

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

YES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

JOHN C. PROCTOR RECREATION CENTER AND PUBLIC BATHS

AND/OR COMMON

PROCTOR RECREATION CENTER

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

309 SOUTH ALLEN STREET

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

PEORIA

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

EIGHTEENTH (18)

STATE

ILLINOIS

CODE

COUNTY

PEORIA

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Rec-relatio

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA

STREET & NUMBER

2218 NORTH PROSPECT ROAD

CITY, TOWN

PEORIA

VICINITY OF

STATE

ILLINOIS

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

PEORIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ROOM 11, RECORDER'S OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER

324 MAIN STREET

CITY, TOWN

PEORIA,

STATE

ILLINOIS

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

INVENTORY OF ARCHITECTURE BEFORE WORLD WAR II IN PEORIA

DATE

OCTOBER 1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

ILLINOIS HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY

CITY, TOWN

1800 SOUTH PRAIRIE AVENUE, CHICAGO

STATE

ILLINOIS

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

DESCRIPTION

Located on Peoria's near southside, the John C. Proctor Recreation Center occupies one full city block. The rectangular, three-story brick building include: two gymnasiums, an auditorium with stage and dressing rooms, a library, and six game and meeting rooms. The building contains a rotunda and office, private offices for the director and staff, a laundry, a boiler room, storerooms, custodian's room and apparatus rooms in connection with the gymnasiums. "Two wings extend from each end of the office room, reception rooms, and such. One wing is devoted to men's and boys's activities; the other wing to women's and girls'." (1) Upon a plat of five acres adjacent to the building are a swimming pool, two tennis courts, children's playground, lighted softball diamond, and playfield areas.

The Proctor Center today provides services as it did when designed and constructed. It remains virtually unchanged as a "staunch, boy-proof" tribute to its Peoria Architects Hewitt and Emerson, and the endowment which funded it. The building is of fireproof construction except for the roof. The exterior is faced with a mat brick in two shades of gray, laid in double Flemish bond, a light gray double stretcher alternating with a single stretcher of the darker shade. The joints are five-eighths inch flush joints of natural colored rough textured cement mortar. Certain trimmings, such as arches, pilasters, and the like are entirely of the darker shade brick with horizontal joints deeply raked out. The stone is buff Indiana Limestone. The original, multi-pitched roof with red interlocking shingle tiles and copper gutters has seen only minor repairs; asphalt shingles were applied to one of its many pitches. Two side entrances leading into the gymnasium and large game and meeting rooms have also had recent modifications to allow wheelchair accessibility.

Specific features which appear striking at first observation include: the great number of double-hung windows with matching stone sills and lintels which completely surround the structure; two sets of imposing brass entrance doors flanking a brass plate of the founder; and, three chimneys extending from the Center.

B 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	1913	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Frank Emerson
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SIGNIFICANCE

The John C. Proctor Center, a multi-purpose recreational facility, is significant as a fine example of quality architecture in the Classical Revival style of 1913.

"John C. Proctor, the founder, died June 22, 1907. He was a banker and a lumber dealer, but more than that he was a philanthropist, and his story never will recount all the good deeds of his noble heart during his lifetime. Wealthy, he left his entire estate to the good of humanity." (1)

Acting on the provisions of his will, the trustees established the John C. Proctor Recreation Center and Public Baths.

Under these provisions (of Proctor's Will) the free baths are established and offered to all persons who wish to avail themselves of the opportunities provided. And in connection therewith, as a proper and valuable adjunct for the encouragement of virtue, morality, temperance, and training for the finest physical development, is established the playgrounds and gymnasiums adapted to the use of both children and grown people. (3)

The aim then of the institution was to further the physical, social and moral welfare of the community.

The institution is unique in that

Either the committee or the architects visited most of the more complete and recent institutions of the kind in this country; but the general scheme adopted was not modeled on any precedent, owing to differing conditions. The difference in scale, the fact that the scope was to be wider than that of any example found, required original treatment. (2)

As finally developed in 1913, praise was given to the plan and functional consideration which have seen several generations of continued use. But durability is not the only reason for singling out this building, for in this community of sturdy buildings, the architects of Proctor Center did it all with romance and flair. "Architect Frank Emerson was a student of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and had worked with Thomas Hastings in New York City. His experience brought classical Italy to Peoria. The loggias' broad proportions, and details of the Allen Street entrance have been described as Classic Modern." (4) The influence of Palladio and the patterned brickwork of the Germanic Peoria heritage enrich the entire building.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

CONTINUATION SHEET REFERENCES ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

3. John C. Proctor Endowment. The John C. Proctor Recreation Center and Public Baths. Peoria, Illinois: John C. Proctor Endowment, 1913.
4. Kenyon and Associates; Architects. "Statement of Significance: The John C. Proctor Recreation Center; Peoria, Illinois." 4, October, 1978.
5. "Proctor Center Directs Variety of Work and Play." Peoria Star, 27, December, 1936, vol. 39.

