

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Kenilworth Club

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 410 Kenilworth Avenue

CITY, TOWN Kenilworth

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10

VICINITY OF

STATE Illinois

CODE 12

COUNTY Cook

CODE 031

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Community Club

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Board of Directors, The Kenilworth Club

STREET & NUMBER 410 Kenilworth Avenue

CITY, TOWN Kenilworth,

VICINITY OF

STATE Illinois

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Cook County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 118 N. Clark Street

CITY, TOWN Chicago

STATE Illinois

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Historic Structures Survey

DATE c. 1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Department of Conservation, Division of Historic Sites

CITY, TOWN Springfield, Illinois

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

When the exclusive Chicago suburb of Kenilworth decided to build a social club on land provided by the village's founder in 1907, it was not surprising that the architectural commission went to George W. Maher. Maher, a Kenilworth resident, was one of the young, influential Prairie School architects and a number of the members of the Kenilworth Club were already his clients. The clubhouse he designed is a beautiful, well preserved example of Maher's individual style within the vernacular of the Prairie School.

The Club is a one story building with white walls broken by a repetitive pattern of dark brown wooden vertical posts. These irregularly spaced posts are bound together by broad horizontal bands of dark brown wood and stucco. These bands serve to emphasize the horizontality of the structure. The east half of the Club contains an auditorium, the west half houses offices, a kitchen, and a small reception hall. The different functions of the interior spaces are reflected externally through the forward projection of the low hipped roof over the auditorium at the front of the building. As in most Prairie structures, the eaves extend out well beyond the facade. The entrance is recessed between the two halves of the building, and the continuation of the front eave the length of the structure visually ties together this elevation. At the rear, a flat roof covers a small southern extension housing offices and mechanical systems. This roof extends far over the rear entrance, forming an awning.

Inside the Club, the built-in seating, woodwork, and excellent stained glass windows reflect Maher's fascination with vertical geometric designs. Maher created a symbol for the village of Kenilworth that is used repeatedly in the windows and the stencils on the walls of the Club. A slender, straight stem supports an angled square, inside of which is a green-tinted shape echoing a clover leaf. The corners of the square are tinted blue. The design represents the lake and trees of Kenilworth. Maher uses the pattern in a three-fold design throughout the glass windows and doors of the building, and a stylized, monochrome variation is used on the exterior for the posts that divide the walls.

Except for the modernization of the kitchen and the enclosing of some of the originally open office space, the Kenilworth Club has been unchanged from its 1907 condition. One tragic loss was the death of the tremendous elm tree that Maher designed the entrance of the structure around. Originally, one entered the front doors and stood next to a great American elm that broke through the eaves of the building and spread its branches high above the roof. It was an innovative vertical counterpoint to the ground-hugging, horizontal structure. The tree was infected with Dutch Elm disease in 1976, and after its death had to be removed lest it break and damage the Club.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/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 built 1907

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

George W. Maher

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George W. Maher (b.1864, d.1926) has been called "among the most prolific and original of the Prairie School of residential architects."<sup>1</sup> He was a resident of the village of Kenilworth from 1893 to his death, and designed a number of fine houses in the area. He also was known for his innovative commercial structures and a brief career as a campus planner for Northwestern University, where he designed two buildings and left a series of brilliant but unexecuted plans.

The Kenilworth Club is an important, early structure in Maher's career, marking a point at which he was vigorously refining his unique version of the Prairie School vernacular. The vertical ornament of the structure anticipates Maher's famous thistle patterns first used in the Swift Hall of Science at Northwestern in 1908. Also, the windows of the Kenilworth Club are early examples of Maher's tripartite organization of detail which he was to exploit to the fullest in Swift Hall and subsequent buildings.

While the Kenilworth Club marks the beginning of Maher's restless exploration for new architectural detail and its organization, it also is a sign of the end of a stage of his career. The Kenilworth Club is one of G. W. Maher's last structures that heavily emphasizes the horizontal. Maher was one of the few architects to consistently explore the vertical element possible within the style of the Prairie School (two others were his friends Barry Byrne and Dwight Perkins) and his struggle with the horizontal form is evident in the clubhouse. The varying rhythms of the wall panels and the overly broad eaves give the structure slightly disjointed lines that at least one architectural historian has called "unsatisfactory".<sup>2</sup> In subsequent designs, Maher would use the interplay between vertical and horizontal lines more fully and approach solutions to his problems with the organization of detail. The Kenilworth Club is a significant structure showing the necessary intermediate steps a great architect takes to arrive at his best design solutions.

<sup>1</sup>Carl W. Condit, The Chicago School of Architecture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p.195.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Condit, Carl. The Chicago School of Architecture. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1964

Lafferty, Joseph S. Interview. 7/18/78. Kenilworth, Illinois.  
Mr. Lafferty is a past president of the Kenilworth Club (1968-9)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME _____			QUADRANGLE SCALE _____				
UTM REFERENCES							
A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 2 and 4 in Block 3 in "Kenilworth", a subdivision of part of frac'l sections 22, 27, and 28-42-13 rec. Sept. 7, 1890 doc. 1343386

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Philip L. Pomerance Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission

DATE

August 2, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

400 W. Madison

TELEPHONE

(312) 454-0400 ext. 256

CITY OR TOWN

Chicago,

STATE

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