School had a later addition which doubled its size, adding the two story south wing, while Emerson apparently did not. Although the 1908 fire insurance map clearly shows Eugene Field School as a rectangular building, at some point early in its history the two story rear wing was added, converting it into an 8 classroom school with a basement level classroom or gymnasium.<sup>31</sup> Given that local histories talk of the last school construction in Flat River as 1911 and since the brick and detailing match in both the original wing and addition, it is likely that this addition was completed prior to 1911. The simple Late Victorian design choice, with its functional symmetry and horizontal banding created by sill courses and a watertable line, focused on the round arched entry. In more affluent districts, schools of this era would often be dressed with intricate detailing, such as the grand designs of William Ittner that took place concurrently in St. Louis. The restrained detailing and symmetry of this school building reflect its utilitarian purpose for the surrounding community in which it was built. The boiler and radiator heat provided the most modern of heating systems for the students and the tall, sashed windows that lined all the exterior walls helped provide ample light and ventilation, as being promoted for school designs of that era.

Over the years, while it operated as a school, there were only a few modifications to the building, after the early addition doubled its size. Another room was added on the back of the building, using some of the same masonry details as the main building. Since records were destroyed when the school system consolidated in the late twentieth century and the local newspaper files are also missing for this time period, it is impossible to date these additions, but both appear to be a fairly early additions, although the one story extension was definitely added after the main 8 classroom configuration was completed. The original use of this one story extension is not known, but it probably was a gymnasium expansion that was later remodeled and served as an auditorium (with a small stage).

The Eugene Field School began its life as a grammar school, for students through eighth grade, one of two in Flat River. The other grammar school, Emerson School was finished in 1909 using the same plans and exterior design as Eugene Field School. With the opening of the junior high in 1911, these two schools were converted into primary schools (first through sixth grades). Eugene Field School remained open into the 1960s, but was closed as part of the region's school consolidation effort. In 1978, the East Missouri Action Agency purchased the building and renovated it to use as its offices, installing partitions, dropped ceilings, and carpeting, as well as forced air heating, but it made few modifications to the exterior, only installing a wheelchair ramp and replacement front doors. This social service agency recently vacated the facility as it is now slated for an historic rehabilitation project to convert the classroom building into apartments for senior citizens. Since Emerson was demolished in the 1970s, and even the junior high and Central School have been torn down in recent years, and the Domestic Science Building has been greatly modified, making the Eugene Field School especially significant as the last Flat River grammar school buildings still standing.

The administrators in the school district for Flat River were actively involved in the movement honoring the poet, Eugene Field, by naming their new north ward school building in Flat River after him. He was a native of Missouri as well as a beloved children's poet. He was born in St. Louis in 1850 and died in Chicago in 1895. He spent parts of his childhood in New England and began his university studies at Williams College, Massachusetts before ending up at the University of Missouri. He returned to St. Louis without graduating and began a career as journalist, which later took him to Chicago.<sup>32</sup> Field's chronicles, articles, and poems were initially published in ten volumes, and his "humor, pathos, tenderness, and love of child-life" have made him worthy of the honor, Poet Laureate of Children.<sup>33</sup> Over the past century, his poetry has been essential reading in elementary schools, with famous poems such as "Little Boy Blue," "The Rock a-By Lady," and "The Sugar Plum Tree," works that would be recited in schools on "Eugene Field Days." These "Field Days" began while

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

Eugene was living, as early as 1885, but became very popular following his death. School districts across the country, including Flat River, most likely did not know of Field's interest in promoting a less restrained educational environment. Instead, school districts were only aware of his beloved poems. By 1897, schools throughout Missouri observed annually the date of Field's death with programs made up from the dead poet's writings and articles eulogistic of him and his works.<sup>34</sup> In fact, at the Eugene Field House in St. Louis, a museum at the site of the poet's birth, the narrative during the tour claims that "more schools were named after Eugene Field in the United States than Thomas Jefferson."

