

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (November 2005)

**State Inventory No.** 29-01138  New  Supplemental  
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 29-03685, 29-0001  
 Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing  
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries  
 National Register Status:(any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE  
 9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company  
 other names/site number Downtown Survey Map # J-160

**2. Location**

street & number 704-706 Jefferson Street  
 city or town Burlington  vicinity, county Des Moines  
 Legal Description:(If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original City Block(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s) west 40' of east 85' of Lot 925A

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property			
	If Non-Eligible Property		If Eligible Property, enter number of:	
	Enter number of:		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	—	buildings	<u>1</u>	— buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	—	sites	—	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	—	structures	—	— structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	—	objects	—	— objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	—	Total	<u>1</u>	— Total

**Name of related project report or multiple property study** (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).  
 Title N/A Historical Architectural Data Base Number \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>10A02: Industry / factory</u>	<u>02E: Commerce / specialty store</u>
<u>02E01: Commerce / auto parts/supplies</u>	

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>09F05: Commercial / brick front</u>	foundation <u>10: Concrete</u>
	walls (visible material) <u>03: Brick</u>
	roof <u>08B: Rolled Asphalt</u>
	other _____

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Des Moines Address 704 Jefferson Street Site Number 29-01138  
City Burlington District Number 29-03685

**Criteria Considerations**

- 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** (Enter categories from instructions)

05: Commerce

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1924  check if circa or estimated date  
Other dates, including renovation

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

**Architect/Builder**

Architect

Builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References** (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Rebecca L. McCarley, consultant, Davenport research by Kay Weiss, Steve Frevert, Barb Mackey  
organization Burlington Historic Preservation Commission date February 7, 2014  
street & number City Hall, 400 Washington Street telephone 319-753-8158  
city or town Burlington state Iowa zip code 52601

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** (Submit the following items with the completed form)

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____

See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.

Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

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William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company

Des Moines

Name of Property

County

704-706 Jefferson Street

Burlington

Address

City

## 7. Narrative Description

This four-story brick building sits on the north side of Jefferson. The building appears to retain a number of original storefront elements. The entry is slightly offset to the east/right, and the wood frame door is recessed. Three large display windows are found to the right, and four large display windows are found to the left. Prism glass transom windows span the width of the storefront, with a flat aluminum canopy above them. Each of the upper stories has four one-over-one-light double-hung windows with a rowlock brick sill and no lintel detail. While a 1928 photograph shows painted signs on the façade, there are no ghost signs left. The west elevation has window openings set to the front and rear of this side on the third and fourth stories. Three of the windows have one-over-one-light double-hung windows, with the front window on the fourth story filled with brick. The elevator tower extends above the roof between these openings. The rear/north elevation has doors on the first and second stories, with three one-over-one-light double-hung windows on each story as well. The third and fourth stories have four one-over-one-light double-hung windows.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company appears to contribute historically to the potential Downtown Commercial Historic District (#29-03685). The building was constructed in 1924 for the William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company, who moved here from 700 Jefferson. This significant local business continued to manufacture harnesses while expanding into automotive parts and accessories to remain viable in the 1910s and 1920s. The move to this building permitted sufficient space for all aspects of their growing business. The company continued to operate here until 1965. The building may also be individually eligible under Criterion A for its association with the William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company. Further research and assessment of the interior would be required for full individual evaluation. The building is currently listed as contributing in the West Jefferson Street Historic District (1991, #29-00001).

D.L. Parsons Company sold this property to William E. and Ralph H. Nees on June 28, 1924, and they built this four-story brick building for the William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company. The William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company started as the harness making business of William Nees in 1890. William Nees built the east half of the corner building at 700 Jefferson Street in 1904, and the harness business operated here until 1924. The business started out as manufacturing harnesses, but Nees saw the rise of the automobile and decline of his business. Thus, he expanded into automotive parts and supplies, while retaining the historic name and operations of the business. This four-story building with a basement was built in 1924 for the significantly growing business. In 1928, the business sold Goodyear tires, making that brand the backbone of their tire department. Additionally, they sold all parts and accessories for vehicles, including car heaters, radiator covers, and batteries. They also repaired cars and operated a tire vulcanizing department. The company was run by son William E. Nees, president, and Ralph H. Nees, secretary, by 1928 ("Wm. Nees Harness Mfg. Co.," *Hawk-Eye*, March 25, 1928). The 1930 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the four-story building with elevator here, labeled as auto repair. The elder William Nees died in February 1935.

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<u>William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company</u>	<u>Des Moines</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>704-706 Jefferson Street</u>	<u>Burlington</u>
Address	City

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The William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company continued to be listed here through the 1930s and into the 1940s. By 1945, only William E. Nees was associated with the company, and Ralph H. Nees was associated with Ralph Nees Grocery, which also operated at 704-706 Jefferson. Both of these businesses are listed here through the 1955 city directory. By 1957, only William Nees Harness Manufacturing Company is listed here, with both William E. and Ralph H. Nees associated with the business again. The company was last listed here in the 1965 city directory. William E. Nees died, and the building was sold by his widow Minnie Nees and Ralph and Hulda Nees to Horace Sutton on March 1, 1966. The building was then vacant in 1968 and 1970.

Bangert Computer Software Services have their offices in this building today.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Antrobus, A.T. *History of Des Moines County Iowa and Its People*. Chicago, IL: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915.

Brower, Steven. *West Jefferson Street Historic District*. National Register of Historic Places nomination form. On file at State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, IA. Listed on April 9, 1991.

