

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lyceum, The

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

920 Manchester Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Manchester

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#2 - Hon. Robert A. Young

STATE

Missouri

CODE
29

COUNTY

St. Louis

CODE
189

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

1. Donald F. & Patricia E. Essen

STREET & NUMBER

525 Kehrs Mill Road

CITY, TOWN

Ballwin

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63011

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis County Government Center

STREET & NUMBER

7900 Forsyth Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Clayton

STATE

Missouri 63105

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1. 100 Historic Buildings in St. Louis County

DATE

1970

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN

Published: St. Louis County Department of Parks & Recreation

STATE

Clayton

Missouri 63105

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE See below
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lyceum is a two-story rectangular building measuring about 48 by 72 feet and placed with the gable (short) end toward the street. It is located at 920 Manchester Road in the City of Manchester, on the south side of the road slightly west of its intersection with Woodsmill Road.

EXTERIOR

Construction materials and colors

It is a frame structure covered with metal sheeting embossed to resemble brick, with trim in several materials including wood moldings, shingles, stuccoed sheet metal, wrought iron and cast iron. The metal sheeting was originally a barn-red color, as indicated by surviving examples stored in the basement, but it is now painted grey. The building cornice and the frames of windows and doors are painted white. A white wooden balcony extending the width of the facade is supported by wrought iron brackets and lined with a cast iron balustrade, all of which are painted black. The underside of the balcony was originally painted olive green, but is now white. A wrought iron sign bracket extending outward between the first and second windows from the left on the second floor of the front elevation is also painted black. Moldings decorating the woodwork on the first floor, originally barn red, are now painted grey. Finally, at the point of the front gable is a sheet metal decoration with black painted lettering "18 LYCEUM 94".

Side elevations

Both side elevations of the Lyceum (east & west) consist of two rows of six windows. First floor windows are square-headed while second floor windows are topped by pedimental cornices supported by brackets that flank the upper parts of the windows. The brackets are decorated with rosettes above acanthus leaves apparently made of stucco applied to the metal. (Some parts of this material have fallen away.) The central portion of each pediment above the lower windows is decorated with a rosette and two swags; on the second floor the rounded tops of the windows project into the corresponding space.

Front

The north front of the Lyceum has six bays on the first floor and four on the second. To the left (east) as one faces the first floor is an arched door leading to the second floor. To the right of this are three large four-pane store windows separated by 2 recessed double doors. This arrangement gives the store windows the appearance of projecting bays, although they are actually flush with the upper portion of the building. The doors leading into the store also have tall glass panels and are topped by two-paned transoms. A row of wooden panels of uniform height runs along the bottom of both windows and doors and each panel is decorated with a rectangular grey molding. The door to the staircase is distinguished by having two rectangles in the lower portion of each panel, matched by taller rectangular panels above. Above this door is a semi-circular window of six lights, a larger and simpler version of an Early-American fanlight.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1894

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Lyceum, 920 Manchester Road, Manchester, Missouri, lies in the fact that it is a nearly-intact example of the multi-use building once common, but now rare, in Missouri. It originally had a tin shop on the first floor and an auditorium on the second. This combination of theatre or meeting hall with commercial use can also be seen in the two lodge halls at Arrow Rock, and it was true of the old Opera House in St. Charles and of a similar building in Clarksville.²

The Lyceum was a focal point in the town of Manchester in the years before it became a suburb of St. Louis, and it is still a prominent landmark on Manchester Road. It was built in 1894 by a prominent Manchester citizen, John Straszer, president of the Bank of Manchester, on land he had begun to acquire sometime before 1875.³ He used it to house one of his business interests, the tin shop. Straszer had two sons, Edward (born in 1874) and David (born in 1876) who worked in the Lyceum building tin shop. When he retired in 1899, his sons formed a partnership and took over the business. He died in 1913.

