**1 NAME**

**HISTORIC**

Mutual Musician's Foundation Building; Musician's Union Local #627

**AND/OR COMMON**

Mutual Musician's Foundation Building

---

**2 LOCATION**

**STREET & NUMBER**

1823 Highland Avenue

**CITY, TOWN**

Kansas City

**STATE**

Missouri

---

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

District

**OWNERSHIP**

Building(S)

**STATUS**

Occupied

**PRESENT USE**

Agriculture

---

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

**NAME**

Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc.

**STREET & NUMBER**

1823 Highland Avenue

**CITY, TOWN**

Kansas City

**STATE**

Missouri

---

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.**

Office of the Assessor, City Hall - 2nd Floor

**STREET & NUMBER**

414 East 12th Street

**CITY, TOWN**

Kansas City

**STATE**

Missouri

---

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

**TITLE**

1. From Yesterday Comes Tomorrow...

**DATE**

1975

---

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS**

The Black Economic Union, 2500 Prospect Avenue

**CITY, TOWN**

Kansas City

**STATE**

Missouri
The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building (Musician's Union Local #627), 1823 Highland Avenue, is located in the East District of Kansas City, Missouri. Constructed in 1904, it was originally designed as a multi-family residential structure. The building is constructed above grade with its main facade facing west onto Highland Avenue.

**EXTERIOR**

**Overall Dimensions**

Rectangular in shape, the maximum dimensions of the building measure approximately 31' (north-south) by 52' (east-west). The building, two full stories in height, contains approximately 4,836 square feet of interior space.

**Construction Materials and Colors**

Native rubble limestone forms the foundations, while exterior walls consist of pressed red brick. The main, west facade is stuccoed and painted magenta. The secondary, north and south facades are painted gray. Along the east facade is a two-story, frame and concrete cinder block addition; the second story is presently surfaced with asphalt composition sheeting. Glass bricks are used for some window openings. The roof is flat, surfaced with built-up tar and tar paper.

**Alterations**

Originally designed as an apartment house, the building has received extensive modifications from ca. 1940 to the present. Major alterations include:

1. removal of an original first story entranceway on the west and east facades
2. addition and remodeling of present main entrance
3. resurfacing with stucco of west facade
4. removal of sash windows on west, north and south facades
5. construction of secondary entrances on north and south facades
6. replacement of original frame rear porches
7. removal of five of the original six chimneys

**Site**

The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building is located in the once flourishing commercial center of the black community. The immediate area surrounding the building contains single and multi-family residential buildings. Churches and small commercial buildings are also situated in the area. The property slopes from east to west. Remnants of a concrete cinder block garage are located at the northeast corner of the property.

**Present Status and Condition**

The building, owned by the Mutual Musician's Foundation, Inc., serves as a clubhouse, recital hall and museum. The organization has been considering the purchase of a
2. Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, Survey 1977
   Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri
   City Hall - 26th Floor, East
   414 East 12th Street
   Kansas City, Missouri  64106

3. Kansas City: A Place In Time 1977
   Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri
   City Hall - 26th Floor, East
   414 East 12th Street
   Kansas City, Missouri  64106

2. Mr. James M. Denny (State Contact Person)
   Department of Natural Resources
   Office of Historic Preservation
   P.O. Box 176
   Jefferson City
   February 20, 1978
   314/751-4096
   Missouri  65102
new building to relocate and furnish the organization with larger facilities. The building is included within an area designed for future redevelopment, centered around the intersection of East 18th and Vine Streets. The building is well maintained and is in fair condition.

FOOTNOTES

1. Western Contractor, Vol. 3, No. 15, April 6, 1904, p. 1; Service Permit No. 24390, May 2, 1904, Water Department, 5th Floor, City Hall, 414 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.


### SIGNIFICANCE

**PERIOD**
- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**
- ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- CONSERVATION
- LAW
- ECONOMICS
- LITERATURE
- EDUCATION
- MILITARY
- ENGINEERING
- PHILOSOPHY
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INDUSTRY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- INVENTION
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- COMMUNICATIONS
- THEATER
- ARCHITECTURE
- INVENTION
- ART
- MUSIC
- SCULPTURE
- COMMERCE
- RELIGION
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- ECONOMICS
- LITERATURE
- ART
- MUSIC
- ARCHITECTURE
- RELIGION
- COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMERCE
- EDUATION
- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- MUSIC
- RELIGION
- SCULPTURE
- COMMUNICATIONS
- COMMERCE
- ART
- MUSIC
- ARCHITECTURE
- RELIGION

**SPECIFIC DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFIC DATES</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>BUILDER/ARCHITECT</th>
<th>Rudolf Markgraf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building in Kansas City, Missouri, is a significant center for the development of jazz, particularly the "Kansas City Style," one of America's indigenous musical expressions. The building, constructed in 1904 for Mrs. A. Lizzie Burr, was originally built as an apartment flat from designs by local architect, Rudolf Markgraf. The structure was utilized for residential purposes until 1928, when the building was purchased by the former all-black Musician's Union Local #627 for their organizational headquarters.

