

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name The Century Apartments

other names/site number T. L. Ritchey Apartments

2. Location

street & number 627 N. 25th Street [ n/a ] not for publication

city or town St. Joseph [n/a] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Buchanan code 021 zip code 64506

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

21 May 2001  
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet [ ].

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet [ ].

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register

other, explain see continuation sheet [ ].

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

contributing	noncontributing
1	0 building
0	0 sites
0	0 structures
0	0 objects
1	0 total

**Name of related multiple property listing.**

Historic Resources of St. Joseph, Buchanan County,  
 Missouri

**Number of contributing resources  
 previously listed in the National Register.**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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**Current Functions**

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY  
 REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish Eclectic

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see continuation sheet [ ].

**Materials**

foundation concrete  
 walls brick  
 roof ceramic tile  
 other synthetics  
 terra cotta

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see continuation sheet [ ].

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

See continuation sheet [x]

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

**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

Property is:

**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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

### Periods of Significance

1926

### Significant Dates

1926

### Significant Person(s)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Boschen, Walter (architect)

Lehr Construction Company

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 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

# \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: Western Historical Manuscripts  
St. Joseph Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 1.2

**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	343280	4403750			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cydney E. Millstein  
organization Architectural & Historical Research date December 1, 2000  
street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816.363.0567  
city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64113

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map

A Sketch map

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Carlson Gardner Woodman Properties, Inc.  
street & number 205 W. Walnut Street telephone 417.864.7772  
city or town Springfield state Missouri zip code 65806

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

The Century Apartments  
St. Joseph, Buchanan County, MO  
MPS Listing "Historic Resources of  
St. Joseph, MO"

Section Number 7 Page 1

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**Summary**

The Century Apartments, located at 627 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street, St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri, was designed by noted St. Joseph architect Walter Boschen in December 1925 for T. L. Ritchey. The three-story buff brick and terra cotta apartment building is sited in a well-established residential neighborhood featuring detached, single-family housing and apartment buildings generally dating from the turn-of-the-century through the 1920s. As defined in the MPS cover document, the Century Apartments is a fine example of a "Multiple Family Residential" structure. Blending Mission and Spanish Eclectic style elements, The T. L. Ritchey Apartment Building has maintained the majority of its historic features to convey its significance. Although this historic apartment building has been slightly modified since its completion in 1926, its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association has been retained in both the exterior and interior, meeting the registration requirements as set forth in the MPS cover document.

**Elaboration**

The Century Apartments is a three-story buff-brick building designed in the Mission Style/Spanish Eclectic and features a large courtyard at its main or west façade reached through a pair of brick piers with terra-cotta capitals crowned by vases. Defining features of the U-shaped complex includes Mission-shaped roof parapets throughout the building's exterior; honeycombed, polychromatic brickwork; and modified and stylized quatrefoil windows — all related to the Mission vocabulary. Those features that are derived from the Spanish Eclectic include asymmetrical design, balconets with full-length tripartite arched windows embellished with spiral columns and prominent terra-cotta surrounds. Coping, stringcoursing and prominent window surrounds are designed of terra cotta, further embellishing the exterior. Original fenestration, often tripartite, is six-over-six, and four-over-four, double-hung, sash with brick sills and lintels. A non-original wood-framed parking facility, in deteriorated condition, is located at the rear of the building. Additional features include secondary entrances and one-bay overhead garage doors at the rear façade. Apartments feature hardwood flooring, built-in bookshelves and fireplaces; bathrooms and kitchens have been modified over the years.

Future plans for the Century Apartments include its rehabilitation. Proposed designs for the 33-room apartment building, prepared by Duncan Architects, Kansas City, Missouri, are in accordance with *the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The current owner will be applying for both federal and state historic tax credits.

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St. Joseph, Buchanan County, MO  
MPS Listing "Historic Resources of  
St. Joseph, MO"

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### Summary

The Century Apartments, 627 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street, St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C and is locally significant in the following areas: COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. The development of the Century Apartments coincides with two historic contexts identified in the MPS Cover Document (and its amendment): "Wholesale Distribution in St. Joseph, 1866-1865," and "Suburban Growth in St. Joseph, 1900-1950." As a representative example of a "Multiple Family Residential structure" as defined in the MPS cover document, the Century Apartments not only played an important role in the economic development of St. Joseph, Missouri, during the 1920s, but helped to further defined the city's expansion patterns. Furthermore, the Mission Style/Spanish Eclectic building serves as a representative example of a style or type and is the work of a master. The building has continually operated as an apartment since it was completed in 1926 and remains one of three courtyard apartment in the city of St. Joseph. Designed by St. Joseph architect Walter Boschen for T. L. Ritchey, an assistant general freight agent for the Chicago, Great Western Railroad, the Century Apartments is also a relatively rare example of a multiple-family dwelling constructed in the Mission Style/ Spanish Eclectic. The period of significance is 1926, the date of the completion of construction.