In 1911, Edward acquired sole interest in the tin shop, which was subsequently known as the Sheet Metal Works, but he retained the name "Straszer Brothers." In addition to the tin shop interest, he managed the upper floor auditorium which was used for political meetings, dances and amateur theatricals. Sometime in the early twenties, he liquidated his tin business and moved to Orlando, Florida.⁴

The younger Straszer brother, David, left Manchester for a western tour in 1901, returning in 1904. When he returned, he opened a hardware store in part of the Lyceum which he sold to his wife's brother, Otto Kuehne, in 1910. The following year, after purchasing the merchandise from August Schroeder's general store, he entered a new partnership with Kuehne. By 1920, the Straszer-Kuehne Mercantile Company advertised a complete line of fine merchandise, groceries, shoes, dry goods, hardware, ice cream, a soda fountain and a gasoline filling station. It is likely that the store also housed the Post Office, as Otto Kuehne was appointed Manchester Postmaster in 1911.⁵ Otto Kuehne apparently altered the partnership agreement about 1926, but kept an interest in the business until his death in 1930.⁶

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Bell, Sally, "Another Try to Utilize Old Lyceum Building," St. Louis [Missouri] Globe Democrat, August 18, 1976.
2. Cohn, Abby, "Manchester Historic Area Set Up," St. Louis [Missouri] Post Dispatch, Thursday, January 26, 1978.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 22

QUADRANGLE NAME "Manchester, Mo." QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	7 1 6 8 4 0	4 2 7 4 3 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Part of Lots 1 & 2 in block 7 of Triplett's Addition to Manchester, beginning at a point 4.50 ft. west of the northeast corner of Lot 1, thence west 78.75 feet along Manchester Road, thence south 120 feet (less the part taken for the widening of

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Missouri	29	St. Louis	189
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE J. Esley Hamilton

ORGANIZATION St. Louis County Department of Parks & Recreation DATE December, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 1723 Mason Road TELEPHONE 314/822-8475

CITY OR TOWN St. Louis STATE Missouri ZIP 63131

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE [Signature] DATE 2-6-79

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources, and State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

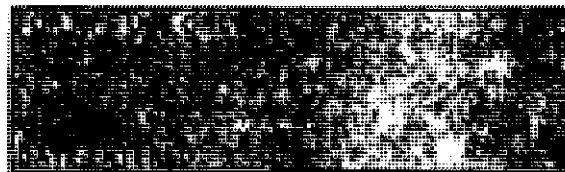
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION DATE

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-
2. Michael T. Shepard and
William Smart
9227 Manchester Road
Rock Hill

Missouri 63114

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2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1979
Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City

state

Missouri 65102

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The balcony is supported by seven brackets which frame the six lower bays of the front facade. Access to the balcony is by the second window from the left (east) which has a removable wooden panel below the window sash. Otherwise all four upper front windows match the upper windows on the sides of the building.

The pediment or gable of the front elevation is given special treatment. The cornice is elaborated with modillions, each with its own rosette below. The top of the pediment does not come to a point but is squared off, with brackets supporting the horizontal piece. Surmounting this top panel with its aforementioned inscription is a large semi-circular crest filled with thick ribs to form a fan or perhaps half a sunflower.

The surface of the gable or pediment is covered with shingles in two patterns, scalloped and pointed, like positive and negative half circles. These shingles are placed in uniform rows, but the rows are apparently selected at random. There are nine scalloped rows and five pointed ones. In the center of the shingled surface is a circular white medallion with a plain surface.

Rear

The rear elevation of the Lyceum is in four bays. It betrays the previous existence of a second-floor balcony and possibly also a first-floor porch. The first floor is now a full story above ground, but the building was moved back on sloping ground in 1962, and possibly the first floor rear was at ground level in its original position. The pattern of the first floor from west to east is window-door-window-door. Windows are plain, double-hung, four-over-four lights. The doors are also simple ones, single leaves of four panels. Above the doors are four panelled transoms which line up at the top with the tops of the windows. The second floor pattern by contrast is door-window-window-door. The upper doors match the lower ones but their transoms are round-headed with four panes, and are topped by pedimental cornices like the ones seen on other second floor windows. The central windows match these transoms but are slightly taller, so that their tops touch the base molding of the rear pedimented gable. All four of the pedimental cornices on this upper rear facade are surmounted by an acroterion-like ornament in the shape of a palmette. This rear gable is considerably plainer than the front one, having a conventional peak and plain moldings. It is covered with decorative shingles as in the front and is centered by a small round-headed window with a pedimental cornice similar to the others.

