Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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The Wildwood period house is one of Nebraska's finest examples of early rural estates. Built in 1869, it commands a 70 acre, extensively land-scaped, rolling site which is now used as a community park.

COESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (II known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The period house is a brick one and one-half story dwelling in the Gothic Revival mode of architecture. In this respect the house is unique, for this particular style of architecture was usually reserved for church and municipal buildings.

There is no known architect, as such, who designed the Wildwood house. It was most likely designed and built by local laymen who had been influenced by similar styles they had seen in the East. They, in turn, produced a vernacular application of the gothic style which was adapted to the available materials and building methods of this region.

The house has 10 rooms, with both formal and informal parlors, dining room, kitchen, a large pantry, and four bedrooms in the upper story, including the maids' quarters. Many of the interior walls are brick, load bearing and all have been repapered with imported French and English wallpapers which are in keeping with the Victorian era. The parlors have the original oak parquet floors in the original pine tongue and groove flooring. Under the first floor windows there are panels of walnut wainscoting.

A unique feature of the Wildwood house is the manner in which natural light is let into the upper half-story. Usually in half-story construction, the upper story does not provide wall surface of sufficient area for a window. This makes it necessary to project dormers from the sloping roof in order to provide window openings for the interior spaces. But in the construction of the Wildwood house, the upper story was projected far enough to allow for quarter windows along the base of the half-story floor. Each room in this manner is provided with surprisingly adequate light of a very nice effect.

A frame addition had been made on the west of the existing house at some later date. It was used as a milk room and as quarters for a hired farmhand. When restoration started in 1968, it was determined that this addition was beyond repair and it was torn down. It was replaced by a structure similar in design and dimensions and is presently used as an apartment for the curator of the Wildwood estate.

Also on the estate, but not included in this nomination, is a barn dating to approximately the same period as the house and a gazebo of fine Victorian, wood detailing. The barn, which is to the rear of the house, is being used as a community crafts center and also serves as an art gallery for displays by regional artists. The gazebo, which is to the north of the house, overlooks the rolling Wildwood Park grounds, projecting the unhurried atmosphere of the mid-Victorian era, 1860 - 1880, to modern-day visitors.

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SIGNIFICANCE			
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Jasper A. Ware, the original owner and developer of the Wildwood estate, came from Kentucky in 1857 directly to the Territory of Nebraska. Buying squatters' claims, his first dealings in Nebraska were in real estate. In 1857 he acquired a quarter-section of land about six miles southwest of the original plat of Nebraska City. Here he developed a farming estate which he referred to as Wildwood.

In 1859 Mr. Ware opened in Nebraska City one of the first seven territorial banks. In 1860 he erected a brick business building following the great fire in Nebraska City of that same year. During 1863 he rented office space to the county commissioner and county clerk while the court house was being erected. He helped organize the first hook and ladder company in Nebraska City and served as City Treasurer from 1864 to 1867. Mr. Ware was an active railroad promoter and was one of the incorporators of a railroad, later known as the Midland Pacific, built west from Nebraska City. By 1870 his investments were so vast that all his monies were either in real estate or other speculations. Ware was hard hit by the Panic of 1871 which resulted in the failure of banks and other enterprises. That same year Mr. Ware assigned his business assets to his creditors and retired to the Wildwood farm, where he lived until his death in 1900. These events are typical of the mid-Victorian era, 1860 - 1880, as is the Wildwood period house.

The Wildwood house is one of Nebraska's best examples of meticulous restoration and preservation. When restoration started in 1968, the interior was the first part converted to its original uses and dimensions. Next, the wide veranda over the front entrance was removed and replaced by a replica of the original portico. Old photographs were used to project the style and dimensions of the original porch. The windows were restored by using some of the original glass which had been found on the farmstead. In the south parlor, a window which had been enlarged into a door was restored by using replica woodwork.

