

920

United States Department of 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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sauk City Fire Station

other names/site number Village Hall/Fire Station, Old Sauk City Fire Station

2. Location

street & number 717 John Adams Street n/a not for publication

city or town Sauk City n/a vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Sauk code 111 zip code 53583

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     nationally     statewide x locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia Z. Cook  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

6/15/99  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

Sauk City Fire Station  
Name of Property

Sauk County, WI  
County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.
    - See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register.
    - See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
    - See continuation sheet.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper      Date of Action

Edson H. Beall      7/28/99

**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 listed resources in the count)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>buildings</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		<u>sites</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u>structures</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u>objects</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>Total</u>

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register  
0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT-fire station

RECREATION AND CULTURE-museum

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Weatherboard

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

INTRODUCTION

Begun in 1862, the brick Sauk City Fire Station is one of the oldest fire stations in Wisconsin. It represents a period when fires were fought with hand-powered equipment, and the formation of volunteer fire companies was a significant step in the creation of communities and the exercise of local democratic process. In 1870 the footprint of the station was doubled by the construction of a north section. A wooden rear addition, reached by passing through the front section of the building, was attached to the building sometime before 1892<sup>1</sup> to house a meeting room. It was demolished in 1994. The fire station also served as the village hall and jail from about 1892 to 1937. In 1954 a new station was built and the fire station stood vacant until it became a museum in 1963. It is presently being renovated by the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society. Sauk City appears to have the oldest continuously operating volunteer company in the state, formed in 1854. The fire station is an important symbol of the origins of the community and its German traditions.

DESCRIPTION

The fire station is built of soft red brick veneer which has been painted a matching shade of red. It measures 28' wide by 36' deep. A single course of offset bricks forms a simple corbeled cornice below the eaves on the north-facing side elevation. Its front gabled main facade, with two wooden overhead garage doors, faces east on John Adams Street, a residential street in the middle of the oldest part of the village. Between the doors, within the frame of the north door opening, is a narrow pedestrian entrance. The recently repaired roof is covered in asphalt shingle.

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<sup>1</sup> The addition is seen on the 1892 Sanborn-Perris map.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

The peak of the gable roof is approximately 18 feet above the street. The front (east) facade has a hipped gable, with a square tower set back about two feet from the facade and centered on the new (1870) roof's ridge line. The tower rises approximately 15 feet above the roof. The wooden tower is in three sections: an unornamented base, about 6' x 6', and 3' high, framed with moldings at its corners and upper edge; a center section, also square and slightly less wide than the base, has louvered windows with round tops. This section of the tower is also framed with corner moldings and is topped by an eave with a pronounced overhang. A square belfry with large segmentally-arched openings on all four sides crowns the tower. Its openings have been boarded up. The belfry is also framed with moldings. Once capped by a shallow dome, the belfry now has a flat roof. The interior of the belfry is reached through a hatch in the ceiling of the north section of the building.

On the south elevation, the brick wall of the fire station meets the ground and it probably rests on a stone footing. On the north a very low stone foundation is barely visible. Inside the station a buttress wall about two feet high runs along the north and west walls of the 1870 (north) section.

Inside the building there are two chimneys, both on the rear wall of the north section, one floor-to-ceiling and one suspended near the center of the north bay. (Both chimneys have been removed from the exterior of the building.) The interior of the station is one large room, with plastered walls, except for the rear wall of the south section, which is finished in weatherboard, and a shiplap board ceiling. The floor is concrete. Except for a single window in the south wall, a smaller window at the rear of the south wall and a door and a window in the north half of the west (rear) wall, all of which are bricked or boarded up, the only openings are the two large doors at the front (east) and a modern, windowless door in the south part of the rear wall.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

EXPANSIONS AND REMODELING

The oldest section of the Sauk City Fire Station was built in 1862<sup>2</sup>. At this time it was a one-stall building, 11' by 36', with a wooden rear wall. The building is shown in an 1870 bird's eye view with a simple gable roof and a wide door in the gable end facing east. A trace of the shape of this original building can be seen in the brickwork on the south side of the gable wall as seen in a photo, circa 1900.

A major addition was made about 1870, when the station acquired the form it presents today. The addition more than doubled the width of the building. The north wall of the original building was removed, except for a four foot stub wall extending from the front (east) wall toward the back of the building. A 10" by 10" wooden beam was placed axially at ceiling height the length of the building, to support a new roof. This roof rises above the original gable, which is still intact underneath.<sup>3</sup> With the addition, the fire station consisted of one large room with places for the two hand-pumped fire engines which were the village's fire fighting equipment by 1870.<sup>4</sup> The new addition had a brick rear wall, with a door and a window. There is a coal chute high in the west end of its north wall, and there is said to have been a "furnace," or large coal stove. Next to it were two iron cages used as the jail.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the fire company, translated by Karl Petter, available in the Sauk City library.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Micheal Wipperfurth, one of those who worked on the building in 1994-1997. At this time the building was re-roofed and the tower was painted in the colors found under layers of paint: red, green and cream.

<sup>4</sup> Pioneer Presse, June 18 and July 9, 1870, as translated by Rae Onstine for Myrtle Cushing, in the Sauk City Public Library. The single stall station is seen in a bird's eye view of the village in 1870. An 1883 view shows the station in its present form, including the tower.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Schimmel Coenen, retired fireman, February, 1998

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

Sometime before 1892, a pre-existing building was moved up against the rear wall of the fire station.<sup>6</sup> It was the same width as the station, and its gabled roof continued the line of the roof. The building was frame, with wide weatherboard walls. Windows faced south and west. The addition encompassed a single room which was used as village hall and community center.<sup>7</sup> It was heated by a pot-bellied stove, and there was a toilet in a cubicle in the southeast corner. The brick rear wall of the 1870 addition was closed up; a door in the wooden rear wall of the original (south) section became the only entrance to this rear room, reached by going in the large front doors of the station, and passing through the station. In 1963, a concrete floor was poured in the rear addition. The floor remains today as a platform behind the fire station.

Three changes were made during the 20th century to the two large openings that face John Adams Street. In a turn-of-the-century photo, the two doors have segmental arches and a row of small panes above hinge-mounted doors that swing outward. Oscar Becker, aged 90, recalls these doors from his youth. A picture dating from circa 1924 shows that the first alteration was to the north door. Most probably it was changed to accommodate the gasoline-powered fire engine purchased in 1924.<sup>8</sup> The arch was filled in and new, glazed, swinging doors installed.

