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**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 Owen Park Bandshell
other names/site number Donald "Sarge" Boyd Bandshell

2. Location

street & number	First Avenue, Owen Park	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Eau Claire	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Eau Claire	code 035 zip code 54702

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia J. Boehring June 19, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer-Wisconsin

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 commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

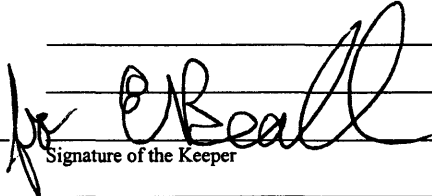
Owen Park Bandshell
Name of Property

Eau Claire
County and State

Wisconsin

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

SEP 2 2003
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

____ private
 public-local
____ public-State
____ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

____ building(s)
____ district
 structure
____ site
____ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
	buildings
	sites
1	structures
	objects
1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete
Walls Concrete
Stucco
roof Asphalt
other Concrete

Narrative Description

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

DESCRIPTION

The Owen Park Bandshell is located in Owen Park, an 11-acre recreational park on the west bank of the Chippewa River. The park borders a residential area comprised of turn-of-the-century, frame houses. The bandshell is situated 100 yards east of the intersection of Broadway Ave. and First Ave. Permanent wooden benches are located just west of the bandshell. The Chippewa River and Chippewa River Recreational Trail are just east of the bandshell. Modern public restrooms are 50 yards to the south, and a gazebo built of treated wood is located 50 yards to the north. A 40-foot metal flagpole set in a poured concrete base is located 25 yards west of the bandshell. On the west end of the seating area is a wooden sign that identifies the "Donald 'Sarge' Boyd Bandshell." The sign was unveiled at a dedication ceremony in July 1992.

Orientation of the bandshell is due west. The structure measures 36 feet wide, 24 feet deep, and 20 feet from the foundation to the top of the parapet front wall. The semi-circular opening is 30 feet wide at the ground and 15 feet high from the stage floor to the top of the opening. The interior walls consist of four concave recessed, concentric shells that narrow to a back wall giving it its Art Deco style. A small utility door is located in the back wall. The walls have a smooth plaster finish painted white. The floor is poured concrete and consists of four raised platforms or risers; it is painted blue.

The foundation is poured concrete and is built on a slope resulting in an exposure of nearly ten feet of foundation on the river side (east) and close to grade level on the front (west). The superstructure consists of steel support columns with wood structural framing. The exterior surface is smooth finished stucco over metal lathe and wire mesh. The roof is asphalt on wood framing and slopes from front to back.

The mass of the structure is accented by squared corner pilasters and recessed bays on either side accent the mass of the structure. The bandshell's front, sides and rear are covered with a light tan stucco finish with scored geometric detailing. A stepped parapet wall with a metal cap projects on all four sides. A seven by nine foot garage-type utility door (not original) provides access to the area in the lower level. Now used primarily for storage, this area underneath was originally designed to include dressing rooms and space for electrical equipment. The interior storage area is also accessed by the utility door in the back wall of the stage.

Lighting inside the shell is provided by four concentric rows of narrow neon tubes located just inside the edge of the recessed shell. There are also four recessed incandescent lights at the top of the inside of the first shell. Exterior lights are mounted on both sides and at the southeast corner of the rear side. Four rows of electrical outlets run along the front of the risers in the bandshell. The band director can

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Section 7 Page 2

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

control the neon lights from his position in front of the stage, switching them to provide a series of color variations during performances.

The audience seating area is approximately 75 feet deep and 150 feet wide. The permanent wooden benches are arranged in four sections, two outer sections are 30 feet wide and two inner sections are 40 feet wide. All sections are 20 rows deep. The seats and backrests are painted wooden planks running the length of the section, supported by poured concrete posts. Crushed red granite covers the ground in and around the seating area. Total seating capacity is estimated to be 1500. While the benches are an important part of the historic setting and use of the bandshell and contribute to the bandshell's significance, they are not included in the resource count because of their size. While the benches have been repaired over time, they are thought to date to the construction of the bandshell.

