

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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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 Temple of Free Masonry
other names/site number Masonic Temple

2. Location

street & number 616 Graham Avenue
city, town Eau Claire
state Wisconsin code WI county Eau Claire code 035 zip code 54701

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal
Category of Property: [x] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. [] See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature]
Date: 12/19/87
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:
[x] entered in the National Register.
[] determined eligible for the National Register.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)
Entered in the National Register: [Signature] 1-14-88
Signature of the Keeper: [Signature]
Date of Action: []

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social - meeting hall

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social - meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestonewalls Limestone

roof Other - silicone layer over foamother stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Situated between the Y.M.C.A. and a condominium complex along the Chippewa River on Graham Avenue, the current Masonic Temple is an imposing Neo-Classical structure designed by Eau Claire architect E. J. Hancock (attached Sheet 81). Constructed in 1927 of Indiana Limestone, the temple rises two full stories above a raised basement. The building is symmetrically designed and is characterized by a colossal pedimented portico in the Doric order. The front facade of the building features an unadorned entablature, a parapet which rises to form a gable-like element shadowing the pediment, and recessed bays framed by either single or paired pilasters.

Between the four columns on the front facade are three double door entrances. Each door contains ten panels. Placed symmetrically above the entrances are paired windows on the second and third floor levels. Each window has six muntin clear panes over one clear pane. Stone carved motifs are centered over the paired windows on the second floor.

Inscribed in the stone above the columns and under the dentils below the pediment are the words "Temple of Free Masonry". Stone carving details the area between the gable roof and the pediment. Carved stone acanthus leaves adorn the top and ends of the gable.

On each side of the portico, three windows are found placed symmetrically between pilasters in the raised basement, second floor, and third floor levels. These windows contain six muntin clear panes over one clear pane. A transom window is placed above each window on the main floor level with three muntin clear panes.

The entrance on the north side of the building is covered with a stone architrave accented with a stone molding and a stone floral motif. There are six narrow rectangular clear glass windows above the architrave. The windows on each level of the north elevation are identical to the front facade. There are twelve windows placed between pilasters on the second and third floor levels. The last eight windows toward the west of the building on the third floor are enclosed with recessed limestone facing that matches the building stone. The window design on the south elevation is identical to the window pattern on the north elevation. The west rear elevation is constructed of light colored brick and several of the windows on this side have been enclosed with the same brick.

A three-story entrance containing an elevator and a stairway was added to the south elevation of the building in the 1960's. The east and south elevation of this addition is constructed of carved stone to match the building, while the west elevation is constructed of light colored brick.

The foyer of the temple contains a stairway that leads to the main level and to the basement. The floor plan of each level of the building features a large center space which is bordered on three sides by smaller meeting rooms and lounges. This center

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Temple of Free Masonry, Eau Claire,
Eau Claire County, WI

space contains a large dining room on the lower level, a "theatre in the round" auditorium with a stage on the main level, and a partial balcony area for the auditorium on the upper level.

The interior spaces retain their original materials and decorations. The "Theatre in the round" has wooden panels and seating risers. The ceiling cove dentils in the foyer, main lounge, and two lodge meeting rooms are plaster cast moldings and the lodge symbols and decorations below the balconies of the two lodge meeting rooms are plaster stylistic motifs. Included are pictures of the detail of the ceiling cove dentils in the main lounge on the first floor and of the two lodge meeting rooms on the second floor.

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

Significant Dates

1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hancock, Edward J.

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

The Masonic Temple proves a significant example of Neo-Classical architecture. The two-story stone and brick structure is equally significant to three other Neo-Classical/Beaux Arts structures in the Central Business District of Eau Claire. Built in 1909, the Federal Building (formerly the U.S. Post Office Building) is a fine example of Beaux Art/Neo-Classical design. It is not currently included on the National Register of Historic Places. The Eau Claire City Hall (built in 1916) and the former Eau Claire Public Library (built in 1903) were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

The Masonic Lodge in Eau Claire was founded in 1857 by seven lumber and businessmen influential in the nineteenth century history of Eau Claire. Since this early history of Free Masonry, the lodge has built two presently significant buildings (317 S. Barstow Street and 616 Graham Avenue) in Eau Claire and has been extensively involved in non-profit community activities.

The Temple of Free Masonry was organized in Eau Claire July, 1857, when a group petitioned the St. Croix Lodge No. 56, Hudson, Wisconsin, the territorial lodge that held the jurisdiction over Eau Claire, for a dispensation to organize. The petition was accepted and the Eau Claire lodge operated under this dispensation until June 15, 1859. On that date a charter was granted in Milwaukee for the Eau Claire Free Masonry Lodge No. 112.

The founding members included William P. Bartlett, Henry C. Putnam, Delos R. Moon, Leander B. Foote, Hiram B. Graham, William Mosher and George Mulks (attached Sheet 3).

The lodge held its first meetings in a frame building at the northeast corner of S. Barstow and Gibson streets. After several moves, steps were taken in 1898 to erect a permanent lodge at the northeast corner of S. Barstow and Main streets. This building, which was dedicated in October, 1898, presently stands at 317 S. Barstow Street. The first floor was occupied by three different furniture store operators until 1985, the second floor was the lodge room, and the third floor was the banquet room.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

100 Years of Free Masonry, 1909-1959. Eau Claire Lodge No. 112. Published by Centennial Committee, May 15, 1959.

Intensive Survey Form, Masonic Temple, 9/17/81.

Final Report Intensive Historical/Architectural Survey of the City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. 1983.

Bailey, Judge William F., Editor-in-Chief.

History of Eau Claire County, Wisconsin, 1914. (pp. 453-454).