Many of the nation's leading jazzmen were or are members of the Musician's Union Local #627 and the Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc. They include: band leaders, Bill "Count" Basie, Bennie Moten, Jay McShann and George F. Lee; singer, Julia Lee; trumpeter "Hot" Lips Page; tenor saxophonists, Dick Wilson, Herschal Evans and Lester Young; alto saxophonist, Charlie "Bird" Parker; drummer, Baby Lovett; and pianist, Pete Johnson. The building is immortalized in the song "627 Stomp," one of the original "boogie-woogie" tunes by jazz greats Pete Johnson and singer, Joe Turner. The song is named in honor of the Musician's Union Local #627.

### HISTORICAL DATA

Between the first three decades of the twentieth century, Kansas City experienced an increase in its black population following a rapid migration to the urban areas. To satisfy the demand for entertainment that grew out of a diverse culture, a separate world of black entertainment and show business evolved; derived principally from minstrel shows, vaudeville, traveling companies and ragtime, culminating into its greatest product, jazz. Jazz developed simultaneously across the country in the early part of the century. Prior to World War I, the main center of jazz was located in New Orleans. In 1917, city authorities closed down the largest club and red light district in the country, dispersing many performers to other American cities. Many arrived in Kansas City. The genesis of Kansas City jazz dates to approximately 1917 following the organization of the Musician's Union Local #627.

Kansas City, in association with the other jazz centers - New York City, New Orleans and Chicago, became the western center of American jazz. Under the control of political boss Thomas Pendergast, night life flourished in Kansas City during and after Prohibition. In the 1920's, large bands formed throughout the region and gravitated towards Kansas City, whose night clubs and dance spots remained open around the clock. The most famous clubs were the Reno, the Subway, the Sunset and the ballrooms, El Paseo and El Torreon. The clubs nurtured jam sessions, a Kansas City specialty, encouraging jazzmen to participate in musical contests. During the late twenties all groups and


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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one (1) acre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUADRANGLE NAME</th>
<th>QUADRANGLE SCALE</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>B 4,3,2,7,17,6,0</td>
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

WM Toms Add N 25 Ft. LOT 35 ALL EXC N 30 FT LOT 36 BLK 3

---

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
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**FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME/ TITLE

Edward J. Miszczuk, Chief Research Historian

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri

DATE

February 20, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall - 26th Floor E., 414 E. 12th Street

TELEPHONE

816/274-2555

CITY OR TOWN

Kansas City

STATE

Missouri

64106

---

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X  STATE   LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

[Signature]

DATE

1-9-79

TITLE

Director, Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

---

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]

DATE

2/7/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

[Signature]

DATE

2/7/79
bands with any reputation were heard at the annual tournament of bands staged by Local #627. The tournaments, begun in the early twenties, were strictly limited to union members. The proceeds from these events were used to purchase the building at 1823 Highland Avenue.

In 1929, the Negro Musicians Association was formed and chartered. It was comprised of a group of black professional musicians in need of rehearsal facilities. In 1958, the Association changed to its present corporate identity - Mutual Musician's Foundation, Inc. The foundation's prime tenant was the Local #627.

The Foundation was a second home, a training ground and a source of jobs for approximately 90 percent of the musicians who created the powerful Kansas City sound of the 30's and 40's. There was a period when the Foundation directly supported Count Basie and other jazz greats.

The general prosperity in Kansas City came to a sudden end in 1939 with the indictment of Thomas Pendergast for income tax evasion. Following his conviction, reform elements soon took over. Most of the clubs and speakeasies were forced to close down and the musicians who were not established in big travelling bands drifted away. Some musicians went to war and a few remained in Kansas City. This great era of Kansas City jazz was over, and replaced with the "Bebop Revolution." The mainstream of musical ideas that shaped this new jazz style emanated from Kansas City with saxophonists Lester Young and Charlie "Bird" Parker being the most notable practitioners.

