

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: Dresser Drive in Fairbanks ParkCity or town: Terre Haute State: IN County: VigoNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

____ national ____ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ____ B x C ____ D_____
Signature of certifying official/Title:_____
DateIndiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:_____
Date_____
Title :_____
State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☐

Public – Local

☒

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	☐
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☒
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION/CULTURE: music facility

LANDSCAPE: plaza

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION/CULTURE: music facility

LANDSCAPE: plaza

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation:	STONE: Limestone
walls:	BRICK
	STONE: Limestone
	STONE: Granite
roof:	ASPHALT
other:	CONCRETE

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza was constructed in Fairbanks Park, along the Wabash River, between 1936-1937 with materials salvaged from the former city post office and repurposed under the Federal Works Progress Administration. The plaza features a large terrace of concrete steps and paver brick backed by a wide, stepped brick wall forming a classically inspired backdrop. The main feature of the plaza is a temple-like pavilion composed of two colonnades of tall, polished stone Corinthian columns topped by back-to-back stone pediments with impressive high-relief carvings of eagles.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

Narrative Description

The Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza is situated on the east side of Dresser Drive as it winds in a north/south direction through Fairbanks Park on Terre Haute's near southwest side. Fairbanks Park is located west of U.S. 41 on the east bank of the Wabash River as it flows along the city's west side. The plaza is situated in a southwest/northeast orientation in the north half of the park. A lawn with a few mature trees surrounds the plaza and gradually rises up toward the northeast/First Street and down toward the riverbank. Modern park amenities such as wood pavilions and a brick and stone amphitheater are located in other parts of the park (seen in photo 13) and are not included in this nomination which is exclusive to the plaza and surrounding lawn.

The plaza functions together as a single structure, over two hundred feet wide (photo 07), but is composed of three primary parts: a large brick and concrete terrace surrounded on three sides by seven concrete steps, brick walls that form a backdrop to the plaza and flank long sets of steps leading to the terrace, and a tall stone temple-like pavilion composed of two rows of Corinthian columns topped by large, carved back-to-back pediments. Each of these primary parts will be described separately. Much of the stone material, most notably the carved limestone pilasters, columns, and carved stone pediments are materials that were salvaged from the old city post office, built in 1887 at the southwest corner of Cherry and Seventh Streets, and repurposed for the plaza in 1936-37.

The terrace extends from the brick wall backdrop southwest a distance of approximately sixty-three feet and is approximately forty feet wide (see photos 05, 13). Wide entries to the terrace lead from long sets of steps flanked by brick walls in the northwest and southeast corners near the back wall (photos 09, 15). These steps and wall composition will be described later. Seven concrete steps lead up to the terrace on its southwest (front) and northwest and southeast sides (photo 06). The concrete steps, which feature short risers and wide treads are in deteriorated condition. The terrace floor is composed of panels of brick pavers laid into a concrete grid (seen in photos 11-13).

The brick walls that form the back wall, or backdrop to the plaza and flank the long sets of steps that lead to the terrace feature a stone base and are divided into bays by brick pilasters. The walls that flank the long sets of steps have a broad arcing form (inward toward the terrace) and are topped with concrete caps (photos 09, 15). The walls flank a wide set of five steps fronted with concrete, with two additional concrete steps on the northwest side (right side of photo 17) and one additional step on the southeast side extending from the end piers of the walls. The wide treads of the steps are composed of brick pavers. The end piers have a base composed of ten courses of brick followed by a course of rowlocks stepped in from the base. A short limestone block steps in from the course of rowlocks and is followed by a tall block of limestone with a concrete cap (photos 05, 15). The tall blocks on the east side of the steps function as cornerstones.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

The southeast stone features the following inscription (photo 08):

(outer face)

ERECTED BY
FEDERAL WORKS PROGRESS
ADMINISTRATION
A.D. 1937

(inside face)

BOARD OF
PARK COMMISSIONERS
SAMUEL E BEECHER – MAYOR
LILLIAN J WHITE – PRESIDENT
BEN BECKER – VICE-PRESIDENT
GUY STANTZ – SECRETARY
ANTON HUMLAN JR.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS
RICHARD A WEY

ARCHITECTS
MILLER AND YEAGER

The northwest stone features the following inscription (photo 16):

(inside face)

PLANNED AND DEDICATED
BY
THE BANKS OF THE WABASH
ASSOCIATION

TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY
OF THOSE WHO BY THEIR
GENEROUS MATERIAL GIFTS
HAVE ENLARGED THE SPIRITUAL -
EDUCATIONAL – EDUCATIONAL – PHYSICAL
AND RECREATIONAL LIFE OF
THIS COMMUNITY

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

The west flanking walls of the steps are divided into seven bays by pilasters that feature flat tops capped with concrete (photo 05). The walls feature a stone base topped by a course of rowlocks and stone beltcourse. The outer five bays are divided by short brick piers with stone bases that are set on the course of rowlocks. The inner two bays are composed of a semicircular bay composed of courses of header brick and the innermost bay that features a stone balustrade. The balustrade is composed of five carved balusters with large stone end blocks (photos 06, 10, 13). This balustrade is also capped with stone. While the southeast balustrade is intact, portions of the northwest balustrade are missing or in storage.

