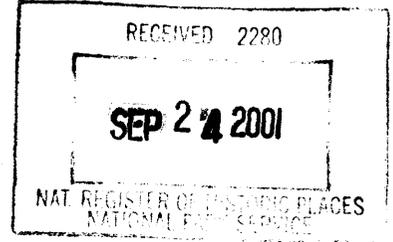


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1218



# 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 any 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 Prentis Park  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number Plum and Main Streets not for publication N/A  
city or town Vermillion vicinity N/A  
state South Dakota code SD county Clay code 027 zip code 57069

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Jay D. Voigt  
Signature of certifying official

09-13-2001  
Date

SD SHPO  
State or 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 commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**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 Entered in the National Register	Date of Action 11-8-01
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**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**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	2	buildings
3	1	sites
3	6	structures
3	0	objects
15	12	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) Federal Relief Construction in South Dakota, 1929-1941

---

## 6. Function or Use

---

### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation/Culture Sub: Band shell, swimming pool,  
stadium, park  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation/Culture Sub: Band shell, swimming pool,  
stadium, park  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

## 7. Description

---

### Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: WPA  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
roof Asphalt  
walls Stone, Wood, Metal  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See 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.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a 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

Entertainment/Recreation

Landscape Architecture

Social History

**Period of Significance**

1923-1945

Prentis Park  
Name of Property

Clay County, South Dakota  
County and State

**Significant Dates**    1923, 1930,  
                                 1933, 1937,  
                                 1938, 1945

**Significant Person**    (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
                                 N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**    N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**    WPA

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

(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: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreage of Property** 20 acres

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>14</u>	<u>670138</u>	<u>4738215</u>	3	<u>14</u>	<u>670396</u>	<u>4738540</u>
	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
2	<u>14</u>	<u>670134</u>	<u>4738540</u>	4	<u>14</u>	<u>670404</u>	<u>4738212</u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Lynda B. Schwan  
organization SD SHPO date November 15, 2000  
street & number 900 Governors Drive telephone 605-773-6056  
city or town Pierre state SD zip code 57501

---

## 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)

Prentis Park  
Name of Property

Clay County, South Dakota  
County and State

---

**Property Owner**

---

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Vermillion  
street & number 25 Center St telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Vermillion state SD zip code 57069

---

**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 the 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 Project (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

Prentis Park is bordered by East Clark, East Main, North Plum Streets and Prentis Avenue in the City of Vermillion, South Dakota. The park is located in a thriving community, just blocks from the University of South Dakota. The park is surrounded by both early and late 20<sup>th</sup> century structures. The park is an excellent example of a designed landscape and community park in South Dakota.

The design of the park remains the same as when it was first conceptualized in the late 1920's. Paths, trees, plantings and buildings remain in the same location as when the landscape artist and City designed the Park. There are three main entrances into the Park located at the northwest corner, southwest corner and in the center of the east side. These entrances have square brick columns which support a decorative metal arch. The entrance on the east side was added in 1999 with the remaining entrances being historic to the park. At the center of Plum Street side is a U-shaped driveway and drop-off point for the swimming pool. Parking is available on the East Clark Street and Prentis Avenue sides.

## Log Cabin (1)

At the southwest corner of the park is the contributing Log Cabin. This building was constructed in 1933. It has an asphalt shingled gable roof with exposed rafter ends. The façade (east elevation) of the building has stone masonry walls with the rear portion has log and chinking. The façade has a central entry with windows on either side. In 2000, the girl scouts put shutters on all of the windows to prevent further vandalism. The north elevation has one window at the northeast corner. In the gable end of the north elevation are wood shingles. The south elevation has no openings. The west elevation has two windows with new shutters. There are wood shingles in the gable end of the west elevation.

## Horseshoe Pit (2)

To the north of the Log Cabin is a contributing horseshoe pit. The horseshoe pit was constructed between 1940 and 1945. The exact date could not be found. To the north and south of the actual pit is a bench/wall. Directly behind each of the walls is a planting of bushes to conceal the actual pit. There are four sets of pins so that four different games can be played at one time.

## Swimming Pool and Bathhouse (3)

To the north of the horseshoe pit is the non-contributing 1965 swimming pool and bathhouse. Historically, there was a pool in this location but it was replaced. The new facility has a t-shaped bathhouse constructed of concrete blocks. The pool is also T-shaped.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

North of the pool is an open area that has historically been used as an open green space. Current mapping shows that space as a playing field. No changes have been made to the area.

## Play Area (4)

At the corner of Plum and Clark Streets is a picnic shelter. While this area has historically been a picnic area, the current structure constructed of wood posts and an asphalt shingled gable roof, is non-contributing.

## Maintenance Facility (5)

Adjacent to the swimming pool and the open playing area is a maintenance building. This is a contributing building constructed circa 1940. The asphalt shingles gable roof building faces Plum Street. The façade (west elevation) has a door at the southwest corner and two single paned windows to the north of the door. The north and south elevations have small square vents in the gable ends. The east elevation has no openings.