The Owen Park Bandshell has undergone no significant alterations since its first public concert held 18 June 1938. The description of the bandshell and its setting provided by the *Eau Claire Leader* on opening night is still accurate today, as is the historic photograph in Fig. 1. The historic newspaper account reads:

The band shell, which cost more than \$10,000, was erected as a WPA project with the WPA taking care of the bulk of the labor costs.

The band shell, embodying the latest in musical "sounding boards", stands in Owen Park, not far from the shore line of the Chippewa River. It is on a direct line with Broadway, which it faces. In front of it are permanent seats for 1,500 people. The seats are located on an incline, which rises away from the shell, and arranged in a semi-circle in front of it.

The shell is located in a beautiful setting of some of the finest trees the city boasts in any of its parks. Behind it and at one end are two towering elm trees, and the seats are surrounded by beautiful trees of many varieties. . . .

One of the outstanding features of the band shell will be the electrical effects which will be produced by the very elaborate electrical installation, which represents a large share of the cost of the structure and equipment.

All the lighting is indirect and the light bulbs as well as neon lights, all of varied colors, are located out of sight behind the curving recesses in the interior of the hall.

From his position in the front center of the stage the band director can control the lights, switching them in a series of colored variations.

The seats . . . are of solid construction, heavy planks being placed on concrete uprights, and lighter lumber as back supports. The slant of the seats and backs is such that they insure a maximum of comfort for the members of the audience.

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Section 7 Page 3

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

The dressing rooms for the members of the band as well as the electrical switch board, transformer and other electrical equipment are located in the basement under the stage platform occupied by the band during performances.

After nearly 80 years, the Owen Park Bandshell is showing signs of wear. Some staining is evident on the tan stucco finish, probably due to corrosion of the metal parapet cap. The staining is worst on the rear of the bandshell where water drains off the roof and down the back wall. Some cracking of the stucco finish is also evident. Despite this, the overall condition of the structure and interior recessed area is quite good.

Owen Park Bandshell
Name of Property

Eau Claire
County and State

Wisconsin

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.)

Property is:

- 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 or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1938-1953

Significant Dates

1938

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Garnock, Alec

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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Section 8 Page 1

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Owen Park Bandshell is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of entertainment and recreation. It is also important locally because of its affiliation with the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The total resource count is one contributing structure. The period of significance begins with the construction of the bandshell in 1938 and continues to the end of the 50 year period in 1953. During this entire period it was used for its original purpose.

The bandshell is situated in Owen Park, an 11-acre park on the west bank of the Chippewa River. The park land was donated by lumber baron John S. Owen between 1913-1914. Owen began buying up land along the river in 1907, part of a popular effort to establish Eau Claire as a city of parks. Community leaders, who touted Eau Claire as a "City of Beauty", embraced the City Beautiful Movement of the Progressive era.¹ Owen Park quickly became a popular location for picnics and other social gatherings.

Owen Park underwent its first significant development in early 1930, when the area was plowed and seeded and the semi-circular drive laid out. The municipal band, under the direction of Donald I. Boyd, is thought to have played its first concert in the park on 2 June 1932.² Free band concerts were approved by a resolution of the Eau Claire city council in 1912, with the first concert held at University Park and the second at Wilson Park.³

Nothing is known about the Eau Claire municipal band until it came under the directorship of Donald I. Boyd about 1929. Boyd came to Eau Claire that year to take the position of high school band and orchestra director. Within four years' time, he had increased the size of the high school band from 30 to 75 musicians and implemented a marching band program. His enthusiasm and dedication to music

¹ See, for example, Helen Rosenkranz, ed., "Eau Claire is a City of Beauty" in *Eau Claire, Wisconsin—The Poor Man's Paradise—The Capitalist's Opportunity—The Millionaire's Playground* (Eau Claire: private, 1922). Rosenkranz writes: Eau Claire is fast becoming a city of parks—already there are ten, mostly gifts from the pioneers who loved Northern Wisconsin's beauty and wished to see portions set aside to be preserved in its pristine state, so that in the years to come all people might enjoy its woods, hills and streams. The business men of Eau Claire, also, are keen to provide playgrounds and amusement parks that will be free to everyone. Already much progress in this line has been made, and there are bathing beaches, ball parks, opportunities for boating, picnicking and all sorts of outdoor sports provided for anyone who cares to enjoy them. (n. p.)