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with Micheal Wipperfurth. The rear addition was demolished in 1995 by Wipperfurth construction, and it was discovered then that it was a pre-existing building.

<sup>7</sup> Schimmel Coenen, who joined the fire department as a high school student in the 1930s, observed that the Fire Station was the "center of the community," where the village board met, the polls were located and groups met. Karl Ganzlin remembers attending meetings of the "Lone Scouts," forerunners of the Boy Scouts, in this room soon after WW I.

<sup>8</sup> A photo shows the firemen posed with the truck in front of the station. The north door has been recently remodeled while the south door is still arched.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

In a photo dated March 1951, the south door had been replaced by a much larger opening with an overhead door, glazed with twelve panes in two rows, which may have become necessary when a second engine was purchased in 1928. Sometime between 1951 and 1954 (when the station was abandoned by the firemen for their present station,) the north door was enlarged to the same size as the south door and equipped with a matching overhead door. A narrow pedestrian entrance was installed within the frame of the north door.<sup>9</sup> Probably about the same time a dome, shown topping the tower, was removed. (The dome is seen in a picture dating after 1925;<sup>10</sup> the doors appear in that picture in the same configuration as the 1951 photo.) In 1963 the local historical society painted the doors and lettered "Museum" on each of them.

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<sup>9</sup> Pictures of the fire station were collected for a book, Volunteer Firefighting in Sauk City and South Central Wisconsin, written by Jane Eiseley and published by the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society for the 1998 Wisconsin Sesquicentennial. A picture from the (Madison) Capitol Times, dated March, 1951, shows the south door in its present configuration and the west door smaller than its present size. A picture dated 1924 shows the same north door seen in 1951, marked by the outline of new brickwork in an arch above it, and the earlier arched door still in the south opening.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Ewald Blum, who owns the fence seen in the picture, in the adjoining lot.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 6 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

SETTING

Sauk City is a village of about 3000. The adjacent village of Prairie du Sac brings the population of the modern community to about 5500. The two villages stand on the west bank of the Wisconsin River, with business districts that run along Water Street, parallel to the river. They were founded in the 1840s following the Black Hawk War. For many years the language of Sauk City was German, while Prairie du Sac spoke English.

The fire station is located on the north side of John Adams Street, one block west of the main business street in Sauk City and one and one-half blocks north of Highway 12 as it passes through the village. This is the heart of the original plat of the village. The original plat, made in 1842, bespeaks the German origins of the founders. It has narrow streets and lots and many of the houses are adjacent or close to the sidewalk. This intimate quality was appropriate when the firemen ran to the station from their homes and hand-pulled the equipment to the fire.

It became an obstacle in later years when the fire trucks had to make a difficult turn onto John Adams Street and often had to wait for traffic on Highway 12.<sup>11</sup> The houses adjacent and facing the fire station are a mixture of styles and periods. To the north a small residential hotel may pre-date the station. To the south an idiosyncratic "castle" was constructed about 1915 in rusticated concrete block. Across the street are the large Italianate home of one of Sauk City's lumber dealers and a Queen Anne style house that was updated with stone veneer in a locally popular style in the 1940s.

CONCLUSION

With its repeated remodelings, the fire station today recalls the history of the Sauk City Volunteer Fire Department between 1862 and 1954. Except for the enlarged doorways and the loss of the domed top of the tower, the existing fabric presents the appearance of the station

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with former fire chief Albert "Peck" Derleth.



NPS Form 10-900-a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 7 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

after the 1870 addition. In its design, location, setting, workmanship, materials and in its feeling and association, the fire station is highly evocative of the German heritage of the village and the long and important role the fire department has played in its development.

Sauk City Fire Station  
Name of Property

Sauk County, WI  
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 the 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.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

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 of age achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Social History

**Period of Significance**

1862-1948

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B marked above)

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

INTRODUCTION

The Sauk City Fire Station is locally significant under Criterion A for its role in the development of Sauk City: as the meeting place of local government, a community meeting place and as the home of an important service organization that has always been a focus of local pride and community identity. The history of fires in Sauk City demonstrates the crucial importance of the fire department in shaping the historic fabric of the town. The period of significance extends to the end the 50 year rule in 1948 but it was used until 1954, the date a new fire station was built in Sauk City. During the period of the early 1950s the role of the fire department expanded to include an annual fund raising dance and summer jamborees that were major social events in the community, and rescue and resuscitation services not related to fire. The fire station is also significant under Criterion C as an exceptionally fine early fire station incorporating a hose drying and bell tower, large front doors, and elements of decoration and design that recall the German origins of its builders.

THE ROLE OF THE FIRE COMPANY IN THE HISTORY OF SAUK CITY<sup>1</sup>

Organization of the fire company

In 1854 Sauk City had two saw mills, a distillery, a brick yard, a

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<sup>1</sup> The minutes of the Sauk City Fire Company begin in 1854. Written by hand in German script, they were translated in 1997 by Karl Petter, of Prairie du Sac, for a Wisconsin state sesquicentennial book entitled Volunteer Firefighting in Sauk City and South Central Wisconsin, written by Jane Eiseley and published by the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society. Another source used to re-construct the history of the fire department for the book was translations from the German-language Pionier am Wisconsin and its successor, the Pionier Presse, prepared by Rae Onstine for Myrtle Cushing, whose research was published posthumously as Lives Lived Here, compiled by Myrtle Wilhelm Cushing and written by Micheal J. Goc. Both translations are available in the Sauk City Public Library. The English language Pioneer Press and its successor, the Sauk Prairie Star and more recent, English-language, minutes of the fire department and the village board were sources for later events. Numerous interviews with older citizens of Sauk City and local histories were also used in gathering the information presented in the book. The Petter and Onstine translations are preserved in the Sauk City library. The following material is taken from the book.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

