

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received FEB 28 1983  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Zim Thematic Resources

and/or common The Zimmerman House, Zim Bandstand

## 2. Location

street & number various \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Horseheads \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district

state New York code 036 county Chemung code 015

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
___ district	___ public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
___ building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
___ structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	___ work in progress	___ educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
___ site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
___ object	<del>NA</del> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	___ government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<del>NA</del> being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		___ no	___ military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name See inclosed inventory forms

street & number

city, town Horseheads \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state New York 14854

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Chemung County Courthouse

street & number East Lake Street

city, town Elmira \_\_\_\_\_ state New York

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes  no

date 1979 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records NYS Office of Parks & Recreation, Division for Historic Preservation

Agency Building 1  
city, town Empire State Plaza Albany \_\_\_\_\_ state New York 12238

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date NA

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Zim Thematic Group consists of two properties in the village of Horseheads, New York, associated with Eugene Zimmerman (1862-1935), nationally known cartoonist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The properties are: the Queen Anne style Zimmerman House which was Eugene Zimmerman's home and workplace from 1890 until his death in 1935, and Teal Park, dominated by the bandstand Zimmerman designed in 1910.

#### Zimmerman House

Designed and built by Eugene Zimmerman in 1890, the house at 601 Pine Street is a particularly subtle and personal interpretation of the Queen Anne style. It occupies a prominent corner in a village residential area consisting of varied 19th and 20th century houses. Although asymmetrical in plan and diverse in detail, the Zimmerman house displays a simple serenity derived from the solidity of its forms, economy of detail, and the earthy brown of the exterior paint.

The house is a 2½-story balloon frame building set on a broken course stone foundation and sheathed with tongue and groove channel siding and imbricated shingles. The roof, covered in asphalt shingles, combines a variety of forms and profiles. The irregular hipped roof of the main block is interrupted at each elevation by steep gable roofs of varying sizes. The roof on the front elevation shelters a small second story porch, its pediment displaying a carved fan motif. A brick chimney protrudes at the rear of the front gable, while the gable on the rear elevation is bisected by an exterior brick chimney. A gable dormer with a triangular window protrudes from the roof of the north elevation. A large shed dormer pierces the southern roof at the rear; it is probably not original to the house, although there is no record of its construction.

There are a variety of porches on the house, lending an airiness to the heavy mass. A one-story verandah runs the full width of the front and wraps around the south side. A small second story porch rises from the roof of the front porch. On the south elevation, a deep porch juts from the east end, with a shallow gallery on the second floor. A one-story entrance porch at the southeast corner is shaded on the south side by latticework. All porches are supported by delicate, turned columns with curvilinear brackets at the top. Porch railings are simple, with closely spaced, turned balusters.

Fenestration is irregular and of assorted window types, in which rectangular double-hung sash predominate. Of special note are the semicircular windows on the north side, glazed with colored glass in a lyre motif and, on the south elevation, the paired, quarter round windows which combine with the long rectangular sash below to form an arch.

In addition to the architectural detailing, the decorative features of the house have remained intact since Eugene Zimmerman's death in 1935. The original electric lighting fixtures, curved brass with tulip-shaped glass shades, remain on ceilings and walls throughout the house. The furniture, the pictures, the artifacts hung on walls and displayed in cabinets, even some of the kitchen appliances remain as they were in Zimmerman's lifetime. Designed by Zimmerman and decorated to his taste, the house is an astonishing reflection of the famous man.

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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** 1890-1910 **Builder/Architect** Eugene Zimmerman/Alvah Beard/Howell Bros.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Zim Thematic Group in Horseheads, New York, consists of two properties significant for their association with nationally prominent cartoonist Eugene Zimmerman (1862-1935). Zimmerman achieved prominence as a political cartoonist and homespun philosopher through publication in Puck, Judge, and many other books. The appeal of his cartoons, which he signed "Zim" was based upon his ability to take the commonplace features of life and transform them into humorous situations through caricature. Zimmerman's creations had a tremendous influence upon the cartoonists of his day, and distillations of his style are still evident in contemporary caricature.

The two properties - the Zimmerman House, and Teal Park - are also significant as embodiments of the architectural fashions of the period 1890-1910. Zim designed both his house on Pine Street and the Bandstand in Teal Park.

Eugene Zimmerman, born in 1862 in Basel, Switzerland, spent his early years in the Alsace region of France. The death of his mother in 1864 caused the family to disperse, his father and older brother emigrating to New Jersey. Eugene stayed for a time with an aunt and uncle, but in 1869, he was sent to America to escape the impending Franco-Prussian War. In New Jersey, the boy received some schooling and held a succession of menial, low-paying jobs. His artistic career was launched when, at the age of 15, he apprenticed himself to a sign painter who shortly thereafter moved to Elmira, New York. As an apprentice, he was paid little, but gained valuable experience. In 1880, he took a \$9.00 a week job as head of the pictorial staff of a rival sign firm in nearby Horseheads. His glory was short-lived, for his new employer's business failed and Zim returned to Elmira.