The east flanking walls are divided into five bays by brick piers/pilasters. The outer two bays feature flat tops capped with concrete (photos 09, 15). The inner three bays step upward toward the center and are capped with stone (also seen in photos 09, 15). These stone caps are square over the pilasters and feature ogee carving along their edge which give the tops of the walls a cornice appearance. The inner three bays feature a belt course of carved stone between the pilasters at balustrade railing height. Two carved scroll brackets atop the stone caps brace the pilasters as the wall steps up toward the center.

A semicircular bay connects the flanking east walls to the back wall of the plaza which is set back from the flanking walls approximately eight feet (this is best seen in photo 03). These semicircular bay walls feature a carved stone belt course at balustrade railing height followed by two projecting brick belt courses that divide the wall into four horizontal bands. The wall is topped by a stone cornice. The back wall, or backdrop of the plaza is divided into five bays by fluted stone pilasters (photo 03). The pilasters feature simple Doric capitals with a star carved into the center of the lower band of the capital (photos 11, 14). The bays are divided into six horizontal bands by a carved stone belt course (or balustrade in the center three bays) followed by four projecting brick belt courses. The back wall/backdrop is flat and topped with a stone cornice. The outer two bays feature a stone carving composed of an oval cartouche with swags near the top of the walls. The middle three bays feature a balustrade composed of five carved stone balusters and stone railing above which rises a tall segmental arched opening. The arch is composed of brick voussoirs and keystone. The opening is filled with a stone spandrel that has been partially filled with interpretive materials covered with plexiglass. The original intention for the spandrels was to have carved busts or inscriptions of names of city benefactors. The back of the east flanking wall is devoid of details except for simple stone capitals on the brick pilasters that divide the backdrop wall into five bays (photos 17-20).

The pavilion is approximately ten feet deep, thirty feet wide, and thirty feet tall (photo 03). It features two colonnades composed of polished gray granite columns (some reference is made to these being marble) with carved limestone bases and Corinthian capitals (photo 05-06). The bases rest on octagonal stone plinth blocks (photos 11-12); the southwest front block is carved with the inscription "CORNERSTONE." The columns' shafts are composed of three sections with entasis. These support a large stone pediment that is composed of two historic pediments placed back-to-back. The only visual clues to the marriage of two pediments are the blocks used to fill in the sides (northwest/southeast) that lack carved modillions supporting the cornice, and from the built-up section of roof that covers the space between the pediments (photo 01). This

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

built-up portion of gabled roof has copper fascia and is covered with asphalt shingles. The ceiling of the pavilion is stuccoed and features two metal vents (seen in photo 10).

The pediments are mirror images with the northeast-facing eagle looking south while the southwest-facing eagle looks north. The only difference between the two pediments is the carved inscription in the front (southwest) frieze, highlighted in gold lettering: CHAUNCEY ROSE MEMORIAL PLAZA (photo 04). The pediment is composed of all the classical parts including an entablature, followed by the frieze, topped with rows of dentils. The cornice features rows of small scroll brackets supporting the cornice except where infill blocks were placed as mentioned previously. In those locations, and under the cornice that follows the rake of the pediment, are flat stone mutules. Rows of dentils also follow the rake below the cornice. The tympanum features a large relief carving of an eagle with wide-spread wings with its talons resting on a carved scroll-like plinth. Extending out from the eagle's talons, in each direction, are high relief carvings of stylized oak boughs bound with fiddlehead ferns.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☒ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1937-1976

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Miller and Yeager

Federal Works Progress Administration

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in the year the plaza was completed, 1937, and ends in 1976, the fifty-year cut-off for eligibility. This end date was selected since the plaza maintained an important place for Terre Haute's residents for recreational use through the end of the 20th century.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The plaza falls under criterion consideration F as a commemorative property dedicated to the remembrance of an important Terre Haute leader, Chauncey Rose. The plaza's grand architectural scale and use for recreational purposes raises its level of significance from a simple commemorative structure or object to one that has functionality beyond its commemorative nature.

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

The Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places using criterion A under politics/government as the area of significance. The plaza was built by the Federal Works Progress Administration during the 1930s New Deal era. Its grand scale and use of salvaged materials from the 1887 Terre Haute Post Office is an important aspect of the relief project. While many New Deal projects utilized local materials or salvaged elements, the planners of Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza repurposed large scale elements that shaped the scale and grandeur of the plaza. While the plaza served the purpose as a memorial, it was also used for recreational activities, specifically concerts, and pageants. It was often referred to as an open-air theatre or amphitheater. Because of this, it also qualifies under entertainment/recreation using criterion A.

The plaza is also eligible using criterion C under architecture as the area of significance. The plaza's classically inspired design by the locally significant architecture firm of Miller and Yeager is notable for its scale and repurposed classical features when it was constructed between 1936 and 1937.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

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

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT & ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

The Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza was built through support from the federal relief projects of the 1930s. In an effort to provide employment during the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced programs broadly named the “New Deal” which resulted in countless projects employing men and women across the United States for all types of civic improvements. These included infrastructure and beautification projects, park development (local, state, and national), and civic building construction among other types of programs. The programs focused on providing jobs during the time when nearly 13 million Americans were out of work, or roughly a quarter of the civilian workforce.