In the north parlor, a fireplace built about 1920 was removed. The lower sashes of the two adjacent windows had been replaced with bookcases when the fireplace was added. During restoration, the original lower sashes were found with most of the multipaned sections unbroken and were used in bringing the parlor back to its original integrity.

A built-in cupboard, of about 1925, was removed and the original wall was replaced to restore the dining room to its original appearance. This wall

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

8. Significance

permitted the installation of heat and air conditioning ducts which now serve the second floor.

A few of the original window shutters were still existing which made possible the finishing touches of the exacting mid-Victorian restoration.

The interior is complete with antique lighting fixtures and furnishings dating from the mid 1800's which have been donated by many interested people.

The period house was opened in 1971 to the public with guided tours. The Wildwood estate including Wildwood park is owned and administrated by Nebraska City's Municipal government. Today the house and grounds serve as a well preserved reflection of the days of horse and buggy suburban living.



Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FUR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 2 9 1980

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jasper A. Ware House (PH0068110) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 16, 1973. The original nomination was submitted with no verbal boundary description, and despite the proximity of other related buildings, the Ware House was the single structure specified for nomination in the physical description.

The State Historic Preservation Office of Nebraska and the Board of Directors of the Wildwood Center (common name for the Jasper A. Ware property since its conversion to a museum facility) concur that an amendment to include appurtenant buildings and additional acreage is desirable since the structures and land form an entity which substantially retains its sense of time and place.

Commencing with the former residence of the mid-19th-century complex, individual physical descriptions included in this amended nomination are as follows:

<u>Jasper A. Ware House</u> (Wildwood Period House), 1869. Brick, $1\frac{1}{2}$ stories, T-shaped, gabled roof, segmental arches, projecting gabled entrance pavilion, pointed arch window over entrance door, simple wooden tracery under two end gables; frame additions; restored, 1968, Gothic Revival. (See photo 5, first-floor plan of Wildwood Period House, and site plan.)

Barn, 29 feet west-southwest of residence, brick, stuccoed on east, west, and south, rectangular, 24 x 40 feet, 1½ stories, segmental openings; renovated interior, wooden wall sections placed on south and west at unknown time, shed appendage on north dismantled. Ca. 1869. Presently used as arts and crafts sales gallery. (See photo 1, site plan, and elevations and floor plan of Arts and Crafts Building.)

Chicken Coop, 27 feet northwest of residence, frame on concrete foundation, rectangular, 8 x 40 feet, shed roof, modified for use as puppet theater.Ca. 1920. (See photo 3 and site plan).

Outdoor Privy, 39 feet north of residence, frame, rectangular, 6'2" x 5', pyramidal roof with tongue-and-groove boarding, diminutive vent. ca. 1869. (See photo 2, site plan, and drawings for outhouse).

 The National Register of Historic Places, Ronald Greenberg, Editor in Chief, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1976), p. 436. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

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<u>Gazebo</u>, 70 feet north of residence, wood, rectangular, 10×10 feet, pyramidal roof with small monitor, modillion cornice, corner consoles with dripstones, decorative corner pilasters, latticed openings. Late 1860s. Moved to present location in 1970s from another Otoe County estate. (See photo 4, site plan, and drawings of gazebo.)

Classroom Building, 40 feet west of residence, concrete block construction, rectangular, 24'4" x 36'3", gabled roof, built in late 1960s as instruction facility. (See site plan.)

This amended nomination establishes the nominated area as being one and three-quarters acres. The boundaries are arbitrary and are those lines which now serve as metes and bounds of the municipally-owned Wildwood Period House: farmland originally surrounding the nominated buildings presently serves a variety of uses and is no longer connected with agriculture. The nominated acreage contains numerous mature trees and shrubberies of various species and there is a reciprocal effect between buildings and vegetation.

