

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Mountain Grove City Hall
other names/site number Mountain Grove City Hall and Jail

2. Location

street & number 301 East 1st Street N/A not for publication
city or town Mountain Grove N/A vicinity
state Missouri code MO county Wright code 229 zip code 65711

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Mark A. Miles JAN. 04, 2012
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Mountain Grove City Hall
Name of Property

Wright County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government-City Hall

Recreation and Culture-Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: WPA Modern

foundation: Concrete
walls: Stone

roof: Asphalt
other: Concrete

Mountain Grove City Hall
Name of Property

Wright County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance

Politics and Government

Period of Significance

1938-1961

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Biddle, Cecil Wesley/Architect

Sullivan, James Rufus/Builder

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Mountain Grove City Hall
Name of Property

Wright County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>565601</u>	<u>4109466</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Helen Catlett Allen

organization Mountain Grove Central Arts Council date August 30, 2011

street & number 1003 Sunset Drive telephone 573-442-2293

city or town Columbia state MO zip code 65203-2343

e-mail mallen@centurytel.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs.**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner:

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

name City of Mountain Grove

street & number 100 EAST 3RD STREET PO BOX 351 telephone 417-926-4162

city or town Mountain Grove state MO zip code 65711

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

SUMMARY:

The construction of the Mountain Grove City Hall at 301 E. 1st Street, in Mountain Grove, Wright County, began in 1937. It is built in what has been called the PWA or WPA Modern style. A marriage of traditional building materials, modern building techniques, and utilitarian lines, the style is evoked by the building's native stone cladding over a concrete structure and lack of architectural ornamentation. The two-story, flat-roofed building has a slightly projecting central entrance flanked by two widely spaced square window openings on the first and second floors. The walls, as noted, are clad in unfinished native field stone with beaded mortar joints, a technique commonly referred to as "Ozark rock" or "giraffe rock" construction. Topping the walls are thick concrete caps. The only noticeable exterior alteration since the date of construction is the replacement of multi-light metal hopper windows with single-pane fixed sash and the closing of a side entrance. A concrete block public restroom, constructed in the 1960s, sits to the east of the building and is considered non-contributing to the property.

SETTING:

The historic Mountain Grove City Hall is located one block east of the historic Mountain Grove square, at the corner of Green and First streets. The neighborhood is mixed commercial and light industrial and parallels the rail lines that gave birth to the town's historic commercial center. Like nearby buildings, the old City Hall sits close to the sidewalk, though a small strip of grassy lawn extends across the front and west elevation of the building. At the southwest corner of the lot is a flagpole and sign for the Mountain Grove History and Arts Center, now housed in the building. Behind the building is a small paved parking area.

SOUTH ELEVATION:

The primary elevation of the two-story, rock clad building faces south. The slightly projecting entrance bay (one-story) is centered. The original door has been replaced with a modern glass door, but the original concrete surround is intact, as is the sign above reading "19-City-Hall-38." Two spotlights have been installed above and on each side of the door. (See photo 8) The entrance bay is capped by a thick concrete cap. There are two square window openings with concrete sills on the first and second floors. The second floor windows have been blocked off from the inside, even though the openings still remain. Metal awnings have been installed over all windows.

There is little applied architectural ornamentation on the façade of the building. However, the façade is richly textured due to the use of native slab stones applied in a traditional building method called "giraffe rock" or "Ozark rock" construction. (See photos 8 and 10) The stones are not uniform in type, form or color and are applied in a crazy quilt-like pattern. The mortar joints are beaded, a design element that provides additional texture. The parapet walls are capped by thick concrete slabs.

WEST ELEVATION:

The west elevation faces Green Street, and like the rest of the building is clad in native stone slabs with beaded mortar joints. There are no entrances in the west wall, though there is

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

evidence of a door that was later filled in with native stone on the southwest corner. Centered on the first floor is a window opening with concrete sill and a two-light fixed pane window. Just to the south is a smaller window opening with fixed sash and metal awning. Centered on the second floor is a wide window opening with concrete sill and metal awning. The original windows have been replaced by a three-light fixed pane window. A ladder fire escape leads from the second floor window.

NORTH ELEVATION:

The north elevation faces a small paved parking lot. There are only two window openings on this wall, both on the second floor. The original windows have been replaced by slightly smaller, fixed sash units. These windows have been made smaller with wooden paneling at the window sills. There are downspouts at the two corners of this side of the building.

EAST ELEVATION:

Two windows and the original door remain on the first floor of the east side of the building. The entrance and flanking windows are located near the north corner of the building. A metal awning is installed over the doorway. The southern half of the first floor is partially obscured because the non-contributing concrete block restroom building sits very close to this elevation, though the buildings are not attached. A stone clad and concrete capped chimney extends up the south half of this wall and projects above the parapet wall. In the second floor is a large window opening with concrete sill. Like that on the second floor of the west elevation the window has a three light fixed pane window.

INTERIOR:

The interior of the building was completely renovated in 1986 to house the Ozarks Regional Juvenile Detention District facility. Commenting on the renovation, an officer that worked in the building noted:

The inside and outside walls are 12 inches thick solid concrete with steel rods spaced every foot running from top to bottom. When they got the building the old cells were still intact, so they got jack hammers in there and tore them out to put in a bathroom, utility closet and utility room for laundry. One holding cell is still intact at the west end of the first floor. There was a fireplace downstairs and a chimney upstairs for wood or coal heat. These were inoperable and were closed off. The upstairs was sectioned off into a kitchen, furnace room, bathroom/shower and 3 bunking rooms with steel walls. They put in all new windows and carpeted the floors except for the bathrooms, utility areas and kitchen.¹

The city later removed all of the metal wall sheeting that once covered the interior cell walls.² Despite changes, the interior space was historically functional with little ornamentation and the

¹ Frank Vancil, Juvenile Officer, interview with author.

² Mary Ann Barker Frazee. E-mail to author, April 19, 2011.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

building conveys that functionality today with easy to maintain flooring, simple interior trim and open spaces for offices and public gatherings.

