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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED
JAN 24 1977
JUL 14 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

NAME

HISTORIC * Washington Park

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

One city block bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Bluff and

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Locust Streets

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Dubuque

VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

Iowa

CODE
19

COUNTY
Dubuque

CODE
061

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Dubuque

STREET & NUMBER

13th and Central Avenues

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

32001

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dubuque County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

720 Central Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Dubuque

STATE

Iowa

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In 1833, when the original plat of Dubuque was made by G.W. Harrison, Washington Square was bounded on each side by dirt paths and was covered with scrub oak. No more is known about the condition of the land until 1848, when it was cleared of trees or brush and filled in to create an even surface suitable for a public park area. In 1877, the Square was elaborately landscaped: paths laid diagonally across and lined with elms. Benches and chairs were set out, and a wooden pagoda-style gazebo erected as a bandstand and lecture platform just off the center of the square. A white wood fence ran around the edges of the square. The gazebo burned in 1900; it was replaced in 1976 by a metal replica. During the 1960's, Dutch Elm disease denuded the square of all but three or four trees, and until this past year, the square was a rather barren area, with sparse grass and little shade. During 1976, renewed interest in Washington Square (as exhibited in the new gazebo) has surfaced among Dubuque citizens. The city Park Board has made major improvements in the Square, through the planting of trees, shrubbery and semiformal gardens along and between the original walkways. Installation of light fixtures appropriate to its late 19th-century appearance will follow in the coming spring.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input 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 checked="" 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 1834-40; 1877-1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Washington Square has been a public recreation and entertainment area since the city of Dubuque was founded. Two particular periods stand out, however, as times when the Square was the focus of activities important to the city and its people. These are 1834-40 and 1877-1900.

During the first, six-year, period, the city of Dubuque was platted, and the area later known as Washington Square established temporarily as the center of religion, education, and law. The Square was located in the extreme western corner of the original town plat, made in 1833 by G.W. Harrison. In 1834, the first church in Iowa was built on a lot in the southeast corner of the square, the \$225 required for its construction raised by subscriptions of \$25 to 12½¢ from 70 people, including three black slaves. Its principal use (and that for which it had been built) was as a meeting house for the Methodist Episcopal Church congregation (12 members, under Barton Randle), but was also open to other "Christian denominations" and for use as the first "common school" in the city. Early sessions of the court (Michigan Territory) were also held in this one-story log building. On 25 March, 1837, a town gathering was held in the meeting house on Washington Square, during which the city was officially incorporated.

In 1840, the Methodist congregation built a larger church one block north of the old Washington Square meeting house. The latter, now obsolete, was left empty for a few years until removed and converted to a dwelling elsewhere in the town. Until 1877, no other structure is known to have been erected in the Square, although in 1848 the area was cleared and levelled in anticipation of the establishment of a public park.

Not until 1877, however, was Washington Square fully developed. In that year, it was laid out with walks, flower beds, trees planted in rows, and the wood fence and gazebo erected. The pleasant atmosphere thus created was host, during the late 19th century, to a variety of public spectacles, including art exhibits, musical performances, political events and dog shows. Among the most famous of these were Buffalo Bill Cody's "Authentic Wild West Show" in 1896, and an address by President William McKinley in 1899.

Public interest in the square declined during the 20th century, as the city expanded far beyond its original 6 block by 7 block plat. Today however, the surrounding area, once left to deteriorate, has become the focus of central-city renewal efforts which may eventually result in the renaissance of Washington Square as a public meeting or resting area, and in the recognition of its place in the early history of Dubuque.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Dubuque County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880.
 The Dubuque Telegraph-Herald. Sunday, 2 June, 1974; September 15, 1946.
 Petersen, William J. "Some Beginnings in Iowa". Iowa Journal of History and Politics
 28 (January, 1930), pp. 3-54.
 Gallaher, Ruth A. "The First Church in Iowa," The Palimpsest, Vol. 7 (January 1926),
 pp. 1-10.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about two acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	6 9 1 6 2 0	4 7 0 7 6 2 0	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

James D. Miller

ORGANIZATION

Dubuque County Historical Society

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1525 Fairview Place

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Duquhue

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

Alvin D. Anderson

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

10 January 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST:	DATE
<i>Chuck Berry</i>	7/14/77
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE
	6.7.77