Most often, the federal government would pay for labor costs involved in civic improvements if local municipalities would fund material costs. This was the arrangement for the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza when it was built by employees through the Works Progress Administration (WPA).^{1 2} A 1935 report from the acting administrator in Washington D. C. on WPA activity in the United States was received by the Indiana WPA headquarters in October. In the report it was revealed that Indiana was second in the nation with the number of enrollees in federal aid projects, below the New York City district and above Pennsylvania (a population three times that of Indiana at that time). In 1935, 61,616 Hoosiers were employed with WPA jobs.^{3 4} The large force of Hoosiers employed under the federal aid project proved particularly beneficial when flooding ravaged southern Indiana in 1937; an army of men was dispatched for flood relief and rehabilitation work.⁵ Over a two-year period from June 1935- June 1936, expenditures of all federal emergency relief appropriations were nearly \$142 million in Indiana. Of that, just under \$94 million was expended by the Works Progress Administration.⁶ In the last month of Indiana’s fiscal year, ending June 1938, WPA costs were \$5,073,582 with 379,376 employed through the program. This equated to 11.7 percent of the state’s population.⁷

Terre Haute was the recipient of a few projects under the New Deal. One was an extensive flood control project, involving three sites constructed between 1935-1936. It employed approximately 924 men with an expenditure of \$531,460.⁸ A strike by 2,000 WPA employees in/around Terre

¹ “Work Has Begun on \$75,000 Memorial” *Indianapolis News*. 04 May 1936. Pg. 21.

² “Work Underway on Two Memorials” *Indianapolis News*. 11 May 1936. Pg. 17.

³ *Argos Reflector*, October 24, 1935

⁴ “Projects Employ 61,616; State Leads All But NY” *Hancock Democrat*. 24 Oct 1935. Pg. 4.

⁵ *Argos Reflector*, February 3, 1937. The *Indianapolis Star* published a similar article on 10/22/35 (see bibliography) which cites “a report received yesterday at state WPA headquarters” as the source of the statistics. The original report cannot be located.

⁶ “State Spends \$141 Millions” *The Elkhart Truth*. 10 July 1937. Pg. 5.

⁷ “Public Help Cost Reaches New High Mark” *Richmond Palladium-Item*. 13 Sept 1938. Pg. 2.

⁸ *Recovery in Indiana*. April 1936. Pg. 10: accessed through Indiana State Library.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

Haute occurred in December 1935 over being required to work more than a six-hour day. The strike was resolved, though 27 workers were dismissed by the state WPA director.⁹

One of the New Deal projects in Terre Haute included a new Federal Building & Post Office to take the place of the one constructed in 1887. The demolition of that building and construction of the new building completed in 1935 provided the salvage material used for the primary components of the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza. The 1935 building now serves Indiana State University under the name Federal Hall. The building includes a triptych painting by Frederick Webb Ross *Signing of the Magna Charta*, also funded through the New Deal. Improvements to Terre Haute's public park, Deming Park (1919), were carried out through the Works Progress Administration. These improvements included stone bridges, entry gates, and drinking fountains. Park improvements were some of the more common New Deal projects completed during the 1930s. The other massive building project in Terre Haute was carried out by the Public Works Administration under the New Deal. Construction of the United States Penitentiary Building between 1938-1940 cost over \$3 million, largely funded by the PWA.¹⁰

The first mention of the creation of a memorial to Chauncey Rose appearing in the minutes of the Terre Haute Park Department was on December 5, 1933. At that time, Mr. Waldron and Mr. Bauermeister, representing the Banks of the Wabash Association presented plans and specifications for construction of a memorial in Fairbanks Park dedicated to Chauncey Rose and others. Those others are never named, and the memorial only carries the name of Chauncey Rose. At that time, they assured the park board that funding, aside from the cost of materials, would be provided for labor through the Civilian Works Administration, a New Deal agency. The cost of materials was \$6144.00. The park board voted to approve financing the project with \$6000.00 for materials. The Banks of the Wabash Association said the value of the project would be \$39,500 when completed. It is surmised that Miller and Yeager, architects for the new federal building and post office, had provided the plans by this time, specifying the repurposed materials from the old post office and federal building though those specifics are not mentioned in the minutes.¹¹

The Banks of the Wabash Association had formed by the 1920s in the interest of improving civic and cultural facilities in the Terre Haute area, with particular interest in riverside bank and park improvements on the Wabash River. Fred Waldron became its president in 1927. In various meetings of the association, it had been noted that there was no permanent memorial for contributions by individuals for the welfare or betterment of the city, and specifically, Chauncey Rose. Waldron was first to suggest that something of a permanent nature be constructed. This came at the same time a new post office had been approved for the city, so "with this project in mind, steps were taken to secure the stone and marble columns from the old building with the thought in mind that these could be worked over into some kind of memorial."¹² The Banks of the Wabash Association hired architects Miller and Yeager to plan a Rose Memorial using the

⁹ "27 Workers Dismissed" *Hammond Times*. 07 Dec 1935. Pg. 1.

¹⁰ Living New Deal: Terre Haute Sites: <https://livingnewdeal.org/us/in/terre-haute/> accessed December 10, 2024

¹¹ Minutes of the Terre Haute Park Board, December 5, 1933

¹² "Retires After 32 Years Leadership In Banks of Wabash Association" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 10 April 1955. Pg. 25, col. 1

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

materials they obtained from the old post office and moved to the site at Fairbanks Park. The result was the “open air theatre” into which “are niches arranged for inserting plaques or other methods for inscribing the names of past and future benefactors which should be recognized and remembered.”¹³ These are the segmental arched stone spandrels in the back wall of the memorial, though they do not appear to have ever been inscribed.

By the 1910s, early city benefactor Chauncey Rose (1794-1877) was being remembered by Terre Haute residents through annual memorial exercises. Rose moved to Terre Haute in 1819 and had become a leading businessman by the early 1840s, later working to establish railroads to serve the city.