PUBLIC RESTROOM BUILDING:

On the property and adjacent to the east side of the historic Mountain Grove City Hall is a one-story concrete block building with side gable roof constructed as public restrooms. There are three entrance doors, one each for the men's and women's restrooms on either side of a maintenance room entrance. The building measures 24 feet in width and is 18 feet 6 inches in depth.³ The building was constructed sometime in the 1960s and is considered a non-contributing resource to the nominated property.

INTEGRITY:

Although the historic Mountain Grove City Hall has experienced some alterations since its date of construction, the building still reflects its historic construction and function. Built with WPA labor and clad in native stone, the building's most striking features are its broad expanses of native stone of varying colors and textures connected by beaded mortar joints. Windows are not original, but the window and door openings are original and are secondary to the broad expanses of stone clad wall surface. The solid and unique workmanship provided by the townspeople who worked on this WPA project during the Depression has literally been indestructible each time an issue to demolish the building has arisen. The interior, also altered, is still reflective of the simple and functional finishes and office spaces that are characteristic of the original design.

³ Measurements of public restroom provided by Glen Kemper, May 3, 2011.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

SUMMARY:

Located at 301 E. 1st Street in the historic commercial district of Mountain Grove, the Mountain Grove City Hall is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Politics and Government. Funded by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) and constructed with local labor, the building is important both as the long-time center of local government and as an example of buildings constructed as work relief measures during the Great Depression. The project, managed by Morris Major (WPA engineer) and designed by architect Cecil Biddle, employed several skilled workmen, including project foreman James R. Sullivan. The majority of the work, however, was supplied by unskilled labor from the local relief rolls, employing as many as 16 men at any one time. Clad in native stone and designed in the utilitarian lines common to federally funded buildings of the New Deal era, the building is an example of a style commonly referred to as PWA or WPA Modern. Construction started in 1938 and the building was dedicated in April 1939. The building was used as city hall, council chambers and the local jail during the historic period. The period of significance is 1938 to 1961, the date of construction through the 50 year closing date used when activities begun historically continued to have importance but no more specific date can be defined.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND:

Mountain Grove, Missouri, Settlement and Growth:

Mountain Grove formed from three early and adjacent settlements that united under a single name in 1882. Settlement in the Mountain Grove area began with the first land entry by Francis Holt in 1840. By 1851 population was sufficient to support a store and post office operated by S.C. Hardin. Hardin called his post office Hickory Spring for the nearby grove of hickory trees surrounding a spring.⁴ The store soon became the center of a small settlement initially consisting of a log school that doubled as a church and meeting house. After Hardin's death in 1859, his brother-in-law and a partner T. J. Green opened "Mountain Store" and the post office moved to the new location in 1861 as a result of a petition by Postmaster Rivers Bruton.

The stores may have given the settlement its early names, but the heart of the community lay in its school. In 1857, original settler Francis Holt and his wife, Sarah Sally Holt nee Denney, donated five acres of land for the location of the "Seminary Grove Academy" in "Old Town." The seminary, directed by Simeon W. Phillips, opened the next year, replacing the early log schoolhouse. This school was an important stabilizing element in the early settlement period and survived the Civil War despite alternate occupation by both Union and Confederate soldiers.⁵ Classes resumed immediately after the war, though the school passed through several different owners in the late 1870s and in the 1880s was renamed "Mountain Grove Male and Female Seminary."⁶ The academy building was raised in 1949, much to the regret of several citizens. One, John D. Hull, commented at the time of demolition, "they're taking away

⁴*History and Families, Wright County, Missouri. Vol. I, page 28.* Copyright permission from Lois Bowman.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Paul M. Robinett. *Education in Mountain Grove, Missouri 1835-1913.* Point Lookout: School of the Ozarks Press, 1965.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

the trace of those first early years. They're tearing down the very purpose for which Mountain Grove was first laid out—that of a school town.”⁷

The school may have formed the nucleus of the original settlement, but the construction of the railroad in c. 1880 caused a significant boom in population and development. The development, however, shifted away from the “old town” school site to newly platted lots adjacent to the railroad tracks. Two rival plats vied for businesses and residents. Joseph Fisher planned the town of Fyan, named in honor of a railroad attorney living in Lebanon, Missouri. The plat flanked both sides of railroad track and soon featured a depot. In 1882, Dr. Isaac Lane purchased land just north of Fisher’s Fyan. Lane’s addition featured a central square⁸—an important feature that remains in Mountain Grove’s historic business district. Conflicts over a grove of trees that blocked Mountain Grove from the railroad pushed Fisher out of the town-building business, and soon Fyan, Lane’s Addition and the “Old town” incorporated under one name “Mountain Grove.” Some town loyalty issues may have lingered, despite incorporation, as the *Mountain Grove Times* published the following in February 1884:

Do you want to prosper, and see the business of the town and business of all kinds boom as never before? Then drop all ill feeling, bury the hatchet in the depths of good will, and join heart and hand with your fellow townsmen in building up a business point here second to none in S. MO. Remember is it not Fyan or Lane’s Addition, or old town, or new town, by which we are known or by which we are to stand or fail, but Mountain Grove, the fairest of the fair, which includes all, and of which we may justly be proud; and which will continue to grow and thrive and prosper, if we will all work together as good and true citizens should do.⁹

Old hostilities must not have lingered too long in the community as its population and businesses grew substantially in the 1880s and 1890s. From a small population of 300 in 1882, population quadrupled to 1200 in 1887. That year the town elected city officials bent on improving quality of life and business. Soon wooden sidewalks lined the business streets, and a new bank opened in 1888. The following year, the town boasted

five general stores, three drug stores, two stove and hardware stores, four hotels, two large roller process steam powered flour mills, planning mill, marble factory, three churches, bakery, livery stables and milliners.¹⁰

Progress in Mountain Grove was not without a few bumps and the town suffered two destructive fires on the public square. In 1899 a fire thought to have started in Weatherman’s Drug Store destroyed the west side of the square. Just two years later a fire destroyed ten businesses on

⁷ “Academy Razed,” *Tri-County News*, September 8, 1949.

