

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Sent to
Washington
July 1, 1992

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

other names/site number Old Magnus Farm Round Barn

2. Location

street & number 811 East Central Road not for publication

city or town Arlington Heights vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60005

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.)

William L. Wheeler, SHPO 6-25-92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State of 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 Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____

Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Round Barns of Illinois

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/round barn

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD/weather board

roof WOOD/shingle

other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

c.1910

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical 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:

Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6
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4	1	9	5	9	0
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4	6	5	7	2	1	0
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3

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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 Joseph M. Hoerner, AIA, Associate Architect

organization Linda F. Grubb & Assoc., Architects date 4/10/92

street & number 102 North Cook St., #23 telephone (708) 381-6939

city or town Barrington state IL zip code 60010

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

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 Lutheran General Health Care System

street & number 1775 Dempster St. telephone (708) 696-8600

city or town Park Ridge state IL zip code 60068

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is located on the grounds of The Moorings of Arlington Heights, a retirement community northwest of Chicago, Illinois. The barn was constructed circa 1910 as the primary working barn of a forty acre farming facility. The barn is approximately 50 feet in diameter and 46 feet in height, incorporating a floating purlin system of construction which provides a clear span, unobstructed loft. The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is nearly in original condition and possesses a high degree of integrity.

Setting

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is located on the grounds of The Moorings of Arlington Heights, a retirement community on East Central Road in the southern portion of the Village of Arlington Heights, a northwest suburb of Chicago, Illinois. Once surrounded by acres of farmland, the building now serves as the architectural focal point of a series of new residential and support structures which comprise the retirement community. The new structures range in size from a five-story brick multi-unit building on the south side of the barn, to a two-story brick health center on the west side, to a series of one-story brick and frame residential buildings on the north side. A landscaped parking area is located on the east side of the barn.

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Buildings in the community are well sited, with curving drives, generously landscaped and wooded areas, and two man-made ponds reflecting the once rural character of the site. The barn itself is located near the center of the complex along the main drive from the gatehouse on East Central Road to the main residential building. The area immediately surrounding the barn is pleasantly landscaped with ground plantings, shrubbery, and mature trees placed in a naturalistic manner.

Unfortunately, no definite information on the appearance of the site at the time of the construction of the barn is available. However, an early undated photograph reveals that the area immediately surrounding the barn was planted with various farm crops, and that a few trees and shrubs were located close to the perimeter of the barn.

Exterior

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is approximately 50 feet in diameter and 46 feet in height, measured from the finished floor level on the interior to the top of the cupola. The barn is a two-story structure which rests on a foundation of poured concrete. The structure is covered with wood drop siding, and the roof is covered with older wood shingles. The barn has a single hip roof with a conical roof cupola.

The lower portion of the barn is well lit and ventilated by a series of wood double-hung and casement windows. Some of the original casement windows have recently been replaced with newer casement windows. The barn is accessible through both a single and a double hinged service door, as well as a large barn door opening with a non-original wood overhead garage door. The upper portion of the barn has only a few casement windows, yet it is ventilated and partially lit by a series of wood louvered openings in the cupola walls.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

Although the wood drop siding on the building exterior is in good condition, most windows, window sills, and doors or other openings are in need of maintenance. The roofing is in poor condition and needs to be replaced immediately to prevent any possible damage to the building fabric.

Immediately adjacent to the barn is a small, unattached frame silo. This silo was constructed in 1939 after the original silo was destroyed during a windstorm. The existing silo is constructed of vertical wood struts held in place by horizontal metal rods and supports. The silo rests upon and is anchored to a poured concrete base. It is covered by a small, conical roof of wood shingles. The silo is in poor condition. The concrete foundation is cracked, and the frame structure is leaning to one side. The silo is not included in this nomination due to its deteriorated condition and the fact that it is not an original feature of the site.