City Directories, Burlington, Iowa, various dates. On microfiche at the Burlington Public Library

Deed records, per transfer books at Des Moines County Auditor's Office.

Downtown Partners, Inc., a Division of the Greater Burlington Partnership, Burlington, Iowa. Collection of scanned historic photographs of downtown Burlington.

Newspapers, various titles and editions. Particular special editions utilized:

*Burlington Evening Gazette*, March 24, 1906  
*Daily Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 2, 1938  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, August 4, 1942  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 10, 1962  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 4, 1976

Sanborn Map Company. "Burlington, Iowa," Fire Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1892, 1900, 1931, 1952.

Smith, Claudia, and Marie Landon. 1976 survey of sites in Burlington. Iowa Site Inventory forms prepared on file at State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, IA.

Vertical files. Files on business/industry as well as individual businesses. Burlington Public Library, Burlington, Iowa.

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State Historical Society of Iowa  
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**Location map**



Base aerial photography by Aerial Services Inc for Des Moines County GIS Commission, March 2010.

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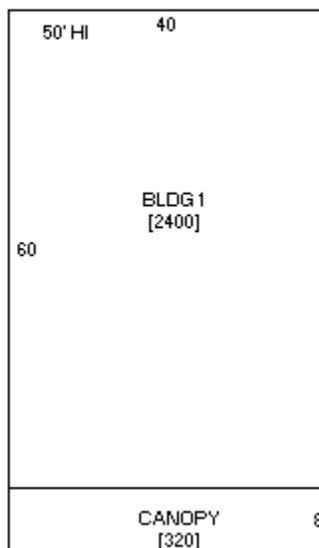
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## Building plan (from assessor's website)



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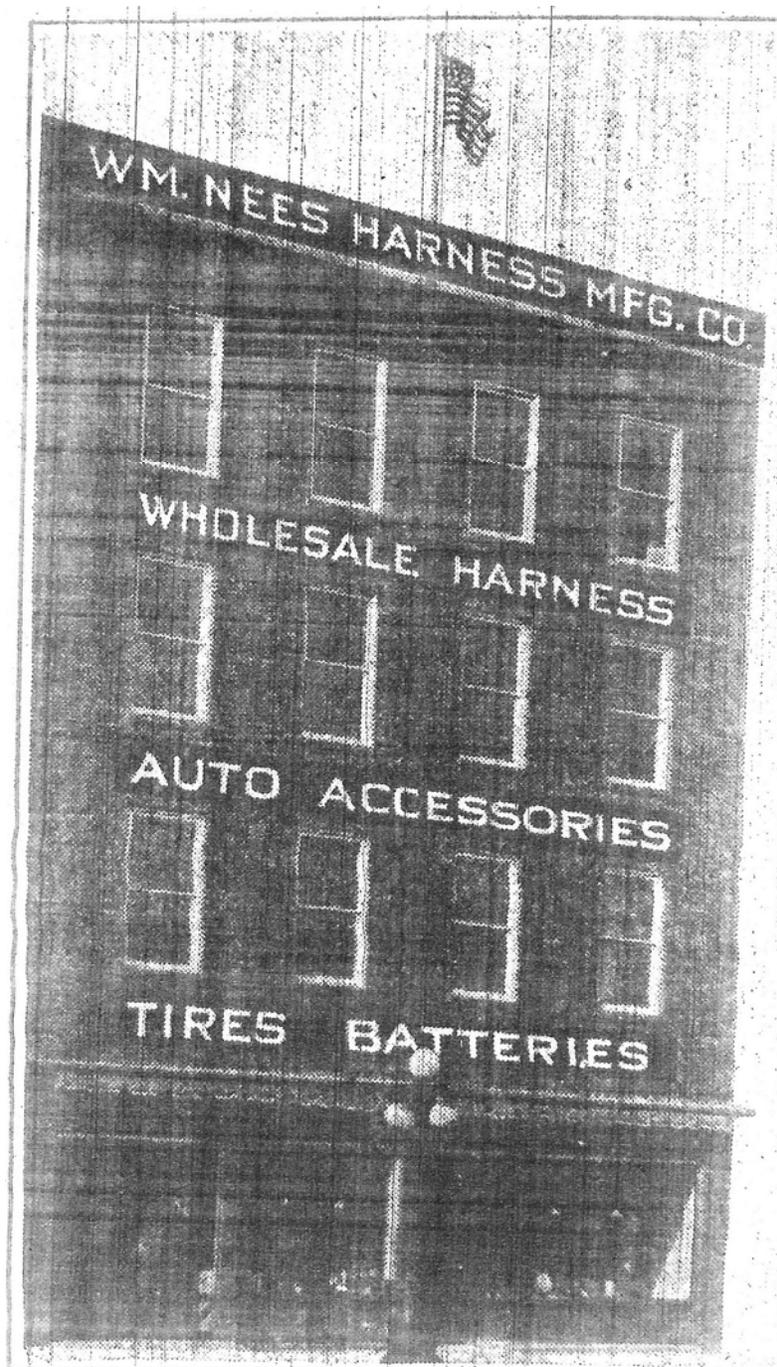
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## Historic images



Building in March 1928 (*Hawk-Eye*, March 25, 1928)

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Looking east from the 800 block to 700 block of Jefferson in 1956 (cropped/enlarged) (Downtown Partners)

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**Digital photographs**



**Photograph 29-01138-001 – South elevation, looking northwest (McCarley, July 17, 2013).**

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**Photograph 29-01138-002 – Detail of storefront, looking northwest (McCarley, July 17, 2013).**

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Photograph 29-01138-003 – West and south elevations, looking northeast (McCarley, January 14, 2014).