

United States Department of the 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Lake Park Bandshell

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: On Lake Park Drive, east of the intersection with Main Street

City or town: Winona State: Minnesota County: Winona

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

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

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☒

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

With a gift from lumber executive Frederick Bell, the City of Winona built a bandshell in Classical Revival style in Lake Park near the north shore of Lake Winona in 1924. The bandshell is a stilted spherical half dome set on a concrete platform that is about 42 inches above grade. The bandshell features a wide stilted Roman arch which frames the west-facing open side of the half dome. The primary decorations are engaged columns and pilasters topped with Corinthian capitols around the shell's exterior. The stilted portions of the dome and arch are constructed of brick covered with concrete. The dome and the arch are framed in wood and sheathed in concrete, except that the closed end of the half dome is covered by a tin roof. A semi-circular area of fixed metal benches west of the bandshell provides audience seating. The Lake Park Bandshell retains a high level of historic integrity. Except for a few minor alterations to the decorative features, the design, workmanship and materials have not been altered. The setting is unchanged, and the bandshell has been used continuously for concerts and other performances since its construction until the present time.

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Narrative Description

The Lake Park Bandshell is located near Lake Winona, about 690 feet east of Main Street and 180 feet north of Lake Park Drive, a road which runs along the northern shore of the lake. West of the bandshell is an audience seating area composed of metal benches arrayed in a wide arch around an oval shaped grassy area which is separated from the stage by an asphalt path running generally north and south (Photo 1, 8). West of the seating area is a parking lot designed to allow audience members to hear concerts from their cars. The Veterans Memorial lies west of the parking lot, linked to the seating area by a walking path that divides the parking lot into a north and south half. About 50 feet to the southeast of the bandshell is a large children's play lot (Map 2).¹

The bandshell is a stilted spherical half dome (in other words, a quarter sphere) that has an outside diameter of about 42 feet. The stilted half dome is set on a concrete platform that is about 42 inches above grade on the west-facing open side of the bandshell. A wide stilted Roman arch frames the open end of the dome (Photo 1). The stilted portions of the dome and arch are constructed of brick covered with concrete. The dome and the arch are constructed of wood framing sheathed in concrete, except that the closed end of the spherical dome is covered by a tin roof. Throughout, there are places where the concrete is cracked or deteriorating, especially around the base of the bandshell.

The arch that frames the open-end is about 6½ feet deep and about 7 feet wide, so that the arch rises about four feet above the outer shell of the dome. The concrete platform is larger than the footprint of the dome and arch. It extends about 3½ feet beyond the arch towards the seating area. As a result, the total distance from the rear interior wall of the shell to the lip of the stage at its center point is about 34 feet. A set of stairs, also made of concrete, extends across the front of the stage. The top step is as wide as the opening between the arches. Each of its six steps is deeper and wider as it descends, so that the stairs can be used from the front or either side (Photo 1). The concrete platform supporting the dome and arch also extends about 3 feet beyond the arch to the north and south. This part of the platform continues to the east for a few feet beyond the eastern edge of the arch. On the north side, the platform ends with a wooden storm cellar door covering a stairway that goes down to a storage room under the stage (Photo 2, 4).

The inner surfaces of the stilted portion of the arch on the north and south each contain a large curved alcove topped by a rounded arch. They are 54 inches wide and 34 inches deep. The top of the alcove has a shell-like appearance and a decorative keystone (Photo 6). The stilted portion of the arch above the alcove is completed with a framed rectangle painted a contrasting color. At the peak of the inner surface of the arch there is another framed rectangle with a decorative medallion. An historic photo indicates that the inner surface of the arch between these

¹ The bandshell is not sited with exact reference to the cardinal points of the compass. The stage primarily faces west, but also few degrees to the south. As a result, the path in front of the stage diverges slightly from a north-south axis.

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rectangular details was originally decorated with a diagonal pattern etched into the concrete, but this area is now composed of smooth concrete (Figure 4).

The inner portion of the shell is decorated by a string course composed of three separate strips which separate the stilted, barrel-like portion from the spherical dome above. A series of light fixtures mounted on the inside of the arch illuminate the interior of the dome at night. At the center of the back wall there is a large bronze plaque with an ornate border that reads "Presented to the City of Winona by Frederic Somers Bell, 1923" (Photo 7). Historic photos indicate that the stage floor was originally a flat concrete surface. At some point, two levels of concrete risers were added, each about nine inches high, which are curved to follow the curve of the stilted portion of the shell.

The exterior façade of the stilted portions of the arch facing west toward the seating area are ornamented by a pair of engaged columns on each side (Photo 1). These unfluted columns are separated by about 15 inches and have Corinthian capitals. They support an unadorned classical entablature composed of architrave, frieze and cornice with a wide overhanging crown. Directly above the cornice on each side is a strapwork ornament in the shape of a classical Greek lyre. Historic photos indicate that originally a different strapwork figure occupied these spaces. The lower edge of the arch is finished with two strips of molding, and a small rectangular plaque at the crown. Historic photos show that an elaborate scrolled ornament, now gone, originally adorned the crown. The upper edge of the arch, which is finished with a narrow coping, maintains its perfect half circle except that it juts into a step just as it reaches the stilted portion.

The entablature continues around the north and south sides of the arch's stilts, except that on those facades, it is supported by two wooden pilasters, separated by about 15 inches, featuring the same Corinthian capitals and bases. Above the entablature, before the curve of the arch begins, there is a framed rectangle. On both sides, the entablature continues around the corner on the return to the arch, a width of about three feet (Photo 3, 4). On this short easterly return, the entablature is supported by one pilaster and a second one embedded in the corner formed where the return meets the stilted portion of the dome.

The barrel-shaped base of the dome on the east is decorated by the same pilasters with Corinthian capitals, except here they are spaced about 5 ½ feet apart. The bases stand on the concrete platform, which because of a rise in the terrain on this side of the bandshell, are only about 3 feet above grade. Above the capitals is a simple three-part cornice, and above that, the dome itself, the lip of which extends a few inches beyond the edge of the base (Photo 2).

A storm cellar door on the north side of the bandshell provides access to a concrete stairway to the basement storeroom (Photo 2). This room has concrete floors, ceiling and walls. The concrete columns and beams supporting the bandshell are visible, as well as the thick concrete load bearing walls around the perimeter. At the foot of the stairs, the floor was raised by adding a platform built from concrete blocks, most likely because of moisture problems in the basement. The barrel shaped wall on the east side of the basement originally had a series of rectangular windows. These window openings have been filled with concrete block, except that several have

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small windows, about the size of a concrete block, which are covered by a metal grill on the exterior (Photo 9).

The seating area west of the bandshell stage is composed of eight rows of six-foot wide metal benches mounted on fixed metal stanchions. Each row contains thirteen benches, arrayed in a wide arch around the oval shaped grassy area (Photo 8). The outer row of benches at the center point of the arch is about 90 feet from the outer edge of the stage. At its widest point, the seating area extends about 145 feet from north to south. These benches were installed in 1994, replacing benches of wood slats mounted on fixed metal stanchions which were installed sometime after World War II.² Historic photos indicate that these benches replaced earlier benches which were composed of wood slats mounted on fixed concrete frames.³

The bandshell has been altered very little during the many decades since it was built. As noted above, comparison of historic and contemporary photographs indicates that at some point, the strapwork lyres above the entablature on both sides of the arch replaced the original strapwork ornamentation, that a scrolled ornament at the crown of the arch was removed, and that the diagonal pattern on the inside of the arch was replaced by smooth concrete. In addition, two levels of low concrete risers were added to the rear portion of the stage, which was originally flat, and the windows of the storeroom which faced the rear (east) façade were filled with concrete block and small windows.

² The *Winona Daily News*, October 5, 1994 carried a photo of benches being removed in preparation for the installation of the present metal benches.