Two long one-story gabled shed structures were removed from the north and east sides of the barn in 1989. These shed structures do not appear to have ever opened directly into the barn. The concrete foundation remains continuous in the areas of connection to the shed, and no siding required patching or replacement when they were removed. It appears that the sheds were not original features of the barn. No substantial alterations to the original barn itself have taken place, and the exterior still maintains a high degree of integrity.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

Interior

The poured concrete floor is formed to create areas for a walk, drop, platform, manger, and feed alley. The walk was used to lead the cattle to the platform, where they stood during feeding. The drop is a narrow depressed area in the concrete floor used to catch manure during feeding. The manger is a narrow depressed area in the concrete floor slanted to accommodate the feed. And the feed alley was used to bring the feed in from the haydrop, which is located just inside the large barn door. A poured concrete water trough is also located next to the cattle area.

The construction of the floor also reveals that one third of the barn was used for dairy cattle, and one third was used for stabling horses. The rest of the barn was used for storage or support purposes. All areas are partially separated by frame bead-board partitions. The portion of the barn used for stabling horses has wood planks set into the concrete to provide the needed cushioning material. This is an unusual and innovative solution to the stabling of horses on a concrete floor.

The interior of the barn does not incorporate a center silo. The walls, loft floor, and roof are constructed of wood framing. The roof is self-supporting through use of the floating purlin system of construction. This floating purlin system uses additional wood bracing for lateral support at the base of the cupola and at the pitch break in the hip roof. A series of six stationary pulleys and a single circular track pulley are suspended from the roof structure in the loft. These pulleys were used to move and stack the hay.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

The completely unobstructed loft is supported by floor joists which radiate from a single log column placed at the center of the concrete foundation. The 2 x 12 floor joists are supported at midspan by a built-up circular wood beam supported by a series of log columns arranged around the central wood column. A smaller built-up circular wood beam, which is not structural, is located nearer to the center log column. Throughout the years, additional wood posts and steel column jacks have been installed to support the original structure where required.

The interior of the barn is in good overall condition. All major interior elements of the framing, interior partitions, windows, etc. are still in place and the interior maintains a high degree of integrity. The concrete floor has some cracking in limited areas, yet is in good overall condition. The structural elements of the building, such as the roof, wall, and loft framing show no signs of serious deterioration and appear to be in good condition. The floor decking in the loft and the stair up to the loft are severely deteriorated in some areas and are in need of immediate repair or replacement. A non-original sprinkler system has been added to the barn a number of years ago.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn meets Criteria A and C, and Criterion Consideration A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as an addition to the 1982 Round Barns in Illinois-Thematic Group Nomination. The barn is representative of a building type which illustrates the application of scientific principles to the field of agriculture. Construction of the barn was most likely influenced by the scientific principles promoted by the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Illinois at Urbana, and also represents an example of the occasional deviations from these principles necessitated by the unique requirements and restrictions of the owner and builder. The barn is currently owned by a religious institution, however, historically it had no religious associations.

History

Although no definitive date of construction, owner, or builder can be documented, it appears that the round barn could have been constructed circa 1910 for Mr. Elbert Bartlett Wheeler, a local farmer, civil engineer, and surveyor and county correspondent for the United States Department of Agriculture.

Elbert Bartlett Wheeler (E. Wheeler) was one of eleven children born to Ephriam Bartlett Wheeler (E. B. Wheeler) and Emily Clough on September 26, 1841 at the Wheeler farm in Elk Grove Village Township (just south of present day Arlington Heights). In 1861, land plats show that the land

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

which is presently occupied by the barn was owned by his father, E. B. Wheeler. At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, E. Wheeler volunteered for the armed services, but was rejected for reasons of frailty. At that time he entered Northwestern University and graduated four years later in 1865. While at the university, he valued education highly and was an active member of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, then designated as a volunteer society of educated men. He volunteered once again for the armed services upon graduation and was accepted into the 132nd Illinois Infantry. In 1870, he was discharged from the armed services and continued his interest in education by pursuing a brief career as a teacher. At this time the site of the barn was still owned by his father, E. B. Wheeler.

E. Wheeler married Nancy Skinner in 1873. They had three children together. Land plats indicate that the ownership of the site of the barn was held by J. T. Wheeler, E. Wheeler's younger brother, in 1875. E. Wheeler's first wife died in 1882, the same year his father sold his other land holdings in Elk Grove Township and moved to Arlington Heights.

