

1009

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUL 03 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Central Station  
other names/site number Sebring Fire Station  
8HG 155

2. Location

street & number 301 North Mango Street  not for publication  
city, town Sebring  vicinity  
state Florida code FL county Highlands code FL 055 zip code 33870

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Multiple Resources of Sebring, FL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 6/21/89  
Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer Date  
FL Dept. of State - Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Entered in the  
National Register

[Signature]

8/14/89

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/fire station

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/fire station

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof composition, rolled

other terra cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1927-1939

Significant Dates

1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Heim, William J.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Please See Multiple Resources of Sebring, FL Cover Nomination

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Bureau of Historic Preservation

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 17 456540 3041390  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Town of Sebring, TB - PG 6, Lots 10 & 11, Block 59.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary follows the legal boundary description historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Vicki L. Welcher - Historic Sites Specialist  
 organization FL Dept. of State-Bureau of His. Preservation date June 21, 1989  
 street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333  
 city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Central Station

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The Central Station in Sebring, Florida, is a 1927, two story, brick structure, designed in the Art Deco style. It occupies a large triangular lot at 301 North Mango Street. The exterior finish is buff brick in a running bond on a continuous brick foundation. Notable architectural features include a flat roof with stepped parapet and a prominent four story, domed hose drying tower rising from the southwest corner of the building (Angle of photograph gives the misconception that the tower is centered), and vertical terra-cotta panels at the second story corners.

The tower features a wrought iron balustrade, cutaway corners, fluted vertical panels and a sectioned dome. Ivy covers the majority of the main rectangular block of the building and hides architectural features. There is a terra-cotta cartouche at the center of the main facade with a design incorporating a ladder, a hose nozzle, an axe, a pike pole and a bull horn; the inscription below the cartouche reads "Central Station" and is embellished with elaborate scroll work. The second story fenestration consists of four bays of triple double hung sash windows. Corners on the second story are canted with fluted vertical panels identical to the tower. The first story has three fire engine bays and an office. The bays are divided by rectangular brick columns with capitals accentuated by rounded corners.

Interior spaces include a large open area on the first level for the storage of fire trucks and equipment. In addition, the first story includes a small office and kitchen area. The second story contains the living quarters of the fire fighters and is also in large open room configuration. The interior of the tower contains stairs and several drying racks on which the fire hoses are hung to dry.

The building retains its original appearance to a remarkable degree. The alterations are limited to the replacement of the original door at the northeast corner entrance with a plate glass aluminum door, and metal freight doors replacing the original wooden roll-up doors. In addition, new aluminum screens have been added to the second story fenestration.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Central Station

The 1927 Central Station of Sebring, Florida, is significant at the local level in the area of architecture as a 1920s example of the Art Deco style which is rare in Sebring. The professionalization of the fire department and the desire for a state-of-the-art station house directly affected the design and construction of the building. The fire station has further significance in the area of architecture for its incorporation of the Art Deco style in a municipal building.

The Central Station was built in 1927 from plans by the architect William J. Heim of Avon Park, Florida. It cost approximately \$40,000 to build. Coming at the height of Sebring's land boom of the mid-1920s, the fire station and the county courthouse represent the major development projects in Sebring during the latter part of the decade.

The construction of the building was undertaken as part of an effort to professionalize, and fire fighting service in the city. Until 1925, the city had a very loosely organized volunteer fire department depending upon volunteers to answer calls in an emergency. Realizing that a critical need existed, Mayor A.E. Lawrence called upon the city council to appoint a fire chief who would be responsible for establishing a more effective organization. The council appointed Allan Altvater, long time Sebring resident and ex-Councilman, to head the force. A short time later two full-time engineers were hired.

A careful survey of existing fire fighting facilities in other Florida cities was made by a city council appointed commission in 1926. The design of the present fire station was based upon their findings. It represented an attempt to provide building sufficiently ornate, to be a credit to the city, as well as providing the most modern facilities available.

The Sebring Fire Department soon became a model for advanced fire fighting techniques in the state. Under Altvater's direction, training became consistent and intensive. In 1928, Sebring resident Harry K. Brown, a retired professor of chemistry, began to conduct classes on the causes and nature of fire. The Sebring department published the lectures which became popular throughout the state. Ultimately, the interest led to the establishment of the first session of the Florida Fire College held in Daytona Beach, Florida in May, 1930. The next year the college held its session in Sebring.

The Central Station was designed by noted local architect, William J. Heim. During his lengthy career in central and south Florida, Heim was responsible for the design of many of the most prominent buildings in Highlands County. He arrived in Avon Park, a few miles north of Sebring, from Pittsburgh in 1920 establishing an office in the Brickell Building. His first

