

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 22 1984
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Grinnell Brothers Music House

and/or common Grinnell's

2. Location

street & number 27 South Saginaw Street N/A not for publication

city, town Pontiac N/A vicinity of

state Michigan code 026 county Oakland code 125

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Pontiac Downtown Development Authority

street & number 58 East Pike Street

city, town Pontiac N/A vicinity of state Michigan 48058

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Oakland County Register of Deeds

street & number 1200 North Telegraph Road

city, town Pontiac state Michigan 48053

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Michigan Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Michigan History Division

city, town Lansing state Michigan

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Grinnell's reputation as a retail outlet for music was echoed in the architectural quality of its facilities. The result in the Pontiac store is an outstanding example of the use of the Gothic Revival influence on an early 20th-century commercial building. This is a small three-story building with a two-story stone-trimmed storefront and a Gothic detailed stone facade above.

This building is located at the south end of a commercial block on South Saginaw Street between East Pike and Water Street. Older commercial buildings (mostly vacant), flank it on the north but the adjacent corner store to the south has been razed as a part of a downtown renewal effort. Likewise, the opposite side of Saginaw Street is completely void of buildings, all having been demolished in the same renewal effort. The entrance faces west and a rear door opens onto the alley at the east.

This commercial retail store offered musical instruments, recordings and sheet music to the public as a quality business operation of long standing in the Detroit area. Twentieth century Gothic Revival in style, the building is 20' in width by 140' in length, three stories plus basement in height, rectangular in plan and has a flat roof. It is constructed fireproof with steel frame and concrete floors. The south wall, presently exposed because of demolition of the corner building, is vulnerable to the elements as it was never designed to be an exterior wall.

Designed entirely of stone, the facade is highly detailed with decorative elements. The upper facade is divided into three bays by decorative pilasters and the side pilasters contain niches at the parapet level. The three panels between the pilasters at the parapet have a tracery design in relief on the stone surface. At the third floor the window openings at the side bays have multi-light wood casement units with transoms and the window opening in the center bay is a single light of glass with a multi-paned transom. The storefront opening fills almost the entire width of the building, is two stories in height and is framed with decorative stone molding. Although presently covered with an inappropriate plywood sign the second floor portion of the storefront consisting of a large display window is intact. The lower portion of the storefront is the only part of the facade which has been altered.

The interior original layout which still exists at the present time, is primarily open in nature at all floor levels. The exception on the first floor is an office enclosed with a wood and glass partition and an enclosed cashier's window at the rear. The front portion of the second floor is enclosed with a similar wood and glass partition.

Apparently the nature of the business operation did not require extensive architectural treatment on the interior. What little that can be found exists in the wood detailing of the wood and glass partitions which skillfully repeats design idioms from the exterior stone facade. The only other detail of note is the stair railing which is in keeping with the remainder of the architecture. General interior surfaces and finishes include flat plaster walls and ceilings, subdivided by wood coffered beams with a simple cove molding at the ceiling. Floors are terrazzo at the first floor level and wood at the second floor. The building interior is essentially unaltered with the exception of some redecoration evident when the building was used for festivities surrounding the 1981 Superbowl which took place at Pontiac's Silverdome stadium.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1923 **Builder/Architect** Leo John Heenan, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Grinnell Brothers Music House was Pontiac's home of Michigan's leading music store for over one-half a century. This fact establishes the building's local significance in music and commerce. In addition, the character of the owner was transmitted to the architectural quality of the building's facade. The building was built in 1923, displaying a Gothic Revival facade, unique in Pontiac.

Brothers Clayton A. and Ira L. Grinnell began a music business in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1880. The company moved to Detroit in 1882 and began manufacturing pianos in 1901. They soon became one of Michigan's largest piano and general music dealers. A third brother, Albert A. Grinnell, joined the company as second vice-president in 1910. With its headquarters in Detroit, the Grinnell Brothers opened retail outlets in other large Michigan cities. Grinnell's operated a store in Pontiac at another location as early as 1904. After a fire demolished that building, this one was constructed at 27 South Saginaw Street. This structure contained the business operation of Grinnell's for over 50 years, totaling a continuation of business operations for over 70 years.

The architect, Leo John Heenan (1890-1957), studied architecture at the University of Michigan and worked for Detroit architects, Albert Kahn; Smith, Hinchman and Grylls; and Bishoff Associates, Inc. For these architects, he was responsible for facilities designed for the Motor Truck Company, Gray's Motor Company plant and the Samson Motor Truck Company. In 1914 he established his own firm in Pontiac and was the architect for the Strand Theatre, St. Joseph's Hospital at Mount Clemens, Pontiac City Hall and Public Safety Building, Pontiac General Hospital, Addah Shelley Branch Library, the Oakland County Infirmary, and a number of public schools. He also built many local residences including those for T. F. McManus, E. P. Waldren, and C. B. Wilson.