³ It is difficult to ascertain the exact footprint of the benches before 1994. There are Historical Aerial Photographs of Lake Park from the University of Minnesota for 1954 and 1960. However, a tree canopy completely obscured the seating area in these photos. The canopy was most composed of the elms planted in 1924 when the bandshell was built. These mature trees were later lost to the disease which decimated Minnesota's elms in the 1970s.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1924-1973

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Edwin Hill Clark, Chicago (architect)

H.W. Seidlitz, Winona (builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Lake Park Bandshell is eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of Entertainment/Recreation because it is closely associated with events that have made a locally significant contribution to broad patterns of our history. From 1924 until the present day, the bandshell has been the city of Winona's prime outdoor venue for music, including concerts by the Winona Municipal Band every summer since the bandshell was dedicated. The bandshell is as well used today as it was in the year it was built. The period of significance begins in 1924 when the bandshell was completed and dedicated, and ends in 1973, as the passage of fifty years is the minimum threshold for considering the eligibility of a property for the National Register.

The Lake Park Bandshell is also eligible under **Criterion C** as locally significant in the area of Architecture because it embodies distinctive characteristics of the Classical Revival style as applied to bandshells. The bandshell is a unique example of its style and almost without peers nationally. In Minnesota, no surviving bandshell resembles the Lake Park Bandshell or even exhibits characteristics of Classical Revival architecture. Nationwide, there are few surviving examples of bandshells which exhibit the Lake Park Bandshell's stilted spherical half dome form in both the interior and exterior.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Ambitious City on the River

The land that became the city of Winona was originally called "Wapasha's Prairie" because the Mdewakanton Dakota band led by Wapasha made it their home. European-Americans first occupied the area in 1851 shortly before the U.S. government and the Dakota signed the Treaty of Mendota that opened the west bank of the Mississippi River for colonization and relocated the Dakota to a narrow reservation along the Minnesota River.⁴ The new arrivals were part of the great stream of immigrants from the eastern United States and Europe who came to the midland prairies to homestead farms and build towns and cities. Mississippi River towns like Winona were at the center of this great American expansion.

The European American settlers at Wapasha's Prairie incorporated the city of Winona in 1857. Thanks to lumber, grain, steamboats and railroads, this small river settlement grew quickly into a major cultural and commercial center for the upper Midwest. Winona never reached the size of Minneapolis or St. Paul, but during its "golden age" of economic expansion in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, it was Minnesota's third largest city.

⁴ Myron A. Nilles, *A History of Wapasha's Prairie*, 2nd Edition (Winona: Winona County Historical Society, 2005), 7.

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Wheat was the city's original economic motor, and by 1870, Winona ranked fourth behind Chicago, Milwaukee and Toledo as a primary grain market. In 1875, thirteen grain mills operated in Winona County. By the late 1880s, the wheat industry around Winona declined. Timber processing, however, was on the rise, and in the final analysis, was the most important factor in Winona's commercial development.⁵ The first sawmill on Winona's riverfront went into operation in 1855 and was soon joined by several others, all of which were expanded and upgraded over the years. Winona's mills processed the timber cut in the great white pine forests of the "St. Croix Triangle" formed by the St. Croix and Chippewa rivers. Local lumbermen benefited greatly from Winona's strategic location just thirty miles downstream from where the Chippewa joins the Mississippi. By 1870, Winona was one of the nation's top lumber processing and marketing centers.

Transportation was the key to Winona's growth. During its first decade, Winona's commercial prominence was based on steamboat traffic. However, Winona's entrepreneurs recognized very early that their future depended on railroad development. In 1855, a group of Winona investors created the Winona and St. Peter Railroad whose track extended west to St. Charles in 1863, Rochester in 1864, St. Peter in 1870, and Dakota Territory in 1872. As a result, Winona became a hub where logs floated down the river could be processed into lumber and loaded onto trains for shipment westward.⁶

Winona was founded by men of English or Scottish ancestry who migrated to the Mississippi River Valley to take advantage of the opportunities offered by occupying Dakota lands. Winona's first businessmen and political leaders were overwhelmingly "Yankees" from states like New York and Pennsylvania. In a few years, German immigrants began to arrive, followed by other groups including Irish, Norwegians, and Bohemians. Winona also attracted a large number of Polish immigrants who came to farm or to work in the sawmills beginning in the 1870s. Overall, 72% of the city's residents were foreign born in 1880.⁷

The early Yankee entrepreneurs brought with them, as one historian wrote, "urban expectations." They wanted their new cities to equal if not surpass the cities of the East.⁸ They greatly valued literacy, high culture, and self-improvement. As a result, they prioritized schools, libraries, and cultural venues. They founded the state's first "normal school" to educate teachers at Winona in 1859. Although the city's founders were men of commerce first and foremost, they believed that

⁵ William Crozier, "A Social History of Winona, Minnesota 1865-1895" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1975), 38.

⁶ Franklin Curtis-Wedge, *History of Winona County*, 2 volumes (Chicago: H. C. Cooper, Jr. and Co., 1913), 177ff.

⁷ Fred W. Kohlmeyer, *Timber Roots: The Laird Norton Story 1855-1905* (Winona: Winona County Historical Society, 1972), 238-244.

⁸ Judith Martin, "The Prairie City Comes of Age: Ambitions and Expectations in the Richardsonian Era," 10 in Paul Clifford Larson, *The Spirit of H.H. Richardson on the Midland Prairies: Regional Transformation of an Architectural Style* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988).

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local government should create impressive public building that were built to last. Even though many were lumbermen, they preferred buildings built of brick or stone.⁹ Their interest in grand public spaces included a passion for public parks, and once they had become rich, they were willing to donate large sums to develop the city's park system.

Parks and Philanthropy

Winona's unique geography allowed for the creation of varied and interesting public parks, but it also posed difficult challenges. Most of the cities along the northern Mississippi are built on river terraces, plateaus along the bluff line that sit above the flood plain. Winona, however, is built on a sandbar north of sharply rising bluffs that mark the southern border of the floodplain.¹⁰ The city developed between the modern river's main channel and a marsh land that became Lake Winona, originally a backwater remanent from when the river was "braided," meaning that it was composed of several channels that came together and separated.¹¹

Winona's first parks were three square blocks set aside in the original plat.¹² Then in 1896, William Finklenberg, a local lawyer, engineer, and landscape architect, began the process of creating a riverfront park on the Mississippi bordering downtown Winona. This land had become available as railroads replaced the riverboats and most of the original grain mills on the riverfront had been retired. Called Levee Park, it was subject to frequent flooding, and the great flood of 1965 finally made the original park untenable. To prevent future flooding, the Corp of Engineers built a massive dike through what had been a highly praised work of landscape architecture. In those years, the city also developed Aghaming Park on marshland north of the main channel in Wisconsin, and Bluffside Park in the bluff land overlooking Winona from the south. The city's biggest challenge was the development of Lake Park, which eventually included all of Lake Winona and became the flagship of the city's park system. The creation of Lake Park required both the public acquisition of land and the transformation of marshy Mississippi River backwater into a stable lake deep enough to allow for boating, fishing, and other water activities.

⁹ These city-builders certainly preferred the look, solidity and permanence of brick and stone, but there were two other factors involved. One was the persistent problem of fire, which swept through downtown Winona, still mostly built of wood, in 1862. The other was the plentiful supplies of granite, limestone, quartzite, and sandstone in the upper Midwest. See John Hudson, "The Midland Prairies: Natural Resources and Urban Settlement," 123 in Larson.

¹⁰ In southeastern Minnesota, the Mississippi runs downstream in a generally southeastern direction before turning south at La Crosse.

¹¹ Calvin R. Fremling, *Immortal River: The Upper Mississippi in Ancient and Medieval Times* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 69, 395.

¹² From west to east, these parks, called "the squares" at the time, are Windom Park, Central Park (only a remnant is left because the park board gave the federal government land for a new post office), and Sinclair Park. Later John A. Latsch, Jr. donated a fourth "square," called Sobieski Park, on the city's east side.