Land plats show that the site of the barn was owned by E. Wheeler by 1886. In that same year he was married to Louise Fredericks, with whom he later had four children. The federal census taken in 1910 reveals his occupation as a farmer, civil engineer, and surveyor. His brother, J. T. Wheeler, who had lived with E. Wheeler and his family since before 1900, stated his occupation as farm laborer and home farmer in the same census. E. Wheeler maintained ownership of the land which is presently occupied by the barn until his death in 1916.

Sometime after E. Wheeler's death in 1916, the farm was sold by the Wheeler family to Dr. A.B. Magnus. Dr. Magnus was a practicing psychiatrist in Chicago. It is not known how many

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of the original farm buildings were standing at this time, but all existing buildings were remodeled and the farm was converted to a sanatorium for the treatment and care of the mentally ill. When Dr. Magnus joined the armed services in 1942, Mrs. M. C. Magnus continued to make improvements and alterations to the facility and converted it to a nursing home. By 1962, after the construction of the two-story brick building which now stands to the west of the barn, the facility had reached a total size of over one hundred beds.

After 1962, operation of the farm was passed to Mr. A. B. Magnus, Jr., eldest of the Magnus' three sons. Mr. Magnus, Jr. continued to operate the nursing home and to make additions, improvements, and alterations to the facility. During this period, the barn continued to be used for its original purpose. Milk, cream, and butter from the dairy cows, along with eggs, stewing chickens, and vegetables from the garden were provided for the residents of the nursing home. Surveys completed in 1975 and 1987 show that the round barn had two separate long frame shed structures attached, one to the north and one to the east. These surveys also show that two multi-story brick and frame residences were located just to the southwest of the barn.

The farm was sold by the Magnus family to the Lutheran General Health Care System in 1986. Construction on the residential buildings began shortly thereafter. In 1989, the two frame shed structures attached to the barn, along with the two residential structures located just to the southwest of the barn, were removed to facilitate the development of the property. Yet, since the purchase of the site by the Lutheran General Health Care System, the barn itself has been maintained and unaltered, and is presently used for storage. The barn is the only remaining building from the original farm. It is the intent of the owner to restore or rehabilitate the barn for use by the residents or

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the owner, and as a continued architectural focus for the entire development.

The approximate date of 1910 for the construction of the barn was arrived at by analyzing the available land plats and comparing them to the available biographical information on the persons who maintained ownership of the land over these years. The earliest available plat which indicates a structure on the property is dated 1875. But the construction materials and methods used on the barn indicate that it is not that old. The last available land plat from that era is dated 1910, the same year that the census was taken identifying E. Wheeler as a farmer, civil engineer, and surveyor. This plat indicates that the structure which first appeared on the 1875 plat is still in the same location, with no additional structures or alterations to the site. It is most likely that the barn was constructed sometime shortly after the land plat of 1910.

It is conceivable that E. Wheeler may have been familiar with the work of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Illinois and other scientific agricultural principles through his association with the United States Department of Agriculture as outlined in his obituary, and his occupations as both a farmer and civil engineer as outlined in the census records. The construction materials and methods of the barn are also comparable to those of other round barns documented in previous National Register nomination forms as outlined below. The size, design, and construction materials and methods used on the barn bear striking resemblance to those of other round barns known to have been built in Illinois around 1910.

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Historic Context

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn can be viewed in the context of other round barns in Illinois already listed on the National Register. As stated in the Thematic Group Nomination of Round Barns in Illinois, 1982 and 1983, the round barns in Illinois represent a manifestation of the application of scientific principles to American agriculture, having been promoted by the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Illinois in Urbana. The national trend of application of scientific principles to agriculture began in the mid-nineteenth century at Yale University. Illinois joined this national trend with the creation of the Geological Survey in 1851. In 1867, the University of Illinois in Urbana opened in part to teach scientific farming. The Agricultural Experiment Station was opened in 1888 to help convey this new information to farmers around the state.