### Elaboration

As stated in the MPS Cover Document "Historic Resources of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri," multiple family residential structures were constructed in St. Joseph from the 1850s through the twentieth century. The majority of these buildings, however, were built from the 1880s through the 1920s, coinciding with the period of St. Joseph's suburban growth and expansion. Due to the city's pivotal role as a distribution center for goods, a variety of people were required to work in the many wholesale warehouses, railroad-shipping lines, and associated industries. Multiple family structures satisfied the needs of two kinds of workers: those new to the community who had to wait for a house to be constructed; and those who could not afford a single family detached residence. Units like the one constructed for T. L. Ritchey, helped alleviate housing problems experienced during this period of St. Joseph's growth. Furthermore, real estate had proven to be a popular form of investment for those who made their fortunes through the wholesaling, banking, and related industries. Multiple family buildings, which had a ready source of tenants, were a relatively safe investment.

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The Century Apartments  
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MPS Listing "Historic Resources of  
St. Joseph, MO"

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Large commercial properties constructed during the 1920s, such as the Century Apartments, were typically developed on large, vacant tracts of available land in existing neighborhoods. Other factors that influenced their construction (as stated in the MPS Cover Document) included the "effects of a strong local economy, changing technologies applied to residential construction, and the effects of the automobile in changing both the design of residential properties and the development patterns in the city."

Architecturally, the Century Apartments were typical of those buildings constructed in St. Joseph, in that the style and detailing made it compatible with the surrounding neighborhood in which it was located. They were commonly constructed of brick and two to three stories in height. Multiple family dwellings such as the Century Apartments remain a good and somewhat rare example of the Mission/Spanish Eclectic style of architecture in St. Joseph. The building has been continuously occupied from the time of its completion.

**Walter Boschen**

Walter Boschen (1881-1959), one of St. Joseph's most noted architects, was born in New Haven, Connecticut, on January 30, 1881. A graduate of Betts Academy, Stamford, in 1898, Boschen also attended the University of Pennsylvania (1898-1902) and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (1902-1904). Married twice, Boschen was joined in architectural practice with Edmond J. Eckel, as Eckel and Boschen, from 1908-1909. Their firm designed, among other works, the Robidoux School and the First Presbyterian Church. Subsequently, Walter Boschen practiced in St. Joseph on his own. Examples of works in St. Joseph from his solo period include the YMCA, YWCA, St. Joseph County Club, St. Mary's Church and parsonage, First Christian Church, the Kirkpatrick Building, and the Jerome Hotel. Boschen also designed his own residence, the first Spanish styled home in St. Joseph, located at 1114 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street, just a few blocks from the Century Apartments. After suffering a long illness, Walter Boschen died on June 16, 1959. He left no survivors.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

The Century Apartments  
St. Joseph, Buchanan County, MO  
MPS Listing "Historic Resources of  
St. Joseph, MO"

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**Bibliography**

Baldwin, Sara, ed. *Who's Who in St. Joseph, Missouri*. St. Joseph: Robert M. Baldwin, 1929.

Boschen, Walter. "Apartment Building for Mr. T. L. Ritchey. December 3, 1925.

"Death Takes Architect Walter Boschen at Age 78." *St. Joseph News Press*, 16 June 1969, 1.

*Polk's St. Joseph City Directory, 1928*. Kansas City: R. L. Polk & Co., 1928.

Sanborn Map Company. St. Joseph, Missouri. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1929.

Wolfenbarger, Deon K. "Historic Resources of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri." Multiple Property Listing. June 20, 1988, with amendments.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

The Century Apartments  
St. Joseph, Buchanan County, MO  
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### Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1 through 8, Block 16 in the St. Joseph Eastern Extension, an addition to the City of St. Joseph, Missouri. Also, the West Half of the Alley adjoining said lots on the East and Lot 1 and the West Half of Lot 2 in Block 79, France's Eastern Extension an addition to the City of St. Joseph, Missouri.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Century Apartments.

### Key to Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

The Century Apartments

627 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street

St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri

Photographs taken by Cydney E. Millstein

December 2000

Negatives on file with : Architectural And Historical Research, L.L.C.  
Kansas City, Missouri

### List of Photographs:

1. Main façade, view looking east.
2. Detail of main façade and courtyard, view looking east.
3. Detail of entrance, south courtyard façade, view looking north.
4. Detail of center bay, west courtyard façade, view looking east.
5. North and main façades, view looking southeast.
6. Rear (east) and south façades, view looking northwest.
7. South façade, view looking northeast.

T 58 N  
47° 30'  
T 57 N  
4406

BM 820  
4405

4404

1 310 000 FEET  
(MO.)  
T. 3 S.

4402

The Century Apartments,  
627 N. 25th St.  
St. Joseph, Mo.  
UTM Reference  
15/343280/4403750



30  
WASHINGTON  
Elwood

31  
32  
18  
UNION PACIFIC  
C. R. & R.  
M P  
Gaging  
442

ST JOSEPH

15  
Bartlett  
Park





CENTURY APARTMENTS

627