### CONCLUSION

The economic activity that took place in eastern Missouri's lead mining district at the turn of the century spurred a flurry of school construction in response to an influx of workers into the area. This school building campaign resulted in the development of an entire school system in what had been Flat River. As the last remaining grammar school building and one of only two of historic school buildings left in what had been Flat River, it is especially significant as a symbol of this period of early development of the area's educational system. It is also significant as a reflection of the character of the community, where the lead mines played an instrumental role in both the development of the community and its schools. Now that the community of Flat River has been merged with three other small towns as a new town, Park Hills, the Eugene Field School has gained even more significance as one remnant of the history of a town that no longer exists.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Flat River 50 Year Anniversary Celebration Committee, ed. *Flat River, Missouri – 50 Years of Progress – 1934-1984* (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1985), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Bob McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington—Missouri—1953* (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Brothers, 1953), p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>*Flat River, Missouri – 50 Years of Progress*, p. 3; and McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>*Flat River, Missouri – 50 Years of Progress*, p. 3

<sup>5</sup>McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington*, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>Brian J. Balsman, and Chauncy D. Bucheit, *Flat River, Missouri, Comprehensive Plan, 1982* (Perryville, Mo.: Southeast Missouri Regional Planning & Economic Development Commission, 1982), p. 4.

<sup>9</sup>Mary Bye, "Flat River Missouri Facts," (Flat River, Mo.: N.p., 1983), p 11, 12.

<sup>10</sup>McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington*, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup>Sanborn Map Co., "Flat River St. Francois Co., Missouri," (NY: Sanborn Map Co., June 1908).

<sup>13</sup>"Flat River School District," *Farmington Times* (Farmington, Mo.), 15 March 1907, p.5.

<sup>14</sup>Balsman and Bucheit, *Flat River, Missouri, Comprehensive Plan, 1982*, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup>Roger W. Forsythe, "Park Hills History," Website: <http://parkhillsmo.brick.net>, accessed 5 July 2004.

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St. Francois County, MO

### Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

<sup>16</sup>Balsman and Bucheit, *Flat River, Missouri, Comprehensive Plan, 1982*, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup>David P. Grimes, Regional Planner, *Population Trends and Projections for the Southeast Missouri Region: Cities, Counties, and Regional Totals 1900-2010* (Perryville, Mo.: Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission, 1985), p. 48.

<sup>18</sup>Balsman and Bucheit, *Flat River, Missouri, Comprehensive Plan, 1982*, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup>John L. Sullivan, *History of Flat River, Missouri*, [Manuscript], Flat River, Mo., 1947, p. 163.

<sup>20</sup>"St. Francois County's Educational History and Progressive Public School Program Has Few Equals in the Entire State of Missouri," *The Farmington News* (Farmington, Mo.), 14 October 1927, p.17.

<sup>21</sup>Dave Darnell, *St. Francois County Looking Back* (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1991), p. 152.

<sup>22</sup>Russell Cannon, ed., *St. Francois County Pictorial History* (Marceline, Mo.: *The Daily Journal*, 1999), p. 57.

<sup>23</sup>State of Missouri, Department of Education, *Missouri Report of Public Schools* (Jefferson City, MO: The Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1906), pp. 93, 96, 99, 100; and *ibid.* (1909), p. 123.

<sup>24</sup>Darnell, *St. Francois County Looking Back*, p. 152.

<sup>25</sup>*ibid.*; McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington*, p. 19; and Sullivan, *History of Flat River*, p. 164.

<sup>26</sup>Darnell, *St. Francois County Looking Back*, p. 152; and "St. Francois County's Educational History."

<sup>27</sup>Sullivan, *History of Flat River*, p. 164.

<sup>28</sup>"St. Francois County's Educational History."

<sup>29</sup>School Board of Park Hills, interview by Karen Bode Baxter, Park Hills, Mo., 5 July 2002.

<sup>30</sup>Karen Bode Baxter and Mandy K. Ford, *School Buildings in Park Hills, Mo., Informal Windshield Survey*, 5 July 2002; and School Board of Park Hills, interview.