Wilbur J. Fraser, chief of dairy husbandry at the station, published two bulletins on round barns: No. 143: Economy of the Round Barn (February, 1910) and No. 230: The Round Barn (September, 1918). Fraser believed that the round barn was the most practical and profitable barn type for use on a dairy farm. Fraser's writings were part of a larger movement at the turn of the century to improve farming through the dissemination of scientific information through published materials.

The Thematic Group Nomination of Round Barns in Illinois notes that the popularity of round barns decreased as the use of mechanized farm equipment and prefabricated barn structures increased. The mechanical equipment was designed primarily for use in square or rectangular barns and did not prove cost effective for use in round barns. A decline in the use of handcrafted materials and the new popularity of

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machine-made products made the use of prefabricated barn structures more frequent.

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is most similar to three barns included in the Thematic Group Nomination of Round Barns in Illinois. These three barns are the Leek Round Barn, the Fehr Round Barn, and the Harbach Round Barn. These barns were each constructed circa 1910 (the actual date of the Harbach Barn is unknown). Each barn has a poured concrete foundation, and each lacks a central silo. The lofts in these barns are supported on variations of a central column from which floor joists radiate towards the outer walls, which are finished with drop siding in all three cases. Like the Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn, the Fehr and Harbach barns have a single hip roof employing a floating purlin system to support their clear span, unobstructed lofts. These three round barns provide a specific historic context in which the Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn can be evaluated.

Evaluation

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn is representative of a building type which illustrates the application of scientific principles to the field of agriculture. Although it is clear that such an application is present, the source of all specific influences is not clear. Roof construction details, such as the floating purlin system, indicate the influence of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Illinois and Wilbur J. Fraser's bulletins on round barns. Yet the lack of a central silo indicates some degree of independence from the recommendations of the Station. The barn also appears to be influenced by some earlier building traditions in the use of log columns to support the loft. And this tradition seems somewhat incongruous in a building constructed following the most recent scientific trends. Although unusual, these variations

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are most likely due to the requirements or restrictions of the owner and builder, rather than any deliberate variation from the recommended scientific methods of the time.

The Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn possesses integrity of location and design. The barn has not been moved and no major alterations to the basic form of the barn have been made. The setting in which the barn is presently located is different from its original setting, yet great effort has been made to preserve a rural character in the area immediately surrounding the barn. The barn possesses integrity of materials and workmanship as well. All original materials, including the concrete foundation, drop siding, and wood framing are still present. The original workmanship is also still present in the exposed and unaltered structural system of the barn. Integrity of feeling and location is also represented in the Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn. Through its present passive use as a storage facility, the barn evokes a sense of its original feeling and association.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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Chicago: A. T. Andreas.
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Manual of American College Fraternities. Indianapolis:
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- Brown, Willard Sr. (Chairman, Round Barn Committee at The
Moonings), Interviews; December, 1991 - March, 1992.
- Cook County Herald Volume 44, Number 15, January 21, 1916,
Pioneer Citizen Is Dead. Chicago: E. O. Peddock.
- Cook County Highway Department Base Map, 1967.
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Urbana: University of Illinois Agricultural
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University of Illinois Agricultural Experiment
Station, (Circular No. 230).
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- Mitchell's Real Estate Map of Cook County, 1902.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

Price, H. Wayne, 1989, Letter to Ms. Ann Swallow concerning
Old Magnus Round Barn.

Real Estate Map of Cook County, 1870.

Sculle, Keith A., National Register Coordinator, 1982,
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Snyder's Real Estate Map of Cook County, 1886.

Snyder's Real Estate Map of Cook County, 1890.

Sodko, Tom, Recollections as referenced in the historical
and promotional article printed by The Moorings.

United States Federal Census of Elk Grove Township, 1900.

United States Federal Census of Elk Grove Township, 1910.

VanVechten & Snyder's Real Estate Map of Cook County, 1875.

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Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A circular area with a 30 foot radius taken from the center point of the barn.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the land which has been historically associated with the Wheeler-Magnus Round Barn.