

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF GAINESVILLE  
SUMTER COUNTY, ALABAMA

Park and Bandstand

S. of junction of Alabama 116 (State Street) and Alabama 39 (McKee Street)

Town of Gainesville, AL 35464

Lot #1            Tax Map: #60-08-01-02-4            UTM: 16/391610/3632002  
                  Less than 1 acre.

Period:            c. 1850

Description:

This triangular open space measures approximately 94' x 152' x 113' and is bordered by State Street (Alabama Highway 116) on the west; on the east by McKee Street (Alabama Highway 39) and on the south by Washington Street. The park is enclosed by an iron fence and is entered by means of a concrete stile on the State Street side. A rectangular open pavilion or "bandstand" that measures 10' x 12' is located near the apex of the enclosed area. The pavilion has a pressed tin covered pyramidal roof which is supported by square columns.

An artesian, or flowing, well that is now capped is located in the south portion of the park and is connected by a cast-iron pipe to a stuccoed brick watering trough that is outside the fenced area.

Statement of Significance:

Criterion A & C - Architecture and Social:

The Park and Pavilion's significance is attained from its being the social center for life in mid-19th century Gainesville. It was used as a gathering place for social events such as concerts, political rallies and celebrations of various types. The pavilion is also significant as an example of the use of Greek Revival architecture in this type structure and is also significant in that survival of this type building from the mid-19th century is relatively rare.

Historical Summary:

This small triangular park lies just north of the cluster of stores which today make up Gainesville's commercial district. In the mid-19th century, one and two-story business buildings faced the park from State and McKee Streets, including the Gainesville Branch of the State Bank to the west on State Street. Northeastward at the corner of McKee and Main Streets near the river stood the "American House Hotel," erected during the "Flush Times" of the 1830s. The earliest Sanborn Insurance Map for Gainesville, dated November 1884, reveals that the present bandstand existed by that time. It may, indeed, have been constructed in the 1840s or 1850s. The present fence and stile, as well as the watering trough just outside the fence at the edge of Washington Street, probably date from the late 19th century.