Near the baseball field at the corner of Clark and Prentis Streets is a bird bath and planting area. This is the historic location of the Pergola that was constructed in 1936. The Pergola was removed from the park in the early 1950's.

## Baseball/Football Field (6)

The baseball diamond and football field were designed almost immediately when the Park opened to the public. The football field was located in the outfield of the baseball diamond. A fence surrounds the entire field and historic trees line the southwestern portion of the fence. In 1938 grandstands, dugouts and restrooms were added to the ball field. Directly behind home plate, the grandstand was constructed. The wooden grandstand bleachers are covered with an asphalt shingle gable roof. Four large posts on the façade and the rear support the roof structure of the grandstand. Located at the top of the roof is a crow's nest which has a shed roof. Directly below the grandstand bleachers is a concession booth. The concession booth has horizontal wood siding and faces south, away from the field. There are two, long narrow window openings on the east end where food and drinks are sold. At the west end is a door to the interior of the concession booth. To the east and west of the grandstand is a dugout used for baseball games. Each is a three-sided wooden structure with a shed roof with an overhang. Located in each dugout are wooden benches. To the southeast of the grandstand is a restroom facility. This is a gable structure with two entry doors on the west elevation. In the gable peaks are two triangle windows. There are no other openings in the building. All of the buildings associated with the baseball/football field are contributing. In the summer of 2000, drainage was improved on the field.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Located directly in the center of the park is a non-contributing 1959 metal water tower. Also in this area is a historic playground where new equipment installed in the mid-1990's. Finally, in this area is an asphalt basketball court. There are eight sets of hoops, of which four sets are historic dating to 1940.

### Caretakers House and Outbuildings (7)

Located at the center of the block on Prentis Avenue is the Caretakers House and outbuildings. The circa 1940's vernacular house faces west into the park. The design of the house is simple: square with clapboard siding, steeply pitched gable roof covered in asphalt singles and a stone foundation. The façade has a central entry with one-over-one double hung windows on either side. The entry is covered by a gable porch roof supported by two columns. Above the porch is a one-over-one double hung window. The west elevation has two evenly spaced one-over-one double hung windows. The east elevation has two one-over-one double hung windows and an entry door on the first floor with a one-over-one double hung window in the gable peak. The north elevation has three one-over-one double hung windows on the first floor as well as a shed roof dormer with two one-over-one double hung windows.

To the east of the house is a one-stall clapboard covered historic garage. The north and south elevations each has two one-over-one double hung windows. The west elevation has sliding doors. The east elevation has an entry door. The asphalt shingle roof has exposed rafter ends.

To the north of the house is a non-contributing carport. This is a shed roof structure with large wood posts for support.

To the northeast of the house is a historic maintenance shed. The simple building has exposed rafter ends, an asphalt shingle roof, and wood siding. The only entry to the building is on the south elevation.

### Picnic Shelters and other structures (8, 9)

Located at the southeast corner of the park are two picnic shelters. Historically, picnic shelters have been located in this area. The current shelters are of the late 1980's. Each shelter has a flat roof and concrete posts. Located to the west of the picnic shelters is a WPA constructed grill box. The unit is roughly 3 feet high by 1.5 feet deep. It is taller in the middle with shorter shoulders. The rock construction is typical of WPA projects. Located in the center at the base is a place for grilling. Originally, the City of Vermillion provided natural gas to the grill box. This feature has since been

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

removed. Also near the grill box is a historic drinking fountain. It dates to the initial design of the park.

## **Band Shell (10)**

The 1937 Band Shell is located at the center of the block on East Main Street. The design of the site is an elongated oval with the back of the rock shell facing East Main. The wall of the Band Shell is constructed of uncoursed local rock. The top of the wall is curved with shoulders at either end. Located in the center of the wall is an entry door. Above the doorway and on either side are grist mill stones. The stage for the shell is raised earth. There are three different sets of stairs evenly spaces which lead to the top of the stage from the audience floor. To create a distinctive theatre area, the area is delineated by a historic planing of shrubs which creates the elongated oval.

## **Water Tower (11)**

Located in the center of the park is a non-contributing 1950's era metal water tower.

## **Basketball Court (12)**

Located between the water tower and swimming pool is a historic asphalt basketball court. There are eight basketball hoops, four are historic, four are 1980's replacements.

## **Park Design (13)**

Diagonal sidewalks starting at the southeast and southwest corners of the park lead to the swimming pool and basketball court. These paths are historic to the initial design of the park. Also throughout the park are mature trees that were also part of the initial design as well some trees from the historic orchard. The trees create alleys and paths. Automobile traffic was kept to the perimeter of the park. With the installation of the watertower in the 1950's, on driveway was created adjacent to the caretakers house, which allowed for access to the tower. The overall appearance today has changed little from the original design. The sequence of open spaces remains intact with the largest play area (4) being adapted for modern uses including soccer. Early and late 20th century buildings surround the Park, which reflects the importance of a park in a residential setting.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

