

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Washington, D.C.
7-12-93

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 Memorial Hall

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 10308 Main Street not for publication

city or town Richmond vicinity

state Illinois code IL county McHenry code 111 zip code 60071

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 C. Whelan 7-9-93
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:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Memorial Hall
Name of Property

McHenry, 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>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall
SOCIAL/meeting hall
RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium
RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
SOCIAL/clubhouse
EDUCATION/library

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall
RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium
SOCIAL/civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American
Movements

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick
roof asphalt
other limestone

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)

Politics/Government

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1907-1943

Significant Dates

1907

.

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arp, Fred, builder

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:

McHenry County Historical Society

Memorial Hall
Name of Property

McHenry, 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	16	392650	4703190
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

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 Christina J. Gallagher

organization Creative Arts Center of Nippersink date April 26, 1993

street & number 3307 Sherwood Forest * telephone 815-675-6524

city or town Spring Grove state IL zip code 60081

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 Village of Richmond

street & number Hunter Lane telephone 815-678-4040

city or town Richmond state IL zip code 60071

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Memorial Hall

DESCRIPTION

Memorial Hall is located at 10308 Main Street in Richmond, McHenry County, Illinois. The two-story rectangular brick building was built in 1907. It stands on the east side of Main Street one building south of the intersection of Broadway and Main, and one block east of the former railroad line (the tracks were removed in 1987). The building stands approximately 10 feet from the street edge to the west and 45 feet from the street edge to the north. It faces onto a parking lot to the north, a rear alley to the east, and a narrow grassy area on the building's south side. War memorials are located in a small garden area in the northwest corner of the parking area which is fenced with wrought iron. A time capsule commemorating the nation's Bicentennial is located near the southwest corner of the building.

The two story building has a full basement and is made of brick. The total perimeter of the building is 254 feet. The condition of the building is excellent. There is a gable roof with asphalt shingles. Chimneys are located on the southwest and northwest sides of the building. All of the windows are wood and appear to be original. The building incorporates an upper level auditorium space with lobby, ticket and cloak offices, a stage, and a balcony. A flight of six concrete steps leads to a landing and double doors entering this space. The lower level consists of two office spaces, a central hallway, a large open meeting room, kitchen, and bathrooms. A flight of concrete stairs on the northwest corner of the building leads to this lower area.

The facade is made of orange-yellow brick has a central, projecting bay with a central double door, topped with an arched, multi-paned window. The current metal doors are not original; earlier photos show wooden double doors, paneled on the lower portion and either screen or glass on the upper half. Horizontal limestone string coursing projects off the horizontal plane formed by the upper edge of the projecting doorway and runs beneath a three-paned horizontal window. The entire central section of the facade is capped with limestone.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Memorial Hall

Above the projecting central doorway "MEMORIAL HALL" is incised in limestone above three rectangular one-over-one windows. Two small one-over-one rectangular windows are located on the first floor level. They have limestone lintels and sills. Two larger one-over-one arched windows with limestone sills are located on the second story.

Two bays flank this section and are recessed further back from the door. These bays have no windows. Yellow brick coursing connects all sections of the limestone coursing on the second story. On the lower level, heavier brick coursing connects three of the sections, located approximately 3 feet from the base of the building.

To the left of the entry, concrete steps lead to the basement. In the 1940s a concrete block protective enclosure was built around the stairs leading to the lower level. Prior to that time, an open metal railing encased this area. Concrete steps lead up to the main entrance of the building. They are flanked by concrete block walls, which have been stuccoed and painted dark brown. Earlier photos show what appears to be concrete steps and a landing, each flanked by brick walls, topped with limestone caps.

The north, south, and east sides of the building are made of yellow-brown brick. There is a concrete foundation. The north and south sides have two pairs of large one-over one windows, capped with three square-paned horizontal windows (the horizontal windows on the north side are covered with wood). Six segmental arched windows with limestone sills are located a foot above ground level. They light the basement of the building. A flight of wooden stairs and a door to the auditorium are located on both the north and south sides of the building toward the rear (east). On the northwest corner an additional door serves the basement level.

The rear or east side of the building consists of a central bay projecting four feet. This section has a central wooden door with a small square single-pane window (date unknown, but not original). Two small square single-pane windows are located to the south of the door. These have limestone sills. Four rectangular one-over-one windows with brick segmental arches and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Memorial Hall

limestone sills bring light in the upper portion of the auditorium space. Two recessed bays frame the central projection. In these bays are two rectangular one-over-one windows with segmental brick arches and limestone sills on the upper level. A small square single-pane window with a limestone sill serves the lower level at the southeast side. A stage door is located on the north side of the central projection approximately six feet above ground level. Exterior window and door frames have been painted dark brown, although they appear lightly colored in earlier photos.