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SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1869	BUILDER/ARCH	ITECT Unknown	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Jasper A. Ware House, commonly known as the Wildwood Period House, is architecturally significant to Nebraska as an outstanding product of the Gothic Revival. Two outbuildings contemporary with the dwelling and also of architectural note exist in close proximity and create a vestige of semi-rural, 19th-century life. Historically, the property derives significance from its associations with Jasper A. Ware, a leading resident of the city and state during his generation.

Jasper Anderson Ware (1831-1900), the original owner of the estate, was born in Todd County, Kentucky. He moved to Otoe County, Nebraska, in his mid-twenties, and within a short time was engaged in extensive financial operations. An account of Otoe County citizenry describes Ware as having been "a banker, broker, and exchange broker...he was a dealer in land warrants, coin, uncurrent money and bills of exchange; he bought and sold real estate on commission; he discounted notes and negotiated loans with real estate as security; he paid taxes and made collections in Nebraska and Western Towa; and he paid cash for territorial, county and city warrants. Elsewhere it is learned that he bought bullion from Colorado mines" (R.E. Dale, Otoe County Pioneers: A Biographical Dictionary, pp. 2672-73).

One of the first seven private banks in the Territory of Nebraska was opened by Ware in 1859 (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 2672). He erected a substantial business building in Nebraska City in 1860 and took part in the organization of a hook and ladder company that same year. In 1861, Ware was one of fourteen men to whom the Territorial Legislature granted articles of incorporation for a railroad company (<u>Ibid.</u>, 2673). Other business involvements included insurance, mining, cattle dealing, and further railroad and banking interests (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 2674).

Jasper Ware's civic involvements were numerous and noteworthy also: in 1864 he was elected Treasurer of the Nebraska City Board of Trade; he was City Treasurer from 1864-67; he was the Democratic candidate for State Treasurer in 1868; and he was a vestryman of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, vice-president of the Immigration Assocation, and a trustee of Nebraska College (Ibid., pp. 2673-74).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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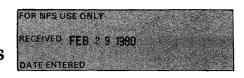
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After his retirement from the business world in 1871, following unfortunate speculations, Ware retired to a brick residence completed two years earlier. Until his death, he engaged in farming and gardening, reportedly making large profits (Portrait and Biographical Album of Otoe and Cass Counties, Nebraska, p. 210). Ware's country residence was described during his time as "a commodious brick structure, which is finely located on an eminence, sloping gently back from the street, one mile from the court-house, overlooking a beautiful stretch of country" (Ibid., p. 210).

The Ware House is considered the "earliest and most thoroughly gothic and most sophisticated example of the most common architecture in Nebraska City" (Victorian Architecture in Nebraska City, p. 3). Its interior spaces are in a well-preserved state and are open for public viewing—a refurbishing having occurred in 1968. Significantly, a brick barn with segmental—arched openings and a fine vernacular outdoor privy, both contemporary with the house, are in close proximity. There are three other structures on the nominated property; a recent concrete block building erected for art instruction purposes, a shed-roofed chicken coop built ca. 1920, and an 1860s wooden gazebo, transported recently from an estate in the same county.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography

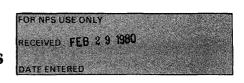
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PAGE 2

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- History of the State of Nebraska, Vol. II. Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1882.
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- The National Register of Historic Places, Ronald Greenberg, Editor-in-Chief. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1976.
- <u>Victorian Architecture in Nebraska City</u>. Nebraska City: Otoe County Historical Society, Inc., 1979.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