printing office, and ten stores, hotels and saloons. On November 21 fire destroyed Simeon Dean's store, as well as a tin shop, Mr Nebel's house and store, a cooper shop, a barn and four horses. Before the year was out the first meeting to organize a fire company had been held. On January 2, 1855, Charles Spiehr, a leading member of the German Free Congregation, was elected President of the new organization.<sup>2</sup> John Henry Hantzsch, Captain of the rifle company, agreed to be provisional Captain. J.J. Heller, who had called the meeting, was made foreman of the engine company. Charles Deininger was foreman of the hook and ladder company and F. Franzel was foreman of the bucket company. Hantzsch agreed that the rifle company would be the "rescue and protection" company. It is worth noting that Hantzsch, Halasz, Deininger and Robert Cunradi, all of whom figured in the first meetings of the fire company, were also members of the first village Board of Trustees. In July, 1855, the members "assembled and exercised some with the hook and ladder and resolved to have a meeting August 2, 1855, in the schoolhouse." Mr. Hantzsch made the first of many proposals to ask the trustees of the village to raise a tax "to provide the necessary things" for the fire company. Robert Mosbach was appointed secretary, and they determined to meet at Schneider-Schreiber's hall. A committee was formed to draw up rules. In August Mr. Heller reported on a visit to the Milwaukee fire company. He suggested that they should have another, larger hook, useful for pulling apart a burning building in order to save nearby buildings. In November, 1855 by-laws were adopted and a motion was made "that records shall be kept from this day on in the German language."

Fundamentals of organization were slowly worked out. On January 2, 1856, 31 votes were cast for officers. Hantzsch was elected Captain, W. Guett, Vice Captain, Robert Mosbach, Secretary, and Charles Nebel, Financial Secretary. Eight new members were accepted. In April the Captain reported that the fire company was to be incorporated along with the village of Sauk City, and the officers would be sworn in along with the village trustees. Mr. Hantzsch asked to be relieved as Captain, and J.J. Heller agreed to take his place, temporarily. Mr. Cook was fined

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<sup>2</sup> As noted in Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin Vol. 1, "Settlement" 2-4, "A large company of Germans settled at an early date in Sauk and Dane counties and created the layout for Sauk City." The proclivity of the German settlers in Wisconsin to form organizations is noted in the same section, 2-8: "Other forms of associational activity were established in the state's German community in the mid-nineteenth century. Among the earliest formalized activities in Milwaukee were the German fire company (1844)..."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

50 cents, seven other members were fined 10 cents apiece for non-attendance. In May Mr. Cook reported in sick, and Mr. Nebel was "too busy" to attend. Members agreed that the officers should take their oaths according to the by-laws of the village. They also decided that they should appear in uniform at the next meeting, those not in uniform having no right to vote. (This was reconsidered and defeated in July.) In June the Captain asked Mr. Halasz to pay a fine for not following his order at the last fire. A vote was taken and the majority of members voted against it. Mr. Cook was not present, but reported that he wished to resign, and Halasz refused to take the oath. There was a long discussion and members decided to elect new officers according to their own by-laws, rather than those of the village.

A major difficulty was the Sauk City rifle company, whose members, after the resignation of Capt. Hantzsch, declined to give assurance that they would help at fires. Still, the fire company continued to accept new members, and at the last meeting of 1856, it was reported that "everything is on hand and repaired." The village trustees were asked to raise a tax to buy a larger engine, and responded that their charter did not authorize it.

In September, 1857 the fire company received its charter from the State of Wisconsin, and voted to cover the expenses of a member to go to Madison to accept it. The firemen continued to seek a way to get help and official status from the village, however, and in March the state legislature amended the village charter to allow "prudential provisions" including a fire department. (The 1880 History of Sauk County observes that this amendment "...indicates particularly the prudent character of the people (of Sauk City) at that early date, for many villages in adjacent localities of equal pretensions...had nothing of the kind then, nor for many years after.") But the village trustees still refused to buy a fire engine and discussion continued on ways and means of fund raising. W. Guett was the next elected Captain. In 1859 J.J. Heller was elected Captain; he was to serve more than a decade.

In 1862 the rifle company left to fight in the Civil war. In January, "because of the war," there were not enough members for a quorum at the annual meeting. In February, only 14 votes were cast for officers of the fire company. By the summer of 1862, the firemen were divided on whether to dissolve and join the Union Army. The draft law specified that firemen were exempt, as were the foreign-born. (Many German-speaking Catholics resisted joining the army when it was decided not to provide for last rites in any language but English. An allegation had been made by the Governor that the fire companies were full of "shirkers.") At a special meeting in August, fifteen members voted to serve, twelve voted no, with four abstaining due to age. One refused to

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

vote, one resigned, and J.J. Heller did not attend the meeting. The company continued, with dedication of the building and recording of by-laws at the courthouse in Baraboo. With the end of the war in 1865 membership again increased, with 16 members joining or re-joining in October. The fire company had survived the war.

Indeed, by this date the fire company had its own building, which served the fire department for the next 89 years.

The fire history of Sauk City

The small barns still found in the oldest part of Sauk City were standard equipment for a household in the 19th century. The roots of the town in the German villages of its founders are evident in an 1879 news item: "Joseph Hafer has offered to be the cow herder next year. A good job for him, as he is crippled." A cow, and possibly a horse, and hay and straw to feed and bed them, were a part of the usual household inventory. Carl Schlungbaum served the fire department as Captain from 1898 to 1911, succeeding E.K. Heller. In January of 1906 the Captain's barn was set afire by lightning and burned to the ground in 40 minutes. Many other village fires reported in the fire department minute book for 1890 to 1911 were barn fires.

Large quantities of lumber and wood shavings are, potentially, fuel for devastating fires. Lumber was a big business in Sauk City because it was easily available from the rafts that came down the river from the northern pineries. Often these rafts were damaged going through the Dells, making sale at Portage or Sauk City an attractive option. Beams in old buildings around Sauk City are sometimes found with large, round peg holes in them, indicating that they once formed part of a lumber raft.