The interior floor plan is very simple. (See sketch plan). The basement of the building consists of two small offices in front, a large open meeting area (dining room), and a kitchen. There are hardwood floors in the offices and the meeting space, a concrete slab in the central hallway and kitchen. The walls consist of plaster, painted cream with brown trim. There is a painted metal ceiling in the meeting room. The ceiling in the offices are plaster. The current heating system is a forced air natural gas furnace.

A kitchen and storage space lies beyond the meeting room. The storage space consists of two rooms with concrete floors and plaster walls. One room accommodates the furnace, the other is for storage. A hallway with concrete floors runs between the kitchen and the storage space. It leads to the rear door, located on the east side of the building.

There exists an intermediate level located on the east side of the building, midway between the basement and the auditorium. This level accommodates two bathrooms. At one time these held showers for use by the athletic teams. The bathrooms are finished in modern materials and fixtures. Linoleum has been installed on the floor at this intermediate bathroom level. Portions of the rear hall leading to the bathroom have been drywalled, however painted wainscoting lines the stairwell which leads to the auditorium.

The upper level of the building consists of a central foyer flanked by a ticket office and cloak room, the auditorium, and stage. One of the original interior diamond-paned windows separating the foyer from the cloak room remains. A partition

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4

Memorial Hall

was installed between the foyer and the main auditorium space in 1946. Evidence of column caps exist where metal columns once stood. These have been drywalled in. Oak stairs on the northwest and southwest side of the building lead to a balcony area. At one time, the balcony extended in a curvilinear form along the north and south walls of the building, but was trimmed back in 1946 to accommodate the high school gym. Oak wainscoting, banisters, and floors are found throughout the balcony area.

The auditorium space has hardwood floors that are currently covered with foam-backed carpeting. Three ceilings have been installed, the most recent of acoustical tile with suspended workshop type fluorescent fixtures. The first of the two false ceilings (made of 4' x 8' fiberboard) was installed in 1948 when a metal movie projector booth was installed. The acoustical tile ceiling was installed in 1972 when the Nippersink Library used the space. Above the uppermost false ceiling, the original varnished oak ceiling still remains. There is evidence of original stenciling, a central oak leaf motif in brown on cream, surrounded by fleurs de lis. Some metal pendant lamps hang on chains in between the two false ceilings. Metal tie rods span the width of the auditorium at the uppermost ceiling level. (Evidence of these is clear from the photos of the north and south exteriors).

In the auditorium area, the walls are lined to chair rail height with oak wainscoting, which has been painted (except for the balcony area, where the original finish is evident). Above the wainscoting the walls are plaster. The auditorium area is lit naturally by two sets of large windows on the north and south walls. These are each topped with three square windows. On the north side of the building, the square windows have been covered with wood. Gas jets for the original gas lighting are present on this level. The stage area was also trimmed back to accommodate the high school gym. It originally curved in a serpentine form into the auditorium space, echoing the lines of the balcony. This frontal stage area was rebuilt in 1992 as closely as possible to the original design, to accommodate high school theater productions. The original dressing rooms are unchanged and the original stage backdrop is still in existence (although not at this building). A black velvet curtain is in fair

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Memorial Hall

condition, but it is not original. It was made to accommodate the lowered height of the ceiling.

The integrity of Memorial Hall is excellent. Structurally, the building is basically sound. Tuckpointing has been maintained (although it is the wrong color). Windows are functional, although one diamond-paned interior window is missing. There is some damage on the south interior wall which appears to have been caused by a leak at the chimney. This chimney leak has been repaired.

Located to the northwest of the building is a small fenced in garden area with two veterans' memorials. These large stone boulders with bronze plaques were installed in 1946 and honor the veterans of World War I and II. They are both noncontributing objects.

To the southwest of the building is a small boulder located above the buried Bicentennial time capsule. The boulder which was placed in 1976 is a noncontributing object.

There is also a wooden sign to the southwest donated by the Rotary in the late 1970s, it announces upcoming events for the village of Richmond. To the northwest is a tall metal flagpole and a pay phone.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Memorial Hall

Statement of Significance

Introduction

Memorial Hall meets Criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is a locally significant building associated with the governmental/political administration of the community of Richmond. Memorial Hall was built in 1907, by a bequest of \$10,000 provided by Charles McConnell to provide offices for the village government and a meeting space for the village board. In addition, Memorial Hall is significant for Recreation/Entertainment as a gymnasium for the high school basketball team and physical education department as well as a recreation center for the Y.M.C.A. and Boy Scouts; as a meeting place for the Women's Club and American Legion; space for graduations, community dances, and Alumni dinners; as a home for the J.B. Rotnour Players, a traveling vaudeville troupe; a movie theater; and as a performing space for high school theater productions. The period of significance is 1907, the year Memorial Hall was built, to 1943, the fifty-year cutoff for the National Register. Since the time it was built, Memorial Hall has been a vital focal point of this rural community located in northern McHenry County, a community in a state of flux as rapid growth impacts its downtown, existing systems, and schools.