The full basement level is exposed to view in the rear of the building. It is plain concrete with four openings; window-door-door-window. Only the right (east) door opening is fitted with an operable door, and this is the only entrance to the basement.

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Roof and Chimneys

The roof is not visible from the ground. It was recovered in 1975 or 1976.² Two chimneys appear above the building; one connects with the present furnace midway along the west side of the building, while the other is non-functioning.

INTERIOR

Basement

When the Lyceum was moved back to permit the widening of Manchester Road, a new 30-foot section was added on to the basement at the rear (south) of the building, and a new foundation wall was erected under the new front (north) elevation. These additions are of poured concrete. The remaining portion of the original foundation is of rubble masonry construction. The basement has a dirt floor. Near the middle of the new portion of the basement is a stone-lined basin or cistern, now loosely filled with rubble, that was originally outside the building. Along the west wall of the old portion of the basement is a stone trough, which is said to have conducted water from a spring to the north of the site through the building and into the cistern. A portion of the original south wall of the building remains in the basement including the arched opening at the end of the trough.³

First Floor

The main floor of the Lyceum was apparently one large open space originally, with a row of heavy squared timbers running down the middle of the building. A wainscoting of vertical boards about three and a half feet high still runs around the outside walls, dropping about a foot to accommodate the windows. This space has now been subdivided by applying a thin partition to the center posts and a second transverse partition about three fourths of the way back, thus dividing the first floor into three main rooms. The rear space is further divided to provide toilet facilities in the south-east corner of the building and a corridor which houses the building's furnace. There is also a closet under the staircase.

Second Floor

The second floor, with ceiling about twenty feet high, was designed as a flat-floored theater, and it is still virtually intact, with the exception that the stage and proscenium arch have been removed. It is one large space, with a shallow balcony fitted above the staircase and extending around the north part of the room. The ceiling is corrugated sheet metal. Six clusters of three gas lights remain in the ceiling although they have been converted to electricity. A varnished vertical-board wainscoting runs entirely around the room projecting forward about three inches at

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each of the windows. At the sides of the space formerly occupied by the stage, the wainscotting rises to about five and a half feet, with the lower half made up of narrow horizontal boards. The facing of the balcony is a continuous stencilled frieze, brown on a honey-colored ground. The balcony is reached by L-shaped staircases in the northeast and northwest corners of the room. The main part of the balcony extends about one bay into the room, but wings extend on both sides a further two bays, and ending in a curve. Under the eastern of these two balcony wings are fitted a closet, the stairs, and a ticket booth. The original ticket window remains, opening from the booth onto the landing of the staircase.

CONDITION

The Lyceum has received little maintenance in recent years, apart from a new roof, and it has suffered accordingly. Plaster in particular has been weakened in many spots, and window frames need repair. The building is basically sound, however,⁴ with notably sturdy floors, and most of the original decorative materials remain in good condition.

SITE

The Lyceum is located at the east end of a row of nineteenth century buildings which formed the village of Manchester. Behind and to the east of the Lyceum, recent strip commercial development has proliferated. The historic integrity of the older section has been severely compromised by the widening of Manchester Road and the extremely heavy traffic from the rapid growth of the surrounding area. The property on which the Lyceum sits is somewhat cramped in these circumstances, particularly on the west side where the building directly abuts the parking lot of the adjacent property.

PRESENT STATUS

The Lyceum is presently unoccupied and for sale. A proposal in 1975 to adapt it for use as the City Hall was not taken up, and at present there are no active plans for the restoration or continued use of the building.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Letter from Gerhardt Kramer, FAIA, to Frank McGuire, Alderman, City of Manchester, November 12, 1975.
2. Interview with Charleen M. Kokesh, August 29, 1978.
3. Kramer, op cit.
4. Ibid.