In February, 1884, there was a fire at Heller's planing mill. The firemen arrived promptly and despite a strong Northeast wind, put it out. In April, 1891, there was a large fire in Peter Keller's carpenter shop. The fire department saved the other buildings in the neighborhood, but the building and building materials, to a total of \$2000, were lost. On April 12, 1894 there was a strong west wind blowing when a fire broke out in William Dresen's planing mill, "but since the fire engine came immediately and there were many willing hands and water was easy to obtain the fire was soon extinguished." In 1940 fire at the Keller Lumber Company in Sauk City destroyed saws and tools and a steam engine. The place was too far from a hydrant, and the firemen could not save the building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

Arson was a recurrent problem almost from the founding of Sauk City. Across the river, opposite the village, the buildings of Caspar Homberger burned and were rebuilt twice in 1861. J.J. Heller himself was the apparent target in 1862 when a fire was set by "some scoundrel" in a house he rented out. The fire was nearby the post office and Veidt's store, and the Pionier observed that it was "fortunate the whole village didn't burn," and asked for a watchman to be on duty. Six months later the house and store occupied by Jacob Veidt was damaged. J.B. Kehl fell from the roof and hit his head, and while it was not a serious injury, the Pionier observed that it was the second building belonging to Mr. Heller to have a fire: "People do not realize when they set a fire that it could be so dangerous to people fighting the fire and others."

In 1881 there was a fire in a barn near Hofer's planing mill in Sauk City. The owner threw a dozen pails of water on it, but in the night it and another barn nearby flared up. Arson was suspected and Mr. Horn was arrested, brought before Justice of the Peace Lachmund and released on bail. "Saloons have been warned not to sell Mr. Horn anything to drink but someone did so," the Pionier reported. In February, 1887 the Lenz brewery caught fire at 3 am. The large fire engine failed to work, and the brewery and the house were lost. The small engine and a bucket brigade kept the fire from spreading, and 150 barrels of beer in the basement were saved. The loss was uninsured, and came to \$5000. Nonetheless, the brewery was rebuilt. Two years later, in 1889, someone turned the spigots under the vats of brewing beer to let them go dry and let loose the horses in the stable. On June 16, 1892 arson was suspected when the B. Merkel barn burned and charred kindling and shingles were found next to the Lachmund planing mill nearby. The fire broke out at 2 am and Mr. Stinglehamer and George Just, who were the last to leave (was there a dance in the barn?) did not see anything although someone remembered a small boy near the scene. In 1893 another barn burned and later kindling was found nearby.

Kerosene lamps and unattended stoves were a constant source of fire danger. Heaters in breweries, brooder houses and hog houses were the source of many night-time fires. In 1867 the roof of the Deininger brewery in Sauk City caught fire. The new fire department arrived quickly and only the upper part of the building burned, proving the usefulness of the "fire brigade."

Like most towns of the time, downtown Sauk City in the 1870s consisted of rows of wooden store buildings built close together along the main street. In January 1877 the chimney of Truckenbrodt's Hall spat flames while a children's musicale was taking place inside. Snow prevented the roof from catching fire, and the children filed back in to complete

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

their recital. In February the paper in Mazomanie endorsed a benefit performance of "Our American Cousin," staged to benefit the proposed fire department: "Invest your money in a way that will pay you big interest when the fire rages and the hour of your discontent is at hand," the editor advised. In June the Sauk County News of Prairie du Sac warned, "Shall we wait until the scathing destroyer seizes upon the business portion of our village before we procure any means to stop it?...How could a fire be stopped if once started anywhere on our principal street? The only thing that willing hands could do would be to remove what was movable and let it burn."

Ironically it was neither neighboring Prairie du Sac nor nearby Mazomanie, but Sauk City, which already had a fire department, which had the fire. In the very next issue the News reported:

"Fire! Last Sunday lower town sustained a heavy loss by fire. A large crowd was in town, composed of parties from neighboring villages, to attend the spring festival of the Humanists (the Free Congregation) held there. At 11 o'clock an alarm of fire was sounded, the residence of William Best, on Main Street (Water Street) was discovered to be ablaze. This fire was put out by the women of the house, before much damage ensued. In another moment, a barn in the rear of Phillip's paint shop and bowling alley caught, being to the leeward--though many observers saw no sparks flying in that direction, and consider that both the Best dwelling and the barn were set on fire--and at the same time...From the Phillips building, which has been used as a paint shop below and a bowling alley above, the fire spread to Concordia Hall, the finest hall in the village, used as a beer and concert saloon by N. Truckenbrodt; from there to a three-story brick building next adjoining on Main Street. This structure is owned by Mr. Hanshieder, but was empty at the time. Between this building and Concordia Hall was a one-story wooden warehouse connected to the store on the lower floor. The Sauk City House came next. It is owned by Mr. Deininger, and is a three-story brick hotel, run by Julian Buro as landlord. The upper two stories were destroyed, and a frame addition to the building, further up the street, was torn down by the Fire Department, this together with the immense amount of water thrown by the engines kept the fire from extending further. In the rear of the Concordia Hall, C. Lampertius kept a shoeshop, but saved the greatest part of the stock, the rest being stolen in the general melee. Cunradi's drug store next above the Sauk City House, a wooden building, was saved by the exertions of the firemen. The water thrown upon the building destroyed a large part of the stock, while the glassware and fixtures, being carelessly removed, were mostly broken. Boller's store, the next above, was not damaged. None of the goods were removed. A portion of the drug



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

stock and the druggist's family goods were stolen, while from the Concordia Hall about \$600 worth of liquors and cigars were taken. Two young strangers, caught in the act, were severely beaten by a party of citizens, and then released. The management of the fire reflected great credit on the Sauk City fire department. The Andrew Proudfit #2 the hand engine formerly of Madison, was first brought to bear, but after playing about two minutes she broke a piston rod, the other village engine and three from neighboring breweries (with 500 feet of hose each) taking her place during the repair. After the rod was mended, the entire department did excellent work. The losses from the great fire: William Phillip estate, bowling alley, \$800, no insurance. N. Truckenbrodt \$4000, insurance \$2000. Hansheiders store \$2000, no insurance. Charles Deininger, Sauk City House \$2000, fully covered, company's agency to build it up again, Julius Buro \$600, no insurance...

Sometimes the loss of a row of wooden storefronts made way for progress. In 1896 a Sauk City "old landmark" and its wooden outbuildings burned at the bend in Water Street. The townspeople watched through the night while the firemen saved adjacent buildings. The Pionier am Wisconsin reported that when dawn came, "One good thing came to light...The empty place left a beautiful view of the opposite shore." Minutes of the fire department state that the fire was set. The firemen were unable to save the building, but they did save an ice house and a cattle barn that stood on the low ground between Water Street and the river.

Sauk City had several other downtown fires, though none as devastating as the one in 1877. In February, 1877, the Seibel Bakery in the 900 block of Water Street burned. The heat was so intense that it blistered the paint and made the pitch in the boards bubble in the building across the street. The fire spread to the adjoining house, which burned, and threatened the building of the Pioneer Press.