⁸ “Dr. Lane Patterns Mountain Grove after Washington, D.C.,” *Mountain Grove News-Journal*, June 24, 1982.

⁹ *Mountain Grove Times*, February 9, 1884, quoted in *Tri-County News, Souvenir Centennial Edition 1882-1982*.

¹⁰ *History and Families, Wright County, Missouri. Vol. I*, page 28.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

the south side. The town came back strong, however, replacing the burnt-out frame buildings with substantial brick and concrete commercial blocks.¹¹

Mountain Grove's business district and rail line drew customers from a wide region and was largely supported by the local agricultural economy. Agricultural trade and diversification benefitted in 1899 by the construction of the Missouri State Fruit Experiment Station. The station, now part of the University of Missouri system, still operates to serve the fruit production and processing industries of the state. In 1911, Mountain Grove citizens donated land to the state to establish a second experiment station, this one for poultry (closed 1974). In addition to the two experiment stations, the first two decades of the 20th century saw the installation of the town's first telephone system (1899), electric lights in 1902, and the construction of a canning factory in 1901. The town also claimed a population of 2,325 by 1923.¹²

MOUNTAIN GROVE CITY HALL:

Despite its many advantages, by the 1930s Mountain Grove was feeling the effects of the Great Depression. Droughts in the mid-1930s affected agricultural production and general economic hardships closed businesses. Statistics specific to Mountain Grove are not readily available, but as of July 1, 1935, 14.07% of Wright County families were receiving public relief.¹³ Some relief for Wright County citizens came in the form of work relief projects sponsored by the Works Projects Administration (WPA). Mountain Grove benefited from street projects, a new sewer system and the completion of the new school. Also funded by the WPA was a new home for Mountain Grove's city hall and jail.

WPA projects combined oversight by skilled architects and project supervisors, with unskilled labor from local relief rolls. Overseeing all WPA projects in Mountain Grove was Morris Major, a WPA Engineer working out of Springfield, Greene County.¹⁴ As the second important member of the design and construction team, city officials selected architect and civil engineer Cecil Wesley Biddle. Biddle, a native of Hiawatha, Kansas served in the Navy during WWI and served as a civil engineer for the Missouri State Highway Department throughout the 1930s.¹⁵ Rounding up the project was local builder James Rufus "J.R." Sullivan, well known for his work on the Mountain Grove Post Office, elementary school and gymnasium, and the local telephone office.¹⁶

¹¹ *Tour Guide 1882-2007 Mountain Grove, Missouri*. Historic Preservation Committee, Mountain Grove Central Arts Council.

¹² Jacqueline Breitenbach Barbe. *Mountain Grove Makes Good: 100 Years of Progress, 1882-1982, Centennial Year booklet, 1982*.

¹³ E.L. Morgan, et al. *The Reasons for Openings and Closings in the Rural and Town Caseload in Missouri, October – December, 1935*. University of Missouri, Rural Research Section, July 1936, p. 11.

¹⁴ Census and oral histories. Major, a native Missourian, was born in 1895 to William and Mary Hern Major. He was employed as the manager of the Mountain Grove MFA for many years and was very active in the community. It is believed he was responsible for the fine post office plan the town received.

¹⁵ William "Billy" Biddle and Dorothy Jean Biddle Langston, children of Cecil W. Biddle, interview with author.

¹⁶ Doris Sullivan Smith, granddaughter of J.R. Sullivan, interview with author. According to Smith, J.R. was born in Vineyard, TN in 1873 to Andrew J. and Sarah Jane Tidwell Sullivan. He started his career as a young man building a church in Arkansas and ended his career supervising the construction of a

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

When work began in 1938, Sullivan reportedly expected to supervise a crew of 16 men beginning on the November 24 work period. His labor force included three types: skilled, intermediate, and common. According to the terms of the WPA project:

Skilled laborers are permitted to work 36 hours in a work period, which is two weeks. Intermediate labor is allowed 48 hours in a work period, and common labor, 52 hours in a work period.

To get in six and a half work days in two weeks the common laborers are divided into two groups. Half of them work three days the first week and the other half three and a half days. The second week they just reverse the schedule.¹⁷

Though work did not begin until November of 1938, Biddle's design for the new city hall and jail were revealed in July 1937. Reporting on Biddle's plan, the *Mountain Grove Journal*, provided the following description:

The plan calls for a two-story building, 26 X 36 feet, with exterior of native cobblestone. The proposed location is the city hitch lot one block east of the square. The building will face south on East First street.

On the main floor, the southeast corner room, 8½ X 13 feet, will be for use of the city clerk and collector. This room will be equipped with a large fireplace. Opposite the Clerk's room in the southwest corner, will be the Marshal's room and the stairway leading to the second story.

The main entrance is at the center in the south. At each end of the building with outside entrance, will be a toilet room.

A hallway will run the entire length of the main floor from east to west with double windows at each end. The north side of the main floor will contain jail cells and a furnace room. The jail cells will each be 6 X 8½ feet and equipped with steel beds.

The entire second story will be equipped as a court room. There will be two small jury rooms on the east end.

The plan calls for plenty of windows and lights to furnish an abundance of light at all time.

A large septic tank, 18 X 8 X 8 feet will complete the plans. It will be divided into three compartments, in the third of which the drainage must seep through a bed of charcoal before reaching the outlet.¹⁸

church in Mountain Grove at age 86. He died in 1959. J.R. served on the Mountain Grove board of aldermen during the 1920s.

