#### HISTORIC ILLINOIS BUILDING SURVEY

#### DU-2021-1

## MEMORIAL PARK BANDSHELL (ART SWEET MEMORIAL BANDSHELL)

<u>Location:</u> The Memorial Park Bandshell (aka Art Sweet Memorial Bandshell) was

located in Memorial Park at 208 W Union Ave in Wheaton, Illinois. Memorial Park is situated on Block 2 of Vallette and Beard's Addition to Wheaton, in Section 16, Township 39 North, Range 10 East of the Third

Principal Meridian in the City of Wheaton, DuPage County. The Bandshell was located on the southern edge of Memorial Park on

Karlskoga Avenue.

<u>Present Owner:</u> Wheaton Park District (102 E Wesley Street in Wheaton, Illinois)

<u>Present Use:</u> Community performance space

Significance: The Memorial Park Bandshell was significant for its connection with the

Wheaton Municipal Band, a community band founded in 1930 that became well known locally for its free weekly concerts during the summer months. The band performed at several locations throughout Wheaton until the City of Wheaton constructed a simple wooden bandshell for the ensemble in Memorial Park in 1940. The structure had

deteriorated significantly by the early 1950s, so the City of Wheaton constructed the Memorial Park Bandshell in two phases in 1952 and 1958. Municipal Band Director Art Sweet, who helped grow the Band from 35 to 100 members during his tenure from 1945-1963, played an important role in lobbying Wheaton to build the new bandshell, directing its design, and organizing fundraising for the project. Chicago-based architect G. Robert Johnson transformed the Bandshell into a Mid-Century Modern structure during the second phase of construction in 1958. The Wheaton Municipal Band and the Wheaton Park District used the Bandshell as a performance space until 2019, when the Park District

demolished the structure to build a new amphitheater.

### PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. Physical History
  - Date(s) of construction:
     Stage and southeast wing building: 1952<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Dismantle Bandshell", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, June 18, 1952; "Council Told Status of Band Shell", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, June 24, 1952; "Band Concerts Resume Tonight", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 17, 1952.

Northwest wing building: 1952-1955<sup>2</sup> Roof, side walls, and back room: 1958<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Architect:

Stage and southeast wing building (1952): Horace F. MacKay, Wheaton City Engineer<sup>4</sup> Northwest wing building (1952-1955): Unknown Roof, side walls, and back room (1958): G. Robert Johnson of Hertel, Johnson, Eipper, Stopa & Culver Architect & Engineers in Chicago, Illinois<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Original and subsequent owners:

The City of Wheaton constructed the bandshell in two phases in 1952 and 1958 in Memorial Park, a park owned by the Wheaton Park District. The City of Wheaton did not formalize its ownership of the Bandshell until the Municipal Band Commission of the City of Wheaton signed a ten-year lease for the small portion of land the Bandshell stood on in Memorial Park with the Wheaton Park District on February 28, 1958.<sup>6</sup> The Municipal Band Commission renewed its lease for another 10 years on December 14, 1966.<sup>7</sup> The lease expired on December 31, 1976, and the Wheaton Park District assumed the ownership and operation of the Bandshell.

### 4. Builder, contractor, suppliers:

Stage and southeast wing building (1952): Charles V. Liebal (general contractor and concrete supplier), Modern Construction Company (supplier of face bricks, blocks, mortar and sand, and steel lintels), DuPage Lumber Company (supplier of lumber and glass blocks), F.E. Wheaton & Company (supplier of lumber), and Loser Electric Company (supplier of a lighting system).<sup>8</sup>

Northwest wing building (1952-1955): Unknown

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> According to City of Wheaton Records: City Council minutes, June 16, 1952, the City Council approved the construction of "the platform and one 'wing' room for a band shell in Memorial Park" in 1952. G. Robert Johnson's 1955 plans for the Bandshell's roof, side walls, and back room note that the structure had two wing buildings.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> City of Wheaton Records: City Council minutes, April 21, 1958; "Concert in New Shell A Success", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 25, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "Council Told Status of Band Shell", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, June 24, 1952. This article states that City Engineer Horace F. MacKay "drew up the plans" for the Bandshell's stage and southeast wing building.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> G. Robert Johnson, Plans and Details and Elevation Section Details for Memorial Park Bandshell, June 27, 1955, Wheaton Park District Records.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Lease between the Municipal Band Commission of the City of Wheaton and the Wheaton Park District, February 18, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Agreement between the Municipal Band Commission of the City of Wheaton and the Wheaton Park District, December 14, 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The general contractor for the construction of the Bandshell's stage and wing buildings in 1952 was ascertained from the Wheaton City Council minutes for July 7 through September 8, 1952, which document regular payments made to Charles V. Liebal for labor and materials. The suppliers were determined from the Wheaton City Council minutes for July 28, August 4 and August 18, 1952, which document payments made to the suppliers.

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Roof, side walls, and back room (1958): Charles Crutcher (concrete contractor), West Suburban Steel & Welding (iron and steel contractor), Fred Zarbock (carpentry and roofing contractor), Wheaton Plastering Company (lathing and plastering contractor), Ellis Electric Company (electrical contractor), and BYO Steelmetals, Inc. (sheet metal contractor).

### 5. Original plans and construction:

The City of Wheaton constructed the Memorial Park Bandshell in two phases in 1952 and 1958. During the first phase, the concrete stage of the Bandshell was constructed in an isosceles trapezoid shape facing northeast into Memorial Park. A 3ft brick wall was constructed to frame the back of the stage. The back wall covered the southwest side of the stage and extended partially outward onto the northwest and southeast sides of the stage. One wing building was constructed in a right trapezoid shape at the southwest side of the stage. This building had walls made of orange-brown colored bricks and a flat roof. Sometime between 1952 and 1955, an additional wing building was constructed on the northwest side of the stage in a right trapezoid shape mirroring the other southeast wing building.

During the second phase, the Bandshell's roof was installed over the stage facing upward toward the northeast at an angle with six steel columns supporting it. The roof was made of framework of steel girders and purlins with an asphalt top and a metal lath and plaster ceiling. 34 lights were installed in the ceiling facing downward on the stage. The back room was constructed on the southwest side of the stage with orange-brown brick walls in an isosceles trapezoid shape. The ceiling extended over the back room. The northwest and southeast walls of the building extend outward along the edge of the stage, stopping right before the two wing buildings. The two extending walls were 8ft high. This building had walls made of orange-brown colored bricks and a flat roof Horizontal trellises were also constructed off the two front steel columns that support the roof. The trellises extended outward to the northwest and southeast, respectively.