² Lois Barland, typewritten notes presumably prepared for her book, *The Rivers Flow On: A Record of Eau Claire, Wisconsin from 1910-1960* (1965). Notes found in Owen Park file, Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire, WI.

³ Lois Barland, *The Rivers Flow On: A Record of Eau Claire, Wisconsin from 1910-1960* (Stevens Point, WI: Worzalla Publishing Co., 1965), 260.

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Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

overflowed into the community at large, and he soon organized a large community orchestra to play at patriotic events, weekend concerts, and other festive occasions.⁴

But it was not until 1935 that city engineer, Alex Garnock, conceived a permanent bandshell suitable for the community band. With an eye on funds available through President Roosevelt's federal relief programs, Garnock began corresponding with the engineers of various cities who had used such funds to build a bandshell. He contacted representatives of Sioux City, IA; Ft. Dodge, IA; Watertown, SD, and also the architect/engineer of the band shell erected in Chicago for the 1934 Century of Progress exhibition. He then drew plans for the Owen Park bandshell based on the plans of the other bandshells. His design specifications and budget were laid out in WPA Project Proposal No. 6616 dated 5 April 1937.⁵

According to Garnock's proposal, the Owen Park bandshell would require a construction time of 111 man months. Required skilled labor included 20 carpenters, three brick layers, three plasterers, six concrete finishers, three plumbers, three electricians, two painters, and three iron and steel workers. Materials included sand, gravel, cement, cement blocks, structural and reinforcing steel, metal lath, lumber, lighting, plumbing, doors, windows, and roofing. The total project cost was figured to be \$9,659.50, with \$6,034.00 requested from the federal government and \$3,625.50 coming from local funds. Garnock justified the need for a bandshell by writing: "The city at the present time has no Band Shell, but has an excellent City Band organization attracting good attendances. This project was applied for in 1935 and granted in 1936 under Serial No. 80-151."⁶

The WPA operated from 1935-1939 and was established by executive order of President Roosevelt to provide employment for limited numbers of unemployed workers throughout the United States. The federal "make work" initiatives originated with the Civilian Workers Administration (CWA), which operated from November 1933-May 1934. The CWA was followed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) from 1933-1935. The WPA in turn succeeded FERA. By 1940,

⁴ Typewritten biography of Donald I. "Sarge" Boyd found in Owen Park file, Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire. Boyd remained the director of the city band until 1984; he died in 1985. The bandshell was dedicated and renamed in his honor on July 1992.

⁵ The proposal is found in the Owen Park Bandshell file in the office of the Parks Superintendent, City of Eau Claire.

⁶ WPA Project Proposal No. 6616, dated 5 April 1937.

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Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

approximately 5 million projects had been undertaken, with Wisconsin ranking relatively high among the states receiving appropriations. Statistics for the year 1939, for example, ranks Wisconsin in the 124 percentile following fifth behind Pennsylvania, the highest ranking state at the 218 percentile. Funding for this program was administered annually by Congress, and although the types of projects varied from year to year, the provision for funds for public structures—including bandshells—consistently ranked second behind highway and street projects.⁷

With steel provided by Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company of Milwaukee and lighting by General Electric Supply Corporation of St. Paul, MN, the Owen Park Bandshell was ready for its debut concert directed by Donald I. Boyd on 16 June 1938, with Thursday evening open air concerts following throughout the first and subsequent summers.