Chicago: G. F. Cooper and Company. 1914.

History of Eau Claire County, Wisconsin, 1914. (pp. 453-454).

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property Less than one

UTM References

A

1	5	6	1	8	7	7	0	4	9	6	2	4	5	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 7-8-9-10, Blk. 67,

All of VAC Seaver St. ADJ & the NLY 13.75 FT. of BLKS 68 & 73 & that PRT of VAC Porter Avenue ADJ Village of E.C.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include all of Lots 7-8-9-10 including the Temple of Free Masonry and parking lots.

This area constitutes the entire Masonic Temple property historically associated with the building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann Ohl

organization Eau Claire Landmarks Commission

street & number 203 S. Farwell Street

city or town Eau Claire

date 8/3/87

telephone 839-4947

state Wisconsin zip code 54702

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Temple of Free Masonry , Eau Claire, Eau Claire
County, WI

Needing a larger meeting facility, the lodge built the present temple at 616 Graham Avenue. Construction commenced in 1927 and the members proceeded to raise \$300,000 for the present building.

The cornerstone on the building reads: "1927 H. W. Dixon Grand Master A. L. 5927". The first meeting was held in the temple on May 17, 1928.

Besides sponsoring the programs of Free Masonry, such as Jobs Daughters for young women, the Shrine Program for crippled children, and scholarship funds in journalism, the temple has through the years been available for non-profit community activities and meetings. Prominent citizens founded the Masonic Lodge in Eau Claire and its members have remained an active participant in community affairs ever since.

Edward Hancock, perhaps the best known of the City's architects, was a native of England, who practiced in Eau Claire from 1915 until his death in 1930. He was responsible for several prominent buildings in Eau Claire, including Boyd School (1917), 1105 Main Street, a Collegiate Gothic structure; the former Eau Claire High School (1925), 314 Doty Street, another Collegiate Gothic example; and the Masonic Temple (1927), 616 Graham Avenue, a Neo-Classical building. A commercial building, the former Hobbs Realty Company Office (1924), 403 S. Barstow Street, a terra cotta-faced Art Deco structure is also a Hancock design. A similar composition, Ferings Home Furnishings (1926), 8-10 S. Barstow Street, may be another of Hancock's creations. In addition to these commercial and public buildings, Hancock designed his own residence (1926), 480 Roosevelt Avenue, and its neighbor (1926), 474 Roosevelt Avenue. The two dwellings are similar mediievally-inspired period houses.*

The Eau Claire Temple of Free Masonry is among the best preserved local examples of the Neo-Classical style in the city and was a significant addition to Eau Claire's sizable numbers of Classical architecture.

*FINAL REPORT

Intensive Historic/Architectural Survey of the City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. (p. 114)

NOTE: Kenneth Ziehr, the architect presently serving on the Eau Claire Landmarks Commission finds the Terra Cotta on the building at 403 S. Barstow St. is often associated with Art Deco; however, the design is more commercial Gothic. E. J. Hancock's other designs in the city were more Neo-Classic.

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Temple of Free Masonry, Eau Claire, Eau Claire
County, WI

FIRST MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS

Leander B. Foote

First Worshipful Master, 1859

Member of the First Board of Supervisors, Eau Claire County

Henry C. Putnam

First Treasurer, Temple of Free Masonry

Surveyor for government lands

Register of Deeds-Eau Claire

Stockholder and Director, Rust, Putnam & Owen Lumber Company

Involved in the Pioneer Furniture Company

1876-Organized the Chippewa Valley Bank

Organized the Eau Claire Linen Company

Delos R. Moon

Arrived in Eau Claire as a manager of a bank

1867-Formed a partnership with Gilbert E. Porter and rebuilt Porter's
Mills saw mill

President, Northwestern Lumber Company

Hiram P. Graham

Employed in 1856 by the Eau Claire Lumber Company

Established a planing mill in 1875

Rebuilt a foundry and machine shop which evolved into the Phoenix
Manufacturing Company

First mayor of the City of Eau Claire

William P. Bartlett

1860 Worshipful Master, Masons

First President of Union National Bank (presently First Wisconsin Bank)

First lawyer to locate in Eau Claire County

District Attorney for several years

County Judge

President of the Board of Regents-University of Wisconsin

Elected member of Wisconsin Legislature in 1862 and 1872

Alexander Meggett

1862 Worshipful Master

First person to receive Master's Degree by Lodge 112

Superintendent of Schools

Editor of first newspaper in Eau Claire

Second lawyer to locate in Eau Claire County

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Section number Photographs Page 1

Temple of Free Masonry, Eau Claire, Eau Claire
County, WI

Temple of Free Masonry
Text information on photographs

Photograph No. 1

1. Temple of Freemasonry
2. Eau Claire, Wisconsin
3. No record
4. c. 1930
5. Chippewa Valley Museum
6. Northeast

Photographs Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

1. Temple of Freemasonry
2. Eau Claire, Wisconsin
3. Pat Ivory, Photographer
4. 6/4/87
5. Negative - Historic Preservation Division, SHSW

Photograph No. 2 - 6. Front facade, East

Photograph No. 3 - 6. Front facade pediment, East

Photograph No. 4 - 6. North elevation

Photograph No. 5 - 6. Entrance, stone architrave, windows above the architrave, North

Photograph No. 6 - 6. South elevation entrance addition

Photograph No. 7 - 6. Foyer, North

Photograph No. 8 - 6. Theatre in the round, auditorium, Northwest

Photograph No. 9 - 6. Ceiling cove dentils, main lounge

Photograph No. 10 - 6. Ceiling cove dentils, lodge meeting room

Photograph No. 11 - 6. Ceiling cove dentils, lodge meeting room