In 1912, the memorial exercises were represented by members from institutions Chauncey Rose had established: Rose Polytechnic Institute, Rose Ladies Aid Society, Rose Orphans Home, and Rose Dispensary, which provided for medical needs of the city’s poor.¹⁴ The memorial exercises had been held for a number of years at Highland Lawn Cemetery (Rose’s burial place) but had been moved to Rose Polytechnic Institute in 1923. That year, students, faculty, and the city’s citizenry assembled to hear a reading by James H. Swango on the last message of William C. Ball, who provided funds for flowers to be left on the graves of other benefactors of the institutions founded by Chauncey Rose. The superintendent of the Rose Orphans Home presided over the 1923 exercises and the Rose Home Chorus provided music. A speech was also provided by the Women’s Aid Society regarding the Rose Home for Aged Women, and the operation of the Rose Dispensary was described by another community leader.¹⁵ The annual Chauncey Rose Memorial exercises continued at least into the early 1930s and may have prompted the idea for the memorial plaza by the Banks of the Wabash Association.

Work commenced on the plaza, at that time named the Chauncey Rose Memorial, on April 27, 1936. It was noted in park board minutes that a special meeting of the park board was held on that date to discuss plans for the memorial, “construction of which was started on this date” as the plans had been altered slightly from the original plans. Members reviewed the work at Fairbanks Park and gave approval for the plans in their current form.¹⁶ The construction of the memorial was also noted in the *Indianapolis News*, which indicated that building had begun and was underway in October of that year. It was described as “a long-cherished plan of the Banks of the Wabash Association (and) a tribute to one of the city’s best-known philanthropists and benefactors as well as an ideal place for the holding of open-air meetings, such as pageants, plays and gatherings of all kinds.”¹⁷ The article also describes the use of niches and panels in the plaza wall that could be used for busts, statues or inscribed tablets to honor former citizens.

There is mention of replacement of the eagles in the pediments in one newspaper account. It notes that when the façade of the old post office building was moved to Dresser Drive for the memorial, the eagles were damaged. Terre Haute resident and Chicago Art Institute graduate,

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ “Terre Haute Forty Years Ago Today” *Terre Haute Tribune*. 12 May 1952. Pg. 4, col. 3

¹⁵ “Rose Memorial Exercises Are Held at Terre Haute” *Indianapolis News*. 17 May 1923. Pg. 16, cols. 4-5

¹⁶ Minutes of the Terre Haute Park Board, April 27, 1936

¹⁷ “Rose Memorial Amphitheater Building Begun at Terre Haute” *Indianapolis News*. 19 Oct 1936. Pg. 19, cols. 4-5

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Vigo County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Frank Erxleben was asked “to fashion replacement guardians of the monument.”¹⁸ It does appear that the heads of the eagles were carved separately, which may have been the limit of repairs.

In the Park Superintendent’s annual report of 1937, improvements to the park were noted including mention of the “new Chauncey Rose out-door amphitheater and memorial at which we hope to hold some concerts.” It was noted that so many improvements to the park were made in that year that “people can really enjoy the beautiful Wabash River made famous by Paul Dresser in his song ‘On the Banks of the Wabash.’”¹⁹ It should be noted here that the Paul Dresser House, individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places is located in the southeast corner of Fairbanks Park.

The Terre Haute Parks Department’s archives include a photograph of laying the cornerstone under the southwest column of the memorial on the day this column was raised into place, November 20, 1936. The notation under the photograph states:

Ceremonies was held on a high track of ground in the Fairbanks Memorial Park on the east bank of the Wabash River. The shrine consists of a stone porch forty feet square, upon the floor of which eight marble columns twenty-four feet high support the beautiful arches (pediments). The erection of this memorial which bears the name of Chauncey Rose in large letters carved deep in the stone across the entrance (front) is the only real acknowledgement that the people of Terre Haute and Vigo County have shown of their indebtedness to Mr. Rose.²⁰

The project was completed in 1937 and fulfilled the community’s desire to honor one of its early and prominent citizens. The plaza gave the public an impressive platform to view the Wabash River, looking southwest, or be entertained through performances looking back toward the pavilion. The plaza hosted weddings, concerts, and dances, or just served as a place to sit or have picnics on the tiered steps leading down from the terrace. Two building stones in piers of the plaza entries include the names of the Banks of the Wabash Association (northwest entry, photo 16) and the architects and Federal Works Progress Administration, among other city and park leaders (southeast entry, photo 08). When Fred Waldron, president of the Banks of the Wabash Association, retired in 1955 after leading the organization since 1927, creation of the Chauncey Rose Memorial open air theatre in Fairbanks Park was among his leading achievements.²¹

Efforts were made in the late 1950s through 1960s to maintain, improve, and better utilize the memorial. In 1959, students from Garfield High School were part of a campaign to beautify the memorial with landscaping.²² Additional efforts were made to renovate the Chauncey Rose Memorial in 1966 by the Terre Haute Jaycees, who planned work throughout the park. Work

¹⁸ “Dresser Portrait Donated for Home” Terre Haute Tribune. 11 June 1961. Pg. 38, col. 2

¹⁹ Annual Report to the Terre Haute Parks Board, 1937.

²⁰ Terre Haute Parks Department archives.