¹⁷"Work Starts on New City Hall and Jail," *Mountain Grove Journal*, November 17, 1938.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Stylistically, the historic Mountain Grove City Hall is typical of WPA projects constructed across Missouri and the country and falls into a category often referred to as WPA or PWA Modern. Though the agency left aesthetics largely in the hands of project sponsors, the WPA “followed the newer tendencies toward simplification in architectural style.”¹⁹ This may have been, in part, a product of 1930s architectural trends such as the sleek and simple Art Moderne style. However, as noted WPA projects blended skilled supervisors with unskilled labor and “simplicity of design” according to the WPA final report was also “best suited to the limited skills usually available for WPA work.”²⁰ Because materials to construct buildings funded by the WPA were generally provided by the project sponsor, many of these projects in Missouri utilized native stone and native stone construction mentions. In the City Hall, this meant an exterior of native stone applied using locally traditional building methods.

On April 17, 1939 Mountain Grove celebrated the completion of the City Hall with an open house. More than 800 visitors attended the opening, with each lady in attendance given a rose to commemorate the event. Officials bragged about the size of the new courtroom, equipped to house 50 to 100 people, and boasted of the building noting, “The interior of the building is finished with white plastic cement. The exterior is uncut native stone, attractively trimmed. The city of Mountain Grove, as project sponsor, furnished between \$2500 and \$3000 of materials.”²¹

From its opening day in 1939, the Mountain Grove City Hall played an important role in the community and the memories of citizens. The building housed a variety of governmental functions from tax collecting to municipal court proceedings. Many growing up in the community remember visiting the city hall as a teenage rite of passage. Glen Kemper, treasurer of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council noted in a recent interview that “I remember signing up to get my driver’s license there.”²² And it was at the City Hall that hundreds of Mountain Grove and other area teens took their written and driving tests.

As the home of the local jail, City Hall also drew curiosity seekers. Long time Mountain Grove resident Janet Wood Azevedo wrote, “I grew up close to downtown so the jail was part of my old stomping grounds. I remember going in the city hall giving the excuse that I needed a drink of water from the fountain in the hallway. I really wanted to take a peek at the people in the jail cells that were at the end of the hallway.”²³ This sentiment was echoed by Deby Gilley, who also passed time wondering about those jailed in the building. She remembers, “As a kid I would hang out on the square on the weekends. We would go to the filling station across the street for water and then go peek in the jail to see who was there. I remember the officer saying,

¹⁸ “Architect’s Plans for New City Hall-Jail,” *Mountain Grove Journal*, July 15, 1937, page 1.

¹⁹ *Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-1943*. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1947. Reprinted Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976, p. 52.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “Officials Hold Open House at New City Hall,” *Mountain Grove Journal*, April 20, 1939.

²² Glen Kemper, Treasurer of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

²³ Janet Wood Azevedo, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

'hey, you kids get out of there.'" ²⁴ Court proceedings also drew a crowd, and it was here that several local youths got their first taste of the law in action. Remembering one of her early experiences in the building, Betty Dale noted "When I was a kid, I thought this building was huge. I remember some times we would come to town in a horse driven wagon and sometimes a car. There were hitching posts all around the jail/city hall. One time as a kid I watched a court hearing upstairs. That room seemed so big. The two ladies [on trial] got in a fight." ²⁵

By the mid-1960s the town's growing population and increased city functions outgrew the historic city hall building. When city hall moved, the building housed a variety of functions including at least one commercial business operated by June Conkin and her husband selling stove inserts.²⁶ By the early 1980s, however the building was under utilized and threatened with demolition.

In 1982, a group from the Mountain Grove Centennial Committee expressed interest in using the old city hall for part of the town's celebration. The group was told that a contract for the building's demolition had been accepted by the city to make room for more parking. Committee members questioned the utility of the lot for parking and were supported by councilman Norm Hutcheson who measured the building's footprint and estimated that, at most, the city could fit three of four small cars in the space. With council support, the centennial committee won approval to use the building for the celebration.²⁷

During the celebration, the building was used as a museum displaying historic photos, newspapers, a list of past mayors, and school histories with lists of superintendents and music teachers. Also on display were artifacts from former Mountain Grove businesses like Blakely Candy Co. and from Dr. Dick Denney's medical practice in the upstairs. The impressive bell from the old academy was featured. The bell was in the possession of the Archer family at that time, along with a model of the academy created by Lonzo Maxwell, a retired barber from Mountain Grove. The success of the museum impressed city officials and provided a long-term stay of execution for the historic building. Of the time, Katherine Coffman remembers, "While we were having this open for the public one day, one of the aldermen came in and looked everything over, and as he was leaving he stopped at the registration table and said, "Don't worry, the building will not be torn down now that we realize it could be useful."²⁸

In 1986, the building returned to government service and was renovated to house the Ozarks Regional Juvenile Detention District facilities. The renovation included the installation of new

²⁴ Deby Dodds Gilley, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

²⁵ Betty Middleton Dale, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

²⁶ June Blakely Conkin, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

²⁷ Katherine Bryant Coffman, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

²⁸ Ibid.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

windows, updating interior finishes, and slightly reconfiguration the second floor to accommodate living space for juvenile detainees. The building served the district until 2003.

When the Ozarks Regional Juvenile Detention facility moved to a new location, the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council immediately jumped at the chance to reutilize and revitalize the building. On August 19, 2003, the arts council signed a lease for the building for \$1 per year for five years with an option to extend the lease for an additional 20 years.²⁹ The arts council was attracted to the building, both by its history but also by its quality of construction and native stone exterior. The Arts Council currently uses the building as a museum, art gallery and hosts classes and town meetings. Future plans for the building include maintaining the exterior stone work and beaded mortar joints and uncovering the interior stone fireplace. The art council's secretary, Diane Gooch, recognizes the contribution of the building to the city, noting "Certainly Mountain Grove has benefited by preserving this historic building and using it for community activities. . . Our goal is to improve the building so it can be used by all ages, young and old."³⁰

²⁹ *Minutes from the July 24, 2003 Mountain Grove Central Arts Council*; Debbie Brown Barbe, president of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

³⁰ Diane Conkin Gooch, secretary of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 11

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 12

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Interviews and correspondence:

Allen, Mary Helen Catlett, granddaughter of John D. Hull and member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, 2011.