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The city council established an independent Park Board in 1889 but it accomplished little and became dormant. In 1896, about the time that Finklenberg began his Levee Park project, the Park Board was revived, and by 1900, it was playing an active role in park development. The growth of Winona's parks, however, was ultimately dependent on the philanthropy of several wealthy businessmen. The most important of these was John A. Latsch, Jr., who ran the wholesale grocery business he had inherited from his father. An avid canoeist and fisherman who loved the river and its backwaters, he purchased and donated considerable acreage to Winona for its parks. Latsch set a standard for giving to the public good in 1907 when he donated a large bathhouse for the public beach on the Mississippi across from downtown Winona (on what was later named Latsch Island). He also donated land for Aghaming Park and Bluffside Park, among other city parks, and land for state parks on both the Minnesota and Wisconsin side of the river. In addition to donations, Latsch served on the city's Park Board from 1915 until his death in 1934.¹³

As a Park Board member, Latsch played a role in developing Lake Park, but two men who made their fortunes in Winona's lumber industry made the major donations that built the park. Mathew G. Norton and William H. Laird, two of the three partners who founded the Laird, Norton & Co. in 1857, became millionaires when their company became the most successful of the four lumber companies that dominated the Winona riverfront in the late nineteenth century. The company made money by cutting timber in northern Wisconsin, floating the logs down the rivers to Winona, sawing the logs in a massive riverside mill, and then marketing lumber to farmers and townspeople in the rapidly developing lands of western Minnesota and the Dakotas. Eventually the forests of northern Wisconsin were depleted, and the last log came through the Laird, Norton Co. sawmill in 1905. By then however, Laird and Norton were making new fortunes from the extensive Idaho and Pacific Northwest operations they had developed with Frederick Weyerhaeuser.¹⁴

The Winona Park Board began to explore creating a park on the sandy, marshland around Lake Winona in 1900. Although undeveloped and mostly inaccessible by improved roadway, property around the lake was owned by speculators who hoped the expansion of the city would eventually increase the value of their holdings. In 1905, the park board began condemnation proceedings to take shore land by eminent domain. Some of the property owners objected to the board's valuation of their property, and a series of cases were heard in Winona County District Court. Although the judge increased all the valuations, one property owner appealed to the Minnesota

¹³ Latsch's other contributions to Winona include the land of the present city-owned Westfield Golf Club, Sobieski Park, and Gabrych Field. Latsch contributed land to Perrot State Park and Merrick State Park on the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi, and to Whitewater State Park and John A. Latsch State Park in southeastern Minnesota. See his obituary "John A. Latsch, Donor of Parks, Dead," *Winona Republican Herald* [WRH] March 15, 1934, 1.

¹⁴ This story is detailed in Kolhmeyer, cited above. The third founding partner, James L. Norton, died in 1904 prior to the development of Lake Park.

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Supreme Court, which upheld the judge's decision. At that point, the city floated a \$10,000 bond to begin purchasing land.¹⁵

Simultaneously, thirty wealthy Winonans, including Norton and Laird, contributed \$25,000 to construct a paved road along the south shore of the lake, provided the city agreed to pave Broadway Street, the town's major east-west thoroughfare for the full length of the lake. This project provided access to the south shore of the lake, while at the same time speeding the development of paved streets in the city.¹⁶

The city now owned much of the shoreline, but lacked funds to transform the swampy marshland into a usable park. In December 1906, Norton, who chaired the Park Board, joined with Laird in pledging \$5,000 to spur the development of the park. The board then hired O. C. Simonds, a Chicago landscape architect, to draw up plans for a stable lake shore and surrounding parklands. Simonds had recently redesigned and expanded Chicago's Lincoln Park, as well as built the estates of several wealthy Chicagoans.¹⁷ He developed a plan to dredge the lake, create an attractive shoreline, and design playgrounds and other amenities for the parkland. Simonds' plan involved dredging a large portion of the lake, and then spreading the fill on low lying areas near the lake. In the spring of 1909, the Park Board endorsed Simond's plan, but was unable to finance the extensive work that it required.¹⁸

Norton and Laird broke the impasse by proposing to contribute an additional \$45,000 to develop Lake Park on condition that the city and a new organization, the Winona Park and Drive Improvement Association, each contribute \$20,000. The association began as a committee of the Winona Board of Trade but had just become a free-standing and permanent organization committed to pooling the philanthropy of a larger group of wealthy Winonans for park and road development.¹⁹ The city and the association agreed, and work began in 1910 to dredge the lake and fill in low spots to create a new and stable shoreline following a revised plan from O. C. Simonds.²⁰ The city also constructed a causeway across the lake extending Huff Street south to

¹⁵ George F. Markham, "Lake Park, Finest in the City Has Interesting History; Now Regarded as one of the Most Outstanding in Northwest," *WRH*, August 22, 1931, 6

¹⁶ Markham, 6. As the use of automobiles increased, business leaders pushed local governments to accelerate the construction of paved roads. For example, the business organization created in 1909 to contribute to the development of Lake Park was called the Winona Park and Drive Improvement Association.

¹⁷ Julia Sniderman Bachrach, "Ossian Cole Simonds: Conservation Ethic in the Prairie Style," pp 80-98 in William H. Tishler, Editor, *Midwestern Landscape Architecture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

¹⁸ "Park Plans Too Costly," *WRH*, May 29, 1909, 8. This article essentially reprints the report of the annual meeting of the park board.

¹⁹ "Park Drive Association," *WRH*, October 1, 1909, 3.

²⁰ "Details of Generous Park Offer," *WRH*, August 31, 1909, 4; "An Additional Ten Thousand," *WRH*, September 30, 1909, 6; "To Accept Offer Made: Council Votes Twenty Thousand for Lake Park in Acceptance of Offer of W.H. Laird and M. G. Norton," *WRH*,

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Bluffside Park, complete with a bridge to allow boats to pass to the other side of the lake.²¹ The total development cost exceeded the initial donations, but the Winona Park and Drive Association continued to raise funds for Lake Park and other projects.²²

Although they had sparked the development of Lake Park, Norton and Laird did not live to see its completion. Laird died in 1910 in Winona, and Norton died in 1917, after spending the last few years of his life in California.²³ Frederick S. Bell became president of the Laird Norton Company and continued in that role until his death in 1938.²⁴ He followed Norton and Laird's example of civic engagement. In fact, he had been secretary of the Park Board since 1907, a position he held until 1925. Bell was also a founding member of the Winona Park and Drive Improvement Association, and after few years, its president.

A Venue for Music

O. C. Simonds envisioned Lake Park as a place where people would boat, swim and fish in the summer and skate in the winter, children would have their own playgrounds, and Winonans would gather outside to hear concerts and other performances during the summer months. When Frederick Bell presented the annual report of the Winona Park and Drive Improvement Association in late 1914, he mentioned that Simonds had suggested a boat house for canoe storage and rental with a "shelter pavilion" on its upper level which could also serve as a bandstand.²⁵ With Bell's encouragement, the association pledged \$4,000 towards this project.

January 25, 1910, 4. The \$50,000 pledged by Norton and Laird would be equivalent to more than \$1.5 million in today's dollars. Their contribution to Winona parks was only a part of their philanthropy. Both made large contributions to the YMCA, the local hospital, and the Margaret Simpson Home, a private welfare agency. Norton gave to Central Methodist Church and to Hamline University. Laird gave to the 1st Congregational Church, and was a major donor to Carleton College. As a philanthropist, Laird is best remembered in Winona for his 1899 gift of the Winona Free Public Library (NRHP, 1977), a classical revival building which is the oldest library building in Minnesota still used for its original purpose. See Greg Gaut, *Laird's Legacy: A History of the Winona Public Library* (Winona: Friends of the Winona Public Library, 2016).

²¹ For a number of years beginning in 1901, the Winona Street Railway ran a streetcar across the lake on a wooden bridge. The causeway allowed automobile traffic to reach Bluffside Park.

²² "Much Achieved in Five Years by Park and Drive Improvement Association," *WRH*, November 4, 1914, 7.

²³ Norton and Laird were buried in Winona's Woodlawn Cemetery. "In Memoriam," *WRH*, February 9, 1910, 5; "Mathew Norton Dies at home in California," *WRH*, July 16, 1917, 3; "Hold Funeral for M. Norton on Saturday," *WRH*, July 18, 1917, 3.

²⁴ None of the founding partners of Laird Norton Co had sons who could assume leadership roles. Frederick Bell was an attorney who moved to Winona to work for the Laird Norton Company and married Laird's daughter Frances. Kohlmeier, 248.

²⁵ "Much Achieved in Five Years by Park and Drive Improvement Association," *WRH*, November 4, 1914, 9.