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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Upon the occasion of its opening in 1913,

Trustees of the endowment sought a man of peculiar qualifications to make the recreational center one of extreme popularity. From the field of available men of merit, they selected A.H. Hiatt, who had been principal of the Garfield and Harrison Schools. Mr. Hiatt started his organization upon a foundation of conviction that everyone engaged must cause the visitor to feel his welcome. Within a very few months therefore, Proctor Recreation Center, due to ...Mr. Hiatt and his staff, began to gain a popularity which grew from day to day. Mr. Hiatt was known by hundreds of families, from the youngest son to the mother and father. He, like the organization he represented, became an institution in Peoria life. (1)

In 1934 John E. Gronseth, a field representative from the National Recreation Association termed it the "finest recreational center in the middle west." (5) The basic purposes and objectives, thus defined in 1934, remain today. Proctor Recreation Center seeks to meet specific needs of the neighborhood's residents of all ages, reaching out to them with programs designed for worthwhile participation, and sharing with them the responsibility for planning the future growth and success of the Center.

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CONTINUATION SHEET DESCRIPTION ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

On the interior the architects were given practically "carte blanche" to use materials best fitted for the various purposes. Terrazzo and marble are used for floors, except in rooms requiring finished oak or maple floors. All bath, toilet, and locker rooms are of gray Tennessee marble and white enameled brick with cove angles. The swimming pool bottom is lined with white tile, with sanitary overflow rim in white terra-cotta. All exposed metal in bath and toilet rooms has been reduced to a minimum and is of white metal.

The two things kept uppermost in the minds of the architects in designing interior details of the building were to "use the most fitting and durable materials in the simplest and most cleanable forms to make everything, so far as possible 'boy-proof'." (2)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. "Park Board urged to take over Proctor." Peoria Star, 15 September 1934, vol. 36.
2. Emerson, Frank. "The John C. Proctor Recreation Center, Peoria, Illinois," Architectural Record vol. 37 (February 1915): 117-131.

(continued on page 2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Five (5)

QUADRANGLE NAME Peoria East Illinois

QUADRANGLE SCALE :24000 inches

UTM REFERENCES

A

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

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D

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The ground, 305 feet by 600 feet is bounded by Allen, Kettelle, Warren, and Martin Streets. The Center is near and faces Allen Street.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

J. Tom Brimberry, Planner

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Pleasure Driveway and Park District of Peoria

March 28, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

2218 North Prospect Road

(309) 688-3667

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Peoria

Illinois

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

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ILLINOIS

STATE

Date Entered SEP 6 1979

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Rohrbough, Calendar, House (Grissom House)	Kinmundy Marion County
Coronado	Rockford Winnebago County
✓ Proctor, John C., Recreation Center	Peoria Peoria County
Unity Building	Chicago Cook County
Church of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Monastery	Libertyville vicinity Lake County

Also Notified

Honorable Charles H. Percy
Honorable Adlai E. Stevenson
Honorable Paul M. Simon
Honorable John B. Anderson
Honorable Robert H. Michel
Honorable Cardiss Collins
Honorable Robert McClory

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-640

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

SURVEY USE ONLY

1. Name of Site: **Proctor Recreation Center**

Common

Historic

- Archaeology
- Architecture
- History

2. Location:

Street and Number

309 S. Allen

Township

Section

City or Town

Peoria

Zip Code

Range

1/4Section

County

Peoria

3. Classification:

Category (Check one)

- District
- Site

- Building
- Structure

Integrity (Check one)

- Altered
- Unaltered
- Moved
- Original Site

4. Ownership

- Private
- Public

Status (check one)

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted
- No

Present Use (check one or more)

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (specify)

5. Ownership of Property

Owner's Name

Street and Number

Phone Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description

Condition

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Deteriorated
- Ruins
- Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway? Yes No

SPORTS



7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Archaeological Site | (pre-Columbian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Archaeological Site | (post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | French Influence | (1673-1780) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Illinois Frontier | (1780-1818) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Illinois Early | (1818-1850) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Illinois Middle | (1850-1900) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Illinois Late | (1900-present) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Famous People | (Give names & dates) |

8. Specific Date: 1913

Areas of Significance (check one or more of the following)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Aboriginal (historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> | Music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Art | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Education | <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Landscape Architecture | | |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates). Use additional sheets if necessary.

Gymnasium & sports complex

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Metzger Date:

Organization:

Street and Number

City or Town County Zip Code

Phone Number

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for references for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.

Joch C. Proctor, a Peoria banker and philanthropist, built this gymnasium and sports complex in 1913. Proctor endowed several other public facilities in Peoria. He was single and had no family, therefore his efforts went toward public programs. This sort of sports facility with complete equipment was innovative in its time.