The only alteration to the building's original design is the main entrance and adjacent glazing at the first floor and the removal of an original canopy. Both of these changes are eminently restorable. Other than that, the resource retains all of its original significant design. Because of the dominance of the stone gothic detailing on the facade, alterations detract little from the building's architectural significance.

Because of the carved name "Grinnell Bros. Music House" in the stone facade above the first floor storefront level and because of a strong local relationship to the Grinnell Company, the building retains sufficient integrity to convey its history during the time it served as a significant local business in Pontiac. No other buildings exist in the city which have a similar association. Also, this is the only 20th century Gothic Revival building in the downtown commercial area.

Entered in the
National Register

9. Major Bibliographical References

Adler, Gretchen, Historical research for Pontiac survey commissioned by Preservation/Urban Design/Incorporated. Unpublished, 1983.

Atlas of Oakland County, Michigan. New York: W. Beers & Co., 1872.

Avery, Lillian Drake (ed.), Historic Michigan - Oakland County. Vol. III, National Historical Association, Inc., 1924.

(continued)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .06

Quadrangle name Pontiac North, Mich.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	3	1	2	0	9	0	4	7	2	2	7	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Original Plat, N. 20 ft. of S. 40 ft. of Lot 55 contains only the land on which the building is located.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N.A. code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard C. Frank FAIA, President

organization Preservation/Urban Design/Inc.

date 3 October 1983

street & number 120½ W. Washington

telephone (313) 994-0313

city or town Ann Arbor

state Michigan 48104

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national 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

Martha M. Bigelow

title Director, Michigan History Division

date 3/19/84

For NPS use only

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

for Allores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/19/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

9. continued

- Harman, Arthur A. (ed.), Oakland County Book of History. Oakland County Board of Commissioners for the County's Sesqui-Centennial.
- Mallory, Worth. Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Adult Education, Pontiac Schools, Interview on 3 October 1983. 101 East Pike Street, Pontiac, Michigan 48058.
- Oakland County Atlas. Racine, Wisconsin: Kace Publishing Company, 1890.
- Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society - Newspaper Archives. 1900.
- Pontiac City Directors. 1878, 1902, 1907 and 1929.
- Sanborn Maps. Library of Congress. 1888, 1898, 1909, 1919, 1924 and 1950.
- Seeley, Taddeus D. History of Oakland County, Michigan. Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1912.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Grinnell Brothers Music House
Oakland County
MIC HIG A N

MAR 22 1984

Working No. _____

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.5.80

Date Due: 4/19/84 - 5/6/84

Action: ACCEPT 4-19-84

_____ RETURN _____

_____ REJECT _____

Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION REPORT

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

O'Connell Brothers House
Osland County
MICHIGAN

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____


Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Grinnell Bros Music House

G RINNELL'S
PIANO - ORGAN -
OUTLET

- a. Grinnell's
27 South Saginaw Street
- b. Pontiac/Oakland/Michigan
- c. Photographer's Name: Eugene C. Hopkins
- d. Date: September, 1983
- e. Negative filed: Michigan History Division
- f. West facade/facing east
- g. 3:15 1 of 4