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Lake Park needed a bandstand because Winona, like all midwestern towns of the era, had an active music culture, and musicians needed places to play. Winona had popular brass bands, church choirs, theater orchestras, soloists, and for a time, even a symphony orchestra.²⁶ It was the birth of the Winona Municipal Band, however, which made the construction of a substantial, permanent bandstand an urgent necessity. In the fall of 1914, the Association of Commerce (an early name of the Chamber of Commerce), asked its members if they would support the sponsorship of a municipal band.²⁷ By Spring 1915, the association decided to move forward, and a music committee was formed to hire a band director. George Colburn, an experienced band director and composer, arrived in June and immediately began recruiting and rehearsing a band.²⁸ By absorbing experience players from existing bands, he was able to announce his first concert for Sunday August 1, although heavy rains delayed it until August 9.²⁹

Several thousand people came to Levee Park on that date to hear the band play on a makeshift bandstand. The newspaper was impressed by the performance of the thirty-two musicians under Colburn's direction, but noted that most of the large crowd were disappointed, "for except when pretty close to the band the music could be hard only indistinctly." Colburn was also dissatisfied, and told the newspaper that maybe the band should play on a barge with a large sounding board behind them to direct the sound back to the shore.³⁰ Over the next several years, the lack of an appropriate venue was a persistent issue for the band.

At the same time that the Winona Municipal Band was being organized, the Park Board, for which Bell served as chair, hired local architects to draw up plans for the multipurpose building including a bandstand and local contractors to build it. Some criticized the project, arguing that the Park Board was trying to meet too many needs with a single building, or as the newspaper report put it, "it is to be expected that something will be lost in an attempt to make a building serve too many distinct purposes."³¹ In the Fall, the board amended the plans to add a roof over the bandstand portion of the building, and the contractors began driving piles for the foundation (Figure 1).³² However, work on the building stopped and did not resume in Spring 1916 because

²⁶ Mrs. John J. Hoffman, "Early Music and Musicians in Winona," June 1961 (typed manuscript at the Winona County Historical Society Archives).

²⁷ "Association of Commerce Notes," *WRH*, October 13, 1914, 2.

²⁸ "Start Band Here at Once," *WRH*, June 23, 1915, 8.

²⁹ "First Band Concert to be Held at Levee Park Sunday Afternoon," *WRH*, July 31, 1915, 12. Herman Rohweder formed the Germania band in the 1860s which played summer concerts in local parks. Rohweder, a violinist, also performed as a duo with George F. Storey, a harpist, and member of the Germania band. Storey, an African-American, was a steamboat barber who settled in Winona and set up a shop. Later, Germania competed with the Gate City Band and other ensembles. Colburn recruited veterans of these bands. Hoffman, 3.

³⁰ "Band Stand Not Suited to Get the Best Results in Band Music," *WRH*, August 9, 1915, 5.

³¹ "Boat House and Band Stand Certain for the Lake Park," *WRH*, May 24, 1915, 8.

³² "Revised Plans for the Lake Pavilion and Shelter to be Built Next Year," *WRH*, November 6, 1915, 12.

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of high-water level in the lake, and perhaps also because of second thoughts about the building's design. A year later, the nation entered the world war, which probably further delayed development of the new park's amenities.

Uncertain funding during the war years led to the departure of George Colburn in 1918. By this time, an independent board managed the band, and it hired Emile Michaux, an immigrant from Belgium, as the next band director. Concerts were held at various venues, including a temporary wooden bandstand in Lake Park. At one point, a city alderman promised the band a roof over the bandstand so that the music "will be deflected toward and out over the park instead of so much of it being wasted by going upward into the air and across the lake."³³

Financial difficulties led the Association of Commerce to reassert its management of the band, and when Michaux left in 1920, the association's music committee hired O. W. Reese, an experienced musician, as the new director. A recent arrival to Winona, he and his partner W. W. Christensen had bought a furniture store downtown. Reese's wife was a pianist, and Christensen and his wife were vocalists, and the foursome often performed together. Reese apparently brought a great deal of energy and new ideas to the Winona Municipal Band, including performances featuring the two couples. He created a "junior" band to train student musicians and give them a chance to perform. Reese rehearsed the band throughout the winter and traveled with the band to local fairs and parades. Reese also organized festivals where bands from neighboring towns came to Winona to compete for prizes, which were usually band instruments. In 1922, twenty bands featuring 600 musicians paraded through town and then competed in an all-day contest playing on alternating temporary stages in Levee Park. The festival concluded with an evening concert by the Winona Municipal Band.³⁴

Although the Winona Municipal Band was thriving, the Park Board's plan to build a combined boathouse, pavilion and bandstand on the shores of the lake was floundering. Flooding around the existing temporary bandshell near the lake continued to be a problem for concert goers. The situation reached a tipping point in 1920, and Frederick Bell announced in late August that the park board had abandoned the concept of a multipurpose building. Instead, he said, the expansion of the park to the east would allow the park board to build a "bandstand pure and simple" at a site 200 or 300 yards east of the original site.³⁵ Bell made no mention of how the new bandstand would be financed but he likely already knew.

A Neoclassical Half Dome

Bell promised that the bandshell would be built in 1922, but it was delayed another year until the city gained control of the high-water levels in Lake Winona. The Park Board did complete one

³³ "Roof Planned for Band at Next Concert," *WRH*, July 19, 1918, 8.

³⁴ "Parade in Which 600 Play Same Selection to Feature Band Tourney Next Sunday," *WRH*, August 19, 1922, 10.

³⁵ "Extension of Lake Park Drive East of Main Street with Loop Driveway and Bandstand Planned," *WRH*, August 20, 1920, 3.

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project in 1922, the construction of a brick road which extended for more than three blocks east of Main Street (to 200 feet east of Walnut St.) and then looped around and returned, forming an elliptical drive that still exists.³⁶ The plan was to build the bandshell within this loop. In Spring 1923, the Park Board built a parking area there, as well as an area for benches to accommodate a future audience watching a performance in the new bandshell. The city also planted several hundred trees, primarily elms, to shelter the audience.³⁷

Behind the scenes, Frederick Bell had decided to personally donate the funds to build the new bandshell, but for his own reasons, he kept his gift out of the public eye.³⁸ In Spring 1923, the Park Board hired Edwin Clark from the Chicago architectural firm of Clark & Walcott, to design the bandshell and also hired local contractor H. W. Seidlitz to build it.

Edwin Hill Clark (1878-1967) was a successful Chicago architect who specialized in public buildings and private residences, especially for wealthy clients from North Shore suburbs like Winnetka and Lake Forest. Clark's designs are stylistically eclectic, ranging from neoclassical to Tudor and Spanish Revival. He studied chemistry at Yale and then went to work for his father's paint manufacturing business. A few years later he left the business to study drafting at the Armour Institute and then went to work for the architect William Otis, who made him a partner in 1908. In 1919, the newly organized Winona Country Club hired Clark to design a clubhouse in a valley outside of Winona. Frederick Bell, who was a country club member, must have been pleased with Clark's clubhouse design. The club had its grand opening in June 1920.³⁹ In that same year, Clark left Otis and formed a new partnership with Chester Wolcott, a firm that lasted until 1924.

Clark created many public buildings in classical revival style, including buildings for the Chicago-area zoos at Lincoln Park and Brookfield, and also the Lake Forest Library, which features a Roman dome. The stilted half dome of the Lake Park Bandshell was a unique creation. It is probably not a coincidence that the Naumburg Bandshell in New York City's Central Park is one of the few, if not the only, surviving bandshell that resembles Winona's bandshell. The Naumburg Bandshell was in fact under construction while Clark was designing the Lake Park Bandshell in Spring 1923. The New York bandshell, like the Lake Park Bandshell, was the gift of a local businessman. In 1916, Elkan Naumburg, a clothing manufacturer and music lover, hired his nephew William G. Tachau, an Ecole des Beaux-Arts trained architect, to

³⁶ "Extension of Pavement in Park Planned," *WRH*, March 17, 1922, 4; "Pavement of Lake Park to be Extended," *WRH*, May 27, 1922, 3.

³⁷ "Improvement of Lake Park Progressing" *WRH*, June 4, 1923, 1.