The Owen Park Bandshell has undergone few significant alterations since its construction. In the mid-1970s, the exterior stucco finish was removed and new stucco applied by park maintenance staff. This has not had an effect on the bandshell's integrity. The interior concrete risers were covered with wood decking in the early 1970s; it was removed in the late 1980s. The neon light bands in the interior of the bandshell have remained intact and operating since their original installation.⁸

Throughout its history the Owen Park Bandshell has been used for band concerts, such as this one described in the *Eau Claire Leader-Telegram* of 3 July 1940:

**Municipal Band
To Play Concert
At Park Tonight**

The Eau Claire Municipal band, directed by Donald Boyd, will present its regular concert at Owen Park this evening instead of Thursday because of the Fourth of July holiday.

Tonight's program, with Elaine Butler appearing as guest soloist, will be as follows:

America
Spirit of the Pageantry (Theme), Fletcher
Stars and Stripes Forever, Sousa

⁷ Debra K. Kellner, National Register of Historic Places nomination for Herbster Community Center, Bayfield County, WI, 1997. Copy on file with Wisconsin SHPO. See also Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and the Federal Relief Policy*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1943.

⁸ Phil Johnson, parks superintendent for the City of Eau Claire. Written communication to Joanne Raetz Stuttgen, 21 May 2002.

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Section 8 Page 4

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

A Manx Overture, Wood
Children's March, Goldmann
Mardi Gras from "Mississippi Suite," Grofe
Them Basses, Huffine
I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls (Balfe) and (b) Because (D'Hardelot), by Elaine Butler,
soprano
Amparito Roca, Texidor
American Patrol, Meacham
Flume March, Boccalari
Star Spangled Banner

In addition to weekly concerts, the Owen Park Bandshell also served (and continues to serve) as the venue for patriotic events and celebrations such as the Memorial Day program held 30 May 1951. The observance began with a parade comprised of veterans groups and area school bands moving from Wilson Park, near downtown Eau Claire, to the Owen Park Bandshell. The patriotic program at the bandshell included an invocation, singing, an address by the Very Rev. Dean Brant of Christ Church (Episcopal) Cathedral, roll call, memorial service for veterans of all wars, firing squad, and raising of the colors.⁹

Since its completion, the Owen Park Bandshell has been an important location for entertainment and recreation in the city of Eau Claire. Throughout its history, the bandshell has been used for band concerts, patriotic events such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day speeches, festivals, and fairs. It is owned and maintained by the City of Eau Claire, which desires National Register listing to recognize its longtime position in the social and community life of the city.

⁹ "Patriotic Services Planned Memorial Day: Parade, Program Scheduled," *Eau Claire Leader-Telegram*, 29 May 1951: 3.

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Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

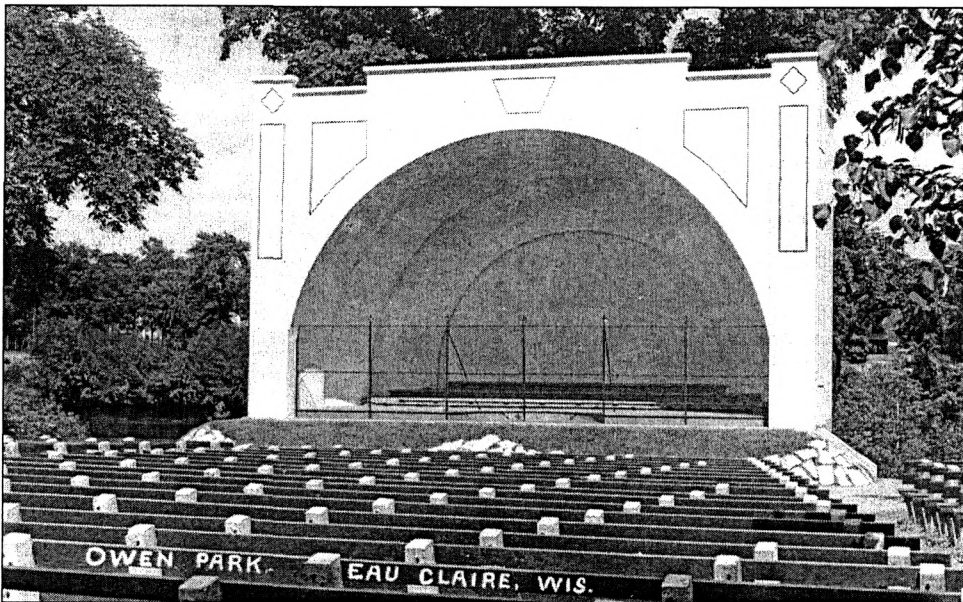


Figure 1 Owen Park Bandshell, c1938. Camera facing east. Courtesy of Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire, WI.