Azevedo, Janet Wood, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Barbe, Debbie Brown, president of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Biddle, William "Billy" and Dorothy Jean Biddle Langston, children of Cecil W. Biddle, interview with author, 2011.

Caskey, Elaine Shorter, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Coffman, Katherine Bryant, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, 2011.

Conkin, June Blakely, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Dale, Betty Middleton, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Frazee, Mary Ann Barker. E-mail to author, April 19, 2011.

Gilley, Deby Dodds, member of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Gooch, Diane Conkin, secretary of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Kemper, Glen, treasurer of the Mountain Grove Central Arts Council, interview with author, January 18, 2011.

Smith, Doris Sullivan granddaughter of J.R. Sullivan, interview with author, 2011..

Vancil, Frank, Juvenile Officer, interview with author, 2011.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 6&7, Block 9, Lanes Addition to the town of Fyan-Now Mountain Grove Missouri. The property measures 100' X 150' and is in Section 9, Township 28, Range 12.³¹

Property Tax Account Number: 010615-03.³²

Parcel Number: 84-21-2.0-09-2-023-002.00³³

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes all of the lots purchased for the construction of the historic Mountain Grove City Hall and associated with the building during its period of significance.

³¹ Entry No. 14 of Abstract No. 1569. City of Mountain Grove Clerk's office.

³² County Assessors Office, Hartville, MO.

³³ Ibid.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 14

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Photo Log:

The following is true for all photographs unless otherwise noted:

Mountain Grove City Hall

Wright County, Missouri

Photographer: Jack R. Allen

Date: April and July, 2010.

Digital images on file with the photographer and at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, PO Box 176, Jefferson City, Missouri.

1. Historic exterior photo, c. 1941, looking northeast. L-R, Fred Morris, Jarrett T. Conkin, Merle Booker, Jack Farrar, and unknown. Possible sheriff's posse. Photographer unknown.
2. Close up of "Wanted Poster" in the second floor window detail from photo #1. Photographer unknown.
3. South elevation, c. 1982, looking north. Photographer unknown.
4. South elevation, looking north, July 2010.
5. South and west elevations, looking northeast, July 2010.
6. South and east elevations, looking northwest, April 4, 2010.
7. Entrance detail, south elevation, looking northeast, July 2010.
8. Chimney and corner detail, south and east elevations, looking northwest, April 4, 2010.
9. North and east elevations, looking southwest, April 4, 2010.
10. Detail of stonework, north elevation, looking south, April 4, 2010.
11. Interior, entrance foyer and first floor room, looking east, April 4, 2010.
12. Interior, first floor, looking west, April 4, 2010.
13. Interior, first floor, looking northwest, April 4, 2010
14. Interior, first floor, last remaining jail cell and door in the west side of the building.
15. Interior, original stairway, looking northeast, April 4, 2010.
16. Interior, second floor, view of one of the old jail cell doors used in the rooms for the juvenile center, April 4, 2010.

Figure List:

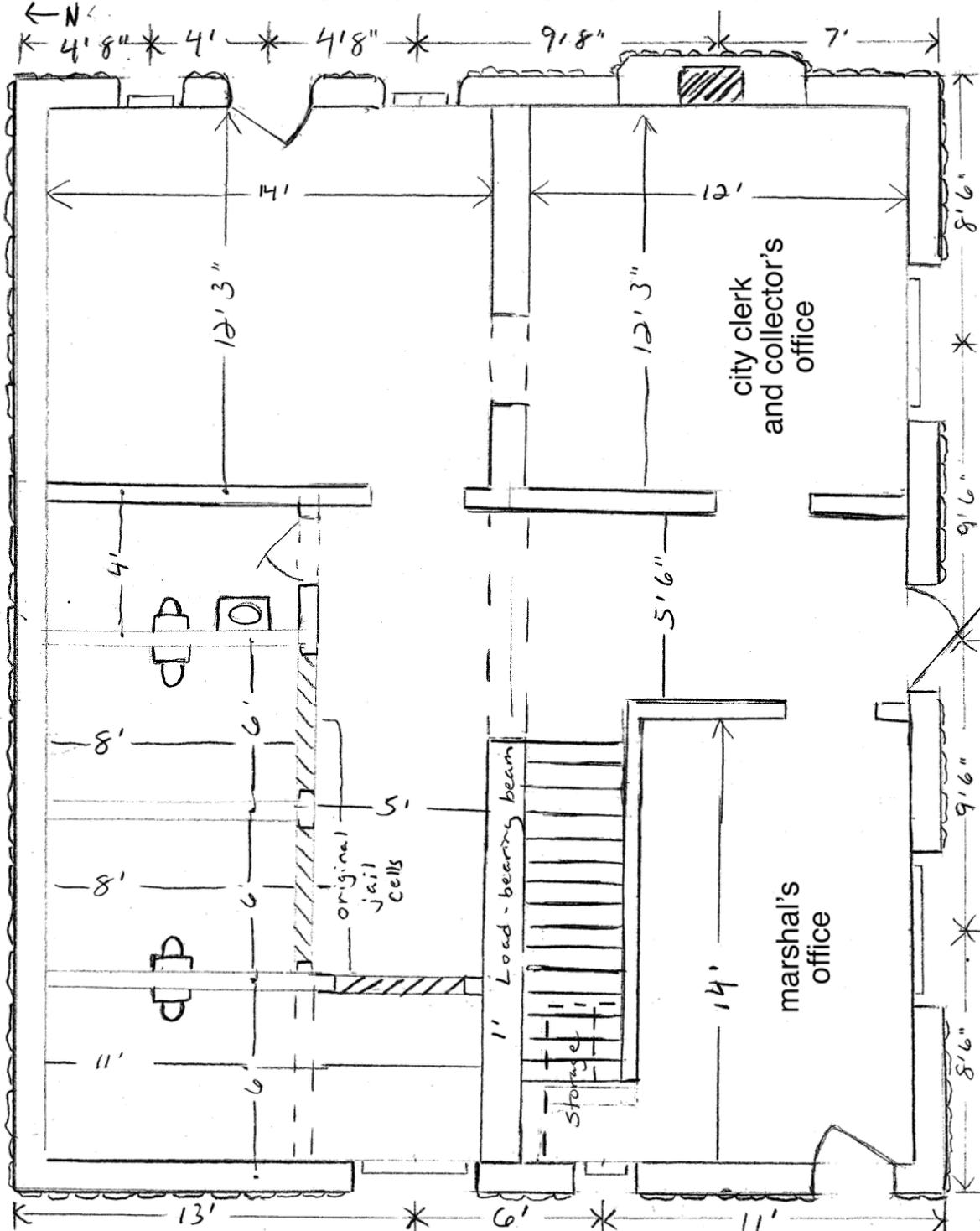
1. First floor plan
2. Second floor plan
3. Sketch map of Mountain Grove
4. Plat and legal description
5. 1982 ad for Mountain Grove centennial with photo of City Hall.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 15