³⁸ The minutes of the Park Board, of which Bell was the secretary, make no mention of the bandshell construction or how it would be financed. The board must have discussed this major, and long awaited, project, but Bell kept these discussions out of the formal record of the board. The minute books are in the possession of the City of Winona.

³⁹ "New Clubhouse Plans Accepted," *WRH*, April 25, 1919, 2; "Party Tonight at Country Club," *WRH*, June 24, 1920, 12.

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design the Central Park bandshell. Drawing on classical forms dating back to at least the Pantheon, and also on the acoustical properties of a stage embedded in a half dome, Tachau designed a structure that satisfied musicians but was also eye-catching enough to fit into the overall park design of Frederick Law Olmsted. Naumburg decided to wait a few years after World War I before making his gift, and the bandshell's inaugural concert was held on September 29, 1923.⁴⁰ The bandshell that Clark designed for Winona is significantly smaller than the Naumburg Bandshell and not as ornately decorated. However, Clark's bandshell echoes the basic design of a stilted half dome on a raised platform, framed by a stilted classical arch decorated by engaged columns and pilasters.

On June 14, 1923, the *Winona Republican Herald* reported that construction of the bandshell had finally begun. The story briefly described Clark's classical revival design, and mentioned that Seidlitz had already moved a pile driver to the site, but it did not mention who was paying for the design and construction.⁴¹ Work on Winona's bandshell continued during the Summer and Fall of 1923. The parking lot was ready and audience benches installed but the bandshell itself was not quite finished when winter began.⁴² During the summer of 1923, the Winona Municipal Band performed its concerts at various venues, including Lake Park and Bluffside Park. In Spring 1924, workers completed the bandshell, but not in time for the Memorial Day program on May 30, during which the band and the speakers spoke from a temporary stage set up in front of the nearly finished bandshell.⁴³ In early June, Dr. Emil Leight, president of the band board, announced that "the nine-year dream" of the Winona Municipal Band and the Park Board would be realized on Sunday June 15 at a dedication of the bandshell where the city would thank Frederick Bell for his generosity.⁴⁴

In preparation for the dedication, the *Winona Republican Herald* described the bandshell for its readers, quoting Dr. Leight's opinion that "every possible thought and effort has been given to make it permanent, consistently satisfactory, and modern to the last minute." The newspaper explained that the shell faces a little to the south of west, that is, slightly towards the lake, so that, its reporter imagined, "on quiet evenings this beautiful vista will invite many to the use of boats during the concert."⁴⁵ The entire city was invited to the dedication, and in preparation, the

⁴⁰ In the 1980s, the Central Park Conservancy and the New York Parks Department proposed to demolish the Naumburg Bandshell, but it was saved after a four-year preservation battle and a landmark court decision. Information from the "Detailed History" page of the Naumburg Orchestral Concert webpage (naumburgconcerts.org/history accessed June 8, 2021)

⁴¹ "Construction of Band Stand Ready to Begin," *WRH*, June 14, 1923, 11.

⁴² "Work on Band Stand Stopped for Winter; Completed in Spring," *WRH*, December 10, 1923, 3.

⁴³ "Final Arrangements for Memorial Day Observance Made," *WRH*, May 27, 1924, 1.

⁴⁴ "Dedication of Bandshell to Mark Advance," *WRH*, June 5, 1924, 1.

⁴⁵ "Winona Band Shell Ranked with Finest," *WRH*, June 14, 1924, 7. It is unlikely that many boaters ever listened to concerts. Band members over the years have wondered why the bandshell was sited so that the setting sun was in their eyes as they tried to read their music during evening concerts.

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police chief issued special orders prohibiting cars from the parking lot because it would be used as standing room for an overflow crowd. He decreed that no cars could enter or leave the park once the event started.⁴⁶

Following well established protocols, the dedication opened with an invocation by a Protestant minister and closed with a benediction by a Catholic priest. The Winona Municipal Band opened with a rousing Sousa march followed by a Von Suppe overture. O. W. Reese then introduced his junior band which played two numbers. This was followed by two vocal selections sung by a large mixed chorus. Next, the featured speaker, Edward Lees, a former Winonan who was the commissioner of the Minnesota Supreme Court, addressed the crowd. He congratulated Winona for having so many prominent citizens, especially Bell, who took such a strong interest in public affairs. When Lees had finished his speech, a bronze plaque was unveiled with the inscription "Presented to the city of Winona by Frederick Somers Bell, 1923" (Photo 7). The College of St. Teresa orchestra then played two numbers, including Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance," and the Winona Municipal Band closed the program with Mendelssohn's "War March of the Priests." The audience must have greatly appreciated this choice because the band played it again as an encore.⁴⁷

Frederick Bell did not speak at the dedication and news reports do not state if he was present. The amount of his gift was never publicly disclosed and was probably handled privately by direct payments to Clark and Seidlitz. The bandshell, was, as Dr. Leight put it, a "fitting climax" of Bell's service and generosity to the city, but it was not the only example. In addition to his service on the Park Board and the Winona Park and Road Improvement Association, Bell also served on the school board and the State Highway Commission. Besides the parks, his biggest commitment was to the library. Bell chaired the Library Board from the founding of the Winona Free Public Library in 1886 until 1906. He also played a key role in the library's search for a permanent home which culminated in his father-in-law William Harris Laird's \$50,000 gift to fund the design and construction of the classical revival library building still in use today. Later, Bell provided funds for a stack room addition to the library, and left a \$5,000 bequest in his will for library maintenance.⁴⁸

Approaching 100 years

The Winona Municipal Band presented its first regular summer concert in the new bandshell on June 25, 1924. The *Winona Republican Herald* gave the band a good review and observed that "public enjoyment of the concert was increased by the acoustic effects created by the new shell." The newspaper also noted that those who chose to hear the concert from their automobiles had honored Frederick Bell's suggestions that they acknowledged the musicians by applauding rather than by honking their horns. However, the news report also mentioned ominously that the

⁴⁶ "Plans Finished for Dedication of Band Stand," *WRH*, June 14 1924, 1.

⁴⁷ "Band Shell is Dedicated as Pride of City," *WRH*, June 16, 1924, 1.

⁴⁸ Gaut, *Laird's Legacy*, 17-24, 73-74. Bell was also a major donor to Carleton College and served on its Board of Trustees. "Winona Mourns Frederick Somers Bell," *WRH*, March 14, 1938, 1.

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audience was temporarily distracted by the appearance of a Klu Klux Klan cross burning in the bluffs across the lake.⁴⁹

From this point on, the Winona Municipal Band presented regular summer concerts at the bandshell, usually on Wednesday nights, which continue to the present day. In the 1920s, O. W. Reese varied the programs, adding vocalists and sing-a-longs. Later in the 1930s, the band also attracted large audiences by hosting the finals of the park board's amateur contests for children and the annual "Chinese Magic Lantern Parade," where over a hundred children paraded across the stage with lanterns made in a Park Board organized activity.⁵⁰ When Frederick Bell died in March, 1938, the band dedicated the opening concert of that year's summer series to the bandshell's donor. It was a typical concert, beginning with "America" followed by a Sousa march, and then moving on to more adventurous fare like a band arrangement of the Spanish composers Isaac Albeniz's Suite Espanola No. 1.

Plagued by persistent financial problems, the band board campaigned unsuccessfully in 1929 to pass a "band tax" in a city referendum. Two years later, the band board and a volunteer committee mounted a bigger campaign, winning endorsements from the newspaper and most of the fraternal and labor organizations in the city. Several days before the vote, the committee published a full-page appeal for a "yes" vote, arguing among other things that the band tax would allow Winona to take full advantage of the band's summer venue, which "was one of the finest band shells in the Middlewest, in a setting of natural beauty that is unsurpassed."⁵¹ This time the referendum passed easily except in Winona's 4th Ward, where it lost by a 2 to 1 margin. This was an indication that the Polish and Czech immigrant communities who formed a majority of the voters in this ward did not identify strongly with the band and its style of music.⁵²

Reese led the band until his death in 1940, at which time Harold Edstrom, a high school music teacher, became the director.⁵³ Edstrom and his brother Everett, a trumpeter in the band, also owned a music store. In 1947, the Edstrom brothers and Roger Busdicker, the assistant conductor of the band, formed Hal Leonard Music, which today is the largest publisher of sheet music in the world. In 1973, Harold Edstrom retired from directing the band and was succeeded Dr. Richard Lindner, another trumpeter in the band and a music faculty member at Winona State

⁴⁹ "Klaxon Applause at Band Concert Discontinued," *WRH*, June 26, 1924, 1. Over time, Bell's request was forgotten and Winonans today still honk their horns to signal their appreciation of the band.