Owen Park Bandshell
Name of Property

Eau Claire
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name/title	City of Eau Claire	date	26 April 2002
organization		telephone	(715) 839-4914
street&number	203 S. Farwell St.	zip code	54701
city or town	Eau Claire	state	WI

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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Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

WORKS CITED

Rosenkranz, Helen, ed. "Eau Claire is a City of Beauty" in *Eau Claire, Wisconsin—The Poor Man's Paradise—The Capitalist's Opportunity—The Millionaire's Playground*. Eau Claire: private, 1922.

Barland, Lois. Typewritten notes presumably prepared for her book, *The Rivers Flow On: A Record of Eau Claire, Wisconsin from 1910-1960*. Notes found in Owen Park file, Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire, WI.

Barland, Lois. *The Rivers Flow On: A Record of Eau Claire, Wisconsin from 1910-1960*. Stevens Point, WI: Worzalla Publishing Co., 1965.

Johnson, Phil (Parks Superintendent, City of Eau Claire). Written communication to Joanne Raetz Stuttgen, 21 May 2002.

Kellner, Debra K. National Register of Historic Places nomination for Herbster Community Center, Bayfield County, WI, 1997. Copy on file with Wisconsin SHPO.

Typewritten biography of Donald I. "Sarge" Boyd found in Owen Park file, Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau

WPA Project Proposal No. 6616, Owen Park Bandshell, Eau Claire, WI. File located in office of Parks Superintendent, City of Eau Claire.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Owen Park Bandshell is located in the northern one-third of Owen Park, approximately 100 yards east of the intersection of Broadway and First Avenue. The boundaries encompass the bandshell and the permanent wooden benches to the west, plus a surrounding 30-foot corridor.

Beginning at the wooden bandshell sign located about 75 feet east of the metal flagpole, proceed southeast 100 feet to a point 30 feet south of the south end of the wooden benches. Then proceed northeast 150 feet to a point on the Chippewa River Trail 30 feet southeast of the bandshell. Follow due north along the west edge of the recreational trail 50 feet to a point 30 feet northeast of the bandshell. Then continue northwest 150 feet to a point 30 feet north of the north end of the wooden benches. Follow southwest 100 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is drawn to include the bandshell and its seating with the immediate setting. It excludes other areas of the park.

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Section photos Page 1

Owen Park Bandshell
Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin

Photo #1 of 5.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL.

Eau Claire, Eau Claire Co., WI.

Photo by Eric J. Wheeler, March 2002.

Negatives are on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Camera facing east.

Photo #2 of 5.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL.

Eau Claire, Eau Claire Co., WI.

Photo by Eric J. Wheeler, March 2002.

Negatives are on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Camera facing southeast.

Photo #3 of 5.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL.

Eau Claire, Eau Claire Co., WI.

Photo by Eric J. Wheeler, March 2002.

Negatives are on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Camera facing northeast.

Photo #4 of 5.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL.

Eau Claire, Eau Claire Co., WI.

Photo by Eric J. Wheeler, May 2002.

Negatives are on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Camera facing west.

Photo #5 of 5.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL.