²¹ “Retires After 32 Years Leadership In Banks of Wabash Association” Terre Haute Tribune. 10 April 1955. Pg. 25, col. 1

²² “Garfield Students Continue Clean-up Project on Drive” Terre Haute Tribune. 21 June 1959. Pg. 34, cols. 1-2

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Vigo County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

planned for the memorial included landscaping and plans for band concerts.²³ A wood bandstand had been constructed near Dresser Drive at the foot of the plaza, but by 1968, it was not being used and had deteriorated. It was shortly thereafter removed, further enhancing the plaza's role as a venue for concerts. The memorial plaza was also part of 4th grade student tours showcasing historical sites in Vigo County during the 1960s-1970s.²⁴

A newspaper article in 1968 recalled the history and purpose of the plaza, noting that the Banks of the Wabash Association was no longer in existence, but stated the plaza's role in perpetuating "the memory of those, who by their generous material gifts, have enlarge the spiritual, educational, physical and recreation life" of the community.²⁵ The article cites Chauncey Rose as foremost of those, named one the community's earliest benefactors and for whom Rose Polytechnic Institute (Rose-Hulman) and the Rose Dispensary Building, as well as the former Rose Orphans Home, were named. The same article noted that the steps leading up to the memorial "add dignity and perspective to the memorial, although seldom does one find people wandering around the memorial itself."²⁶

During the 1970s, Fairbanks Park began hosting the Banks of the Wabash Festival, utilizing the plaza as a stage. It was referred to at this time as an amphitheater. In more recent years, an amphitheater/band shell was constructed near the foot of the hill on which the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza is located (right side of photo 13). The plaza, for the most part, has been largely unused by the public for events in recent decades.

Use of salvaged materials was common in the construction of New Deal projects. Much of Michigan City's stone and concrete structures in Washington Park are composed of salvaged materials from buildings demolished in the city. There, benches, walls, small pavilions, and other structures are created from flagstone and other rubble brick and stone provided from demolished structures. Large slabs of concrete and limestone, some of which is coping or sills, create bench seats and backs. In other locations, stone piers marking openings in stone walls, are repurposed building finials. The floor of one park pavilion is composed of flagstone-like sections of mosaic tiled floors. This, along with the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza are two of the premier New Deal park projects built with repurposed materials in Indiana. Rubble material was the typical materials to be reused from other locations in New Deal projects. In San Francisco, materials salvaged from the Odd Fellows Cemetery and city street projects became the main source for the WPA to construct a 3,250 cubic yard rubble seawall.²⁷

²³ "Will Beautify Fairbanks Park" Terre Haute Tribune. 6 Aug 1966. Pg. 2, col. 4

²⁴ "Plaza, Village Delight Kids at Deming" Terre Haute Tribune. 8 June 1969. Pg. 71, col. 6

²⁵ "Board Plans Many Improvements At Fairbanks Park" Terre Haute Tribune. 21 July 1968. Pg. 9, col. 1.

²⁶ Ibid. Pg. 11, col. 1.

²⁷ WPA Construction in San Francisco:

[https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=W.P.A._Construction_in_San_Francisco_\(1935-1942\)](https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=W.P.A._Construction_in_San_Francisco_(1935-1942)); accessed December 10, 2024

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

ARCHITECTURE

The Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza is an interesting early 20th century example of repurposing late 19th century Classical Revival features into a classical inspired park structure. As mentioned previously, the plaza stands out among Indiana New Deal projects for its use of salvaged materials. The scale and high-style nature of these classical elements help give the memorial its architectural significance. The plaza's most prominent feature was created from two porticos, joined together back-to-back, to form a pavilion (photo 06). These were taken from the United States Post Office building constructed in 1887 at the corner of Cherry and Seventh Streets in Terre Haute (see historic photograph on continuation page). Other features that appear to have come from the same building include the stone balustrades which were part of the porticos, and fluted pilasters which appear to have been salvaged from the post office's tall corner tower (photo 11). The pavilion's columns and pilasters in the back wall feature carved Corinthian or Doric columns, respectively. Other architectural features that likely came from the post office building include stone belt coursing and coping, keystones, and segmental spandrels in the back wall of the plaza. The brick and concrete coping of the plaza does not appear to have come from the post office building, but may have been salvaged material from another structure, or may have been purchased as new material to be incorporated into the plaza.

The Classical Revival style emerged at the turn of the new century and continued into the 1930s in American cities. Several events and trends fed the movement toward Classicism. Planners of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 embraced classicism for most of the fair's major buildings. The Federal government adopted classicism for its expanding number of courthouses and post offices, beginning in the 1890s. Because the features came from the 1887 post office, they were created as part of an early example of the style. The style's continued use into the first decades of the 20th century coincided with America's political and economic rise, as well as the coming of age of American cities. By the late 1910s and into the 1920s, as a robust American economy permitted, the style was being executed with greater attention to classical styling, and businesses increasingly were seeking its image.

The prominent Terre Haute-based architectural firm of Miller and Yeager won the commission to design a new federal post office to replace the one constructed for the city in 1887. Through their efforts, features of the old post office were salvaged during demolition between 1934-1935, when the new post office was completed. This gave the firm a working knowledge of the salvaged materials when they were commissioned to create drawings for the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza leading up to its construction in 1936-1937. Miller and Yeager's design was a less austere use of the features that had been used in grand scale on the all-stone, four-story post office building. Their design elevated the porticos as the most prominent feature, as a pavilion centered in front of the backdrop or back wall of the plaza (photos 03, 21). The firm incorporated brick for the walls of the plaza, both the backdrop and those flanking the long entries to the

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Vigo County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

pavilion. These walls have semi-circular bays that flank the pavilion and allow the back wall to step back from the pavilion (photo 03). The firm also created horizontal sections in the back wall with the use of projecting brick belt courses (photo 14). Both the curved bays and belt courses give the plaza a softer aesthetic than the all-stone building from which materials had been salvaged.