⁵⁰ Earl A. Schreiber, "The Last Fifty Years: Winona Municipal Band, 1933-1983," *Chronicles*, Vol 3, No. 3 (Summer 1984): 11; "Park Crowded for Amateur Contest and Band Concert," *WRH*, July 29, 1937, 4; "Lantern Parade of Children Colorful Affair," *WRH*, July 27, 1939, 5. Both these events likely filled the seats with parents and grandparents.

⁵¹ "Do You Want to Keep the Band for Winona—Then Vote 'Yes' for the Band Tax," [advertisement] *WRH*, April 4, 1931, 7.

⁵² "Band Tax Levy Passes, Street Names Beaten," *WRH*, April 7, 1931, 1.

⁵³ "O.W. Reese, Bandmaster, Succumbs at Age of 63," *WRH*, June 20, 1940, 3.

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University. Linder led the band until 2011. Under Edstrom and Lindner, the repertoire of the band evolved, introducing music from the American Musical Theater and hit songs heard on the radio into the repertoire.⁵⁴ After the brief tenure of Myron Haig, Levi Lundak became the director in 2015 and continues in that role today.

The Winona Municipal Band regularly performed at a number of annual events which have traditionally been held at the band shell, including Memorial Day observances and Labor Day celebrations.⁵⁵ In 1948, Winona instituted an annual festival called Steamboat Days which included a large parade in which the Winona Municipal Band marched.

Over the years, many other bands have performed at the bandshell, which is the only permanent structure in the city for outdoor concerts. The band from the Winona Teachers College gave concerts at the bandshell in connection with college events including commencement.⁵⁶ The bandshell was also a venue for high school bands. In 1939, for example, Winona hosted a high school band festival for southeastern Minnesota schools which included a downtown parade which culminated in a massed band concert at the bandshell.⁵⁷

The bandshell also served as a venue for non-musical events. When Spring weather cooperated, several churches would use the bandshell for an ecumenical sunrise service at Easter Sunday and Labor Day.⁵⁸ Children's theater companies sometimes used the bandshell for performances, including during Steamboat Days.⁵⁹ The bandshell was occasionally used for political meetings. In 1931, the mayor of Winona greeted the Peace Caravan of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom when it came to Winona to campaign for disarmament. Caravan speakers addressed the crowd at the Municipal Band concert on August 3. Many years later, an

⁵⁴ See for example "Band Concert to Feature Broadway Hits," *Winona Daily News* [WDN], July 13, 1976, 5; Columnist Gretchen Lamberton wrote that she heard the band practicing "Rock around the Clock" in preparation for a June 1955 concert. "The Casual Observer," *WDN*, June 27, 1955, 4. The version sung by Bill Haley and His Comets was the number one single in the United States for two months in 1954.

⁵⁵ For Memorial Day, see for example, "Favorable Weather Predicted for Memorial Day Observance at Lake Park Tomorrow," *WRH*, May 29, 1935, 3 and "Goetz Urges Participation in Government at All Levels," *WDN*, May 31, 1968, 3. For Labor Day, see for example, "Program for Two-day Celebration of Labor Groups Here Announced," *WRH*, August 16, 1939, 3 and "Ecumenical service set at bandshell" *WDN*, August 31, 1973, 11. See also Schreiber, 11.

⁵⁶ "Commencement Week Activities at T.C. to Start Next Friday," *WRH*, May 25, 1939, 9.

⁵⁷ "Parade at 4 P.M. to Open Big Eight Music Festival," *WRH*, May 11, 1939, 3.

⁵⁸ "Churches Filled as Ideal Weather Marks Eastertide," *WRH*, April, 22, 1935, 5; "Ecumenical Service Set at Band Shell." *WDN*, August 31, 1973, 11.

⁵⁹ "Steamboat Days Schedule," *WDN*, July 7, 1972, 3; "Rainbow Theatre received grant, schedules shows," *WDN*, July 15, 1976, 8.

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organization opposed to the war in Vietnam called Winona Citizens for Peace used the bandshell as its meeting place.⁶⁰

The bandshell continues to be an active venue in Winona. After performing only two concerts during Summer 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Winona Municipal Band resumed its full summer series of concerts in 2021. Seeking to provide more outside entertainment during the pandemic, the city presented the “Lake Park Drive-In,” a series of events at the bandshell featuring a live music performance followed by a feature film at dusk during the summers of 2020 and 2021.

The Park Board had responsibility for maintaining the bandshell until 1968. At that point, Winonans voted to change city government by disbanding the Park Board and the Library Board. Since then, the city’s park and recreation department has had responsibility for maintaining the bandshell. In its early years, painting of the band shell was reported in the local newspaper which indicate that the Park Board contracted to have the bandshell painted in 1928, 1935, 1940 and 1945. These news articles do not mention color, except in 1945, when the new colors included “aluminum and blue colors to give it an attractive appearance.” Around 1980, the interior of the band shell was painted a deep green.⁶¹ In 2001, the bandshell was repainted and the deep green of the inner shell was changed to light beige. The band shell was last painted in 2015 in preparation for the centennial celebration of the Winona Municipal Band.

Over the years, repairs to the concrete surfaces resulted in slight alteration of some decorative details previously mentioned, including the diagonal patterning on the inside of the arch, the scrolled ornament at the crown of the arch, and the strapwork designs above the columns on each side of the arch. In Spring 1977, vandals destroyed the wooden risers that sat on the concrete floor of the bandshell.⁶² This incident may have been the impetus for the construction of two levels of concrete risers above the original flat concrete stage floor.

Probably the most substantial renovation of the bandshell occurred in 2001, when the Rotary Club contributed to a project to replace some or all of the capitols that top the engaged columns and pilasters. According to the masonry contractor who did the work, the capitols were chipped and broken. Precast capitols that closely match the originals were ordered from a supplier, and then were cut so that they could be installed over the engaged columns and pilasters.⁶³ This

⁶⁰ “Peace Caravan to Arrive Here Aug 3 for Program at Lake Park Bandshell,” *WRH*, July 25, 1931, 5; “Peace Group Will Circulate Petition,” *WDN*, June 23, 1970, 5. The group was chaired by local attorney Roger Brosnahan, who a few years later was elected chair of the Minnesota State Bar Association.

⁶¹ Band member and historian Ruth Bures has a color portrait of the band playing at the bandshell, dated 1980, which indicates that the interior of the dome was painted dark green at that time.

⁶² “Vandals at Work: The arrive with spring,” *WDN*, April 12, 1977.

⁶³ I interviewed Tim Scharmer, of Scharmer & Sons, the Winona masonry contractor who did the work, on May 24, 2021. He said that extra capitols were ordered in case some were

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renovation is recognized by a plaque on the south stilt of the arch that reads “Bandshell Renovation, Winona Rotary Club, 2001.”

The city has also replaced the benches in the seating area at last twice. The current benches were installed in 1994, replacing benches of wood slats mounted on fixed metal stanchions which were installed sometime after World War II.⁶⁴ Historic photos indicate that these benches replaced earlier benches which were composed of wood slats mounted on fixed concrete frames.

The city of Winona is currently preparing to celebrate the bandshell’s centennial during the summer of 2024.

Conclusion

The Lake Park Bandshell is eligible under **Criterion A** in the area of Entertainment/Recreation because it is closely associated with events that have made a locally significant contribution to broad patterns of our history. From 1924 until the present day, the bandshell has been the city of Winona’s prime outdoor venue for music, including concerts by the Winona Municipal Band every summer since the bandshell was dedicated. High school and college bands, as well as other local and traveling musicians, have frequently used the bandshell as well. It has also been a site for national holidays celebrations, especially Memorial Day and Labor Day. The bandshell has also occasionally hosted political meetings. The bandshell is as well used today as it was in the year it was built. The period of significance begins in 1924 when the bandshell was completed and dedicated, and ends in 1973, as the passage of fifty years is the minimum threshold for considering the eligibility of a property for the National Register.