Grinnell Bros - Music House

G RINNELL'S

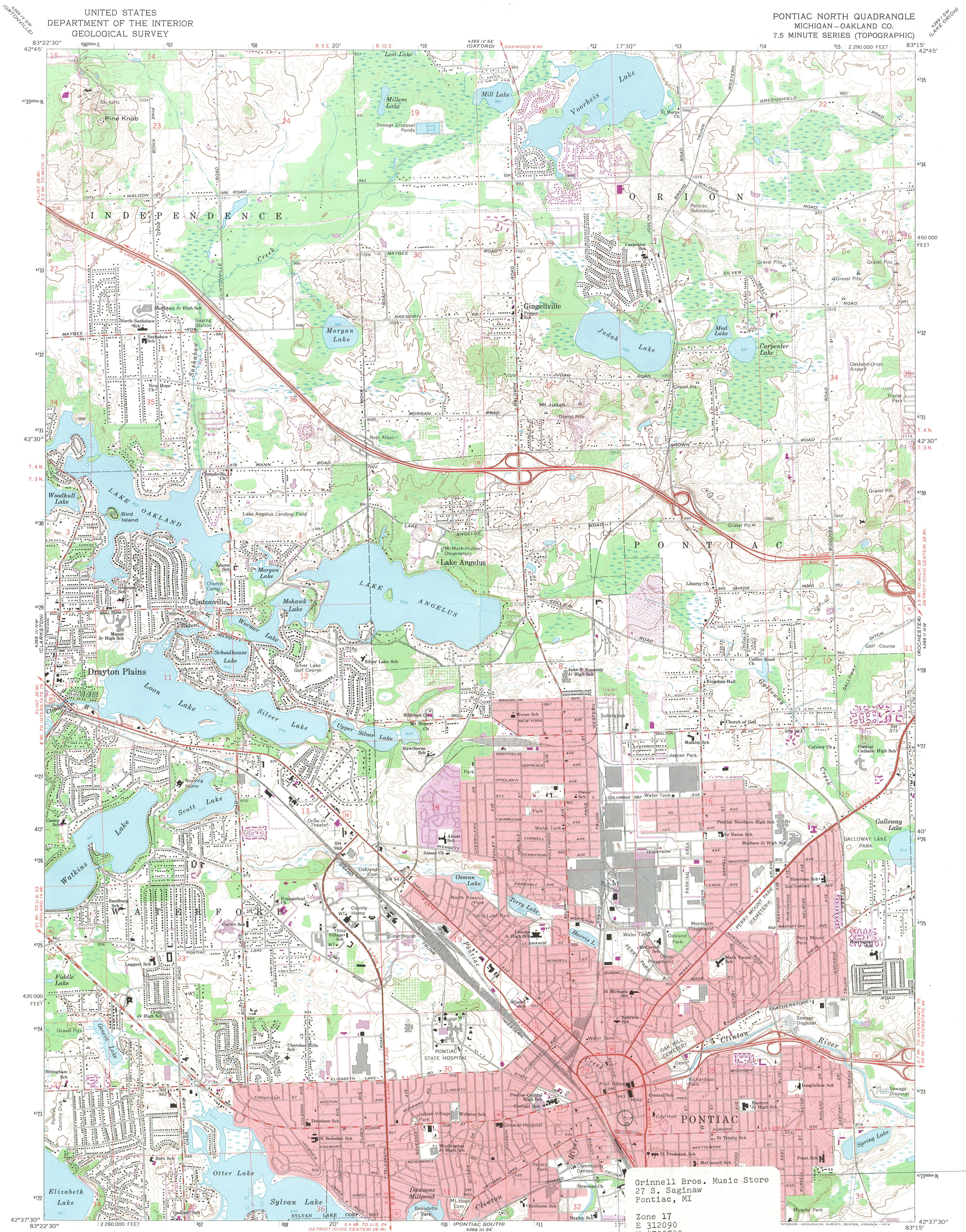
- a. Grinnell's
27 South Saginaw Street
- b. Pontiac/Oakland/Michigan
- c. Photographer's Name: Eugene C. Hopkins
- d. Date: September, 1983
- e. Negative filed: Michigan History Division
- f. Upper facade/facing east
- g. 3:13 2 of 4



- a. Grinnell's
27 South Saginaw Street
- b. Pontiac/Oakland/Michigan
- c. Photographer's Name: Eugene C. Hopkins
- d. Date: September, 1983
- e. Negative filed: Michigan History Division
- f. Decorative wood paneling
- g. 3:17 3 of 4



- a. Grinnell's
27 South Saginaw Street
- b. Pontiac/Oakland/Michigan
- c. Photographer's Name: Eugene C. Hopkins
- d. Date: September, 1983
- e. Negative filed: Michigan History Division
- f. Ornamental stair
- g. 3:18 4 of 4



Grinnell Bros. Music Store
27 S. Saginaw
Pontiac, MI
Zone 17
E 312090
N 4722740

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, improved surface	Light duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

○ Interstate Route □ U. S. Route ○ State Route

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State of Michigan agencies
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planetable surveys 1941. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1968
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

PONTIAC NORTH, MICH.
N4237.5—W8315/7.5
1968
PHOTOREVISED 1973
AMS 4369 III NE—SERIES V862

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD H. AUSTIN

SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING

MICHIGAN 48918

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVISION

**ADMINISTRATION, PUBLICATIONS
RESEARCH, AND HISTORIC SITES**

208 N. Capitol Avenue
517-373-0510

STATE ARCHIVES

3405 N. Logan Street
517-373-0512

STATE MUSEUM

208 N. Capitol Avenue
517-373-0515

March 14, 1984

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Supervisory Historian
National Register of Historic Places Branch
Interagency Resource Management Division
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the Grinnell Brothers Music House, Pontiac, Michigan. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this property submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Brian D. Conway (517/373-0510).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha M. Bigelow".

Martha M. Bigelow, Director
Michigan History Division
and
State Historic Preservation Officer

MMB:BDC:ROC:j1
enclosure