Still, Miller and Yeager created an impressive structure befitting the city's desire to memorialize one of its most prominent citizens. The symmetrical organization of the plaza provides for a grand processional entry to the pavilion through the long, flanking entries composed of arcing walls and tiered steps (photos 07, 09, 15). The plaza terrace is raised from grade by seven steps that frame its perimeter and create an impressive foreground and base from which the pavilion rises (photo 03). Adding to the plaza's formal composition are semicircular bays and stone balustrades that are a continuation of the entry walls (seen in photo 06).

The back wall, which forms the backdrop to the plaza, also has a formal organization. The wall steps down to each side of the pavilion but maintains a consistent height behind the pavilion (photo 03). This allows the eye to rise to the height of the pavilion. The pavilion's carved stone pediments then rise above the back wall and can be seen from any direction around the plaza (photos 18, 21). The backdrop features fluted pilasters that divide it into five bays (photos 11, 14). The middle three bays feature stone balustrades and segmental arched spandrels which form the background to the three bays created by the four-column colonnades of the pavilion (photo 03). These were intended to resemble niches and were to be used for the inscription of names of individuals who had contributed to the city's well-being.

While most of the plaza's stone features are carved limestone, the column shafts are composed of three pieces of polished granite or marble. They rest on short octagonal bases that were not part of the original post office building (photo 11). The southwest octagonal base is carved with the inscription "CORNERSTONE". Another inscription "CHAUNCEY ROSE MEMORIAL PLAZA" was carved into the front-facing entablature brought as part of the old post office's portico (photo 04).

Miller and Yeager were a well-established firm that produced many large buildings, both civic and commercial, designed in the Neoclassical style. However, a transition of design styles popular with the firm occurred through the 1920s and 1930s. An earlier design by the firm in the late 1920s may show their transition of building design from Neoclassic to more modern style. That building, the Temple B'nai Abraham at 1230 N. Third Street, is a large brick block fairly void of ornamentation. Its large two-story entry off Third Street and its parapet has brick patterning in staggered coursing. The building has a regular pattern of fenestration, creating tall horizontal bays on the sides of the building. The building won an honorary gold certificate from the Indiana American Institute of Architects in a competition judged by Eliel Saarinen in 1928.

As previously mentioned, the firm was commissioned to design Terre Haute's Art Deco Post Office & Federal Building (1935) which combined some austerity of classical composition with Art Deco features. This was followed by the Terre Haute City Hall (1936, Art Moderne) in the same year their design for the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza was under construction. By this

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

time, most of their work reflected the Modern movement, or an interpretation of revival styles in the Modern movement. This includes Terre Haute's YMCA designed in the Spanish Revival style in 1939. By 1941, the firm produced a highly stylized Art Moderne building at 669 Ohio Street (Terre Haute Mutual Savings Association). The theme continued to play out on the Indiana State University campus in their design of the School of Art and Design and the School of Music in 1939 and 1953, though the styles were much more given over to large box-like volumes with multi-story bays of windows in regulated patterns.

Ralph Oscar Yeager was born into a family of building contractors and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1915. He had his own office in Chicago until 1923 when he relocated to Terre Haute and formed a partnership with Ewing Miller in 1925. Yeager toured Europe in 1937 under the auspices of Harvard University where he was exposed to modern design. He went on to form a new partnership with Kurt Vonnegut, Sr. and George Caleb Wright in Indianapolis in 1946 after the passing of his partner in Terre Haute.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

“Rose Memorial Amphitheater Building Begun at Terre Haute” *Indianapolis News*. 19 Oct 1936. Pg. 19, cols. 4-5.

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“State Spends \$141 Millions” *The Elkhart Truth*. 10 July 1937. Pg. 5.

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“Work Underway on Two Memorials” *Indianapolis News*. 11 May 1936. Pg. 17.

WPA Construction in San Francisco:

[https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=W.P.A. Construction in San Francisco \(1935-1942\);](https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=W.P.A._Construction_in_San_Francisco_(1935-1942);)
accessed December 10, 2024

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 167-628-20425

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 464083	Northing: 4367869
2. Zone: 16	Easting: 464030	Northing: 4367869
3. Zone: 16	Easting: 464032	Northing: 4367938
4. Zone: 16	Easting: 464083	Northing: 4367938

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

The boundaries for the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza nomination are a small portion of Fairbanks Park, situated between 1st Street and Dresser Drive. Beginning approximately 400 feet south and 150 feet west of the intersection of 1st Street and Oak Street, on the west side of the paved north/south access drive, face south and follow a line approximately 250 feet south. Turn west and follow a line approximately 200 feet, then turn north and follow a line approximately 250 feet. Turn east and follow a line approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning. No portion of this boundary should be interpreted to include the modern amphitheater or its tiered seating between the plaza and Dresser Drive. The rectangle enclosing the nominated property can also be defined by the above UTM points.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is confined to the memorial plaza's structures, including its walls, terrace, steps, and pavilion, as well as a proportional amount of land surrounding the plaza that allows it to be viewed as the designers intended. Modern park amenities are located outside of this buffer of land surrounding the plaza and therefore are omitted from inclusion in the nomination. It does not appear that any other aspect of the park was specifically included in the design of the plaza.