...Only the action of the unfailing large fire engine and the brave men who worked at the pump and water pails with all their strength...we have these to thank for keeping the fire in control. A light wind from the northeast turned to the east and blew coals and shingles for a block and one lit the cupola of the Meyer refrigerator building....The roof of the Ninman dwelling was spared but the heat was great. Even against the wind the heat approached the cottage of Mrs. Ottilie Meyer and they had to keep spraying it with water and chemical spray. The window broke and the woodwork was scorched. They carried much of the furniture out of it. ...The family Seibel lived in the upper part of the building. The youngest child couldn't sleep and kept Mrs. Seibel awake. Suddenly she perceived a strong smell of the pine wood and even before they could dress themselves

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

the smoke was coming into the rooms. He hurried down and found the steam box in which he put the dough to rise near the oven was burning. He tried to telephone but he got no answer from central and hurried to the fire house and rang the bell. Anybody who doesn't believe we have a good fire department should look at the ruins. If you look at the buildings the way they were standing tightly against each other you have to be surprised the fire could even be brought under control. The large fire engine was not even, through a misunderstanding, very quick to come to the place and when they did come, they brought the wrong hose. Still from that time on until the first stream was placed over the fire you could see there was no hope in saving it. For three hours the large engine was used without stopping. Even the women gave them a hand and helped the men with the pumping. Two hoses worked in spite of the cold. They functioned above all expectations. They could have frozen and broken or the pump could have quit on them and then a person can't even think about it. Now that people see what great danger we stand in with our old-fashioned and impractical water works, there is talk again about a new water works system. Now let us keep the ball rolling and vote on it..."

In July of 1919 the town had a close call when fire, apparently from spontaneous combustion, broke out in the attic of a shoe store next to the post office. "The whole row of little frame buildings seemed to be burning because they were standing all so close together and smoke seemed to spread all over," the paper reported. "...It was lucky the fire did not start at night because the whole business district in that area would have been burned." In 1931 fire destroyed Blumberg's store in the Kahn building. The building was at one time the pride of the village, housing several fraternal lodges and a hardware store where Andrew Kahn Jr. sold stoves and utensils. From 1911 to 1918 it was also the "electric theater," where movies were shown. (The projectionists were Bob Henning and his son Clarence, both members of the Fire Department.) In 1936 a fire in the basement of the Royal Blue grocery on Water Street wrecked the store.

In 1949 the Grabill Department Store fire caused one of the few serious injuries Sauk City firemen have sustained when Schimmel Coenen and LaVerne Frosch were blown across the street by the exploding building. They lost a layer of skin off their faces and hands, and were rushed in the village hearse to St. Mary's hospital in Madison. After starting near noon on Christmas Day, the fire burned all night. Few firemen were available, but those that were missed their Christmas dinners. Fire departments from Prairie du Sac, Baraboo, Plain, Middleton and Badger Ordnance Works helped fight the fire. The three-story store and the IGA grocery and Kratchowill apartment next door were a total loss. Arson

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

was suspected and the State Fire Marshall came to investigate, but found no evidence. (A former fireman, Clarence Hicks, relates that as an electrician he was called repeatedly to the building because of power outages. He would find the fuse box door open, and fuses with too high an amperage inserted into the lines. After the explosion he found the fuse box lying in the street.)

As petroleum fuels came into wider and wider use a whole new fire danger appeared. Sauk City firemen were grateful when a fuel line in the hotel exploded but did not ignite the oil storage tank. The proprietor was "very pleased to get his family safely out with the help of the fire company." In June of 1902, Mr. Kahn was filling a kerosene stove when the liquid caught fire. He tried to throw the burning container out the door and instead ran into the door frame and spilled it. Fire reached the roof before being extinguished. The fire was notable because the new Prairie du Sac fire company answered. Although the fire was out when they arrived they were thanked for the help. Fire department minutes note that the town was full because a cattle auction was taking place, so there were many hands to fight the fire. In 1925 a similar mistake caused an explosion, but no fire, when Herman Greiber went to light the steam kettle in the Kirschner, Greiber and Esser meat market. He poured kerosene on it. A live coal lit the kerosene, blowing out the show window and sending so much soot through the stovepipe that the second floor apartment was covered with it. Miraculously Greiber escaped injury. Two new cars and several other vehicles were destroyed in 1926 when oily rags ignited the Midway Garage. In 1928 a motorist ran into a gas pump at Blumberg's garage. The gas in the pump ignited. "The fire looked terrible and could have been very damaging but the fire department were there almost immediately with a chemical sprayer and that did it!" reported the Press.

The Sauk City Canning Factory was destroyed by fire on July 21, 1921. Damage was over \$200,000. The (Sauk City) Pioneer Press reported:

"The factory and warehouses, one of the largest factories in the state as well as valuable equipment and almost 1 1/2 million cans of peas and corn as well as the homes of the widow Mary Breunig and George Maulbetsch were turned into ashes...The fire broke out a few minutes before midnight. Arthur Baer was on his way home from the railroad station. He happened to look in that direction just as flames broke through the roof like an explosion...He ran as fast as he could to the fire house...in spite of the late hour the Fire Department arrived promptly. But because of not being able to get water they were unable to rescue anything. By then the entire factory was in flames and the aged, dried-up walls were in flames. The Fire Department tried to save the office and two homes north of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

the factory and they were able to save the office by great effort. It was so hot that the window panes in the two homes broke...furnishings were saved. Fire fighters stood on the roof of the Breunig home until the heat became unbearable and then they tried to save the little barn on the Maulbetsch property...If these had caught fire the fire would have gone on to more dwellings. There was very little wind, or the fire could have taken the whole village...They brought the large fire engine in and took it down to the river but they didn't have enough hose to reach so then many lengths of hose brought from Prairie du Sac were added and they finally got enough water so they could do some good but it was too late...They stood there for hours and pumped water until the men were exhausted. Even the women helped to relieve men until they couldn't anymore. They saw that they couldn't get enough water to extinguish the flames and then turned to Madison for help. Baraboo had no power pump. Madison came at once to help and arrived at 5 o'clock on a special train...in 55 minutes. The ruins were burning for three days until the rain on Monday extinguished the fire. The produce was packed in cases which burned and through the heat the cans which were sealed exploded...How the fire started probably will always be unexplained. Employees were taking equipment apart and cleaning up between canning seasons. The woodwork was old...and very dry...The only thing left standing was the high chimney. 1 1/2 million cans of peas and corn would have been a blessing for the hungry people in foreign lands and cities and now they lay in a pile ruined."