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Central Station

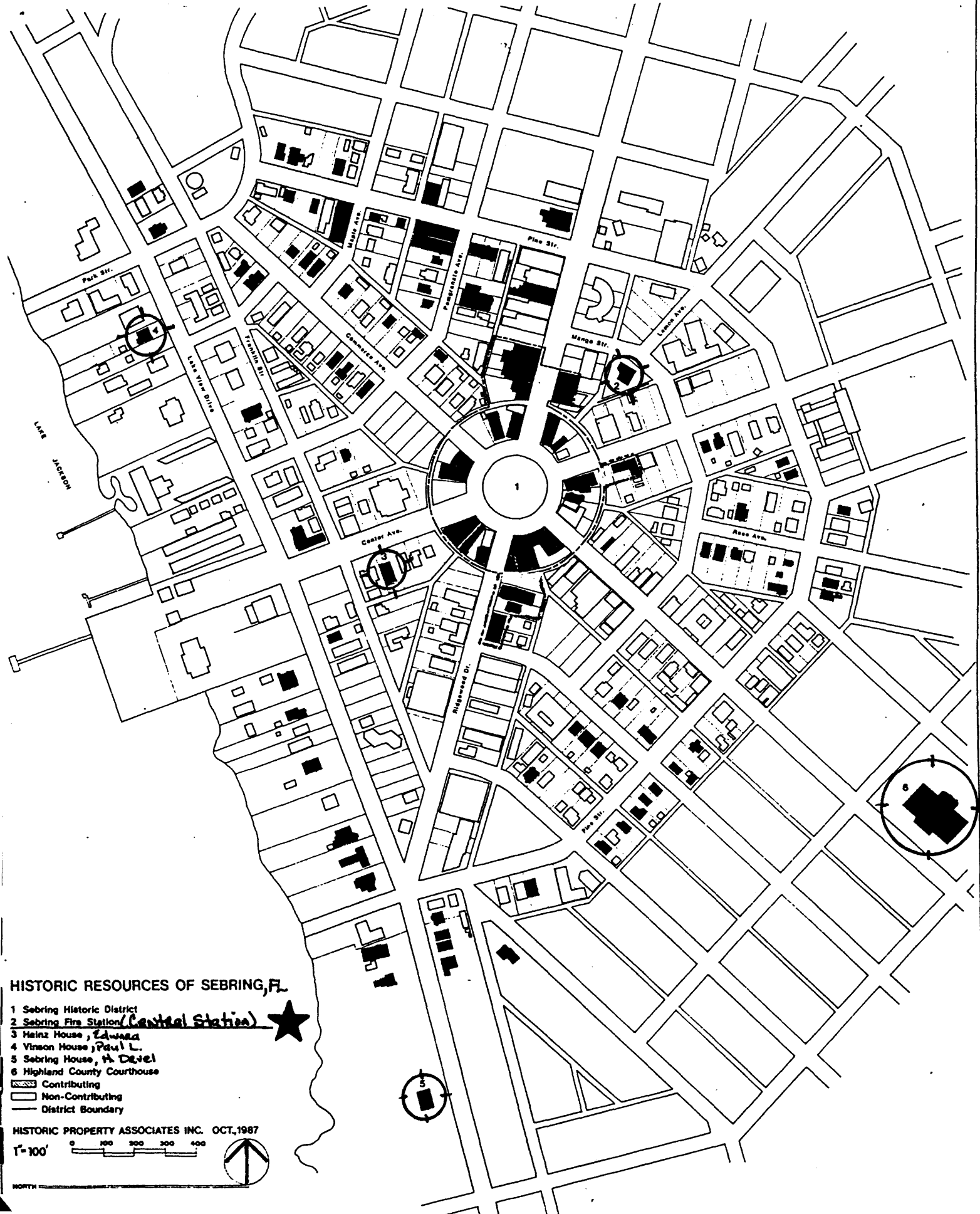
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project was the design of buildings for the Pittsburgh Fruit Growers in Avon Park. During the 1920s he designed the Jacaranda Hotel, the Pinelakes Clubhouse, and the City Hall, all in Avon Park, and the Central Station in Sebring. He subsequently designed a number of other private and public buildings in Highlands County. He was best known for his design of theaters, including the Park Theater in Avon Park, the Circle and Florida Theaters in Sebring, the Dade Theater in Dade City, the Auburn Theater in Auburndale, and the Florida Theater in Wauchula. In addition to indoor theaters, Heim designed a number of drive-in theaters and was credited with inventing the triangular tower which became a common feature of their construction. Among the many drive-in theaters attributed to Heim is the Sevon, located between Sebring and Avon Park.

In 1950 Heim's son, James, graduated from the University of Florida's School of Architecture and joined his father's practice. The firm of Heim and Heim was responsible, in particular, for the design of many of the schools in Highlands County. Their designs include the cafeteria and gymnasium at Avon Park High School; the Sebring and Lake Placid schools; the Woodlawn Elementary School, Sebring; and the Avon Park Elementary School; and additions to the E.O. Douglas High School, Sebring. They remained the only architectural firm in Highlands County through the 1950s.

The Central Station is the first fire station in Florida of its type and served as a model for the fire stations that followed. Constructed in 1927, it contains a number of features that have come to be associated with fire house design. The most striking of these is the domed hose drying tower which rises dramatically from the rear of the building. This drying tower was state-of-the-art to the science of fire fighting and was used by numerous later stations across Florida and the United States. Other innovative features are the oversized garage doors on the first floor that roll upwards instead of the more traditional double freight doors, and the second floor living quarters and offices.

Constructed in the Art Deco style, it is one of the first structures in Florida, in particular municipal buildings, to incorporate this new style. The Art Deco style was first introduced during the mid-1920s, but was not used extensively in Florida until the mid to late 1930s.



**HISTORIC RESOURCES OF SEBRING, FL.**

- 1 Sebring Historic District
- 2 Sebring Fire Station (Central Station) ★
- 3 Heinz House, Edward
- 4 Vinson House, Paul L.
- 5 Sebring House, H. Devel
- 6 Highland County Courthouse

 Contributing  
 Non-Contributing  
 District Boundary

HISTORIC PROPERTY ASSOCIATES INC. OCT. 1987

1" = 100'



NORTH