Drawing was pleasure as well as business for Zim, and he spent his leisure hours filling sketchbooks. On a short visit to New York, he displayed his work to admiring relatives, who convinced him to leave his sketchbook behind. His uncle brought the drawings to Joseph Keppler, one of the finest cartoonists of the day and proprietor of the nation's foremost comic weekly Puck. Keppler, impressed with Zim's work, asked the young cartoonist to call on him. Thus, in 1883 Zim joined the staff of Puck on a three-year contract with a starting salary of \$5.00 a week, to be increased yearly. Although the wages were meager, Zim soon acquired a clientele of advertisers who paid handsomely for his drawings. His years of hardship were behind him and were now subject matter for his cartoons.

Internal struggles within the Puck organization stifled Zim's advancement and after two years he left to join the staff of Judge, a new, rival publication. His affiliation with Judge lasted 28 years, during which time the "Zim" signature achieved national prominence.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Kather, J.S. Zim The Life Story of Eugene Zimmerman Horseheads Cartoonist, Elmira, N.Y.: Elmira Quality Printers, 1978.

Zimmerman, Laura. Horseheads, N.Y. Interview.

Additional biographical material on file at NYS Div. for Historic Preservation, Bld. 1, Albany, N.Y. NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, DHP. Research Files.

## 10. Geographical Data

Empire Plaza  
Albany, NY 12238

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Horseheads

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

PARK  
A 

1	8	3	49	6	80	46	6	9	38	0
Zone	Easting		Northing							

HOUSE  
B 

1	8	3	4	9	6	4	0	4	6	9	18	0
Zone	Easting		Northing									

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The individual properties of the Thematic Group are bounded on all sides by their respective property lines as indicated on the enclosed sketch map.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
			NA

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janette Johnstone, Program Assistant

organization Division for Historic Preservation

date July 1982

Agency Building 1

street & number Empire State Plaza

telephone 518 479-0479

city or town Albany

state New York 12238

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: Zimmerman House = national

national     state     local

Teal Park = 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

*Ann Webster Smith*

title Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

date 14 Feb 83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*See Continuation Sheet for listing* date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

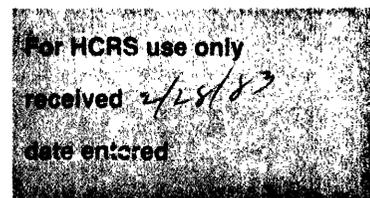
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Horseheads, Chemung Co., NY

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The ornate walnut front door leads to a small foyer, its natural oak flooring inlaid with his logo: ZIM. To the rear of the foyer is the main stairway with richly carved oak bannister and newel post. To the left is the family living room with the stained-glass window whose lyre motif is repeated in a wooden shelf surrounding the window. Directly behind the living room is the study, furnished with built-in bookcases and panelled doors. There, too, is the roll-top desk where Zimmerman did most of his drawing:

A drawing board steadied on a roll-top desk, north light streaming in and his chair in a position from which, when he wanted to, he could look out on Mill Street and wave to friends. He could also study passing dogs, horses, and cats that he would later use in drawings. <sup>1</sup>

In the south wall of the living room, a wide square arch embellished at the top with a patterned spindle screen leads to the parlor, the most unique room in the house. This room is a full two stories in height, overlooked by a second floor gallery on the north. The south wall is dominated by a two-story bay window, whose southeast angle is a door to the back porch. On the west wall is a fireplace with an elaborate wooden mantel ornamented with scrolls, fluting, shelves and a bevelled mirror. The firebox, surrounded by polychrome ceramic tiles, is covered by an ornate iron door. An eclectic assortment of obje d'art are displayed in this room: antique swords, African spears and beads, and Chinese lampshades, as well as the ubiquitous Zim cartoons and paintings.

Behind the parlor is the dining room, distinguished by canvas wall coverings lacquered to look like antique leather. A plate rail circles the room, filled with decorative dishes, figurines and glassware. A swinging door leads to the kitchen and back stairway.

The second floor contains two bedrooms on either side of a panelled hallway. Oak moldings and panelled doors are characteristic of these rooms. The attic is floored but unfinished.

### Teal Park

Teal Park is a small landscaped open space located in a 19th-century residential area. Primarily used for passive recreation, the park features concrete walks, stationary benches, tall shade trees, and two memorial stone monuments. Its centerpiece is the wooden Zim Bandstand, designed by Eugene Zimmerman. Octagonal in form, with one protruding rectangular bay, it is set on a smaller pedestal of the same shape. Ten square columns with capitals formed like lyres support a low-pitched tent roof with a center finial. The roof opens into a low gable above the projecting conductor's bay, forming a shallow pediment. Carved in low relief on the tympanum is a typical example of Zim's whimsy - two horn blowing grasshoppers and a bass fiddling bullfrog performing a summer concert. The bandstand received a new asphalt shingle roof in 1979, but otherwise has been maintained unaltered since its construction in 1910.