<sup>31</sup>Cannon, *St. Francois County Pictorial History*, p. 106; For a discussion of standardized school plans, see Margaret Slater's "The Evolution of Schoolhouse Architecture in Tennessee" (master's thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 1987), pp. 52-71 and Andrew Gulliford's *America's Country Schools* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1991), pp. 164-176.

<sup>32</sup>William Hyde and Howard Conrad, eds., "Eugene Field," in *Encyclopedia of the History of Saint Louis, a Compendium of History and Biography for Ready Reference* (New York: The Southern History Company, 1899), 2:742.

<sup>33</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>Robert Brown, *Field Days: The Life, Times, and Reputation of Eugene Field* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1974), pp. 99-101.

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois, MO

### Verbal Boundary Description

All of the east 115' of the hereinafter described Tract 1 and all of the east 90' of the hereinafter described Tract 2:

TRACT 1: A part of west fractional  $\frac{1}{2}$  of southeast fractional  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 6 Township 35 North, Range 5 East lying as follows: commencing at a stone at the northeast corner of said west fractional  $\frac{1}{2}$  of southeast fractional  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 6, thence north 83 degrees west 558.7 feet; thence south 9 degrees 45 minutes west 30 feet, to an iron bar set for the beginning corner of lot hereby conveyed; thence north 83 degrees west 286 feet to an iron bar set for northwest corner of lot hereby conveyed; thence south 36 degrees east 401.5 feet to southeast corner; thence north 9 degrees 45' east 293 feet to beginning, containing 96/100 acres and also known as Lot 1, Block 3, Town of Taylor Town, and a lot in Block 19, Town of Taylor Town.

and

TRACT 2: Beginning at the southeast corner of the St. Louis Smelting and Refining Works Lot #12 and proceed in a westerly direction along the southern boundary line of the said Lot #12 for a distance of 583.7 feet, the point of beginning, at which point the western boundary line of Mill Street intersects said property line, thence in a northerly direction along the western boundary line of Mill Street for a distance of 34.84 feet to the southern boundary line of Glendale Avenue, thence in a westerly direction along the southern boundary line of Glendale Avenue for a distance of 246.15 feet at which point turn 73 degrees 37 minutes to the left and proceed in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 48.00 feet at which point this line intersects the aforesaid southern boundary line of Lot #12, thence in an easterly direction along said boundary line of Lot #12, for a distance of 257.40 feet to the point of beginning.

### Boundary Justification

These boundaries incorporate all of the property that has been historically associated with the school and the property's legal description as recorded in the St. Francois County Court House, Farmington, Missouri.

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Eugene Field School  
St. Francois County, MO

### Photo Log

Photographer: Patricia Weiss

March 2003

Negatives with Karen Bode Baxter, 5811 Delor Street, St. Louis, MO 63109

Photo #1: Exterior, looking east southeast at overall site and at north façade and west elevation