11. Form Prepared By

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Terre Haute Parks and Recreation
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: December 16, 2024

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza
City or Vicinity: Terre Haute
County: Vigo State: Indiana
Photographer: Kilie Smith
Date Photographed: May 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north toward plaza from lawn

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

1 of 21.

Photographer: Kilie Smith

Date Photographed: May 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast toward plaza from lawn, southeast entry on right

2 of 21.

Photographer: Kilie Smith

Date Photographed: May 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast toward front of plaza from lawn

3 of 21.

Photographer: Kilie Smith

Date Photographed: May 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east at front pediment of pavilion

4 of 21.

Photographer: Kilie Smith

Date Photographed: May 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at plaza, southeast entry on right

5 of 21.

*THE REMAINING PHOTOGRAPHS WERE TAKEN BY THE FOLLOWING
PHOTOGRAPHER ON THE FOLLOWING DATE:*

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: November 15, 2024

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east at plaza from lawn

6 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at plaza from southwest extents of boundary/front lawn

7 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at building stone in southeast entry

8 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north in southeast entry

9 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at top of southeast entry toward pavilion

10 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast from pavilion to back wall/backdrop of plaza

11 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast through pavilion

12 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest from semicircular bay toward terrace; modern amphitheater on right

13 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east at back wall/backdrop of plaza behind pavilion

14 of 21.

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east into northwest entry of plaza

15 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at building stone in northwest entry wall

16 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the back of the northwest entry to the plaza from lawn

17 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the back of the plaza from lawn

18 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking west at back wall/backdrop of plaza from access drive to the east

19 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the back of the southeast entry to the plaza from access drive

20 of 21.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at plaza from southwest corner of the boundary/lawn

21 of 21.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 27

Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza, Vigo County, IN

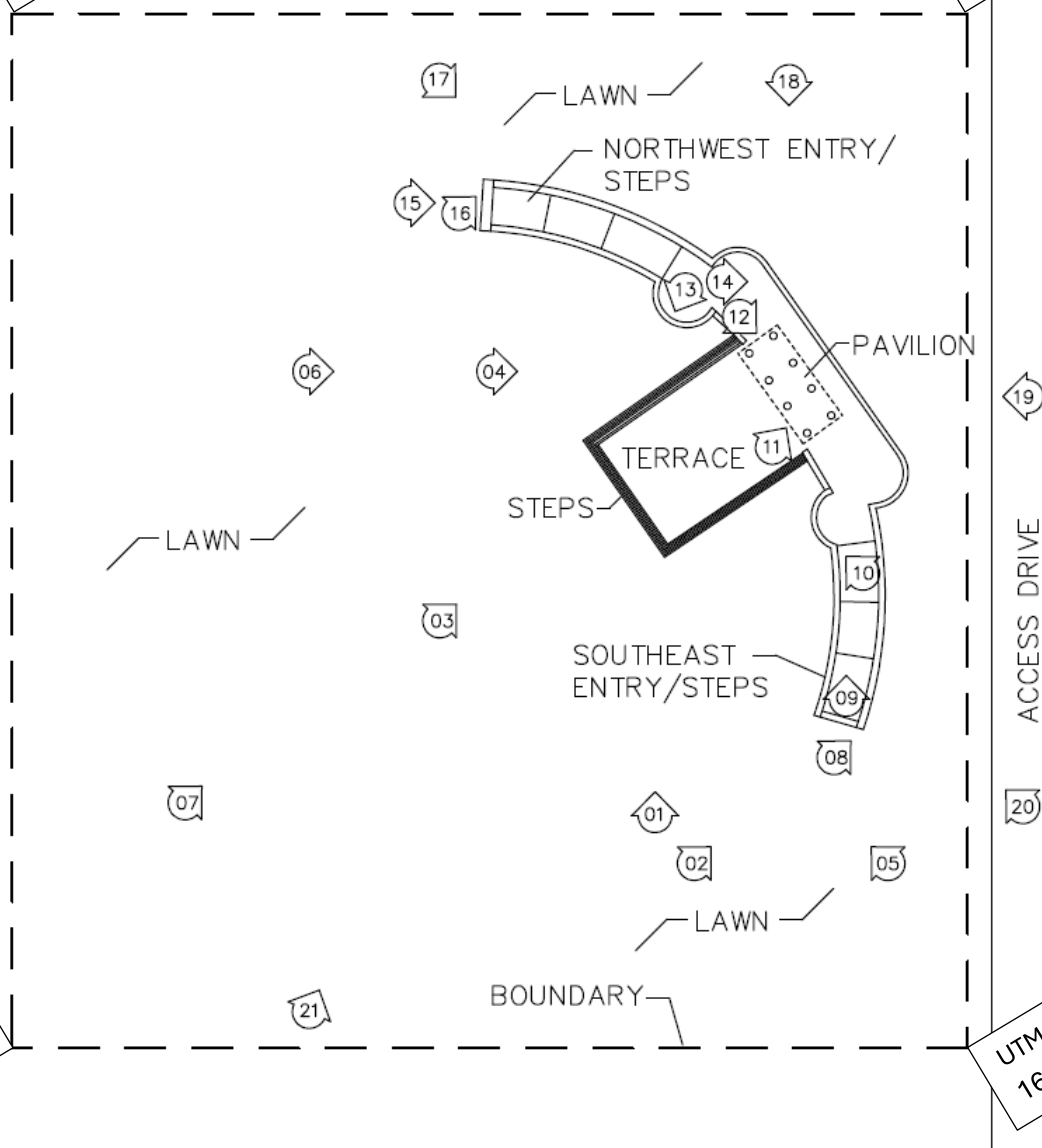


This is a historic photograph of the former Terre Haute Post Office/Federal Building constructed in 1887, materials of which were salvaged and repurposed in the Chauncey Rose Memorial Plaza. The photo dates to c. 1930 prior to demolition c. 1933. In this photo, the original tall, hipped roof of the tower has already been removed.