The first settler in the town of Richmond was William A. McConnell, a carpenter who came in 1837 and erected the first building, a log structure. Eight other settlers came to the area soon after, most of whom settled in 1838. Thenceforth settlement progressed quite rapidly. The first school was built on William McConnell's farm in 1841. In 1844 the village of Richmond was laid out. A cheese factory was started in Richmond by Dr. R.R. Stone and William A. McConnell. This was followed by the establishment of a creamery, other cheese factories, a box factory, wagon works, and a pickle factory. In 1872 the village of Richmond was incorporated.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Memorial Hall

Politics/Government

In his will filed September 5, 1903, Charles DeWitt McConnell, grandson of William A. McConnell, left a bequest of ten thousand dollars,

to be used for the purpose of erecting a village or City Hall, the same to be called Memorial Hall, to be used when required by church societies and school functions free of charge, and not to be used for immoral exhibitions or immoral shows, the said money to be paid to the lawful trustee of said village whenever said building or hall shall be completed and approved by Executors hereinafter named.¹

At a village meeting in June 1905, Mr. E. C. Covell, President of the village board, was appointed a committee of one to investigate a site for the hall. On June 6, 1905 a proposition was made to the board by Charles Kruse to sell the village a parcel of land to be used as a site upon which to build Memorial Hall. This proposition was tabled and on August 1, 1905, an ordinance was passed to condemn land for a site. That same month, bonds in the amount of \$1500 were issued to pay for the site. On August 18, 1905, plans for Memorial Hall were presented with the cost not to exceed \$9,500. By October 1905 an agreement with Charles Kruse had been met, and the site had been procured. A contract was let to Fred Arp for \$9,384 to construct the building. On November 6, 1906, J. W. Haythorne, Village Treasurer, was authorized to receive the bequest from the estate of Charles D. McConnell.

Reverend B. E. Smith and Reverend P. H. Barker, ministers of the Methodist and Congregational Churches prepared the program for the dedication. No specific date is given. 403 chairs were ordered by the village at a cost of \$489.83 in December 1906. The hall was heated by two furnaces purchased at a cost of \$489.80 from Charles Kruse. Gas fixtures were used for lighting.

On January 15, 1907 a special meeting was called to "settle" with Mr. Arp. Scenery curtains for the stage were ordered from the Cox Scenic Company to be delivered by February 15th. Village board meetings had previously been held at the Richmond Bank

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Memorial Hall

(owned by the McConnell family) and the Gazette office. At the village board meeting held at the Richmond Bank office on June 1, 1907, E. B. Covell, President of the board, was appointed to take charge of the hall and also to buy a cook stove and dishes for the hall.²

From 1907 through 1943 many decisions were made by the village board affecting the future of Richmond. On April 18, 1913, the Public Service Company of Northern Illinois was granted a franchise to extend electrical service to Richmond. On May 10, 1915, President Covell stated that in the future all meetings of the village board were to be continually held in Memorial Hall. The village board continued to hold meetings there until March 2, 1993. On June 1, 1915, the first village board meeting at Memorial Hall was held in the auditorium portion of the building, referred to in the village board minutes as the "Council Room."

The first of many village elections was held at Memorial Hall was on April 18, 1916. On January 17, 1917 the decision was made to discontinue gas lighting and to install electric lights in the village. A petition was filed on September 18, 1919 to build a new bridge over the railroad tracks across Broadway. At a special meeting held on April 3, 1923 plans and specifications for the repair of the covered bridge on Broadway were presented by the Chicago and North Western Railway.

On December 2, 1924, the Central Engineering Service Company and R. A. Lovedell, State Highway Commissioner, met with the village board to make a proposal to pave the main streets in Richmond. A week later, the board decided to proceed with the project. In 1925, the stage curtain for Memorial Hall was repaired and painted.

A special meeting was held July 21, 1925, to discuss fire fighting apparatus proposals. A general tax levy was passed in July for the sum of \$6500 for the purpose of obtaining suitable fire fighting apparatus, including buckets and ladders. In the wake of a disastrous fire in December 1925, a meeting was held on December 28 at Memorial Hall for the purposes of organizing a volunteer fire department.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Memorial Hall

The meeting was well attended by representative citizens of the town and all were emphatic in their approval of a plan whereby Richmond would be provided with suitable equipment for fighting fires.³

On December 29, 1925, the village board purchased a Type S chassis fire truck at a cost of \$4,902.04. The board decided on April 22, 1926 to build three concrete water tanks in convenient places throughout the village to help fight fires.