The Lake Park Bandshell is also eligible under **Criterion C** as locally significant in the area of Architecture because it embodies distinctive characteristics of the Classical Revival style as applied to bandshells.⁶⁵ There are very few surviving bandshells in Classical Revival style. In Minnesota, no surviving bandshell resembles the Lake Park Bandshell, or even exhibits characteristics of Classical Revival architecture.⁶⁶ There are surviving historic Minnesota

cracked while being cut. This accounts for the six unpainted capitols stored in the basement storeroom of the bandshell. He also thought that the basement windows were filled with concrete block at that time.

⁶⁴ The *Winona Daily News*, October 5, 1994 carried a photo of benches being removed in preparation for the installation of the present metal benches.

⁶⁵ Based on a 1992 reconnaissance level survey, Hess, Roise and Company identified the Lake Park Bandshell as potentially eligible based on its architecture, and also noted its potential eligibility under Criterion A as part of a possible Lake Park Drive Historic District. Jeffrey Hess and Heather Maginniss, *Final Report: Historic Resources of the Central Portion of the City of Winona*, July 1992.

⁶⁶ The Central Park Bandshell in Faribault is vaguely neo-classical, but it has no engaged columns or pilasters, and in any case, is an open-ended rectangular box. The Sylvania Park

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bandshells with arched openings but these are Art Deco designs from the 1930s and 1940s.⁶⁷ There are surviving Classical Revival bandshells outside of Minnesota. In most of those, a stilted half dome is set within a rectangular structure, so that the exterior of the structure is not curvilinear.⁶⁸ An exception is the Naumburg Bandshell in New York's Central Park, which like the Lake Park Bandshell, exhibits a half dome form in both the interior and exterior. The Lake Park Bandshell is a unique example of Classical Revival architecture in Minnesota, and almost without peers nationally.

Bandshell in Fairmont, built in 1925, is a stilted quarter dome, but its ornamentation is distinctively Arts and Crafts.

⁶⁷ Examples of Art Deco arched bandshells include the Irving Peterson Memorial Bandshell in International Falls, the Community Park Bandshell in Austin, and the Worthington Band Shell. Thanks to Jim Krumrie for supplying a data base search for bandshells in Minnesota.

⁶⁸ Examples of surviving Classical Revival bandshells that use a stilted half dome set in a rectangular box include the Spreckels Temple of Music at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, the Otis Park Limestone Bandshell in Bedford, Indiana, the West Park Bandshell in Allentown, Pennsylvania and the World War I Memorial Bandshell in Mishawaka, Wisconsin.

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Hess, Jeffrey and Heather Maginniss. *Final Report: Historic Resources of the Central Portion of the City of Winona*, July 1992.

Hoffman, Mrs. John J. "Early Music and Musicians in Winona." Presented at a Meeting of the Winona County Historical Society June 1961 (14-page typed manuscript in archives of the Winona County Historical Society).

Websites

Winona Municipal Band Website: <http://winonamunicipalband.org>
(Information the history of the band and of the bandshell)

Naumburg Orchestral Concerts Website: <https://naumburgconcerts.org/>
(Information on the history of the Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park)

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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Winona County Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): WN-WAC-0136

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

Lake Park Bandshell

Name of Property

Winona Co., Minnesota

County and State

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☒ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15

Easting: 608855

Northing: 4877050

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The portion of Lake Park delineated by the footprint of the bandshell and the outer limit of semicircular ring of the associated fixed seating, as well as the area between the fixed seating and the western edge of the bandshell stage.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary encompasses but does not exceed the land which contains the bandshell and the area that has been continually used to seat audiences for bandshell events.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Greg Gaut
organization: Historic Preservation Consultant
street & number: 1235 Yale Place #408
city or town: Minneapolis state: Minnesota zip code: 55403
e-mail: Greg.Gaut@gmail.com
telephone: 507-279-7859
date: November 29, 2022

Additional Documentation

- A USGS map
- Sketch maps (in the additional pages)
- Photo Log

Name of Property: Lake Park Bandshell

City or Vicinity: Winona

County: Winona State: Minnesota

Photographer: Greg Gaut

Date Photographed: October 10 and 11, 2022

Lake Park Bandshell

Name of Property

Winona Co., Minnesota

County and State

Photo #1 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0001)

Front (west) façade of bandshell, camera facing southeast.

Photo #2 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0002)

Rear (east) façade of bandshell, camera facing west.

Photo #3 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0003)

South façade of bandshell, camera facing northwest.

Photo #4 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0004)

North façade of bandshell, camera facing south.

Photo #5 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0005)

Detail of paired engaged columns on northern stilt of arch, camera facing east.

Photo #6 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0006)

Detail of alcove on the northern stilt of arch, camera facing north.

Photo #7 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0007)

Plaque mounted at the center of the rear wall of the stage area, camera facing east.

Photo #8 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0008)

Bandshell seating area, camera facing west.

Photo #9 (MN_Winona County_Lake Park Bandshell_0009)

Storage room below the stage, camera facing north.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Lake Park Bandshell
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Section number Figure and Maps Page 1

Historic Photos and Site Maps

- Figure 1: Architect's sketch of the 1915 plan for a multipurpose lakeside building incorporating a bandstand. This building was not built. From the *Winona Republican Herald*, November 6, 1915, p. 12.
- Figure 2: Photo of the construction of the Lake Park Bandshell taken in the Fall 1923. From the Winona County Historical Society Archives.
- Figure 3: Photo of the dedication of the Lake Park Bandshell on June 15, 1924. Lake Winona is in the background, and beyond that, the bluff known as Sugar Loaf. From the Winona County Historical Society Archives.
- Figure 4: Undated early photo of the Lake Park Bandshell. From the Winona County Historical Society Archives.
- Figure 5: *Winona Daily News* photo of the 1954 Memorial Day observance at the bandshell. From the Winona County Historical Society Archives.
- Figure 6: *Winona Daily News* photo of a Winona Municipal Band concert in the summer of 1989. From the Winona County Historical Society Archives.
- Figure 7: Photo of a 1925 concert at the Naumburg Bandshell, which opened on September 29, 1923 in New York's Central Park while the Lake Park Bandshell was under construction. From the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts webpage. naumburgconcerts.org/history.
- Figure 8: Recent photo the Naumburg Bandshell in New York's Central Park. From the Central Park Conservancy's website, www.centralparknyc.org.
- Map 1: Google Earth view of the City of Winona with Lake Park Bandshell marked with a red star. All of the shoreline of Lake Winona is within Lake Park.
- Map 2: Google Earth photo showing camera direction of contemporary photos.
- Map 3: Google Earth photo showing the boundary of the nominated property.

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REVISED PLANS FOR THE LAKE PAVILION AND SHELTER TO BE BUILT NEXT YEAR