UTM #3
16 464032 4367938

UTM #4
16 464083 4367938

SEE BOUNDARY MAP FOR OAK/1ST STREET



UTM #2
16 464030 4367869

UTM #1
16 464083 4367869

CHAUNCEY ROSE MEMORIAL PLAZA

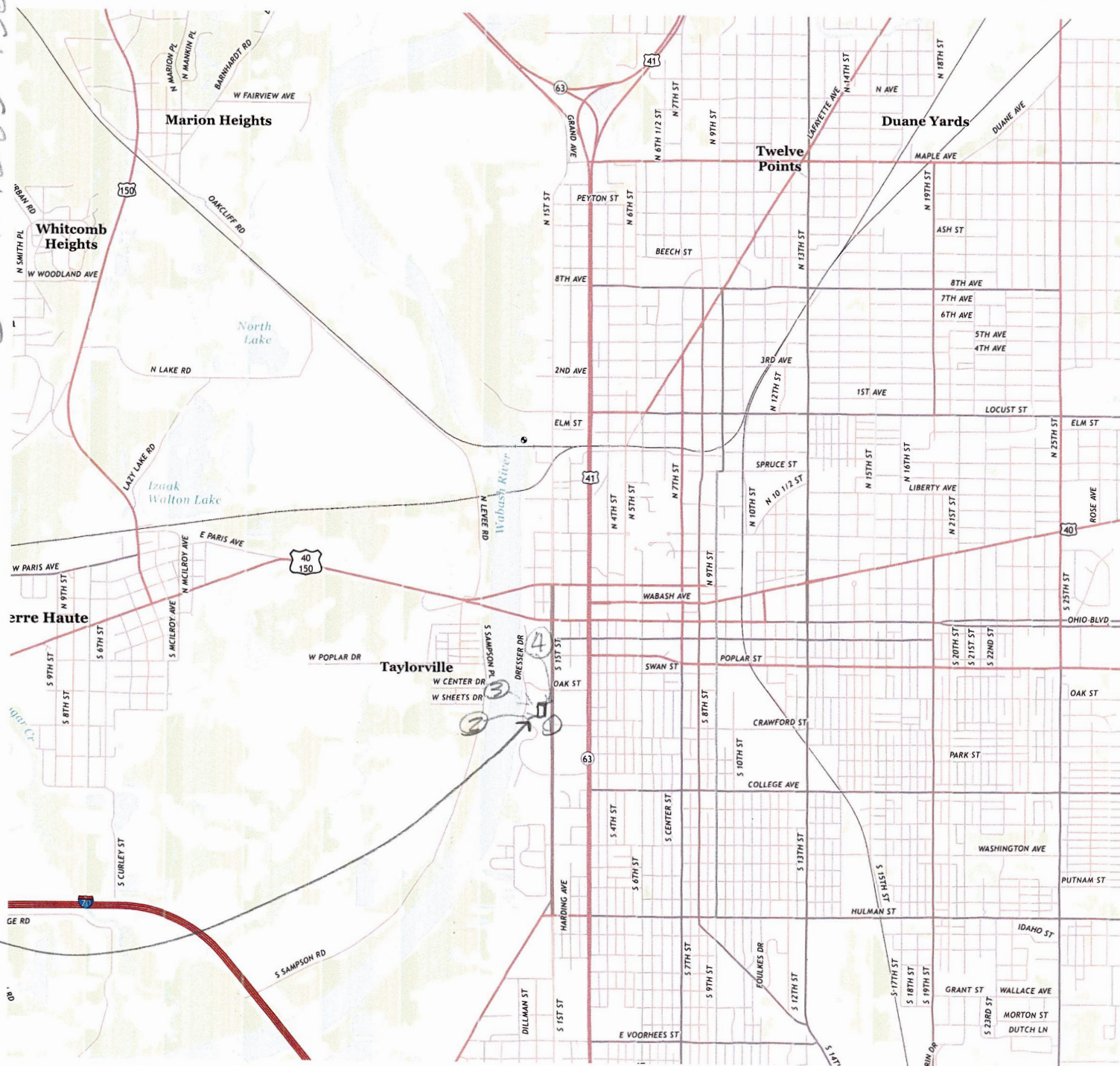
National Register of Historic Places
Site Sketch Map

Dresser Drive, Fairbanks Park, Terre Haute, Vigo Co., IN

② = Photographs

NAD 93 UTM's
① 16 464083 4367869
② 16 464030 4367869
③ 16 464032 4367938
④ 16 464083 4367938

CHAUNCEY ROSE MEMORIAL POZA
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
TERRE HAUTE, VIGO COUNTY, IN





IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0001



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0002



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0004



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0008



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0011



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0015



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0016



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0019



IN_VigoCounty_ChaunceyRoseMemorialPlaza_0021