Village trustee Fred Arp reported on investigating the possibility of installing water and sewer lines along Main Street in July 1926. A contract submitted by Wells Engineering Company of Geneva, Illinois was approved for the work. At that same meeting the McHenry County Light & Power Company was authorized to construct, operate, and maintain an electric light and power system in the village.

In October 1926 bonds were passed to construct a water plant for household use and fire protection. The board decided the water tank and tower should be located on the site of the village dump. A contract was awarded to the Chicago Bridge & Iron Company for a 50,000 gallon steel tank with a tower for \$5,050.

Following the leveling of a special assessment for \$52,655 the village voted to establish a sanitary sewer and purification plant on September 22, 1928.

In 1930 State Route 173 was established through Richmond. On September 18, 1930, the paving of Broadway was approved. The police station and jail were moved to Memorial Hall on March 6, 1934.

An ordinance for a 25-year franchise to the Farmers New Era Telephone Company to provide phone service for the village was passed on October 1, 1935.

A new deep well was constructed by the American Well Works in 1938. The pump for the well cost \$1,056.89 and was approved by the village board. In a special meeting on October 12, 1939, the decision was made to purchase a new fire truck.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Memorial Hall

On August 5, 1941, the village turned over to the newly formed Richmond Township Fire Protection District all of their interest in the fire trucks and equipment. A motion was passed July 7, 1943 to build curbs and gutters along U.S. Route 12 and widen the bridge on the same route.

Over the years Memorial Hall served as a polling place and home to Richmond's local government. The decisions made in Memorial Hall shaped the future of the village and reflected a coming together of the local citizenry to play an active role in the development of their community. *

Recreation/Entertainment

In addition to functioning as a meeting space for local government, Memorial Hall has served as a hub for community recreation and entertainment in Richmond and as additional space for school recreational activities.

Aside from a pool hall, there was little else in the way of recreational facilities in town. Village minutes reflect that on May 3, 1919 a thirty day application for a ten-pin bowling alley was approved. In 1921 this bowling alley, known as Shlupp's Pool Parlor stood next to the Richmond Hotel on the west side of Main Street. It had both a bowling alley and a billiard table.

On October 7, 1919, permission was granted to the high school to use the auditorium space for basketball practices and games with other schools. Professor F. A. Love of Richmond Burton High School was given permission on November 14, 1930 to install showers and bathrooms for the basketball teams in Memorial Hall at no expense to the village. Village board minutes on October 7, 1941 state that Mr. Gunderson of the high school faculty appeared before the board in regard to using Memorial Hall for physical education activities including the showers and the northwest room for a dressing room and the dining room for a play room several times a week. In 1946 the balcony and stage were cut back to accommodate basketball games. After the new high school was built in 1949, Memorial Hall was no longer used for basketball games.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Memorial Hall

Other organizations who used Memorial Hall for recreational purposes include the Y.M.C.A who used the basement during the 1920s, and the Boy Scouts who had free use of the Hall for one night a month for recreational activities.

In addition to its function as the center for government and recreation in the community, Memorial Hall represents an important grassroots trend in American cultural and entertainment history during the late 19th and early 20th centuries: namely the widespread demand by rural and small communities for cultural and intellectual entertainment that required a specialized theatrical and auditorium facility.⁴

A tradition of theater and performance in the community is strong. A program from the Eighth Annual Commencement of Richmond High School, dated June 4, 1902, states that the commencement was held at Burton's Opera House. This space was located above Burton's Store at the northwest corner of Main and Broadway.⁵ After Memorial Hall was built, this space fell into disuse and exists today as an antique shop.⁶

From the day of its opening, Memorial Hall served as a place for local performances, as the stage curtain and scenery were ordered from the Cox Scenery Company to be delivered by February 15, 1907.

The custom of giving a Senior Class Play during graduation week began with the Class of 1911. Rent for the June 11, 1918, Senior Class Play was \$3.30. Since then, each class has presented a play and used the proceeds to purchase items for school use as a class memorial. A Souvenir and Program, Commencement Week, 1920 lists the following events held at Memorial Hall: the Senior Class Play, "Safety First - A Farce Comedy in Three Acts;" the Twenty-Fifth Commencement Exercises, and the Alumni Reunion and Banquet.⁷

From 1921 to 1946, the auditorium was home to The J. B. Rotnour Players, producers of good family entertainment, plays, operettas, and melodrama. Howard Katzenberg recalls the troupe of seven or eight vividly. The troupe gave a weekly performance (Wednesday evening) at Memorial Hall and would go from there to the neighboring communities of Delevan and Genoa City, Wisconsin;

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 12

Memorial Hall

Antioch and Woodstock, Illinois and others presenting the same performance. Shows would change weekly. The troupe was supported by twenty-four local businesses who then gave free tickets to patrons of their establishments. The original backdrop curtain (in the possession of Howard Katzenberg) lists all business supporters.⁸

In 1939, Mr. Daniels presented a new drop curtain for the stage in the auditorium free of charge. Village board minutes of January 7, 1941 noted a complaint filed with Village President Mr. Peet by the J. B. Rotnour management in regard to noise made by certain persons during their show, disturbing the peace and harmony of the audience. After some discussion among the board, President Pro Tem Mr. Pierce ordered Officer Buchert to close off the balcony and to keep order in the auditorium.