The Grass-Premier Truck Company manufactured trucks in Sauk City from 1923 to 1937; the fire department bought Grass Premier trucks in 1924 and 1928. The 1928 truck was the principal equipment of the department at the beginning of World War II. Before a new truck could be bought the war intervened. They nursed it through the war, when parts and tires were almost unavailable. Two men rode in the front of the truck. This was a necessity, as one man was needed to pull on the emergency brake to stop it. Fire department minutes for January, 1943, record "a notable improvement made on the rural truck by George Hicks. The windshield was raised about 4 inches thus enabling the driver to remain seated while driving as it gives clear forward vision." Riding in the back of the truck in winter was an ordeal long remembered by the firemen of that era. After a fire, they would be wet, sometimes frozen into their rubber coats and boots. They crawled in under the canvas that covered the hoses to get out of the wind on the ride home, or hung low at the back of the truck. In December, 1943, Rolf Meyer, the village President, praised the firemen and asked for the public's cooperation:

"..right now, when building material is hard to get, the fire department is vital...Within the last week or two they have answered

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 11 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

calls in sub-zero weather. Your department is the best it has been. Men who know how to fight fires with the least amount of damage to your property. They are volunteer men, offering their service, knowing it may mean death...You do not appreciate them, you obstruct traffic... you can't win the war that way...and you can't win your property back. If you live in a rural area and have a fire you have a debt...the least you can do is ask for the bill. In the present abnormal conditions...these men...have fought many fires and know their business. They know fires like your doctor knows pneumonia. Never in history has a community needed a Fire Department like at the present time. America needs unity. By unity we mean pay for the service if you live in the rural area and have had to call the Fire Department."

(Rolf Meyer was the son of C.F. Henry Meyer, who had served a 7 year term as village President and was the Secretary of the fire department for 25 years.)

For a brief period during World War II civil defense volunteers mounted the tower of the fire station on a regular schedule to watch for enemy planes.

In August, 1948 the Sauk City firemen threw their first Jamboree, with a parade at 7:30 pm, crowning of a "Fire Queen," a tug of war, and a ball game between the Sauk City Firemen and the Roxbury Sod Busters. A trophy was donated by the Riverside Bottling Works. The proceeds went to the Firemen's Fund, to help cover the cost of a respirator. The affair was a success: the next year they invited a group from Black Earth to put on a square dance, crowned another Fire Queen and had another baseball game, with a tub of water for third base.

In 1951 the Pioneer Press reported that the fire department,

"..is equipped with an E and J resuscitator which was purchased by the firemen for use in case a fire laddie is overcome with smoke or in any other emergency. This apparatus is operated by any fireman for each one has had special training in its use. It is offered to serve anyone within reach of the department. The resuscitator can be used on the smallest child or the oldest person without danger or harm. If the need for this equipment ever arises, call the telephone operator immediately and ask for the Rescue Squad. There is no charge for the use of this equipment. In cases of drowning, over-exposure, heart attacks, suffocating, choking, etc. this squad will always be ready to give assistance. If anyone is in need of transportation, this squad will also be ready for call. Many people are unaware of the many services our fire department can and will render. It is each person's

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 12 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

responsibility to know what our excellent department has to offer. Talk to the firemen, ask questions, for the occasion when an extra bit of information will pay big dividends is almost certain to arise sometime."

1954 was the 100th anniversary of the Sauk City fire department. The whole town went all out to help them celebrate it. The Sauk Prairie Star reported plans for two days of events. August Derleth observed:

"Considering the unselfish service of the firemen to the public it is the duty of every one of us to pitch in and help make their event a historic success."

The event was planned for Labor Day weekend. Derleth and Karl Ganzlin wrote an historical burlesque called "Nothing Is Sacred." Ralph Marquardt served as narrator. On Saturday there was a fire fighting demonstration, a tug-of-war, election of the Fire Queen, the Derleth/Ganzlin show, and an address by the State Fire Marshall. On Sunday they scheduled a parade with the Sauk County Circus Band, crowning of the Fire Queen and dances at both the Riverview Ballroom and the High School.

The Star reported a "Huge Success: Our well pondered opinion is that the celebration was worth waiting 100 years for." Eight hundred people (almost half the population at the time) saw "Nothing Is Sacred." The State Fire Marshall gave a demonstration of vaporized gas. Considering that the Star and its editor, LeRoy Gore, were in the midst of the divisive effort to recall Senator Joe McCarthy, the celebration must have been a welcome distraction. A debate was reported in the very next issue between pro- and anti- McCarthy speakers. High school Principal Bill Leahy, who moderated it, provided some comic relief by stating that his opinions were "not those of the Sauk City Fire Department."

1954 also marked the end of an era for the fire department when it moved out of the old fire station to its present facility.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE OLD FIRE STATION

1859-1863: The fire department begins its effort to build a station; construction of the south bay.

By 1859, in addition to the wagon and the ladders the fire company equipment included J.J. Heller's small, homemade pump, a large hook, a small hook, 60 feet of rope, two dozen tin pails, a box to hold the rope riggings for the hooks, several lanterns, five speaking horns and a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 13 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

record book. Meetings were held in one of the several commercial "halls" in the village, but the equipment was as yet homeless. At their September, 1859 meeting, the fire company proposed to petition the village trustees to build them a shed on the north side of Block 25, the village to supply the material. The village board voted in December, 1859 to build a "fire house," cost not exceed \$65, but apparently nothing came of it. On March 6, 1860, the company again voted to appoint a committee of three members to present a petition to the village trustees, asking them to build a shed.

In October of 1861, J.J. Heller reported that a good fire engine was available from Milwaukee for \$200, plus freight. Money collected for a fire engine had been paid out for the wagon, and there was 80 cents in the department treasury. They ordered it nonetheless. By the time the engine arrived, in May, 1862, \$60 had been raised in donations. At a special meeting on May 12 a drill was held and the engine pronounced "very satisfactory." A loan was taken, and a festival held to raise money. The festival, at Stinglehamer's beer hall, raised \$52. Further donations were deposited at interest, and the company anticipated being able to pay off the fire engine in three months.