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Figure 1: First Floor Plan, original layout. Drawn by Deby Dodds Gilley

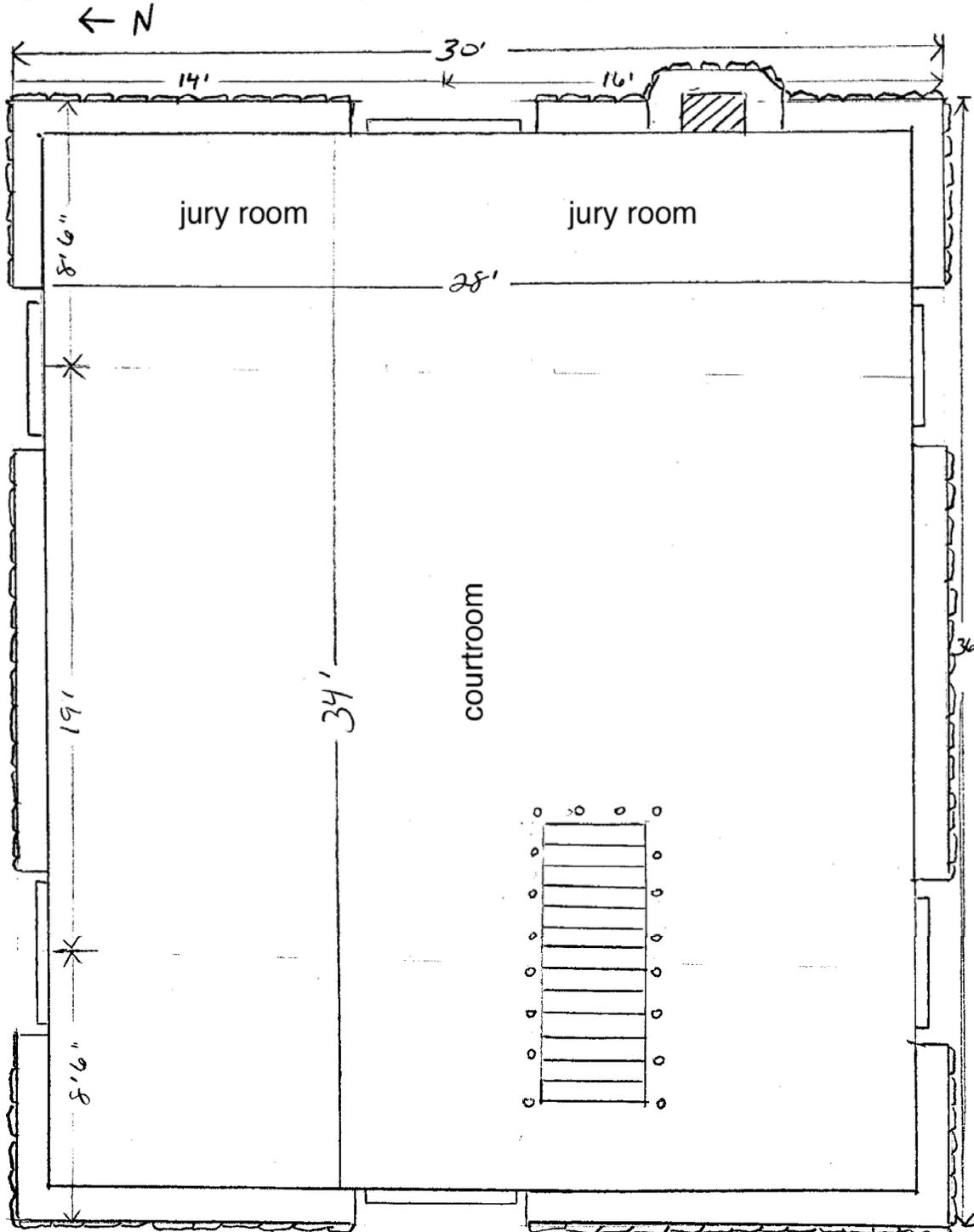


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 16

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Figure 2: Second Floor Plan, original layout. Drawn by Deby Dodds Gilley.