Memorial Hall was also used for other forms of entertainment including the showing of films. In 1925, L. E. Sweet made rental arrangements with the village board to show movies. In 1926 the auditorium was rewired to connect the new film projector. Movies continued to be shown in the auditorium in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1938 an agreement was made with the Pennant Picture Company to rent the auditorium for \$1 per night to show movies. During this time period many of the local businessmen underwrote the performances and gave away free tickets to their patrons.

Other organizations used the hall for entertainment purposes including the Richmond Military Band which hosted a concert on March 16, 1916.

Alumni dances, including an alumni dinner prepared by ladies of the local churches in the kitchen, and high school commencements were held in the building from 1907 until the new high school was built in 1949. The Souvenir and Program, Commencement Week, 1920, notes the Annual Reunion and Banquet was held Friday evening, June 11 at 8 p.m., listing a menu of Pressed Chicken, Creamed Potatoes, and Green Peas. Music was provided by alumni Richard Richardson, Clyde Bell, and Benjamin Winn.⁹

At the June 7, 1938 village board meeting, Trustee Vogel spoke on behalf of the Richmond Burton High School alumni Association in regard to renting Memorial Hall for their annual dance and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Memorial Hall

dinner, claiming that the Association was in stringent circumstances. The village board voted to allow the Association free use of the building for their meetings, dinner, and dance.

The Grand Army of the Republic Post from 1907-1934 sponsored the George Washington Birthday Ball at the building. The annual event was a formal dress affair with a live band, and the auditorium was elaborately decorated.¹⁰ Memorial Day services were held by the G.A.R. from 1907 until 1949 inside the building. In 1946, granite boulders with bronze plaques listing village veterans from both World War I and II were placed northwest of the building.

In September 1911, Mrs. Robert LaFollette, wife of Wisconsin statesman Robert LaFollette, was the founder of a home study circle which evolved into the Richmond Women's Club in 1912. The club hosted a domestic science school for eight grade and high school girls at Memorial Hall in 1912. Club meetings were held every two weeks in the building and in 1913 outside speakers in the area of "Art and Architecture" were brought in.

The Women's Club joined with the Parent and Teacher's Association of the Richmond Public School in giving a School Benefit Week. The benefit week commenced on October 21, 1913 and continued both afternoon and evening through Saturday morning. During this week, watercolors and prints including the Elson prints from Belmont, Massachusetts were exhibited at various locations in town. An antique show was held in the basement of Memorial Hall. Each evening, entertainment was held in the building's auditorium and included a lecture on "Art of the American People," entertainments by children of the school, a talk by the Lincoln Park wild animal trainer, and a high school comedy, "Who's Who." A \$500 profit was realized from the benefit.

The Women's Club continued to sponsor lectures and performances at Memorial Hall until World War I. Following the war, the group purchased a series of Chautauqua books. This series provided cultural information about various topics which were then discussed at meetings. In the 1930s, the Women's Club started a private library for use by village residents at Memorial Hall. It began originally in one of the downstairs office spaces on the north side and was heated by a coal stove in the winter. On July

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 14

Memorial Hall

7, 1972, the Nippersink District Library was formed. The library moved up into the auditorium portion of the building and the village's police station moved into the previous space. In 1991 a new library building was built to accommodate the growing collection.¹¹

Memorial Hall was also used as a home by the American Legion, established in 1919, and the Legion Auxiliary. Board minutes of March 1, 1932 gave permission to the Paul Hoffman Legion Post to use the northwest room of Memorial Hall for their meeting place at no cost. Use by the American Legion continued until the mid-1960s.

Today the building faces a transition as government offices have moved to a larger building. The Creative Arts Center of Nippersink, a local arts group, supervises performances and classes in the building and other community groups continue to use it for meetings, recitals, receptions, and other activities. The Richmond Burton High school theatrical group presents their productions at Memorial Hall.

For over 85 years, Memorial Hall has been a hub around which community life in the village of Richmond revolves. It was built due to the foresight of Charles DeWitt McConnell, who recognized and memorialized the importance of "community," the significance of the contributions individuals can and do make to the fabric of community life, and the importance of providing a central, inclusive location for interaction to take place.