### 6. Alterations and additions:

The City of Wheaton and Wheaton Park District only made minor alterations to the Bandshell from 1952-2019 for maintenance reasons. The Bandshell's asphalt roof was reroofed at least three times before 1996, when the green metal roof it had at the time of demolition was installed.<sup>10</sup> The glass block windows on the northeast sides of the wing buildings were mostly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> City of Wheaton Records: City Council minutes, April 21, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Letters from Ed. C. Warnecke Roofing Company to the City of Wheaton, May 18, 1972, and Olsson Roofing Company, Inc. to the City of Wheaton, April 15, 1976, in the Wheaton Park District Records document two reroofing projects during the City of Wheaton's ownership of the Bandshell. A Wheaton Park District newsletter from Summer 1983 in the Wheaton Park District Records documents an additional reroofing project in 1982. An Application for Permit submitted by the Wheaton Park District to the City of Wheaton Building/Code Enforcement & Fire Prevention Department in 1996 documents the installation of the Bandshell's green metal roof.

replaced with bricks in the 1960s, presumably due to vandalism.<sup>11</sup> The two trellises were removed at an unknown time.

#### B. Historical Context

## 1. The Wheaton Municipal Band

The construction of the Memorial Park Bandshell in the 1950s was the culmination of Wheaton's nearly 80-year history of community bands. Wheaton's first formal community band was likely the Wheaton Cornet Band, which formed in 1873 or earlier. 12 Made up entirely of men, the Wheaton Cornet Band, sometimes referred to as the "Wheaton Band", performed locally at private and public community events in DuPage County and the broader Chicago area throughout the late 19th century. Some examples of these events include a fifteenth anniversary party for Mr. and Mrs. O.D. Barnes in Wheaton in 1875, a Fourth of July event at the Illinois State Penitentiary in Joliet in 1875, a German Republican demonstration in Elmhurst in 1884, and a concert at the School Hall in Elmhurst in 1892. 13 The Wheaton Cornet Band may have officially disbanded in 1897, but sources suggest that various iterations of the "Wheaton Band" gave performances throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century.<sup>14</sup> A profile of Wheaton resident C.M. Gauger from 1935 states that Gauger had been playing in "a good many Wheaton bands" for 39 years. 15 In 1906, the Wheaton Band performed at the home of band member R.B. Steven in Wheaton and in 1907, the Wheaton Band led a parade for the Wheaton Country Fair. 16 A 1922 newspaper article writes that a Wheaton band was "recently organized" and "made its debut at a community fair in Wheaton a few days ago". 17

In 1927, the City of Wheaton began collecting a band tax to fund the Wheaton Community High School Band as permitted by the State of Illinois' 1925 law titled "An Act in relation to

 $<sup>^{11}</sup>$  A document titled "1960 Program for Band Shell Maintenance" in the Wheaton Park District Records lists "Brick up broken window areas" as a necessary maintenance task.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The earliest reference to the Wheaton Cornet Band can be found in a *Chicago Tribune* article from August 29, 1873 titled "Illinois Scatterings": "The Wheaton Cornet Band blew their horns to some purpose. They cleared \$300 upon one excursion".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> "Wheaton", *Chicago Tribune*, November 14, 1875; "Elsewhere in the State: The Convicts at Joliet and in the Penitentiary", *Chicago Tribune*, July 6, 1875; "German Republicans at Elmhurst", *Chicago Tribune*, October 25, 1884; Wheaton Cornet Band Concert program, March 10, 1892, 1997.006.3, General Documents Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> "Old Wheaton Band Meets Again", *Chicago Tribune*, February 17, 1909. The article documents a reunion of the Wheaton "brass band", which the article states was "organized in 1885 and dissolved in 1897". The organization date conflicts with sources documenting the Wheaton Cornet Band's existence as early as 1873, but it could mean that the band was reorganized in 1885. The article could also be referring to a separate band altogether.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Oney Fred Sweet, "Veteran of Wheaton Bands Has Worn Out Five Cornets", *Chicago Tribune*, July 14, 1935. <sup>16</sup> "Wheaton", *Chicago Tribune*, December 20, 1906; "Parade to Open Wheaton Fair", *Chicago Tribune*, September 5, 1907.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> "Here and There in Music", Chicago Tribune, May 28, 1922.

the employment or maintaining of musical bands by municipalities". <sup>18</sup> Wheaton Community High School formed its first band in November 1925, hiring Captain J.D. Henderson who received his training at the Conn National School of Music in Elkhart, Indiana. The Band initially had 27 instruments and held its first concert in March 1926. <sup>19</sup> The band was primarily funded by parents and students who "purchased the instruments and paid for instruction thereon" and by Captain Henderson who gave "unlimited time and energy to the band, often providing music and other equipment". <sup>20</sup> This led the Wheaton Lions Club and Wheaton's American Legion post to lobby the City of Wheaton in to hold a referendum on April 19, 1927 to approve the levying of a Band Tax to support the high school band. The referendum passed by 277 votes. <sup>21</sup> There was some concern at the time over whether the City of Wheaton should fund the high school band as a municipal band when only high school students could participate in it. <sup>22</sup> This question would come up again two years later.

The City of Wheaton starting using its band tax to fund the new Wheaton Municipal Band in 1930 due to pressure from Wheaton's American Legion post. On November 5, 1929, a representative of the Lyon & Healy musical instrument company in Chicago encouraged Wheaton's American Legion post to organize its own community band presumably with the company's help.<sup>23</sup> At their November 18 meeting, members of the American Legion discussed using Wheaton's band tax to fund both a municipal band and the Wheaton Community High School Band.<sup>24</sup> The American Legion was apparently successful in their efforts because the Wheaton Municipal Band was formed in January 1930 and its members began practicing immediately.<sup>25</sup> The Band presented its first public concert on April 2 of that year in the Wheaton Community High School auditorium.<sup>26</sup> The City ceased to fund the Wheaton Community High School band sometime in the 1930s.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Illinois General Assembly, "An Act in relation to the employment or maintaining of musical bands by municipalities", *Laws of the State of Illinois Enacted by the Fifty-fourth General Assembly at the Regular Biennial Session*, 1925, 204-205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Wheaton Community High School, *Orange and Black*, 1926, 1982.001.1937.4, Yearbooks Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> "Don't Forget to Vote 'Yes' On Band Ballot", Wheaton Progressive, April 15, 1927.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Band Tax Will Be Voted on at City Election", *Wheaton Progressive*, April 13, 1927; "Pittsford is Reelected Mayor: Defeats Howe in Election by 14 Majority", *Wheaton Progressive*, April 20, 1927; "Thanks for Band Law", *Wheaton Progressive*, April 22, 1927.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> "Band Tax Will Be Voted on at City Election", Wheaton Progressive, April 13, 1927.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "Legion to Have a Band?", *Wheaton Illinoian*, November 8, 1929. The article states "Lyon & Healy have organized bands in many surrounding towns, and seem to be having a great deal of success with their efforts to make musicians out of prospects in about twelve weeks' time".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> "Legion Notes", Wheaton Illinoian, November 22, 1929.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> "New Band to Have Practice Session", *Wheaton Progressive*, January 3, 1930. The minutes of the Wheaton City Council from November 1929 through January 1930 surprisingly do not include any reference to the formation of the Wheaton Municipal Band.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> "April 2 is Date for Band Concert", Wheaton Progressive, March 28, 1930.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> The Wheaton City Council minutes from October 1929 to December 1930 reference salary payments made to O.B. Cross, the director of the Wheaton Community High School Band for the 1929-1930 school year per Wheaton Community High School, *Orange and Black*, 1930, 1979.006.1.2, Yearbooks Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois. The Wheaton City Council minutes for April to August 1940 reference a salary

By 1932, the Municipal Band had 30 members and was giving weekly concerts during the summer months in addition to playing at special events throughout the year. The Band was mostly made up of Wheaton residents, but also included residents of nearby towns, including Glen Ellyn and Geneva. Many students from Wheaton College and Wheaton High School were also involved. Beginning in 1932, the Band held weekly summer concerts on Thursday nights on top of the City of Wheaton's water works building located across Reber Street from the DuPage County Court House. The audience sat on the lawn of the Court House and in cars along the block. The band only had male members until 1936, when Jean Albertson became the first female member. In July 1938, the Wheaton Municipal Band made plans to construct a temporary bandstand at Memorial Park with the hope of constructing a permanent one in the future, but the plans fell through. Two years later, the City of Wheaton presumably constructed a simple wooden bandshell at Memorial Park and the Municipal Band held its summer concerts there in the 1940s and early 1950s.

The Wheaton Municipal Band was regarded highly in the Wheaton community and achieved some acclaim in the Midwest during the 1930s and 1940s. The Band competed with 26 other local bands at the opening of the Century of Progress International Exposition in 1933, winning third place.<sup>35</sup> In 1936, the Band performed two concerts at the Great Lakes Exposition in Cleveland, Ohio.<sup>36</sup> Former first trombonist of the Band state said in 1939, "the band was always in demand".<sup>37</sup> The Band played at the Children's Convalescent Home at Prince Crossing Farm near West Chicago, the Lilac Festival in Lombard, as well as various sporting and community events.<sup>38</sup> Local concerts in Memorial Park were well attended and

payment made to Hugh Black, director of the Wheaton Municipal Band. The director of the Community High School Band in 1940 was Ralph Boyden per Wheaton Community High School, *Wecomi*, 1940, 1980.029.1.6, Yearbooks Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Franklin MacVeigh and Harold F. Steinbrecher, *Facts About Wheaton, Illinois with Indexed Guide and Map*, 1932, 1988.002.34.1, General Documents Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois. <sup>29</sup> Sweet, "Veteran of Wheaton Bands Has Worn Out Five Cornets".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> "Wheaton Proud of Municipal Band; Hopes for M'boro", *Daily Independent* (Murphysboro, Illinois), April 14, 1939.

 <sup>31 &</sup>quot;From 1930-1965; Years of Music; History of Wheaton Municipal Band", *DuPage County* Times, August 11, 1965; Sweet, "Veteran of Wheaton Bands Has Worn Out Five Cornets".
 32 Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> "Building Temporary Band Stand: Work Expected to Be Completed for Program Tomorrow Night", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 13, 1938; "Band to Play at Water Works Tonight", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 28, 1938.

<sup>34</sup> The construction date of the first bandshell at Memorial Park was ascertained from a July 17, 1940 article in the *Wheaton Daily Journal* titled "Band Will Feature Flag Ceremony" that states "The band wishes to apologize for the 'abbreviated' concert last Wednesday... Due to a misunderstanding the lights for the band stand had not been installed and the concert had to be cancelled on account of darkness". The Wheaton City Council minutes from April 1 to August 26, 1940 do not contain any reference to the bandshell's construction. The exact location of this bandshell in Memorial Park has not been determined.

<sup>35 &</sup>quot;From 1930-1965; Years of Music; History of Wheaton Municipal Band."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> "Wheaton Band to Play Twice at Cleveland", *Chicago Tribune*, August 16, 1936.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Daily Independent (Murphysboro, Illinois), April 14, 1939.

<sup>38 &</sup>quot;From 1930-1965; Years of Music; History of Wheaton Municipal Band."

enjoyed according to Wheaton resident Robert H. Salisbury who was a teenager during the 1940s. He recalled, "There were plenty of benches to accommodate the audience, but in addition cars parked around the perimeter of the park, and after each number the citizenry honked their approval on the car horns."<sup>39</sup>

In 1945, Arthur "Art" Sweet (1915-1999) became the conductor of the Wheaton Municipal Band and helped the organization grow significantly over the next 19 years. Born in Spring Valley, Illinois, Sweet received a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois, a music degree from Sherwood Music School in Chicago, and a master's degree from Illinois Wesleyan University. He moved to Wheaton in 1944 and became the band teacher and conductor for both Wheaton Community High School and Wheaton's grade school district a year later. Under Sweet's leadership, the Municipal Band "increased in size, musicianship, and stature", growing from 35 to 75 members by 1958.

By 1952, the wooden bandshell in Memorial Park had deteriorated significantly, prompting the City of Wheaton to construct a new bandshell that would last longer. On June 10, 1952, representatives from the City of Wheaton - City Commissioner James Peironnet, City Engineer Horace F. MacKay, Municipal Band Director Art Sweet, and members of the Municipal Band Commission - met with the Wheaton Park District to obtain permission to construct the new bandshell at Memorial Park. A week later, the wooden bandshell had been demolished and the City of Wheaton started constructing the first part of the Memorial Park Bandshell, the concrete stage with a rear brick wall and southeast wing building for storage. The Bandshell was mostly finished by the middle of July 1952 and the Wheaton Municipal Band held weekly concerts in it from July 17 to August 28 of that year.

Two years later, the City of Wheaton began corresponding with the firm Hertel, Johnson, Eipper, Stopa & Culver Architect & Engineers in Chicago to complete the Memorial Park Bandshell. The firm provided a preliminary estimate of funds to construct a roof, side walls, and back room to the Bandshell in October 1954 and architect G. Robert Johnson drew up plans for the project in June 1955. Letters between Johnson and City of Wheaton Commissioner W. H. Stevens from early 1956 reveal that the City could not afford to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Robert H. Salisbury, *The Days of Innocence: Growing Up in a Small Town, 1932-1947* (St. Louis, MO: self-published, 1999), 111.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Joan Giangrasse Kates, "Longtime band director Arthur Sweet", *Chicago* Tribune, March 6, 1999.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Ibid. and Wheaton Community High School, *Wecomi*, 1945, 1980.29.1.9, Yearbooks Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> "From 1930-1965; Years of Music; History of Wheaton Municipal Band."; George Williams, "Wheaton Band Plays in High Style Now, But Has Been Higher", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, August 1, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> "Park Board to Erect Bat Boards, Park Fountain", Wheaton Daily Journal, June 12, 1952.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> "Dismantle Bandshell", Wheaton Daily Journal, June 18, 1952.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> "Band Concerts Resume Tonight", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 17, 1952; "Final Concert of Season Will Be Given Tonight", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, August 28, 1952.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Letter from G. Robert Johnson to W. H. Stevens Jr., January 24, 1956 and Letter from G. Robert Johnson to the City of Wheaton, June 9, 1955.

complete the entire project at one time.<sup>47</sup> In a 1956 memo to Wheaton's Mayor and City Council, Stevens recommended that the City issue bonds to cover the construction of second part of the Bandshell at one time, or wait until the 1957-1958 fiscal year when the Municipal Band Fund would have enough money to cover the job.<sup>48</sup> The City's lack of action until 1957 implies that the City took the latter course of action.

In November 1957, the Wheaton City Council passed a motion directing the Municipal Band Commission to obtain a lease with the Wheaton Park District for the land that Memorial Park Bandshell occupied so the City could complete the structure. The City decided to formalize its ownership of the Bandshell because the Illinois General Assembly recently added a section to the Conveyancing Act of 1955 that permitted municipalities to lease its land to other municipalities. On February 28, 1958, the Municipal Band Commission and the Wheaton Park District signed a lease agreement for the land the Bandshell occupied for a period of 10 years and the City of Wheaton began constructing the roof, side walls, and back room. Work on the Bandshell was completed by July and the Municipal Band held its first concert in the renovated structure on July 24, 1958. The Bandshell was officially dedicated with a concert on August 7. A journalist for the Elmhurst Press wrote of the completed Bandshell, "The new home of the 80-piece Wheaton Municipal band has beautiful modern lighting and brick backdrop. The acoustics are superb, permitting the music of one of Illinois' oldest band organizations to carry far beyond the park into the star-studded night".

According to his daughter, Carol Seidel, Art Sweet persuaded the City of Wheaton to construct the Memorial Park Bandshell, contributed to its design, and played a vital role in fundraising for the project.<sup>54</sup> Sweet was among the City of Wheaton representatives who approached the Wheaton Park District about constructing the new Bandshell in June 1952, but local newspaper articles and the Wheaton City Council minutes do not give him much credit for the project.<sup>55</sup> Seidel stated that Sweet wanted a bandshell that had more favorable acoustics than the 1940 bandshell in Memorial Park and this desire appears to have been passed on to architect G. Robert Johnson, who wrote that one of his premises for the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Letter from G. Robert Johnson to W.H. Stevens Jr., January 24, 1956 and letter from W.H. Stevens to G. Robert Johnson, February 10, 1956.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Memo from W.H. Stevens Jr. to Mayor and City Council, 1956.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Letter from the Law Offices of Chapman and Cutler to W.H. Stevens Jr., October 28, 1957.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Lease between the Municipal Band Commission of the City of Wheaton and the Wheaton Park District, February 18, 1958.

<sup>51 &</sup>quot;Concert in New Shell a Success."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Williams, "Wheaton Band Plays in High Style Now, But Has Been Higher".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Alma Jilek, "Bandshell Paces Role as Culture Activity Center: Dedicate Modern Unit in Ceremonies Tonight", *Elmhurst Press*, August 7, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Interview with Carol Seidel, December 28, 2021. Seidel stated that her knowledge of the Bandshell's construction came from conversations with her father, Art Sweet, and mother, K. Jean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> According to "Council Told Status of Band Shell", the City Council thanked the members of the Municipal Band Commission – Anton Carlson, L.W. Winbolt, and Charles E. Gutke – for their "diligence" on the Bandshell project at the Council's June 24, 1952 meeting.

Bandshell's design was the "development of the form providing the most favorable acoustics possible". <sup>56</sup> Seidel also stated that Art Sweet and the Municipal Band arranged for various community organizations to host ice cream socials and bake sales at the Band's summer concerts to raise money for the Bandshell. Concert announcements in the *Wheaton Daily Journal* from 1952 and 1958 reference ice cream socials being sponsored by community organizations. <sup>57</sup>

The Wheaton Municipal Band gave its free weekly summer performances in the Memorial Park Bandshell for the next 61 years. The Municipal Band usually practiced at the Bandshell on Wednesday evenings during the summer and then performed on Thursday evenings. 58 During the City of Wheaton's ownership of the Bandshell from 1958 through 1976, the Wheaton Municipal Band primarily used the Bandshell, but other musical groups, such as the DuPage Symphony Orchestra and the Wheaton Summer Symphony, also performed there. 59 Starting in 1971 or earlier, the Wheaton Park District began holding "family entertainment shows" on Tuesday nights in the Bandshell that included puppet shows, magic shows, and musical performances. 60 After assuming ownership of the structure in 1976, the Park District also began renting out the Bandshell to youth groups, community clubs, and church groups. 61

Art Sweet continued to direct the Wheaton Municipal Band until 1963, having grown the ensemble to 90-100 members.<sup>62</sup> He remained involved with the Band until his death in 1999.<sup>63</sup> To honor his contributions to the Band and his role in constructing the Memorial Park Bandshell, the Wheaton Park District officially named the structure the Art Sweet Memorial Bandshell in 2007.<sup>64</sup>

The Wheaton Park District demolished the Memorial Park Bandshell as part of a redevelopment project for the entire park that took place from August 2019-July 2020. The tennis court to the west of the Bandshell was also demolished, and a large amphitheater was constructed at the southwest corner of the Memorial Park. The structure was completed in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: "Proposed Bandshell" by G. Robert Johnson, c. 1954-1955.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> "Puppeteer Will Appear at Band Concert", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 24, 1952; "Program for Band Concert Is Listed", *Wheaton Daily Journal*, July 24, 1958.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> "Wheaton Band Sets Playing Dates" *Chicago Tribune*, June 13, 1965.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> "Round the Corner", *Bensenville Register* (Bensenville, Illinois), July 24, 1970 documents one instance of the DuPage Symphony Orchestra performing in the Bandshell. "Music in Wheaton", *Souvenir Program and "The Wheaton Story*" (Wheaton: Wheaton Centennial Corporation, 1959) states that the Wheaton Summer Symphony "works in the summer months only, using the new Memorial Park shell".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Wheaton Park District Summer Program brochure, 1971, 1993.009.2, General Documents Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: "Wheaton Park District Bandshell Rental Policy", 1976.

<sup>62 &</sup>quot;From 1930-1965; Years of Music; History of Wheaton Municipal Band."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Interview with Carol Seidel.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: Memo from Mike Benard, Executive Director to the Board of Commissioners, December 18, 2007; James Fuller, "How Sweet it is: Wheaton Municipal Band's outdoor venue named after longtime music director", *Chicago Tribune*, July 17, 2008.

July 2020.<sup>65</sup> The Municipal Band resumed holding its weekly summer concerts at Memorial Park in the new amphitheater a year later.<sup>66</sup>

### 2. G. Robert Johnson and Mid-Century Modern Architecture

The 1958 additions to the Memorial Park Bandshell were a minor work of G. Robert Johnson (1911-1994), a Chicago-based architect and engineer. Born in Chicago, Johnson earned his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Illinois in 1934 and received private tutorage in structural engineering for six months in 1937. He worked as a Junior Draftsman at the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White from 1929-1930, a Designer and Draftsman for miscellaneous architect's offices from 1934-1939, a Designer and Engineer at the Cherry-Burrell Corporation from 1939-1943, and an Architect and Engineer at Kraft Foods Company from 1943-1947. He was as a partner in the newly formed PACE Associates architecture firm in Chicago from 1947-1952 before he and four other partners at the firm – Morris Hertel, Lloyd V. Eipper, Walter T. Stopa, and Bernard William Culver – formed their own firm, Hertel, Johnson, Eipper, Stopa & Culver. Culver left the firm in 1954. Hertel, Johnson, Eipper & Stopa was located at 105 W. Adams Street in Chicago in 1955 and 950 Pine Street in Glenview in 1962 and 1970.<sup>67</sup>

Over his career, Johnson designed a variety of structures across the United States. One of his first major projects was the Promontory Apartments, an International Style high-rise apartment building constructed in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago from 1946-1949. Johnson's firm, PACE Associates, was the architect of record for the Promontory Apartments project, but the structure is best known for its design architect, the world-renowned modernist architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. <sup>68</sup> Johnson lists the structure as one of his principal

Final Report.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Katlyn Smith, "Revised plans for revamp of Wheaton's historic Memorial Park bring it closer to reality", *Daily Herald*, March 21, 2019, <a href="https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20190321/revised-plans-for-revamp-of-wheatons-historic-memorial-park-bring-it-closer-to-reality">https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20190321/revised-plans-for-revamp-of-wheatons-historic-memorial-park-bring-it-closer-to-reality; Katlyn Smith, "Wheaton's Memorial Park project is almost complete", *Daily Herald*, June 25, 2020, <a href="https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20200625/wheatons-memorial-park-project-is-almost-complete-">https://www.dailyherald.com/news/20200625/wheatons-memorial-park-project-is-almost-complete-</a>.

<sup>66</sup> Scott C. Morgan, "Summer concerts at Wheaton's Memorial Park Bandshell", *Daily Herald*, May 10, 2021. https://www.dailyherald.com/entlife/20210510/summer-concerts-at-wheatons-memorial-park-bandshell.
67 "Johnson, G. Robert", *American Architects Directory*, 1st edition, edited by George S. Koyl (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1955), 278; "Johnson, G. Robert", *American Architects Directory*, 2nd edition, edited by George S. Koyl (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1962), 352; "Johnson, G. Robert", *American Architects Directory*, 3rd edition, edited by John F. Gane (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1970), 454; Johnson, G. Robert, Membership Files, The American Institute of Architects Archives, *The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects*, s.v. "Johnson, G. Robert", (ahd1022257),

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Commission on Chicago Landmarks, "Landmark Designation Report: The Promontory Apartments, 5530-5532 South Shore Drive", City of Chicago, October 2019, https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/zlup/Historic Preservation/Publications/Promontory Apartments

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works in his biographical listing in the 1956 *American Architects Directory*, but the level of his involvement in the project is unclear.<sup>69</sup>

Buildings for industrial dairy plants appear to have been a specialty of Johnson. During the 1950s and 1960s, he designed plants, warehouses, offices, and garages constructed for at least eight dairy companies across the county: Lehigh Valley Dairy (Allentown, Pennsylvania), Idlenot Farm Dairy (Springfield, Vermont), Grocers Dairy (Grand Rapids, Michigan), Producers Creamery (Benton Harbor, Michigan), Meadow Gold Dairy (Honolulu, Hawaii), Abbotts Dairy (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), and Hillfarm Dairy (Franklin Park, Illinois). <sup>70</sup> In 1982, he received the Dairy Design of the Year award from *Dairy Field* magazine for his design of the Leprino Food Company's plant in Waverly, New York. <sup>71</sup> He also published articles in the *Milk Dealer*, *Ice Cream Review*, and *American Milk Review*, and co-authored a manual for milk plant operators. <sup>72</sup>

Johnson also designed schools, office buildings, churches, transportation facilities, and public buildings. Other projects Johnson lists as principal works in his biographical listings for the three editions of the *American Architects Directory* include: the Fire and Crash Station at the Glenview, Illinois Northern Regional Transportation Center (1952); Consolidated Transport Facility for the United States Atomic Energy Commission in Benton County, Washington (1954); Immaculate Conception School in Waukegan, Illinois (1955); Glenview United Methodist Church in Glenview, Illinois (1960); and the Glenview Executive Plaza Office Building in Glenview (1966).<sup>73</sup> Besides the additions to the Memorial Park Bandshell in Wheaton, another building Johnson designed in DuPage County was a combination fire station and community building constructed in 1950 for the unincorporated community of York Center near Lombard.<sup>74</sup>

G. Robert Johnson's design of the Memorial Park Bandshell contains many elements common to mid-century modern architecture. Mid-century modern is a label used to refer to modern designs created by American architects from 1945 through 1969. As art historian Alice T. Friedman has shrewdly observed, buildings given this label "are so fundamentally diverse in appearance and type... that it is impossible to create a meaningful historical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> The project files for the Promontory Apartments located in the PACE Associates Records collection held by the Art Institute of Chicago may be useful for determining Johnson's role in the project. Art Institute of Chicago Archives, Research Center, Pace Associates (1946-1968) Records finding aid, Art Institute of Chicago, 2011, <a href="https://artic.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/findingaids/id/27476/rec/1">https://artic.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/findingaids/id/27476/rec/1</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> "Johnson, G. Robert", 1955, 1962, and 1970.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> "G. Robert Johnson...", *Dodge Construction News*, February 1, 1982, Johnson, G. Robert, Membership Files, The American Institute of Architects Archives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Ibid. and G. Robert Johnson, "Is There a Predictable Relationship Between Construction Costs, Plant Capacity and Product?" *American Milk Review* 22, no. 9 (1960): 32-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> "Johnson, G. Robert", 1955, 1962, and 1970.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> "York Center Holds Fair for Fire Station: Building Being Put Up by Community", *Chicago Tribune*, July 2, 1950.

category or a style label that will have lasting value".<sup>75</sup> However, mid-century modern buildings still have several common identifying features, including the prioritization of function over form, use of straight lines and geometric shapes, minimal decoration, flat or low-pitched roofs, exposed supporting beams, use of natural materials, and integration into the surrounding landscape.<sup>76</sup>

Although a more thorough survey of Johnson's designs is needed, there is no doubt that he was heavily influenced by the modern designs popular throughout his career. Johnson received his education in architecture from 1930-1934, during which time the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented its landmark exhibition and subsequent publication on the International Style, which "brought together a selection of key works that established the canon of modern architecture for a generation of students". From 1947-1952, Johnson was a partner in the PACE Associates firm in Chicago, which made its name through a series of collaborations with Mies van der Rohe in the 1940s and 1950s. Johnson directly worked on the Promontory Apartments collaboration. In 1964, the *Chicago Tribune* profiled the house Johnson constructed for his family at 1046 Heatherfield Lane in Glenview, Illinois around 1958, describing the building as a "modern structure of face brick and cypress drop siding". The house was a one-story Ranch house with a flat roof and a "close-knit and compact" floor plan. Johnson assured the home had "an affinity with the outdoors" by using cypress wall paneling throughout the house and including several large picture windows and a greenhouse. Page 19 of 19 o

G. Robert Johnson sought to transform the Memorial Park Bandshell into an economical work of modern architecture with his design of the addition of a roof, side walls, and back room. Designed to fit the Municipal Band's members and instruments and store its equipment, the Bandshell's stage and wing buildings were already very practical structures when Johnson first inspected them in September 1954. Therefore, Johnson intended his design of additions of the Bandshell to further compliment the Band's practical needs while also better integrating the structure into the surrounding park. He wrote, "It is our judgement that the design illustrated will provide the best acoustical characteristics consistent with economy and existing work, and will be an aesthetically pleasing addition to the park in which it is located". <sup>80</sup> He curved the Bandshell's roof upwards and added side walls to better project the sound of the Band toward the audience. After analyzing the construction of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Alice T. Friedman, *American Glamour and the Evolution of Modern Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup>Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 477 and 482; Alan Colquhoun, *Modern Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 233-235; and Friedman, *American Glamour*, 76-77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Friedman, 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Wolf Von Eckardt, editor, *Mid-Century Architecture in America: Honor Awards of the American Institute of Architects*, 1949-1961 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1961), 241.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Nancy Poore, "Garden Inside and Outside", *Chicago Tribune*, July 4, 1969.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Wheaton Park District Records: "Proposed Bandshell" by G. Robert Johnson, c. 1954-1955.

concrete stage, Johnson determined that it could not support the weight of the roof and instead held it up with several steel columns. He included the back room to provide additional storage.

In meeting the practical needs of the Bandshell, Johnson incorporated common mid-century modern elements. The roof is shaped like three isosceles trapezoids stacked on top of each other with crisps, straight lines and has a flat white ceiling that highlights its unique shape. The roof is also low-pitched in the Mansard style and supported by exposed steel beams. Johnson's design of the Bandshell's looks strikingly similar to Seymour R. Joseph's design of a deconstructed front façade for a drug store and other "open front" commercial store submitted to *New Pencil Point*'s 1943 competition titled "Store Fronts of Tomorrow". <sup>81</sup> To "overcome the appearance" of the Bandshell's two wing buildings, which were essential to storage, Johnson included two trellises that extended to the northwest and southeast from the roof's front two beams and covered the buildings. <sup>82</sup> Once covered in plants, the trellises would help the buildings blend in with the greenery planted behind the Bandshell.

### PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: The Memorial Park Bandshell was a Mid-Century Modern open-air structure in Memorial Park. The main feature of the building was a concrete stage covered by a geometrically shaped roof angled upward and supported by exposed steel columns. The underside of the roof was flat with four rows of built-in lights. To the northwest and southeast of the stage on the same concrete foundation were two brick wing buildings with flat roofs. Behind the stage on the same foundation was a rectangular room with brick walls covered by stage's roof. Extending from the northwest and southwest walls of the back room were two brick walls that extended along the sides of the stage, stopping right before the two wing buildings.

# B. <u>Description of Exterior</u>

- 1. Over-all dimensions: The Memorial Park Bandshell had a total length of approximately 49'-7" (southwest-northeast), and a total width of approximately 86'-3" (southeast-northwest).
- 2. Foundations: Poured concrete.
- 3. <u>Walls</u>: Walls were made of orange and brown colored bricks. The two side buildings had a layer of dark red colored bricks ringing the top of the building. The northeast walls of the side buildings each had a square of the dark red colored bricks. The southeast side building had dark red colored bricks cut to spell out "1952".
- 4. <u>Structural system, framing</u>: Isolated steel columns with a roof framework of steel girders and purlins.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Carol J. Dyson, "Mid-Century Commercial Modernism: Design and Materials", *Proceedings of the Mid-Century Modern Structures Materials and Preservation Symposium*, edited by Andrew Ferrell et al. (Natchitoches, LA: Friends of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, 2015), 162-163.
 <sup>82</sup> Ibid.

### 5. Openings:

- a. <u>Doorways and doors</u>: The northwest wing building has one white wooden door on its southeast wall opening onto the stage. The southeast side building has one wooden door on its northwest wall opening onto the stage and one beige colored wooden door on the southwest wall opening behind the stage. These doors all swing outward. The back building has two white wooden doors facing northeast onto the stage that swing inward.
- b. <u>Windows and shutters</u>: The northeast walls of the side buildings each have one small rectangular glass brick that function as a window.

# 6. <u>Roof</u>:

- a. Shape, covering: The Mansard roof of the bandshell has an irregular geometric shape

   it looks like three isosceles trapezoids stacked on each other upside down that increase in size. The roof is tilted upward at an angle with the top and bottom of the roof exposed. The top of the roof is covered in olive-colored metal slates. The exposed bottom of the roof is made of metal lath and plaster. The two side buildings have flat roofs.
- b. <u>Cornice</u>, <u>eaves</u>: The top of the roof has a gutter system with four olive colored metal downspouts near the corners of the back building's southwest side. The northwest and southeast buildings have flat roof gutters each with two black colored metal downspouts on the side opposite of the stage.
- C. <u>Description of Interior</u>: Photographs of the interior of the Bandshell's wing buildings and back room, used by the Wheaton Municipal Band for storage, were not taken before the structure was demolished in 2019.

### D. Site

## 1. General setting and orientation:

Memorial Park is a 2.5-acre park in downtown Wheaton bounded by west Union Avenue to the north, north Hale Street to the east, north Wheaton Avenue to the west, and Karlskoga Avenue to the south. The Memorial Park Bandshell was located on the southern edge of the park. To the to the northwest of the Bandshell was the Mary Lubko Center (a recreation center for active adults), a hexagon-shaped restroom/concessions building, and a Petanque court; to the northeast was park green; to the east was a small gazebo and the archway marking the main entrance to the park; to the west was a tennis court; and to the south was Karlskoga Avenue.

The Bandshell faced northeast into Memorial Park. Directly in front of the Bandshell's stage was a rectangular-shaped area paved with bricks. Behind that area was an area of grass framed by a path that starts at the park's main entrance to the southeast and curves towards the west end of the park. Long wooden benches were placed on this area of grass in the summer months for concert attendees.

2. <u>Historic landscape design</u>: Early photographs of the Memorial Park Bandshell show that there were originally two large trees in front of the structure to the northwest and southeast. In 1958, an *Elmhurst Press* journalist wrote that the Bandshell was "framed by the arching bough of a great tree at either side". These trees were removed by 1967. Photographs of the Bandshell from the late 1950s and early 1960s show a garden bed planted with greenery in front of the stage. It's unclear if greenery was ever planted to utilize the structure's two trellises.

#### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### A. Original Architectural Drawings:

G. Robert Johnson. "Plans & Details, Bandshell, Memorial Park, Wheaton Illinois" and "Elevation Section Details, Bandshell, Memorial Park, Wheaton Illinois". June 27, 1955. Wheaton Park District records.

The Bandshell was not constructed exactly according to these architectural drawings. Another isosceles trapezoid shaped part of the roof was built to extend the roof to the southwest to cover the back storage room. The 3ft existing brick wall on the southwest side of the stage was increased in size to reach the roof. The planned 8ft brick wall that would separate the new stage and backstage areas was extended to reach the roof and the parts of the 8ft side walls on the northwest and southeast sides of the structure that reached behind the separating wall were increased to reach the roof as well. In the place of the small spaces between the separating wall and the side 8ft walls, two doors were installed, and brick walls were built over them that extended to the ceiling.

### B. <u>Early Views</u>:

Joe Cools. Photograph showing the front of the completed Memorial Park Bandshell. 1958. Wheaton Park District Records.

Photograph showing the stage and back wall of the Memorial Park Bandshell. Circa 1952-1955. Private collection of Carol Seidel.

Stuart S. Palmer. Photograph showing the Bandshell from the northeast. 1967. 2018.13.4. General Photographs Collection. DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.
----- Photograph showing Memorial Park from the southwest. 1967. 2018.13.2. General Photographs Collection. DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

#### C. Interviews:

<sup>83</sup> Jilek, "Bandshell Paces Role as Culture Activity Center".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Stuart S. Palmer, Photograph showing the Bandshell from the northeast, 1967, 2018.13.4, General Photographs Collection, DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois.

Carol Seidel (daughter of Art Sweet). 2021. Interview by Zachary Bishop. DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton, Illinois. December 28.

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- E. <u>Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated</u>: The archive maintained by the Wheaton Center for History, run by the Wheaton Historic Preservation Council, is currently inaccessible to researchers and could not be reviewed for this report. The archive maintained by the Wheaton Municipal Band was inaccessible due to a reorganization project. There may be more relevant articles about the Memorial Park Bandshell and the Wheaton Municipal Band in the Wheaton newspapers available on microfilm at the Wheaton Public Library. These newspapers cannot be searched by key words since no catalog or index is available. Similarly, there may be more relevant information in the City Council minutes archived by the City of Wheaton. Members of the public must submit Freedom of Information Act requests asking for specific dates ranges of the City Council minutes.
- F. <u>Supplemental Material</u>: The following materials are attached to this report: Photograph of the 1940 bandshell located in Memorial Park, 1952. Private collection of Carol Seidel.

Edgar E. Webster. Land Survey of the Memorial Park Bandshell. May 13, 1957. Wheaton Park District Records.

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### PART IV. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

- A. Research Strategy: The research strategy was to review a variety of primary and secondary sources, including government records, newspaper articles, architectural drawings, archival documents, and historic photographs, to develop a thorough history of the Memorial Park Bandshell and understand its significance. Since the structure was demolished before this project was begun, photographs taken of the structure before its demolition were used to develop exterior descriptions. No photographs of the structure's interior were taken before demolition.
- B. Actual Research Process: Site-specific documentary research began at the DuPage County Historical Museum's research library and archival collections and included a thorough search of references to the Wheaton Municipal Band and Memorial Park Bandshell in local history books and documents. The primary preparer of this report works at the Museum, so he had easy access to these collections. Members of the public must submit a research request and arrange an appointment to view the Museum's archival collections. The Museum's research library is available to the public during regular business hours. From the Museum's sources, a general understanding of the Bandshell and Municipal Band's histories was obtained, but many contradictions existed in secondary sources about these topics. Two photographs of the Bandshell from 1967 were also discovered in the Museum's collection.

Back issues of the *Wheaton Illinoian*, *Wheaton Progressive*, and *Wheaton Daily Journal*, located on microfilm at the Wheaton Public Library, were reviewed to clear up contradictions about the Wheaton Municipal Band's founding and history and the Memorial Park Bandshell's construction. Since the preparer is also employed by the Wheaton Park District, he was able to easily access the organization's institutional records, which contains architectural drawings, historic photographs, and documents related to the construction and maintenance of the Bandshell. Members of the public must submit Freedom of Information Act requests to obtain access to the Park District's records.

Freedom of Information Act requests were submitted to the City of Wheaton to view the Wheaton City Council and Municipal Band Commission minutes from when the Municipal Band was founded in 1930 and the two phases of the Bandshell's construction in 1952 and 1958. The City does not have Municipal Band Commission minutes from prior to 1966, but had City Council minutes for the dates requested, which helped determine more details about the Bandshell's construction. City of Wheaton records related to the construction of the Memorial Park Bandshell

MEMORIAL PARK BANDSHELL (ART SWEET MEMORIAL BANDSHELL) HIBS No. DU-2021-1 Page 23

were also requested, but the City did not have any relevant documentation. The City's archive of building permits on microfilm were reviewed to learn more about alterations to the Bandshell.

Carol Seidel, daughter of Municipal Band conductor Art Sweet who lives in St. Charles, Illinois, was interviewed to learn biographical information about Sweet, his time as director of the Wheaton Municipal Band, and his contributions to the construction of the Memorial Park Bandshell. She also provided an early photograph of the Bandshell after the stage and southeast wing building were constructed. Jessica Siletzky, archivist for the Wheaton Municipal Band, was contacted regarding materials in the organization's archives related to the Band's early years and the construction of the Bandshell. Siletzky was in the middle of organizing the Band's archives and could not find relevant materials before the report was completed.

Biographies of architect G. Robert Johnson from the *American Architects Directory* and his membership file available in the *AIA Historical Directory of American Architects* were consulted to learn more about his life and work. A search of Johnson's name and firm in the *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals* yielded no results.

An extensive search of newspapers electronically available on *Newspapers.com*, including the *Chicago Tribune* and *Daily Herald*, was conducted to find articles related to the Memorial Park Bandshell, architect G. Robert Johnson, the Wheaton Municipal Band, and other community bands in Wheaton's history, resulting in a great deal of information.

C. <u>Archives and Repositories Used</u>: DuPage County Historical Museum, Wheaton; Wheaton Public Library; Wheaton Park District; and City of Wheaton.

### D. Research Staff:

- 1. Primary Preparer and researcher: Zachary Bishop, Curator, DuPage County Historical Museum, a facility of Wheaton Park District.
- 2. Secondary Preparer: Michelle Podkowa, Manager and Educator, DuPage County Historical Museum, a facility of Wheaton Park District.
- 3. Photographer: Rob Sperl, Director of Parks and Planning, Wheaton Park District and Steve Hinchee, Superintendent of Planning, Wheaton Park District.
- 4. Research material provider: Steve Hinchee, Superintendent of Planning, Wheaton Park District.

# PART V. PROJECT INFORMATION

Art Sweet Memorial Bandshell Demolition, part of an Open Space Land Acquisition & Development Grant by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, subject to review under the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420/1 et seq.) and its implementing rules (17 IAC 4180).















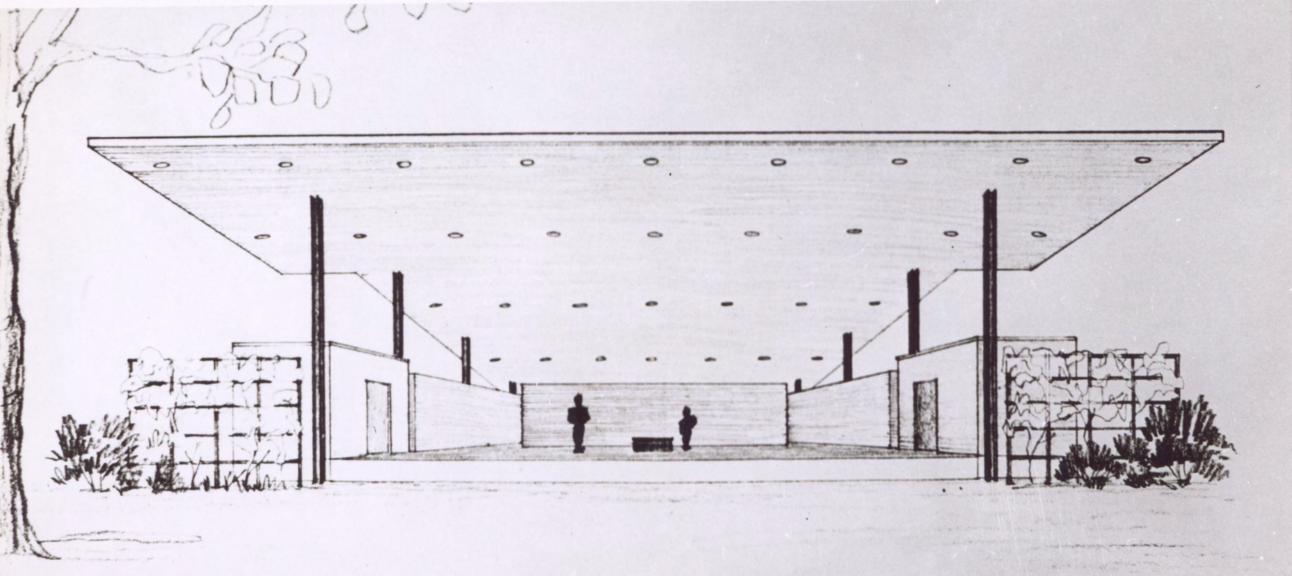


















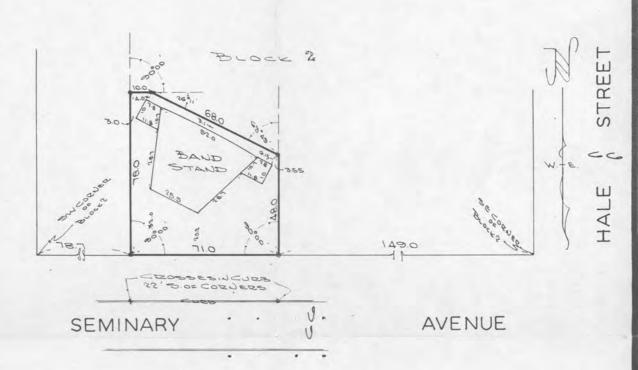






# SURVEY OF

THAT PART OF BLOCK 2 OF VALLETTE AND BEARD'S ADDITION TO WHEATON, IN SECTION 16, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED BY BEGINNING AT A POINT IN THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID BLOCK, 149.0 FEET WEST OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK AND RUNNING THENCE WEST ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID BLOCK 71.0 FEET; THENCE NORTH 78.0 FEET ON A LINE WHICH FORMS A RIGHT ANGLE WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID BLOCK; THENCE EAST ON A LINE PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID BLOCK 10.0 FEET; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY IN A STRAIGHT LINE 68.0 FEET TO A POINT 48.0 FEET NORTH OF THE PLACE OF BEGINNING (SAID POINT BEING IN A LINE DRAWN NORTH THRU THE PLACE OF BEGINNING AND AT RIGHT ANGLES TO THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID BLOCK); THENCE SOUTH 48.0 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING, IN THE CITY OF WHEATON, DUPAGE COUNTY, IDLINOIS.



BUILDINGS LOCATED AS SHOWN ON THIS. acer ILLINOIS LAND SURVEYOR NO 135% COMPARE DESCRIPTION AND POINTS BEFORE BUILDING AND REPORT ANY APPARENT DIFFERENCE TO THE SUR-

EDGAR E WEBSTER III CERTIFICATE Na. 1254 TOU LARD

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF DUPAGE S. S.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, AN ILLINOIS LAND SURVEYOR, HAVE SURVEYED THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE ABOVE CAPTION(S) AS SHOWN BY THE ANNEXED PLAT WHICH IS A CORRECT AND TRUE REPRESENTATION OF SAID SURVEY.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL AT WHEATON, ILLINOIS, 4 D. 195) ebslu ILLINOIS LAND SURVEYOR NO. 4359

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REFER TO DEED OR GUARANTEE POLICY FOR BUILDING LINE RESTRICTIONS NOT SHOWN ON PLAT OF SURVEY

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EDGAR E. WEBSTER III

J. MERRILL GOODELL

· Found iron Stake O Drove Iron Stake All Dimensions Given in Feet and Decimals Thereof Scale of Plot 30 . Feet to the Inch

EDGAR E WESSTER III CERTIFICATE Na. 1364 od Land

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