By the late 1950's and early 1960's, Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc. held regular weekend and after hours promotions for its members and their friends. These concerts and jam sessions have outgrown the facilities at 1823 Highland Avenue, and have been periodically performed in the nearby Armory Building. The Kansas City Jazz Festival concerts have been presented with other jazz programs sponsored by or affiliated with the Mutual Musician's Foundation, Inc. The proceeds from these events have been used for musical scholarships and other charitable projects.

The survey of Missouri's sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in "Missouri: State Historic Preservation Plan." The Mutual Musician's Foundation Building is therefore being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Fine Arts and Humanities," "Recreation," and "Society."

FOOTNOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Page 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Contractor, Vol. 3, No. 15, April 6, 1904, p. 1; Service Permit No. 24390, May 2, 1904, Water Department, 5th Floor, City Hall, 414 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.</td>
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<td>Ibid., pp. 213-214.</td>
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<td>Woo, Musical America, p. 8.</td>
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<td>Russell, op. cit., p. 11.</td>
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<td>Ibid., op. cit., p. 206.</td>
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</table>


6. Kansas City, Missouri. Water Department-City Hall. Service Permit No. 24390.


The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WHEN THE NOMINATION IS RESUBMITTED.

Description: 


Statement of Significance: 


Bibliography: 

Geographical Data -- Acreage: 

UTM Reference(s): 

Verbal Boundary Description: 

Certification: 

Photographic Coverage: 

Map Coverage: 

Other: Please provide original rather than photocopy of form
Please provide photo of building before attachments

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

on the National Register staff, telephone ____________________

Thank you for your attention to the above items.

Date: 12/12/78

Chief, Branch of Registration

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Significance dates exactly to 50 years ago or less and is not discussed in context of exceptional. Exterior of property significantly changed--but changes made by the group important in association to this property. Also, the interior is probably as important an element in significance as exterior.

Conclusion of #9 suggests why they are considering the property at this time.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

I recommend listing--significance based on 50 year association with musicians of central importance to Kansas City musical contribution. This structure more "personally" significant for that group of musicians than the nightclubs, etc., in which they played for pay.

Once listed send to hand marks for their consideration.

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER
Property: Mutual Musician's Foundation Bldg.
State: MO.
Working Number: 5.23.28.317
2nd Control

TECHNICAL
Photos: 5
Maps: 1

CONTROL
OK: 1/26/79

HISTORIAN
Accept

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
Consult with my earlier review. See Denver's comments from state.

ARCHAEOLOGIST
I must agree fully with Sheffy (1/22/79) that structure is eligible through its continuing association
with Mutual Musician's Foundation, an organization of black musicians among whose members have been some
of the most prominent contributors to jazz and post-jazz musical styles of the U.S.

OTHER
Send to HAER for review.

HAER
Inventory: ___
Review: ___

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF
Accept

BRANCH CHIEF
Reviewed by Lucy.

KEEPER

National Register Write-up
Federal Register Entry
Send-back
Re-submit
Entered: FEB 7, 1979

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Mutual Musician's Foundation Building
Kansas City, Missouri
photographer: Sherry Piland
Jackson Co., December, 1977

Kansas City Landmarks Commission
City Hall - 26th Floor East
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Northwest corner of building; view looking southeast, showing north facade on the left and west facade on the right. FEB 7 1979

Jackson Co.
Mutual Musician's Foundation Building
Kansas City, Missouri
photographer: Sherry Piland
December, 1977

Kansas City Landmarks Commission
City Hall - 26th Floor East
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Southwest corner of building; view looking northeast.

FEB 7 1979

MAY 23 1978
Mutual Musician's Foundation Building
Kansas City, Missouri
photographer: Sherry Piland
December, 1977

Kansas City Landmarks Commission
City Hall - 26th Floor East
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Northeast corner of building; view looking west.

FEB 7 1979  MAY 23 1978
Mutual Musician's Foundation Building
Kansas City, Missouri
photographer: Sherry Piland
December, 1977

Kansas City Landmarks Commission
City Hall - 26th Floor East
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Southeast corner of building;
view looking west.

FEB 7 1979

MAY 23 1978
Mutual Musician's Foundation Building
Kansas City, Missouri
photographer: Sherry Piland
December, 1977

Jackson County

Kansas City Landmarks Commission
City Hall - 26th Floor East
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

East facade of building;
view looking west.