Endnotes

1. Will of Charles D. McConnell, filed at McHenry County, Illinois, September 23, 1903 by G.F. Rushton, County Clerk.
2. Borre, Irene. Tracer. McHenry County Historical Society, Spring 1989, p. 7-8.
3. Richmond Gazette. December 24, 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Memorial Hall

4. Swallow, Ann. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Alexis Opera House. Springfield, Illinois: Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, 1987.
5. Eighth Annual Commencement Program, Richmond High School, Richmond, Illinois. June 4, 1902.
6. Oral history interview with Irene Borre, March 29, 1993.
7. Souvenir and Program, Commencement Week, 1920. Richmond, Illinois: Richmond Public Schools, p. 3, 6-8.
8. Yoggerst, Jim. "Historical Magic of Richmond" in News-Sun, Saturday/Sunday, November 19-20, 1988. Oral history interview with Howard Katzenberg, March 29, 1993.
9. Oral history interview with Irene Borre, March 29, 1993.
10. Ibid.
11. Nu Vue News, Richmond, Illinois, August 31, 1972.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 16

Memorial Hall

Bibliography

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 17

Memorial Hall

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September 23, 1903, by G.F. Rushton, Clerk County Court.

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Proceedings of March 5, 1907" and March 12, 1936, "J.B. Rotnour
Players to Start at Richmond on Wed. Eve., March 18th."
Woodstock, Illinois.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 18