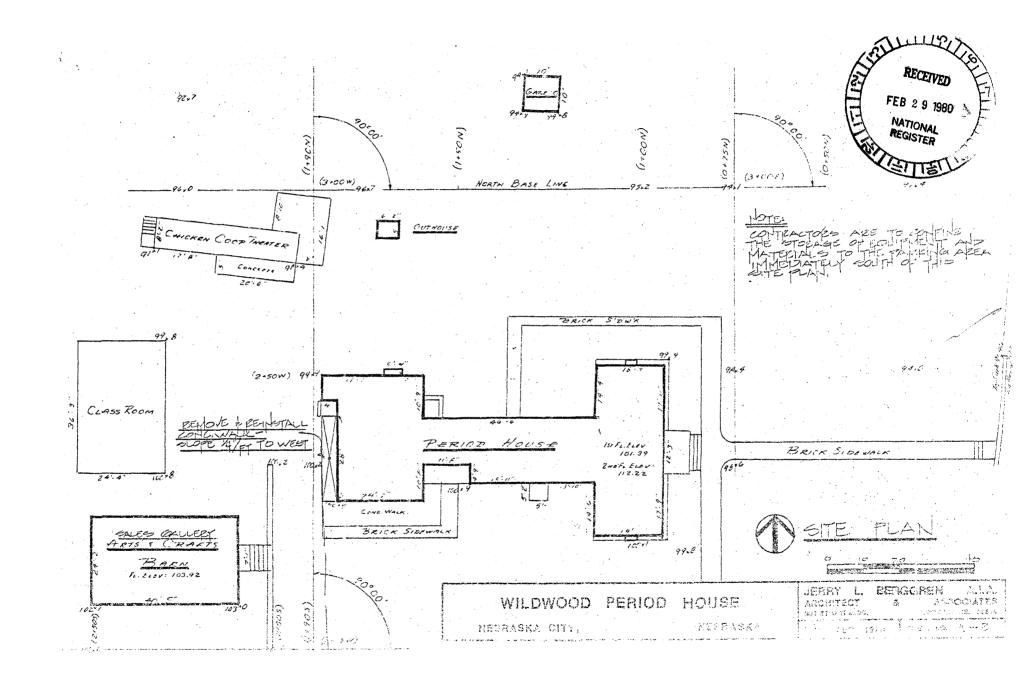
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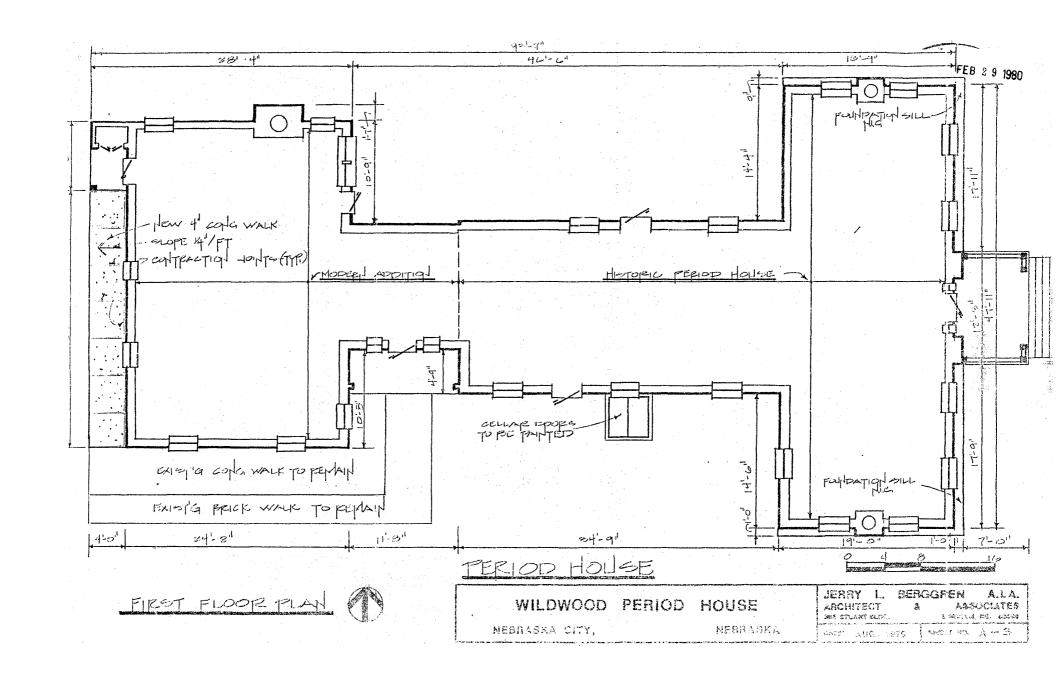
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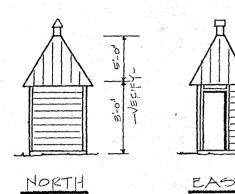
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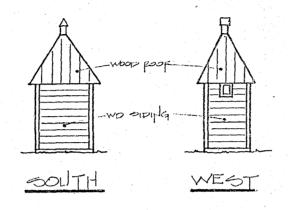
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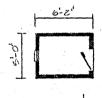