Flush with success, the firemen proposed to raise money for a building. A second festival was proposed for the fourth of July. Vice-captain Halasz declared that if there was a fire company festival on the Fourth, he would resign, and left the meeting. A committee, composed of Mr. Guett, Mr. Stinglehamer and Mr. Kleinfeldt was assigned to find a solution. The committee recommended against the festivity. Perhaps they made their own overtures to the village because Stinglehamer, Guett and Mr. Kehl were then instructed to request \$200 for a brick building, to be built immediately. On August 5, 1862, Mr. Guett reported that half of Lot 2 in Block 29 had been bought for \$25 by the village and a low bid of \$210 to build a brick firehouse had been accepted. Construction must have begun immediately because keys were made to the firehouse and given to the foremen. The fire station, 11 feet wide and 36 feet deep, had a simple gabled roof. It was brick on its front and sides, with a boarded back wall.

During the fall of 1863, the firemen asked the village trustees to pave the floor of the new fire house and to provide a stove, and if possible, a ceiling. It was February before the village allowed \$20. They bought a second hand stove for \$11, not including stovepipes, from J.J. Heller. Mr. Stinglehamer was appointed to get half a cord of wood and split it. The village declined to finance further improvements, nor would it loan money against future fundraising.

Spring came, and a proposal was made to hold another festival on May 28,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

1864. Six members were sworn in as constables in case of disturbance. They wore armbands that read "Special Police." The festival grossed \$135, of which \$56.60 was profit. (There was some difficulty over "32 glasses of beer" but the matter was stricken.) Permission was received from the trustees to pave the firehouse, and a contract was let to Mr. Vogel and Mr. Theide. During the summer the door and woodwork were painted and the inside of the door planed. Membership in the fire company increased at each meeting.

1870: Construction of the north bay

In June of 1870 the fire company purchased a second-hand engine, the "Andrew Proudfit," known forever after as "the large engine," from the City of Madison. In July Mr. Guett was taking bids for an addition to the firehouse; this is probably the construction date of the north half of the building. A new roof was built up and over the earlier gable, which is still intact underneath. The addition included a beautiful tower, which was used both to hang a bell, purchased in 1862, and to dry hoses. The north wall of the original station was partly removed and replaced with a 10 inch by 10 inch wooden beam to support the new roof. A turn-of-the-century photo shows the remodelled building with two matching doorways with elegant segmental arches over rows of small square panes and paired, hinged, solid wooden doors. The new section had a brick rear wall, with a door and a window, and a row of offset bricks forming a cornice under the eave of the north, axial, wall. The fire house was now a rectangle 28 feet wide and 36 feet deep, enclosing a single large room.<sup>3</sup>

1892-1937: The fire station also serves as the village hall, lock-up and polling place.<sup>4</sup>

Sometime before the turn of the century, a wooden addition was moved up against the rear wall of the fire station. The addition contained a single room, 18 feet deep and 26 feet wide and extended the side walls and the roof line of the building to the west. A door in the wooden rear wall of the original station gave entry to the addition; the window and door in the brick rear wall of the 1870 addition were closed in and a suspended chimney installed on that wall, connected to a hand-fired

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<sup>3</sup> Information from the translated Pioneer am Wisconsin, a turn-of-the-century photo of the building, the 1883 bird's eye view, and study of the existing building.

<sup>4</sup> Information from interviews with Schimmel Coenen, Oscar Becker and Karl Ganzlin, Sanborn Perris maps, and photos as noted.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

coal furnace that stood near the center of the back wall. In the northwest corner of the brick building, a small iron hatch door in the wall gave access to a coal bin. Next to the bin were two iron cages that served as the village "lock-up." In March, 1895, following the purchase of a new bell (the same bell that in 1998 stands outside the new fire station,) Joe and Henry Dresen were paid for work on the tower, including a ladder, and for a structure to hang hoses inside the engine house rather than in the tower.

In 1920 the village built its water works on the site behind the present fire station on Madison Street. On this lot, facing Jackson Street, is a small brick garage with a datestone reading "1921." Over the door is a stone plaque that is lettered "Fire Station." This space is still used by the fire department to store a vehicle. Except for this building, which was later expanded to house the city clerk, the rear section of the fire station was the only building the village of Sauk City had in which to hold meetings and conduct official business until 1937. The village board, and the "Lone Scouts" (later to become the Boy Scouts,) met there; it was used for other meetings, official and unofficial, and as the polling place. The rear addition had no separate entrance; access was through the large front doors of the fire station. In 1937 the village used Federal Works Progress Funds to buy the old Curtis Hotel and remodel it for a city hall and library. The "lock-up," used mostly to house drunks until a Justice of the Peace could fine them and let them go, was moved from the fire station to the Jackson Street building. For the first time in many years the firemen had the station for their exclusive use. By 1994, when the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society undertook to save the building, the wooden rear addition was near collapse. A decision was made to demolish it. The original, brick part of the building was re-roofed and missing bricks were replaced, the tower repaired and painted and new siding and a new door were installed on the back wall where the addition had been attached.

1924-1950s: Doors are altered as equipment changes

The doors to the fire station have been altered several times. A picture of the firemen with their first motorized truck, purchased in 1924, shows the south door as it appears in the earlier photo, mentioned above, while above the north doorway new brickwork has replaced the arch and a new, square door has been installed. A Capital Times picture dated March, 1951 again shows the firemen with new equipment. Behind them the south doorway has been enlarged to its present size, with an overhead door, while the north door appears as it did in the 1924 picture. Sometime after 1951 the height of the north door was raised and the opening enlarged to accomodate a narrow pedestrian entrance. In July of 1950 improvements were made to the hose drying tower.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

In 1951-52, the fire department minutes mention space in "the other station." The village was reclaiming space in the Jackson Street building, used to store one of the fire trucks, and the firemen were discussing the need for a new station. In 1954, after years of unrelenting effort by Chief Albert "Peck" Derleth, a new station was built on Madison Street.

PRESERVATION ACTIVITY

After the new station was built in 1954, the old fire station stood unused. The firemen were not unmindful of their long history; now that they had a place to work on it, they bought back their first motorized engine, the 1924 Grass-Premier, and restored it for their 100th anniversary parade. But the old building was the property of the village of Sauk City, and no one had a use for it.