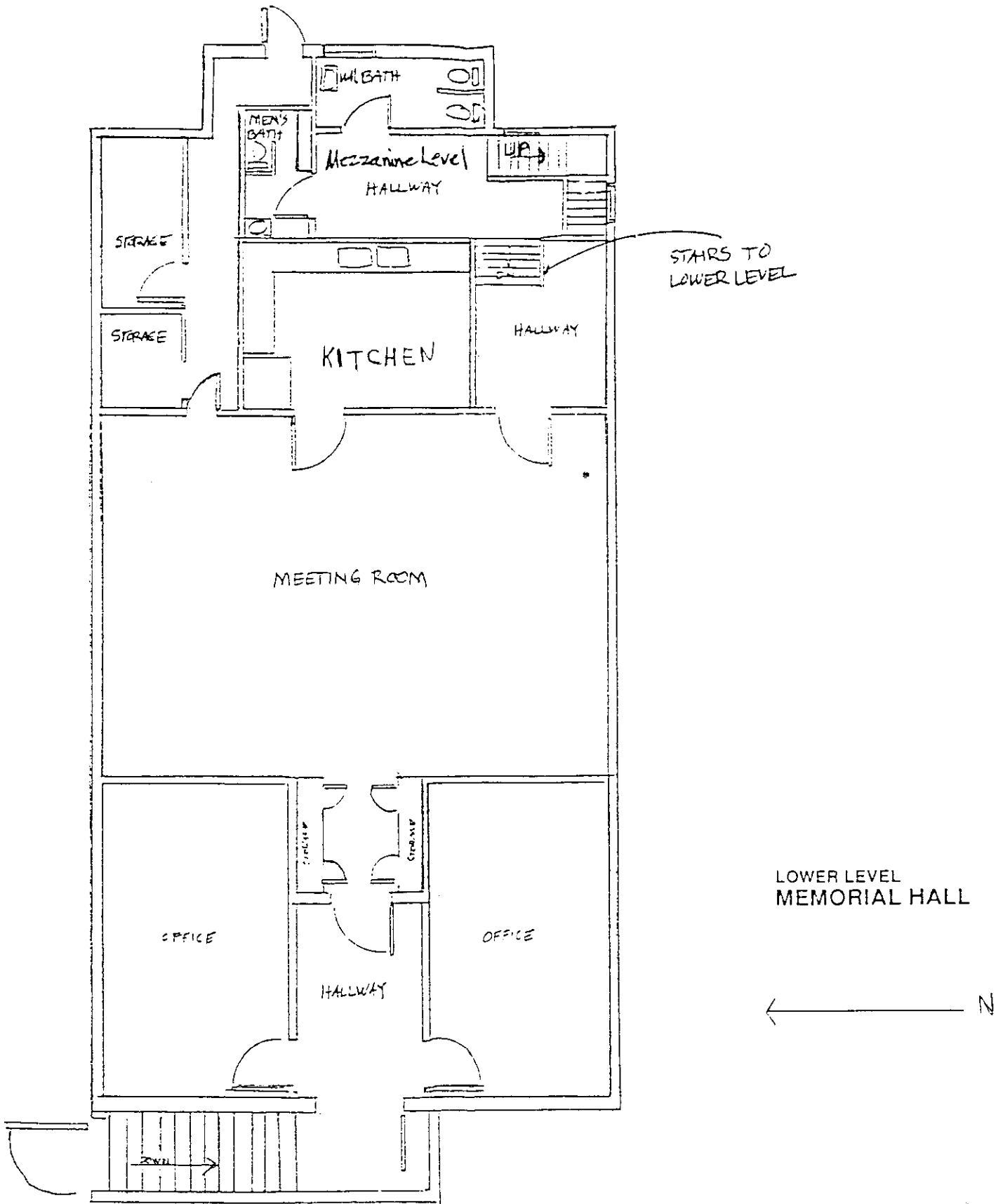
Memorial Hall

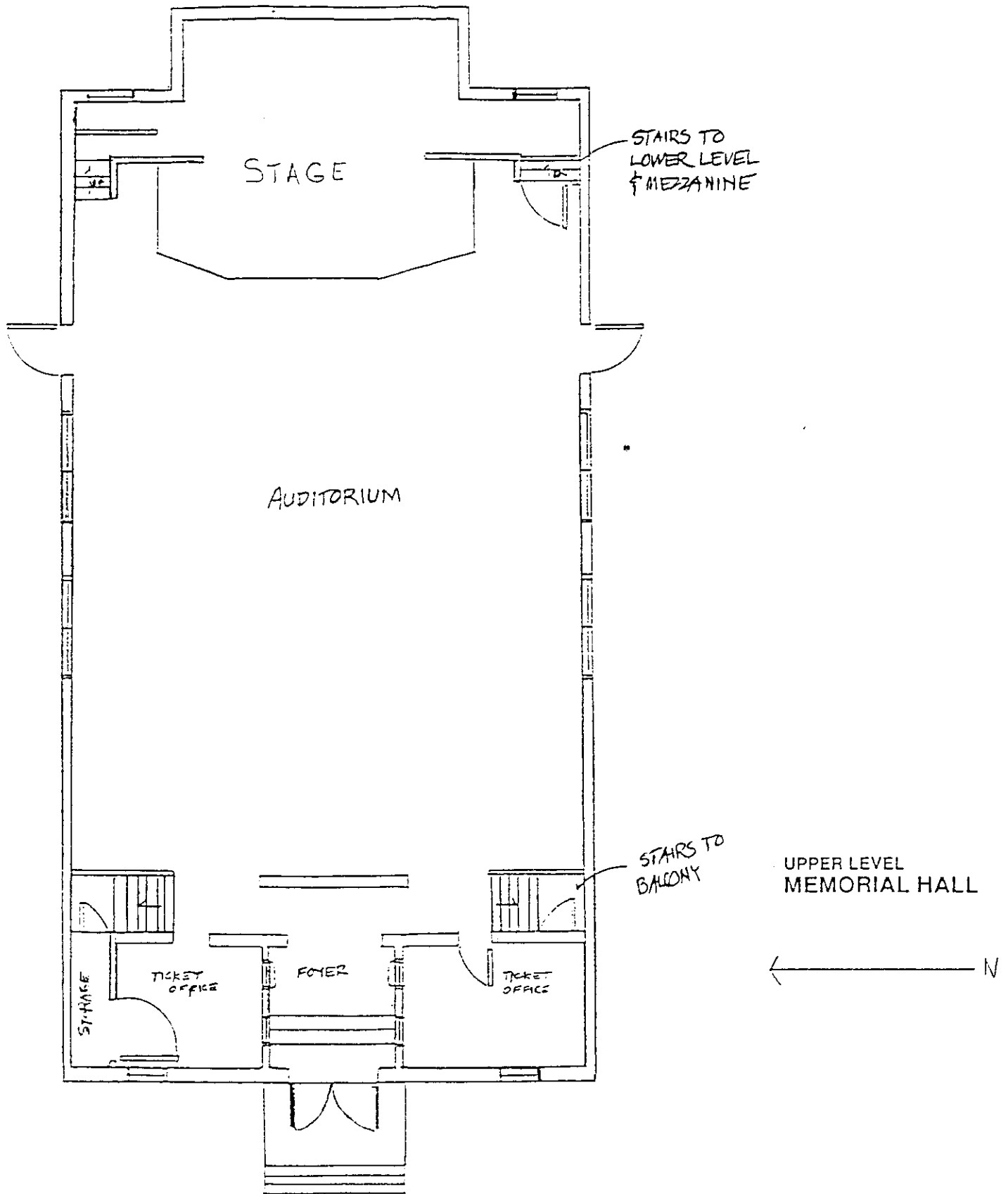
Verbal Boundary Description

South 88 feet of Lots 1 and 2 in Block 4 in the original plat of Richmond, a subdivision of Part of the Southeast quarter and part of the Southwest quarter of Section 9, Township 46 North, Range 8 East, of the Third Principal Meridian, according to the Plat thereof recorded October 18, 1944 in Book D of Deeds, page 345 in McHenry County, Illinois.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the building and lot historically associated with Memorial Hall.