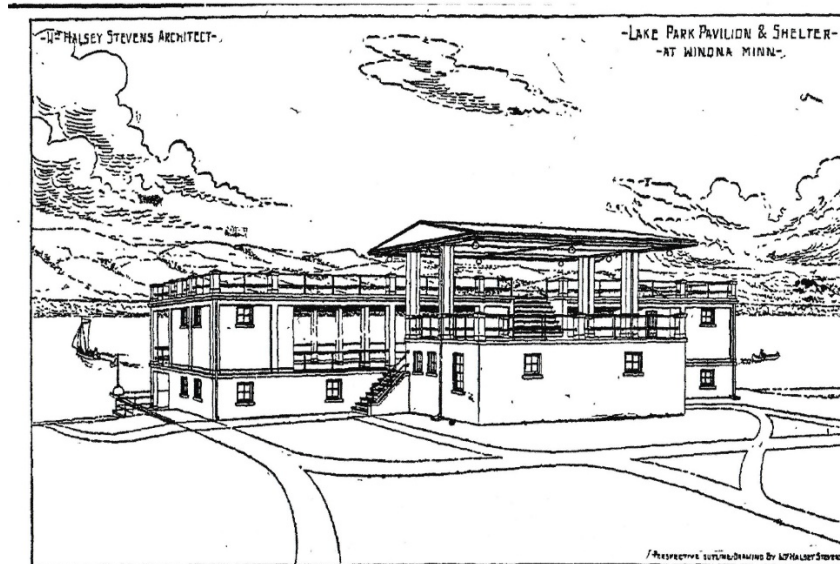


Figure 1

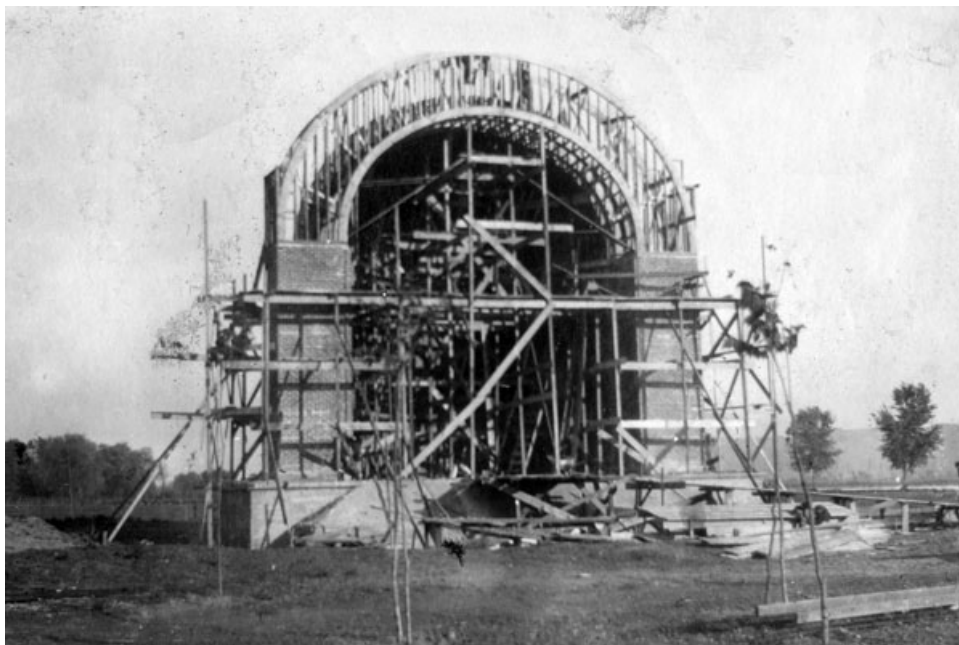


Figure 2

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Figure 3



Figure 4

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Figure 5



Figure 6

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Figure 7

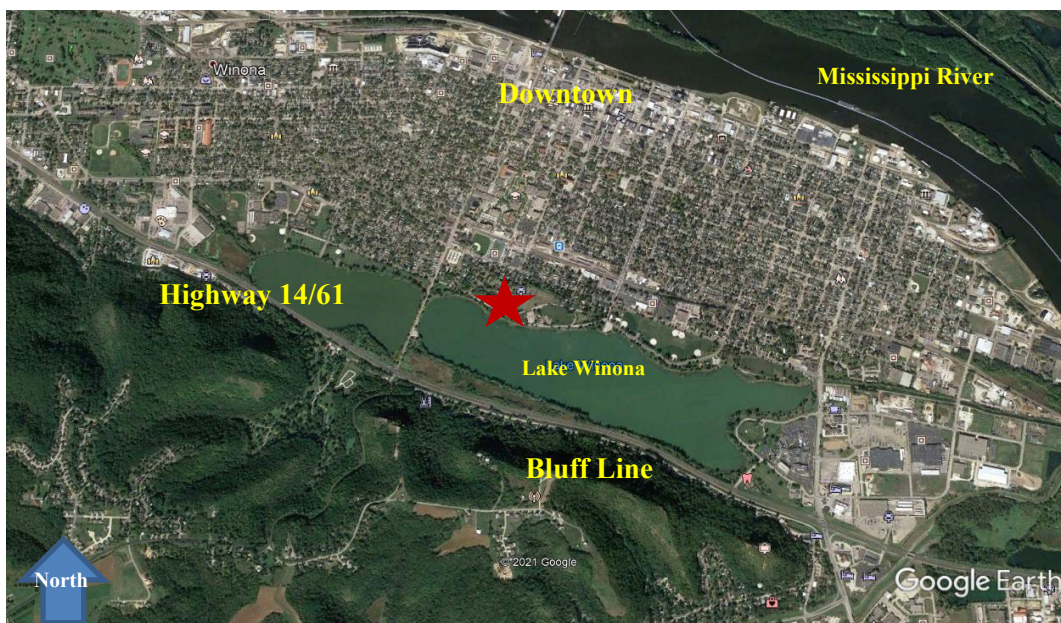


Figure 8

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Map 1



Map 2

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Lake Park Bandshell

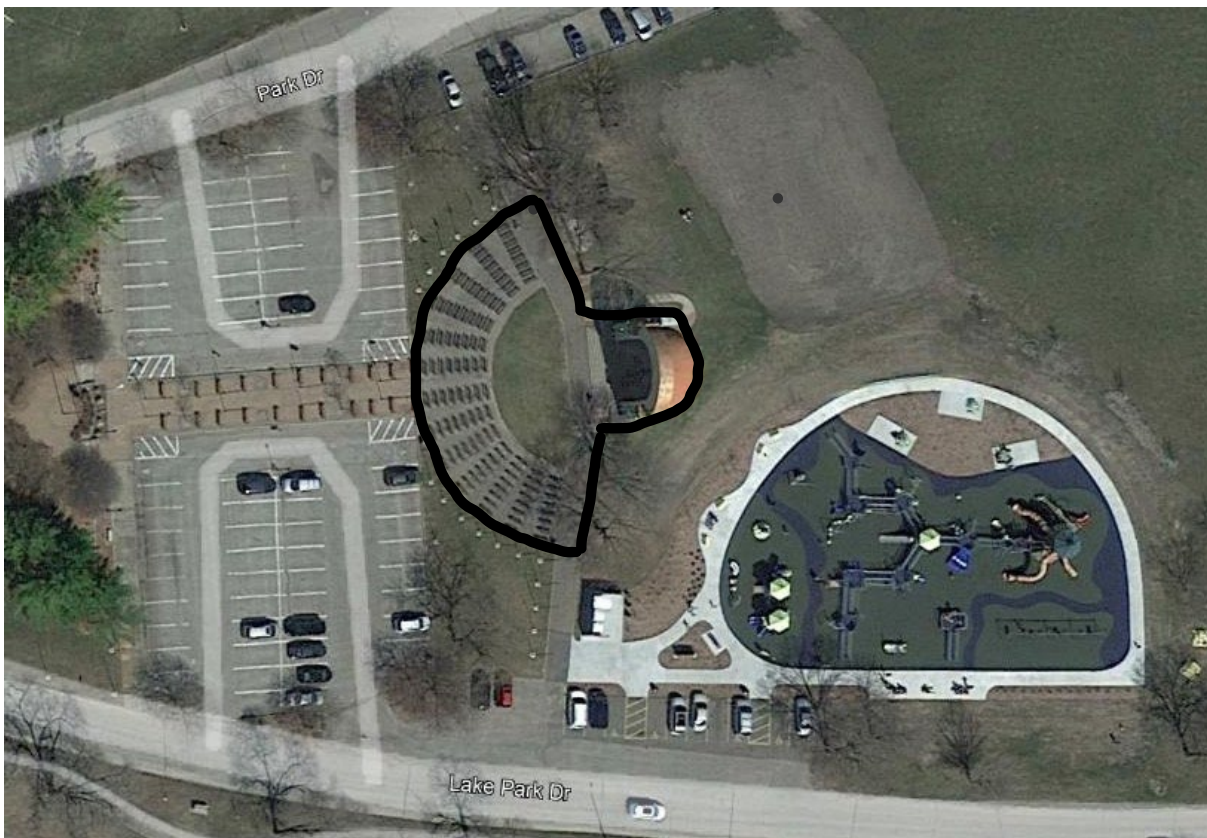
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Map 3

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Map 4