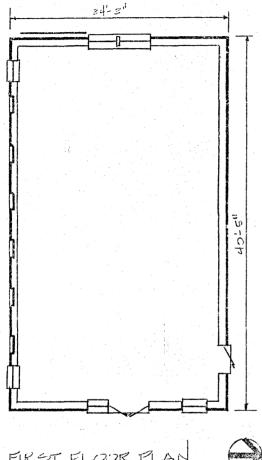




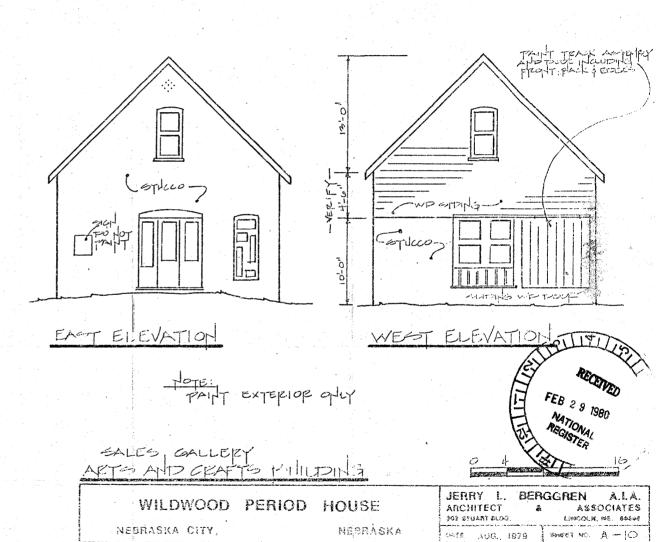


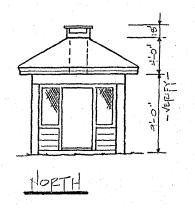


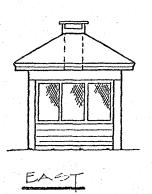
JERRY L. BERGGREN
ARCHITECT & AS:
302 STUART SLDG LINECOL EN A.I.A. WILDWOOD PERIOD HOUSE LINCOLN, ME. 36191 NEBRASKA CITY, NEBRASKA PATE AUG., 1979

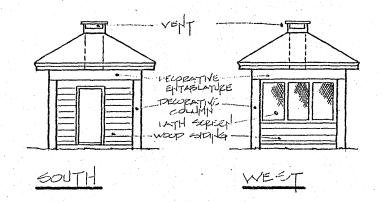


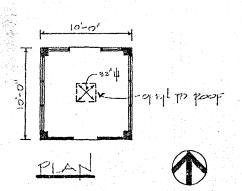






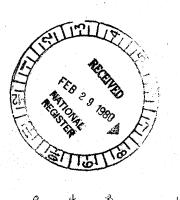






TOTE:
IT PAINT ENTIFE STRUCTURE-INTERIOR INCLUDED

ZI REMOVE EXISTING ENTIFICIES DOWN TO
RELIES EXISTING HIP FLASHING





WILDWOOD PERIOD HOUSE

NEBRASKA CITY,

NEBRASKA

JERRY L. BERGGREN A.I.A.
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DATE AUG., 1979 SHIEST MD. A - 13