

# Bandstand stirred pride in community

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Dunlap had nowhere to go but down — down to the "artesian" well, "which reaches from the realm of daylight to the heart of the continent."

And, as long as he was talking about that region, Dunlap brought up the exciting possibility of a vein of natural gas, which was supposed to catapult Bloomington into an era of unprecedented prosperity. "But the latest and most charming object of our affections is this most exquisite of our public attractions, this poem of mechanical skill and decorative art, which you are here to dedicate this evening."

Feeling that he had to account for the generous outpouring of public spirit that made the bandstand possible, Mayor Dunlap explained that Bloomington people were "a social people," who had no hall large enough to hold a sizeable crowd. The Courthouse Park, he said, had never been "very generously supplied with the conveniences which contribute so much to the comfort of a public assemblage."

Dunlap credited County Auditor W.T. Blair with the accom-

plished fact of the bandstand and added, "I think I but voice the public sentiment here in expressing the wish that . . . this beautiful stand may long endure to delight the eye and ear of a grateful public."

The Bloomington Mechanics Band, too, received credit for enhancing the reputation of the community in the state. Dunlap continued, "Some of these men have grown grey among you, and in their circumspect walks through life as well as in their triumphs in music, they are fit subjects for emulation by these equally skilled musicians to whom we are so deeply indebted."

The Bloomington *Telephone* did not record whether the crowd dwindled or any snores could be heard as the mayor harked back to the "promise that we may here find natural gas in paying quantity. I say let it be done (applause) so that Bloomington will have no cause to be envious of any town in the State."

The *Telephone* reported that, "After the address refreshments were served by a number of young ladies on behalf of the band, from which about \$35 was realized."