Photo #2: Exterior, looking southeast at north façade and west elevation

Photo #3: Exterior, looking south southwest at east elevation and north facade

Photo #4: Exterior, looking north northeast at west elevation

Photo #5: Exterior, looking northwest at south and east elevations

Photo #6: Interior, detail of original balustrade and newel post on first floor

Photo #7: Interior, second floor hallway looking north northeast at stairway

Photo #8: Interior, second floor, southeast corner classroom, looking southeast

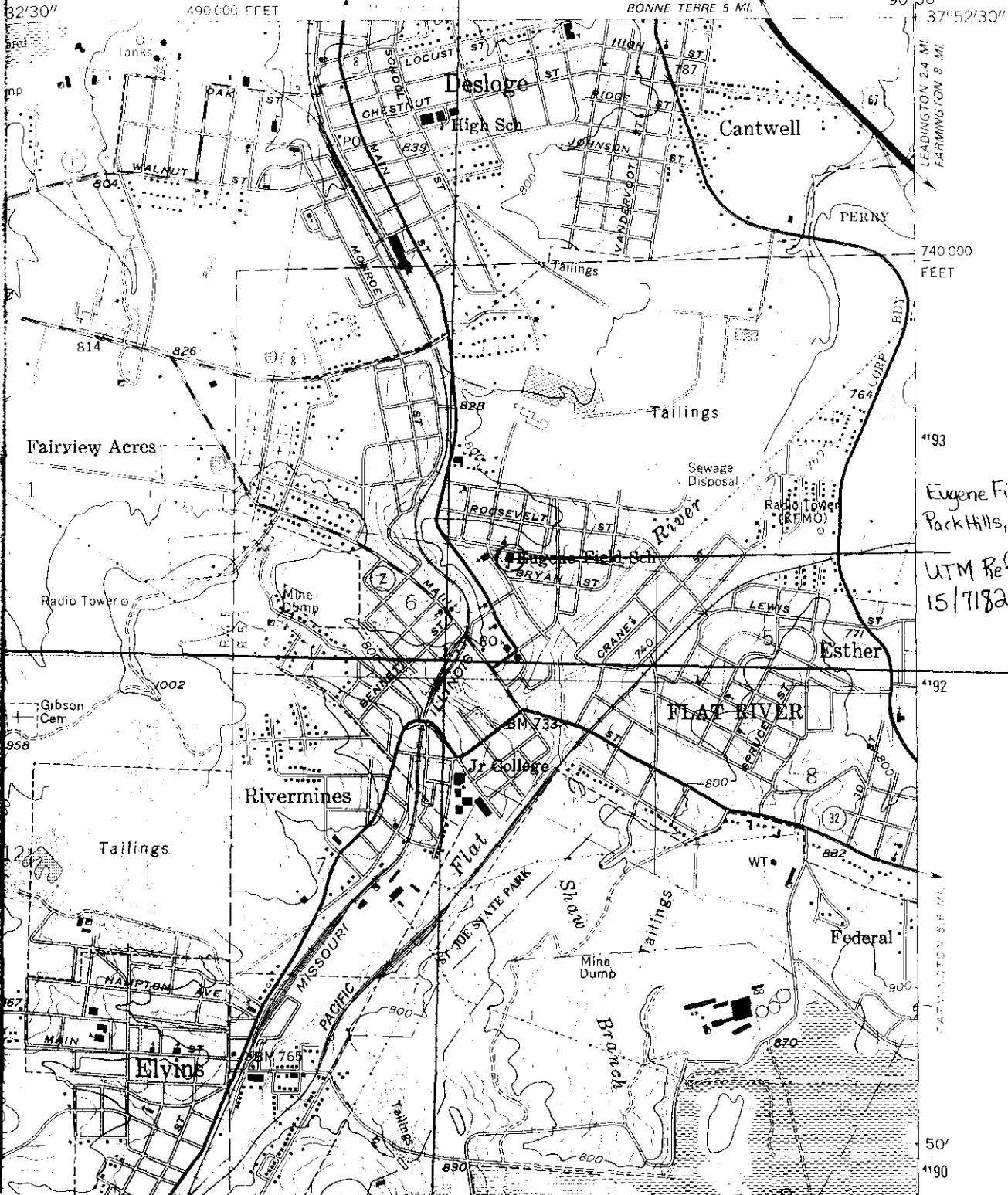
Photo #9: Interior, second floor, northwest corner classroom, looking northwest

Photo #10: Interior, second floor, representative window

FLAT RIVER QUADRANGLE  
MISSOURI-ST. FRANCOIS CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

SE 1/4 BONNE TERRE 15' QUADRANGLE  
CRYSTAL CITY 30 MI  
BONNE TERRE 5 MI

7989 IV NW  
(FRENCH VILLAGE)



Eugene Field School  
Park Hills, St. Francois Co., MO

UTM Reference:  
15T1826014192425

50'  
190





Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 1



Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 2



Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 3



Eugene Field School  
St. Francis Co., Missouri  
No. 4





Eugene Field School  
St. Francis Co., Missouri  
No. 5



Evayne Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri;  
No. 6



Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 7



Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 8





Eugene Field School  
St. Francois Co., Missouri  
No. 9