United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

AUG 27 1993

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 8/16/93 THROUGH 8/20/93

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Wa

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Bryan, Noah, Store, SW corner of Glade and Main Sts., Marshall, 93000760, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Daniel, Dr. Sam G., House, N. side of Nome St., one block W. of Courthouse Square, Marshall, 93000759, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Farmers Bank Building, Jct. of Main and Walnut Sts., Leslie, 93000753, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Fendley, Bud, House, 201 Spring St., Marshall, 93000816, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Gates--Helm Farm, Co. Rd. 13, approximately 1 mi. N of jct. with Co. Rd. 250, Snowball vicinity, 93000817, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Hatchett, Columbus, House, N. side, jct. of Main and Hazel Sts., Leslie, 93000756, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Leslie--Rolen House, Jct. of Cherry and High Sts., Leslie, 93000815, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Lynch, Thomas, House, Co. Rd. 52, approximately 2.5 mi. N of Morning Star, Morning Star vicinity, 93000757, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Redman, Oscar, Building, 119 E. Main St., Marshall, 93000758, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Thomas, Greene, House, W of Co. Rd. 55, 0.25 mi. S of jct. with Co. Rd. 74, Leslie vicinity, 93000755, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Treat Commercial Building, Oak St. NW side, between High and 4th Sts., Leslie, 93000752, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

ARKANSAS, SEARCY COUNTY, Treece, Jasper E., Building, W of Co. Rd. 55, approximately 0.5 mi. S of jct. with AR 74, Baker vicinity, 93000754, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Searcy County MPS)

CONNECTICUT, LITCHFIELD COUNTY, Catlin, J. Howard, House, 14 Knife Shop Rd., Litchfield, 93000672, NOMINATION, 8/06/93

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Mandel Brothers Warehouse Building, 3254 N. Halsted St., Chicago, 93000841, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY, Peabody, Francis Stuyvesant, Estate, 1717 W. 31st St., Oak Brook, 93000836, OWNER OBJECTION, 8/17/93

ILLINOIS, MCHENRY COUNTY, Memorial Hall, 10308 Main St., Richmond, 93000839, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

ILLINOIS, PEORIA COUNTY, Wear, Washington C., House, 1 mi. S and 0.4 mi. W of jct. of IL 90 and IL 91, Princeville, 93000838, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

ILLINOIS, WINNEBAGO COUNTY, Chicago & North Western Railway Stone Arch Bridge, 0.6 mi. E of IL 251, 0.6 mi. W of I-90 and 0.2 mi. S of Burr Oak Rd., Roscoe vicinity, 93000840, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

IOWA, CRAWFORD COUNTY, Dunham, Z. T., Pioneer Stock Farm, IA 37, 1 mi. NW of Dunlap, Dunlap vicinity, 93000652, NOMINATION, 8/02/93

KANSAS, BUTLER COUNTY, Beaumont St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad Water Tank, Jct. of Third and D Sts., Beaumont, 93000843, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

MISSISSIPPI, WARREN COUNTY, Uptown Vicksburg Historic District, Roughly bounded by Locust, South, Washington and Clay Sts., Vicksburg, 93000850, NOMINATION, 8/19/93 (Vicksburg MPS)

NEW YORK, CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY, Pennsylvania Railroad Station, Water St., Mayville, 93000680, NOMINATION, 8/06/93

NEW YORK, DUTCHESS COUNTY, Bard Infant School and St. James Chapel, East Market St., Hyde Park, 93000848, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NEW YORK, DUTCHESS COUNTY, Howard Mansion and Carriage House, Howard Blvd., Hyde Park, 93000862, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NEW YORK, DUTCHESS COUNTY, Rymph, George, House, US 9 S of jct. with S. Cross Rd., Hyde Park, 93000863, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NEW YORK, DUTCHESS COUNTY, Wales House, 23 W. Market St., Hyde Park, 93000858, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NEW YORK, MADISON COUNTY, Nelson Welsh Congregational Church, Jct. of Welsh Church and Old State Rds., Nelson vicinity, 93000681, NOMINATION, 8/06/93

NEW YORK, OSWEGO COUNTY, Riverside Cemetery, E. River Rd. S of jct. with NY 57, Oswego vicinity, 93000854, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NEW YORK, PUTNAM COUNTY, Indian Brook Road Historic District, Jct. of Indian Brook Rd. and US 9, Garrison, 93000853, NOMINATION, 8/19/93

NORTH CAROLINA, LEE COUNTY, Farrar, Obediah, House, 9910 Barringer Rd., Haywood vicinity, 93000728, NOMINATION, 8/18/93 (Lee County MPS)

DOE