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DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED AUG 19 1976  
DATE ENTERED NOV 21 1976

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC  
Munson Building  
AND/OR COMMON  
Library

## LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
210 Second Street Northeast  
CITY, TOWN  
Independence  
STATE  
Iowa  
VICINITY OF  
Third  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
COUNTY  
Buchanan  
CODE  
CODE

## CLASSIFICATION

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

## OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
City of Independence  
STREET & NUMBER  
331 First Street East  
CITY, TOWN  
Independence  
STATE  
Iowa  
VICINITY OF

## LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Buchanan County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
210 Fifth Avenue Northeast  
CITY, TOWN  
Independence  
STATE  
Iowa

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Independence Library is a three story brown pressed brick structure of the late Victorian period. It is set on a foundation constructed of boulders known as "prairie granite." The two main floors, forty feet by eighty feet, are set on what was called a "high basement" and topped by a "high attic." The red tile roof is surmounted on the street end by a four sided tower covered with a pointed tile roof and finished with decorative tin work. Though certainly not typical of its period, it does possess Gothic-inspired decorative effects, some in terracotta, others of tin.

The three floors are each designed of one long room fronted by a three story vestibule containing a decorative wooden staircase. Aside from the installation of plasterboard partitions and lowered ceilings, the interior remains in its original condition.

When first opened in 1895, the Munson Building had a gymnasium in the basement, sewing classes on the first and a library on the second floor. Around 1914, the first floor was partitioned into manual arts and mechanical drawing classrooms, and a printing press installed.

In 1939, the library was moved to the first floor, the second floor being given over to meetings; a kitchen replaced the printing press. The third floor was used for library storage.

In 1975, minor alterations were made on the library floor, including the addition of restrooms, and an exterior access ramp.

Over several decades, the attic and basement were used by Girl and Boy Scouts. The stairwell to the third floor has been closed off for some years, but plans are being made to restore the stairway and perhaps open this upper floor again.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" 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		

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SPECIFIC DATES

1893

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Munson Building is a striking example of early French Renaissance Revival architecture. Its unusual design (two symmetrical units forming an asymmetrical composition) and use of decorative terracotta and brickwork detail combine to make this an unusual and distinctive structure.

Perry Munson, who lived in Independence from 1857 until his death in 1893, was a machinist and blacksmith by trade. Although in later years he ran a grocery, he never lost his interest in manual crafts, and the Munson Building, for which he bequeathed \$5,000, was to be a memorial to that interest. For nearly 60 years, the young people of Independence were trained in a variety of mechanical arts, including printing, drafting, and manual skills such as wood-working. Use of the building was not limited to practical instruction, however; the Y.M.C.A., the public library, Boy and Girl Scouts, and community groups have, since the beginning, found space in the Munson Building for their activities.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Conservative (Newspaper), January 3, 1894.

Chappell, Katharyn J. and Harry C. Buchanan County Iowa and its People.  
Vol. I. Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1914.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	15	590080	800	4700270	2400	B			
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C						D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dorothy Farber, Librarian

ORGANIZATION

Free Public Library

DATE

2/27/74

STREET & NUMBER

210 Second Street Northeast

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Independence

STATE

Iowa

# 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

*Adrian D. Anderson*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

August 10, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

*Chris A. Riggs*

DATE

11/21/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*Charles Anderson*

DATE

11.15.76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER