

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: Illinois
COUNTY: Madison
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: **Haskell Playhouse**

AND/OR HISTORIC: **Same**

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: **Henry Street Haskell Park (Haskell House -1211 Henry**

CITY OR TOWN: **Alton** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: **20th, Paul Findley**

STATE: **Illinois** CODE: **17** COUNTY: **Madison** CODE: **119**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Park ornament	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: **City of Alton, Illinois - Parks & Recreation Department**

STREET AND NUMBER: **P. O. Box 582**

CITY OR TOWN: **Alton** STATE: **Illinois** CODE: **17**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: **Madison County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Edwardsville** STATE: **Illinois** CODE: **17**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Historic Building Survey - Alton, Illinois**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1967** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **Hayner Library**

STREET AND NUMBER: **326 Belle St.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Alton** STATE: **Illinois** CODE: **17**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Illinois**
COUNTY: **Madison**
DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Haskell Playhouse is a single room, only 14 x 16 feet. Twin bays to north and south of the symmetrical structure, and projecting entrance under raised porch balanced by enclosed rear projection-side porch, make this architectural gem appear much larger than it actually is. Constructed on a stone foundation, the underlying balloon frame construction (the Stick Style) is suggested by the horizontal and vertical boards dividing walls into panels. Vertical trim boards are attached to studding, and clapboards fill the horizontal resulting spaces. Diagonal 'sticking' is repeated in the lower panels beneath the window level encircling the structure base. This theme is echoed by the open work design on the porch railing, and decorative double-cross lattice adds another diagonal design note filling the porch-to-ground spaces. Wooden shingles appear at the eave lines on the slightly curved surfaces then are replaced by fish scale shingles to the points where curved bay roofs join gables. Above these points overapplied ceilings announce the remainders of the smooth gables which are pierced by tiny gothic 'ventilator' windows. The hip to berm slate roof is an extremely heavy and complex feature; completely overwhelming the tiny square box, it increases its mass and importance greatly by extending outward to form supported overhangs. On the east it is pierced by a triangular 'dormer' originally containing diamond lights. Large brackets support the raised entrance porch projection, its own hip roof making it appear wing-like. Additional brackets support the curving hoods over the window bays and 1/8 cartwheels 'hold open' the 'shields' over the side windows. The only trim removed has been the 1/4 cartwheels where the porch uprights meet the roof. Decorative iron work, beautifully to scale, crowns the roof and, at right angles on a lower plane, marches along the projected porch 'wing' roof to a tiny whimsical spire.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1885

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

THE HASKELL PLAYHOUSE IS A UNIQUE ARCHITECTURAL GEM AND A WORK OF ART.

Built in 1885, the flamboyant elements of the height of the Queen Anne period of design have been artistically and liberally applied to a child's garden playhouse, thus creating as much a park sculpture as any urban furniture open space art form. The fact that few small accessory structures from the past remain among us adds to its importance. Although Lucy Haskell's playhouse would be more at home in the garden of the Carson mansion in Bureka California, nevertheless it was constructed in Alton Illinois at the rear of Old Haskell House (c. 1868; razed 1914). It has been attributed to Lucas Pfeiffengerger, well known Alton and St. Louis architect, although other structures he designed around this period such as the Watson mansion on Alby St., the Job-Drummond mansion on E. 12th and the Rodgers mansion (now razed) show much more conservatism in interpreting the Queen Anne Style. However, Pfeiffengerger may have felt, that on this tiny structure in Dr. Haskell's garden, he could express himself and the Queen Anne style totally in all the complexities and varieties of cartwheels, brackets, and iron spires.

Today, in the shadow of the behemoth and severely institutional looking Haskell mansion of 1911 (now Haskell House; headquarters of the Alton Board of Education) the playhouse seems even more an oddity than when it made its 1885 appearance at the end of the garden dependencies of the old Italianate Revival Haskell mansion on the N.E. Corner of 12th and Henry.

THE HASKELL PLAYHOUSE VISUALLY AROUSES THE CURIOSITY OF ITS PURPOSE AND IN THE EXPLANATION BRINGS FORTH A DRAMATIC AND NOSTALGIC EXPERIENCING OF ANOTHER ERA.

"The birthday of Miss Lucy Haskell was celebrated with a party on the lawn at the Haskell house on Henry St., the children enjoying games and taking turns riding the pony of their young hostess." Few families were more prominent than the Hasskells or more talked about. It has been said about Lucy's father, Dr. W. A. Haskell, that his extensive medical practice was largely due to his father who preceeded him and the prestige he enjoyed being married to the daughter of the wealthiest man in the community." In any event, Dr. Haskell, by 1912, did spend a great deal of time aboard his steam yacht 'Ouatoga' after an early retirement from his medical practice. The excerpt from the July 30, 1885 newspaper article recounting 5 year old Lucy J. Haskell's birthday party may also have been the occasion of the playhouse presentation to her by her grandfather -

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Illinois	
COUNTY Madison	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

No. 8, cont. - Statement of Significance

John E. Hayner, merchant prince-banker-financier and philanthropist. It has been reported that Hayner commissioned the playhouse for his granddaughter and that workmen donated their time to construct it in the Haskell's garden on Henry St.. Since Pfeiffenberger had been the architect some 15 years before on the upper State St. Hayner showplace mansion, (now razed) Hayner could have commissioned him for a playhouse for the daughter of his only child. Dr. Haskell, a fourth generation physician, direct descendant of Rev. Cotton Mather and an 1869 Harvard medical school graduate had married the heiress in 1877. Their first child John was born in 1878 and Lucy J. in 1880.

Four years after her playhouse was completed, at the age of 9 years, Lucy J. Haskell died of black diphtheria. It is reported that her death occurred not long after her father had treated the Hapgood girl for the same disease. Although Florence Hayner Haskell gave birth to another daughter in 1894, she died at 8 months and John remained the only Haskell child; and the only Hayner grandchild. John Haskell married in 1912 shortly after the current Haskell House was completed for his father but his emotional health was always poor and finally he was institutionalized in Boston where he died. John Hayner had died in 1903 and Dr. Haskell in 1916, but Florence Hayner Haskell lived on until 1932. After the loss of her father, her husband, and all of her children, she had decided to keep the playhouse as a memorial and it had not been razed along with the old mansion in 1916. At her death the 6.4 acre Henry St. estate containing Lucy's Playhouse and Haskell House was bequeathed to the city of Alton for a playground and facility for children; the playhouse to be retained in memory of Lucy J. Haskell.

No. 6, cont. - Representation in Existing Surveys.

Interim Report - Inventory of Architecture before W.W. II in Madison Co.
October, 1973, X-State, The Alton Council, Inc., 413 Henry St., Alton

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Coombs and Elgin, Historic Buildings Survey Alton Rotary Club, 1967 p. A-78
 Lewis, Leah, The History of the Haskell Family in Alton, unpublished.
 Norton, W. T., Centennial History of Madison County, Lewis Pub. Co., Chicago and New York, 1912.
 Pfeiffenberger, Mrs. Hortense, Conversation.
 Ryrrie, Mrs. J. A., Conversation. - Voss, Viola, Conversation.
 Swick, Norman, 19th Century Alton Architecture, unpublished.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	38°	53'	56"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	90°	10'	33"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Ruth Means and P. H. Poehner

ORGANIZATION: _____ DATE: 1

STREET AND NUMBER:
RR. # 1 413-Henry

CITY OR TOWN: Alton STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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