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As for the auditorium, by 1928 it had become a "moving picture theatre," and the County Directory lists it this way through 1932. During this time many of the early "talkies" were probably screened there. By 1938, the Lyceum auditorium had returned to general purpose use, but was occupied with less frequency than it had been in its heyday. One of the later occupants was a church.⁷

David Straszer managed the auditorium in its later years, and his store was located in the Lyceum until the early forties, undergoing a variety of transformations from confectionery to grocery store and back to general merchandise. He died in 1961.⁸

About 1953, Joseph Lehman opened the Manchester Hardware store in the Lyceum building. Around 1955, he divided his space with the Manchester Upholstery Shop, which was operated by Vernon R. Harness. Harness was later joined by Forest L. Wolff. In 1959 the space occupied by these businesses was taken over by the Manchester Produce Company, operated by William H. Bauer and Roger W. Krull.⁹ In 1962, Bauer and Krull, along with their wives, purchased the Lyceum property and held it until 1974 when they sold it to Don Essen, a local Chevrolet dealer.¹⁰ Like Straszer and Kuehne, Bauer and Krull were also brothers-in-law.

Since the Essen purchase, the building has been vacant. The City of Manchester considered converting it to municipal uses for a brief period in 1975, but ultimately abandoned the plan.¹¹

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in Missouri history as outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." The Lyceum, therefore, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture" and "Fine Arts and Humanities".

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1. Jerry Edmundson, "The Lyceum Hall," Along the Trail, vol. I (Manchester, Missouri: Old Trails Historical Society, 1969.)
2. Letter from Gerhardt Kramer, FAIA, to Frank McGuire, Alderman, City of Manchester, November 12, 1975.
3. The land on which the Lyceum sits was purchased in three separate transactions, one of which must have been before 1874, based on available St. Louis County and St. Louis City records. The second purchase was made by John Straszer on October 19, 1875 (City Book 528, page 535) and the third as late as September 21, 1894 (County Book 74, page 513). This third purchase would seem to date the start of construction, but as the seller, Mary E. Monnaster, was possibly a relation of John Straszer's wife, the former Amelia Monnaster (or Monnastees), construction may have begun earlier based on a verbal agreement.
4. Book 796, page 381, St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds.
5. History of St. Louis County, Missouri (Clayton, Missouri: Watchman-Advocate, 1920), pp.40, 86.
6. St. Louis County Probate Court records.
7. Recalled by Charleen M. Kokesh, a former neighbour.
8. St. Louis County Street Directories, and St. Louis County Probate Court records.
9. St. Louis County Street Directories.
10. Book 4901, page 185, and Book 6757, page 461, St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds.
11. St. Louis [Missouri] Globe Democrat, November 19, 1975 ("Manchester Considers Buying Lyceum Building for City Hall"); December 3, 1975 ("Manchester Opens Negotiations On Price of Lyceum Building"); and, August 18, 1976 ("Another Try to Utilize Old Lyceum Building").

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3. Edmondson, Jerry, "The Lyceum Hall," Along the Trail, vol. 1, (Old Trails Historical Society, 16 Alfresco, Manchester, Missouri).
4. Kramer, Gerhardt, FAIA, to Frank McGuire, Alderman, City of Manchester, November 12, 1975.
5. St. Louis [Missouri] Globe-Democrat, "Manchester Considers Buying Lyceum Building for City Hall," November 19, 1975.
6. _____, "Manchester Opens Negotiations on Price of Lyceum Building," December 3, 1975.
7. St. Louis [Missouri] Globe-Democrat, "Then and Now," September 15, 1968.
8. Watchman-Advocate, History of St. Louis County, Missouri., Clayton, Missouri: Watchman-Advocate, 1920, pp.40,86.

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Manchester Road in Cause No. 240719 of the Circuit Court of St. Louis County, Missouri), thence east 81 feet along the alley and thence north to the point of beginning.

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. James M. Denny, Section Chief (State Contact Person)
Department of Natural Resources
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City

January 15, 1979
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102

LYCEUM, THE
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle
"Manchester, Mo." (1954, photorevised
1968 and 1974)