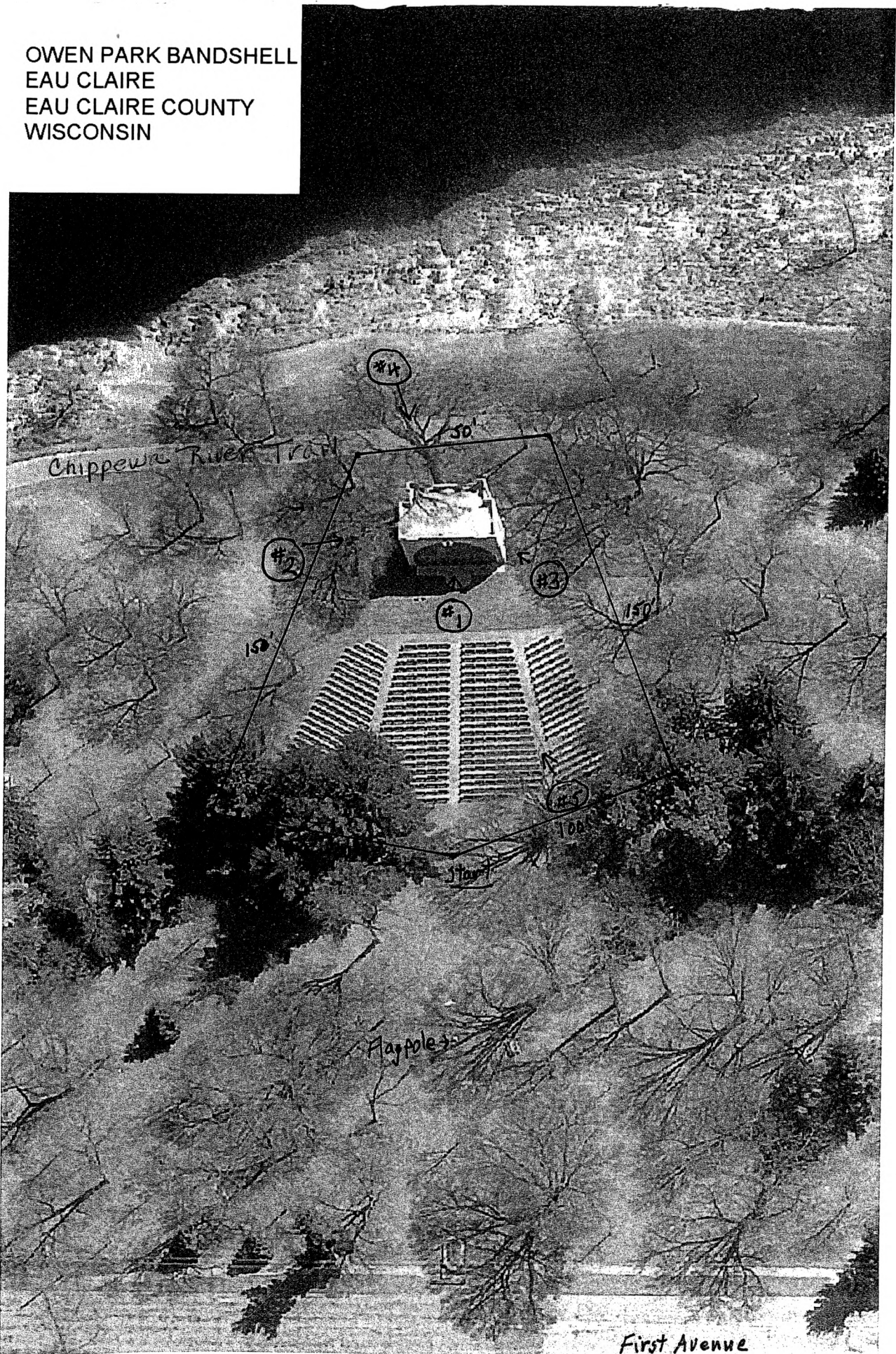
Eau Claire, Eau Claire Co., WI.

Photo by Eric J. Wheeler, March 2002.

Negatives are on file with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Camera facing east.

OWEN PARK BANDSHELL
EAU CLAIRE
EAU CLAIRE COUNTY
WISCONSIN



Chippewa River Trail

#4

50'

#2

#3

#1

150'

150'

#5

100'

Flagpole



1"=50 ft.
approx.

Aerial view 2002 camera facing East

First Avenue

← Broadway Street