<sup>1</sup>Charles Barber, quoted in Jan Strausser Kather, Zim (Horseheads, New York: Horseheads Historical Society, 1978).

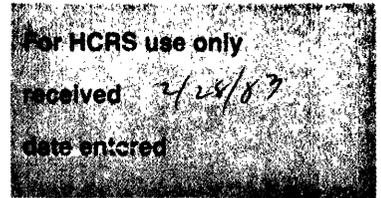
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In 1886, Zim married Mable Alice Beard of Horseheads. For a short time, they resided in Brooklyn but, because both preferred the amenities of rural life, soon returned to Horseheads. Every other week Zim commuted to New York for consultations with the Judge staff, but most of his drawing was done in Horseheads, and from thence came much of his inspiration.

In 1888, the Zimmerman's daughter Laura was born, and the following year they adopted Zim's orphaned nephew Adolph. Requiring larger quarters for his expanded family, the cartoonist turned his creativity to architectural design. In 1890, Zim and his father-in-law, master carpenter Alvah Beard, built the new house at 601 Pine Street. It is a home that is at once solid and whimsical, like Zim himself. The exterior design, subdued and serene belies the plethora of interior detail, which has remained intact since Zim's death in 1935. Laura Zimmerman, who resided in the house until just before her death in 1980, kept the furnishings and decorations as her father arranged them, and the Horseheads Historical Society intends to do the same. The house provides a remarkable picture of the living and working environment of a celebrated artist.

In the late 1880's, Zim's appreciation of music inspired him to organize a band in Horseheads. In 1910, he designed a permanent home for the Zim Band, a light wooden bandstand in Teal Park. The park was donated by Nathan Teal in 1807 "for the use and purpose of a burying ground ... and ... building there a meeting house and such other public building for said inhabitation (of Horseheads)," but none of these early uses have left any mark. Financed in part by public subscription, construction of the bandstand was a cooperative effort by Zim and Alvah Beard. In form and workmanship it is typical of bandstands sprouting all over parks in that era, but the details - lyres for capitals, musical grasshoppers - are pure Zim.

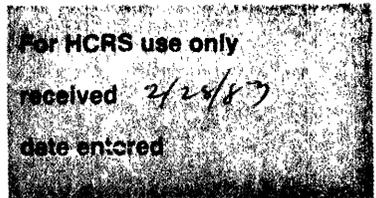
Secure in his position at Judge, Zim began to publish independently. Books on the art of caricature, humorous histories of Horseheads and Elmira, and tongue-in-cheek philosophies were the products of his fertile imagination. He also illustrated the works of such authors as James Whitcomb Riley and Ring Lardner. Always anxious to share his craft, he established "Zim's Correspondence School of Cartooning, Comic Art, and Caricature," which reached students all over the world. He was widely loved by readers and admired by his colleagues, who in 1926 elected him president of the American Association of Cartoonists and Caricaturists. In spite of the many honors which he received, Zim is remembered in Horseheads as a humble and generous neighbor.

Although a few of his civic contributions were very visible, like the bandstand and his cachet for the 1929 Clinton-Sullivan Campaign first day cover, most were quieter neighborly gestures, like his numerous caricatures of fellow villagers. Zim died at the age of 73 on March 26, 1935. He was mourned by admirers from across the nation, as well as by his neighbors, who remembered him as:

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... a lover of God's great outdoors, friend to all mankind, tender hearted as a child; kind beyond expression, generous to a fault, liberal and tolerant in his religion, gentle in spirit, exponent of a simple and homey philosophy of life, a talented artist who gave freely of his time and service to whomsoever solicited it....<sup>1</sup>

In 1939, the community raised a memorial to Zim in Teal Park, a seven-foot granite shaft bearing a plaque of Zim's profile.

Eugene Zimmerman, through his many publications and his correspondence school, had a profound effect on the art of cartooning. Art Wood, past president of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists writes:

... his drawings amused readers around the world and his correspondence course on cartooning caused him to set the pace and style of many of his contemporaries as well as future generations, who indeed modeled their work on his appealing drawings. Some of the leading cartoonists in the nation have told me they were greatly influenced by this master cartoonist.... Eugene Zimmerman stands as one of the most distinguished artists which America has produced....<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Rev. Harry E. Malick, quoted in Jan Strausser Kather, Zim (Horseheads, New York: Horseheads Historical Society, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>Art Wood, letter to Lucy Breyer, filed in Zim Thematic Group Research file, Division for Historic Preservation. Albany, New York.

# ZIM THEMATIC GROUP · HORSEHEADS · CHEMUNG COUNTY · NEW YORK

**A: TEAL PARK**  
 STEUBEN STREET,  
 PINE STREET AND  
 WEST MAIN STREET  
 3/4 ACRE plot

**B: ZIMMERMAN  
 HOUSE**  
 601 PINE STREET  
 lot measures  
 140' x 100'



**NOMINATED  
 PROPERTIES OUTLINED  
 IN BLACK**  
 NOT TO SCALE