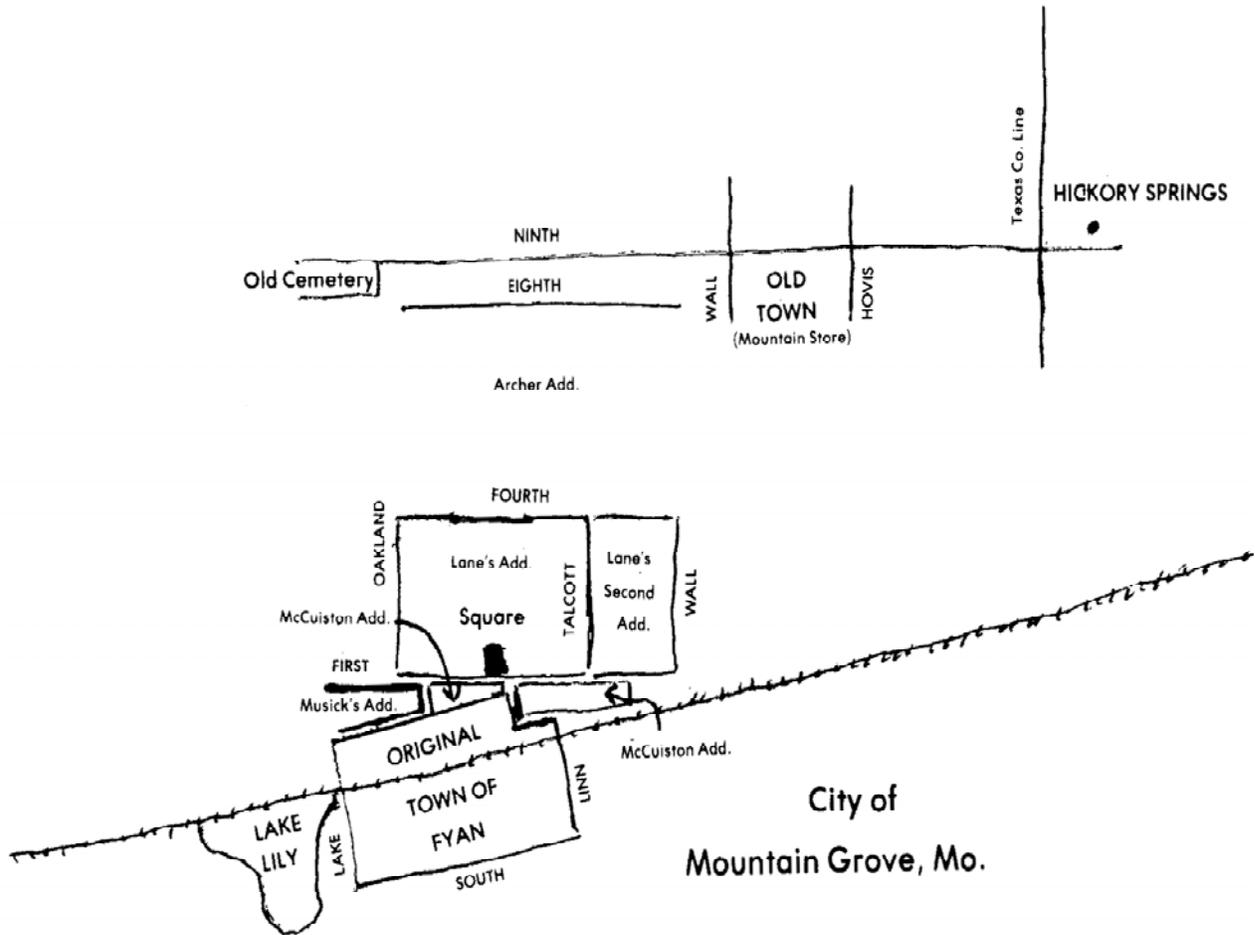


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 17

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Figure 3: From "1882-1982 A Centennial View of Mountain Grove, Missouri"