FEB 7 1979
MAY 23 1978

Jackson Co.
January 16, 1979

Dr. William M. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register
Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation & Recreation Service
440 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20243

Dear Bill:

Please find enclosed one (1) completed National Register Inventory-Nomination Form for:

MUTUAL MUSICIAN'S FOUNDATION BUILDING

and related data approved by Missouri's review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This form is signed by Fred A. Lafser, State Historic Preservation Officer, and this site is thereby formally nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Orval L. Henderson, Jr.
Program Director

Enclosures: as stated

cc: Milton Perry
   Jane Flynn

Joseph P. Teasdale    Governor
Fred A. Lafser    Director
Telephone report

Mutual Musician's Foundation Bldg

(jan 3)

James Benny - Mo. SHPO staff

Jim said that they had noticed this structure since other dance halls, etc. had disappeared and they felt it was important to document this aspect of St. Louis history.

They realize that the building has been altered. They know of no earlier photos - Jim made the point they weren't nominating it for architecture.
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MISSOURI

Date Entered    FEB 7 1979

Name

Mutual Musician's Foundation Building

Location

Kansas City
Jackson County

Also Notified

Honorable John C. Danforth
Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton
Honorable Richard Bolling

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Fred A. Lafser
State Department of Natural Resources
1001 SW. Blvd.
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

NR Byers/bjr 2/13/79

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.
February 22, 1979

Mutual Musicians Foundation, Inc.
1823 Highland Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri  64108

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to inform you that Mutual Musician's Foundation Building, Kansas City, Missouri, has been entered on the National Register of Historic Places as of February 7, 1979. With this acceptance the Building is now eligible for federal matching assistance for preservation projects.

Mutual Musician's Foundation Building has been given the distinction of National Register enrollment because it is a significant center for the development of Jazz, particularly the "Kansas City Style," one of America's indigenous musical expressions.

As owners, you are eligible to receive a handsome, framed certificate, signed by the Governor, the Secretary of State, and the State Historic Preservation Officer, signifying the official recognition of Mutual Musician's Foundation Building. Please notify this office if you wish to be presented with such a certificate.

Enclosed please find a brochure explaining the National Register program, a sheet listing the benefits of enrollment and discussing the protective clauses established by law and executive order, data on the Tax Reform Act of 1976 as it pertains to historic preservation, and a question and answer sheet providing information on points frequently raised by owners of registered properties.

Joseph P. Teasdale   Governor
Fred A. Lafser     Director
February 22, 1979

Your continued interest in the preservation of one of Missouri's historic sites is encouraged. Feel free to write or call my office if further assistance is needed.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

FRED A. LAFSER

Fred A. Lafser
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer

FAL:OH:jk

Enclosures: as stated

cc: Honorable Henry A. Panethiere, Senator 11th District
Honorable Paul Rojas, Representative 23rd District
Milton Perry, Chairman, Mo. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
/ Jane Flynn, Landmarks Commission of Kansas City
**NAME as it appears on federal register:** Mutual Musician's Foundation Building

**OTHER NAMES:** Musician's Union Local #627 Building

**LOCATION**
- street & number: 1823 Highland Ave.
- city/town: Kansas City
- state: MO
- county: Jackson

**DATE OF ENTRY:** FEB 7 1979

**OWNER/TYPE:**
- kd: Privately owned
- pr: Private

**EXISTING SURVEYS:**
- ch: Yes
- au: Yes
- cd: Yes
- ds: Yes
- np: Yes
- ad: Yes

**CONDITION:**
- original site: good
- unexposed: fair
- excavated: deteriorated
- altered: excavated

**OWNER/ADMINISTRATOR:**
- admin: Landmarks Comm. of KC

**EXISTING SURVEYS**
- ch: Yes
- au: No
- cd: No
- ds: Yes
- np: Yes
- ad: Yes

**ACCESS:**
- yes: Restricted
- unknown: Yes

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:**
- architecture
- history
- landscape

**FUNCTIONS:**
- historic events

**ARCHITECT:**
- architect:
- master builder:
- engineer:

**NAMES:**
- landscape architect:
- interior designer:
- artist:
- artisan:
- builder/contractor:

**NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP**

**NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET**
|--------|------------|-------------------|-------|------|-------|--------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------------|----------------|

EXPLANATION:

1. Missing Status: Entire Folder ( ); Nomination ( ); Map(s) ( ); Photos ( )
   Available on: Microfiche ( ); Optical Disk ( )

2. (Cause for removal)  
   (Date Removed)

3. (NHL Name, if different than NRHP Name)  
   (Date Designated)

4. (If multi-state/county TR, state/county where filed and location)  
   (TR or MRA Name)

5. (If multi-state/county MRA, state/county where filed and location)

6. (Location of oversize file)  
   (Target Date)

7. (Current source of partial documentation)  
   (Target Date)

COMMENTS:

(Where found, or source of replacement)  
(Date Found/Replaced)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
National Register of Historic Places  
Locator Card  
WASO 21  
JAN. 1986