Scale: 1:24,000

UTM Reference: 15716840/4274300

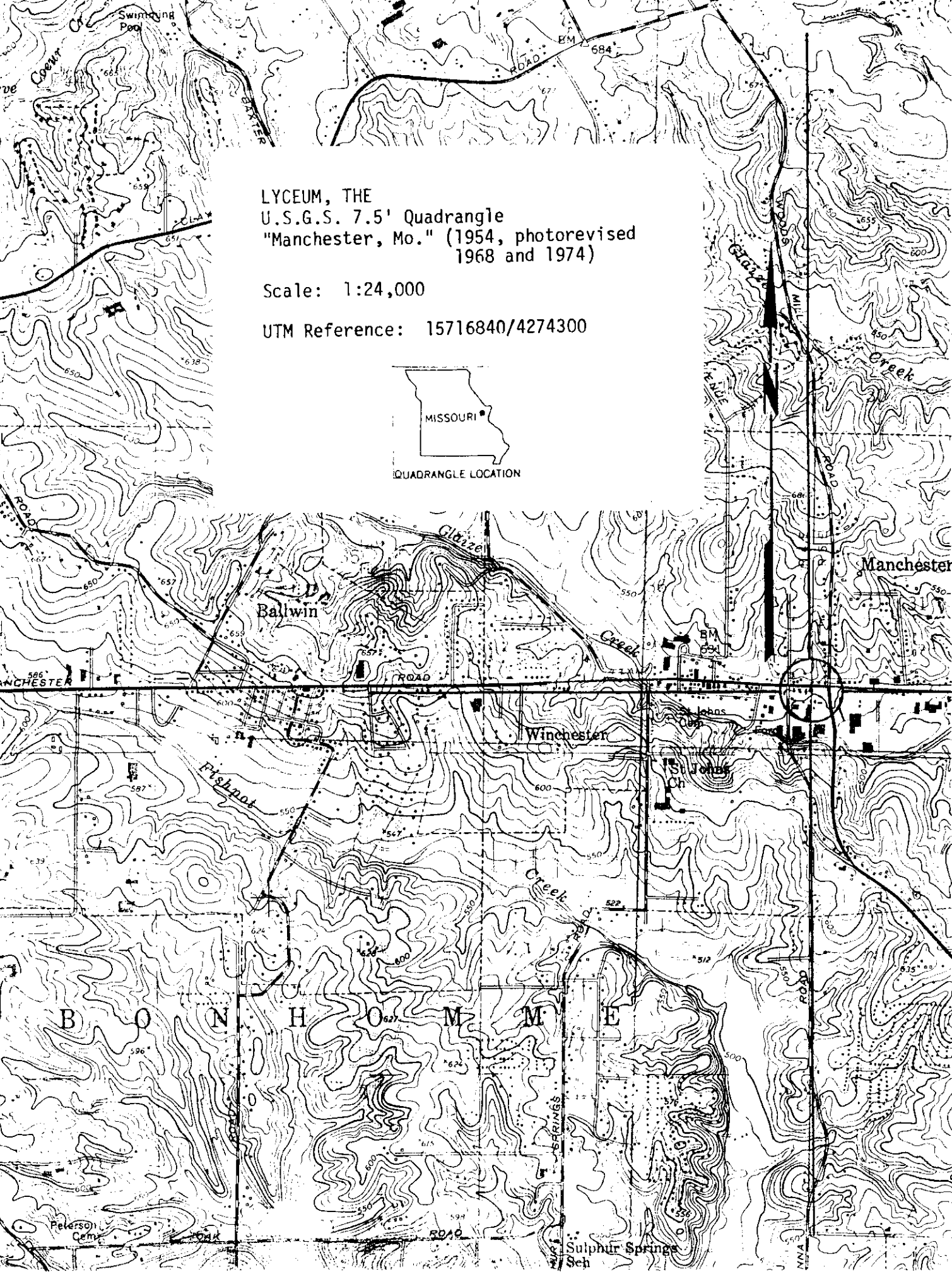


Photo Log:

Name of Property: Lyceum, The

City or Vicinity: Manchester

County: St. Louis County State: MO

Photographer: St. Louis County Parks & Recreation

Date

Photographed: 1978

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 4. Lyceum from NW, with parking lot of adjacent police station.
- 2 of 4. Lyceum from NE.
- 3 of 4. Lyceum, detail of porch railing and supporting brackets.
- 4 of 4. Lyceum, rear elevation from SW.



18 LYCEUM 94

FOR SALE
HUNT RANSFORD INC.
2007-10-18-2008



LYCEUM

FOR SALE
SEE ME ON WEDNESDAY