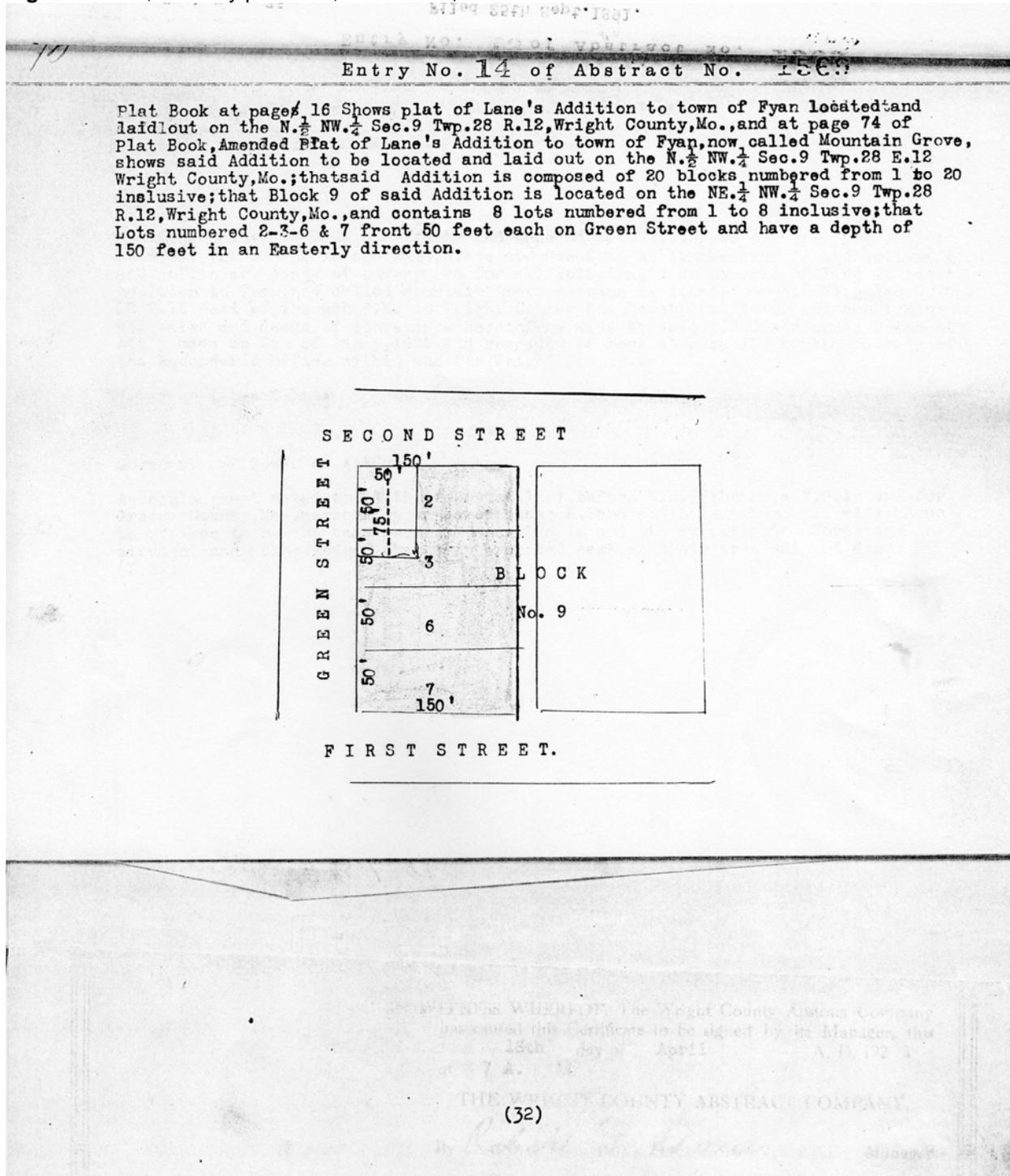


National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 18

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Figure 4: Plot, from city plat book, Lots 6 & 7, Block 9. Lanes Addition.



National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 19

Mountain Grove City Hall
Wright County, Missouri

Figure 5: Ad for Mountain Grove Centennial, From the *Mountain Grove News Journal*, 1982.



NOTE FROM

Centennial Hall

If you are one of those who have been thinking, "I'll go see the exhibit some of these days"--- some of these days is now! Hours for this final week of the Centennial will be:

FRIDAY, July 2 1 to 4 p.m.

SATURDAY, July 3 9 to 11 a.m. and 12 to 5 p.m.

SUNDAY, July 4 2 to 5 p.m.

MONDAY, July 5 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The location is the old City Hall on East First Street, 1 block east of the square. For those who find it impossible to come during the hours listed, arrange a special appointment by calling 926-3611 or 926-3511. If you have already visited, several new things have ben added for this final week.



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 1 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 2 of 18 (detail of photo 1)



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 3 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 5 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 6 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 7 of 18

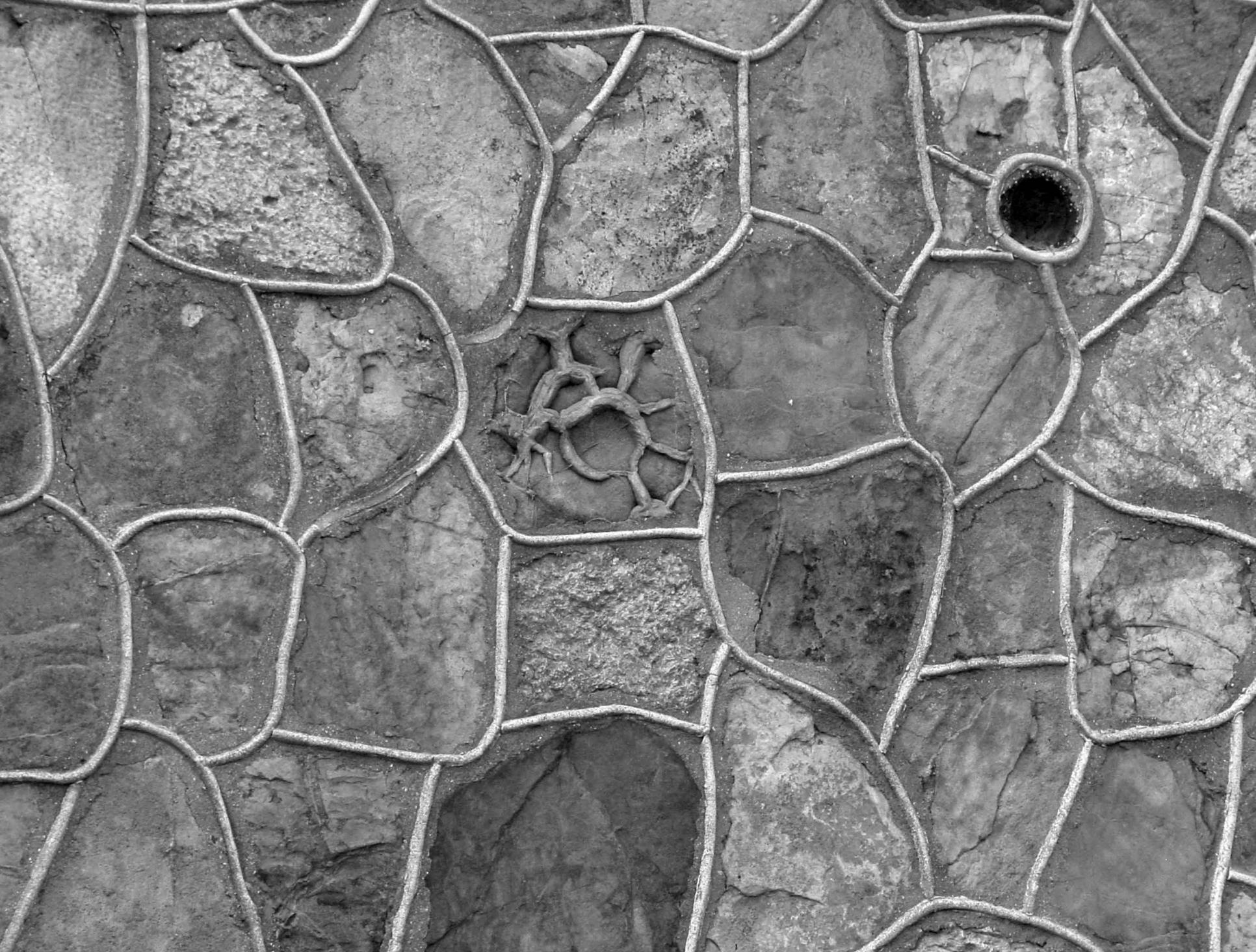


Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 8 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 9 of 18





Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 12 of 18



Mountain Grove
Central
Arts
Council

Historic 20th Centuries \$10

Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 13 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 14 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 15 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 16 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 17 of 18



Mountain Grove City Hall, Wright County, Missouri
Photo 18 of 18