In 1963 a group including Paul Meyer, August Derleth, Ralph Marquardt, Rose Just, Clara Merkel, Louis Durst, Robert Koenig and Howard Hicks decided to save the station and turn it into a museum. Harvey Bender replaced the crumbling wooden floor of the rear meeting room with a cement floor. They succeeded in collecting a number of items from bygone days: tools, furniture, a collection of lantern slides, trophies from past high school athletic events, a collection of Indian arrow points. They lettered the doors of the fire station "MUSEUM," in bright red, circus-style lettering. The 1928 Grass-Premier fire truck still sat in its stall in the north section of the building. Ralph Marquardt and other volunteers kept the door open to visitors on summer weekends, but gradually interest waned and it became harder to keep the building clean and in repair. By the mid-1980s it was rarely open and children had begun to take the soft, red bricks that had come loose at its corners, using them for chalk and then leaving them scattered on the sidewalk, an invitation to further destruction. The village, which still owned the building, began to discuss its demolition.

Interest in the fire station was reawakened in December, 1992, when the Village Board again proposed to demolish the building. Project Restoration was formed by Stephen Dittberner and Sheila Anderson to find a way to save it. A letter was sent to potential donors while the Village was persuaded to put off any drastic action. Mason Harvey Bender made an emergency repair to the south front corner, putting a stop to the process of casual destruction.

In June, 1994, the Board of the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

voted to negotiate a lease of the fire station from the village, to get around the refusal of the Village's insurer to cover volunteer laborers on the building. In October, 1994 the building was leased for \$1 to the Historical Society, and fundraising began for what had become emergency repairs. The Historical Society debated what to do about the rear, wooden addition, which was sagging so badly that the roof threatened to collapse. A decision was made to demolish it and John, Steve and Micheal Wipperfuth took it down. The wooden sills were rotted away, and hornets had occupied the eaves. An estimate was received of \$12,000 for restoration, including a roof and repairs to the bell tower. With the help of Vicki Breunig, Sauk City Administrator, they tried hard but without success to get a grant from the State Department of Transportation for restoration of the building.

By August of 1995, \$6700 had been received. Many of the donors were relatives of firemen of bygone years. Other donations were received in memory of long time citizens of the village. Another emergency appeal was made by Robert France, President of the Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society, for enough funds to repair the roof and the tower. Together with a donation of funds by the Society, enough was raised to complete the job. The repaired tower was painted in the colors found under its layers of peeling paint: cream, green and dark red.

CONCLUSION

The Sauk City Fire Station is significant as the home, from 1862 to 1948, of the Sauk City Fire Department. The department not only protected the lives and property of the village but was an important social and civic organization.

Believed to be one of the oldest, if not the oldest existing volunteer fire station in the state, it is also significant because it incorporates the characteristic features of this important building type, including the hose and bell tower, and large front openings, in a building which is particularly attractive and is reminiscent in its setting, materials and style of the German heritage of its builders.

Sauk City Fire Station  
Name of Property

Sauk City, WI  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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|   | Zone Easting | Northing           |                      |   | Zone Easting | Northing         |                  |
| 2 | <u>/</u>     | <u>/ / / / /</u>   | <u>/ / / / /</u>     | 4 | <u>/</u>     | <u>/ / / / /</u> | <u>/ / / / /</u> |
|   | Zone Easting | Northing           |                      |   | Zone Easting | Northing         |                  |
- \_\_\_ see continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jane Eiseley  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 1, 1998  
street & number 3433 Richard Street telephone 608-249-8818  
city or town Madison state WI zip code 53714

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1 Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

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(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processing Format  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10                      Page 1

Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

Verbal Boundary Description

The fire station occupies the east 1/2 of Lot 2, block 29 of the original plat, Sauk City.

Boundary Justification

This is the site purchased by the village trustees in 1862 for construction of a fire station.

Sauk City Fire Station  
Name of Property

Sauk City, WI  
County and State

**Property Owner**

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

name Village of Sauk City, Wisconsin  
street & number 726 Water Street telephone (608) 643-3932  
city or town Sauk City, state WI zip code 53583

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section    Photos    Page    1

Fire Station  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI

Photo 1 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View looking southwest

Photo 6 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Interior: ladder to tower

Photo 2 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View looking northwest

Photo 7 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Interior: rear (west) wall

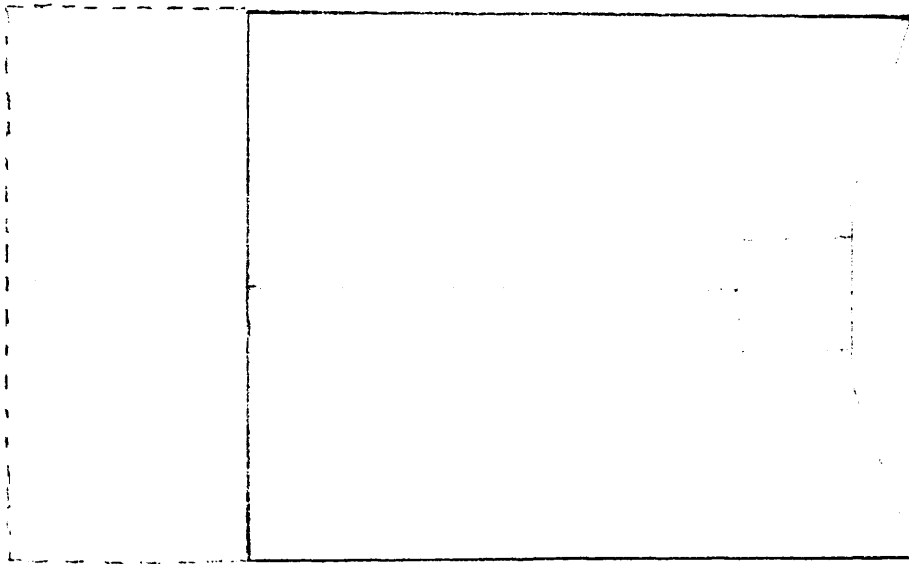
Photo 3 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View looking northeast

Photo 4 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View looking east

Photo 5 of 7  
FIRE STATION  
Sauk City, Sauk County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
June, 1998  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Detail of cornice



Fire Station  
Sauk City,  
Sauk County, WI



John Adams Street