## INVENTORY OF MAJOR FEATURES IN THE PARK

<u>Name</u>	<u>Map Code</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Log Cabin	1	1933	C
Horseshoe Pit	2	c. 1940	C
Swimming Pool/Bath House	3	1965	NC
Play Area	4	1920	C
Maintenance House	5	1940	C
Football/Baseball Field	6	1920/1938	C
Caretakers House	7	c. 1940	C
Picnic Shelters	8	1980	NC
Grill Box	9	c. 1934	C
Bandshell	10	1937	C
Water Tower	11	c. 1955	NC
Basketball Court	12	c. 1920	C
Park Design	13	1920	C

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Prentis Park is located in Vermillion, the county seat of Clay County. Vermillion is notably a college community. Settlement in the City of Vermillion began in the 1820's with a small fur trading post. Permanent settlement did not commence until the 1850's with immigrants from the east. By 1868, the city of Vermillion was growing and establishing itself as a true community. By 1870, the population of the town had doubled. The new immigrants brought with them services that up to that point had not been available in Vermillion, including: lawyers, doctors, druggists and dentists.

Beautification in the City of Vermillion started in 1902 when the City purchased property at the end of the ravine in an attempt to clean up that portion of town. It continued with the improvements made at Austin Park and the creation of Prentis Park in 1923. The beautification of Vermillion continued into the early 1950's. Prentis Park is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C for its association with the Works Progress Administration and the design of the park.

Prentis Park traces its beginning to a ten-acre gift to the city by Charles E. Prentis on November 5, 1923 in memory of his wife who had recently passed away. The tract, located along the east edge of Plum Street north of Main, was the original homestead of A. A. Carpenter and had been an apple orchard as a part of the nursery maintained by the Carpenter Family for thirty years.<sup>1</sup>

The gift from Charles Prentis also included the services of a professional landscape gardener. The plans drawn up for the park's development by the landscape artist during the early part of 1924 included a swimming pool, a bandstand and an outdoor theater. In the course of the next few years, the park was provided with picnic grounds and a limited amount of playground equipment. The Civic Council gave support in the form of shrubbery and park benches.<sup>2</sup>

The pool was opened to the public during the early summer of 1929 after a public vote was made. The vote won by only three ballots and the pool was constructed at a cost of \$22,000.00. Several years later, the voters gave approval to expand the facility. In 1965, a new pool was constructed in approximately the same location, on the west side of the park. The facility includes a new pool, new

<sup>1</sup> Herbert S. Schell, *Clay County: Chapters Out of the Past*, Broadcaster Press, Vermillion SD, 1985, page 218.

<sup>2</sup> Schnell, 219.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

bathhouse and pump station. Other improvements in the park's appearance continued with additional plantings in shrubbery and flowerbeds. During the summer of 1930, the city expended a total of \$350.00 for nursery stock. By this time, considerable grading had been done and paths laid out.

An additional gift of ten acres from Prentis in 1930 provided space for a baseball diamond and a football field. A plan to purchase seven more acres was turned down by voters in 1931. In 1935, the city was able to buy two additional acres to provide parking space and enable the construction of Prentis Street along the east edge in 1936.

Prentis Park benefited from the W.P.A. relief program initiated by the federal government during the depression period. The program not only provided labor for landscaping and keeping the park in good repair but also a grant for the construction of a band shell and outdoor theater, grandstands and pergola. Each of these facilities were built entirely with relief labor except for the work completed by the stone masons. The rocks for the projects came from five townships in the central and northwestern parts of Clay County.

The band shell incorporated three old millstones in the front of the structure for decorative purposes. They came from the Bloomingdale gristmill that went into operation during the fall of 1868. The band shell with its natural amphitheater was completed during the early summer of 1937. The facility was officially dedicated on June 8, 1937.

The grandstand and pergola were also projects that were completed by the W.P.A. The grandstand was completed in 1938, which allowed for the public to have seating during both baseball and football games. Lighting was added to the area in 1940 for evening games. In 2000, the city received a grant to complete a drainage project on the field. The pergola was completed in 1936, unfortunately no photographs exist of this structure and it no longer remains in the park. There is evidence that the structure was located just west of the baseball field.

During the period of the W.P.A. in South Dakota, a total of 107 parks were developed or improved. Improvements to parks cited by the W.P.A. include picnic shelters, recreation buildings, pathways,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

---

landscaping and band shells. In keeping with the emphasis on nature, natural settings were emphasized and rustic architecture. The only exception made were the band shells as they were more "moderne" in appearance. Band shells were typically constructed on concrete and may have been architect designed. The band shell in Prentis Park is designed in a manner not typical to the W.P.A. While Prentis Park was not designed by the W.P.A., it does have improvements made by this program. Landscaping, recreation buildings and a band shell were part of their improvements.

In 1933, the log cabin was constructed as a Girl Scout hut and as a memorial by the '76 Club. Over the years it was neglected and suffered from minor vandalism. In 2000, the city gave the Girl Scouts a grant to repair windows and replace the door. Near the Girl Scout Cabin is a historic Horseshoe Court. This facility was added to the park in the 1940's.

Prentis Park contains a high degree of integrity in spatial relationships, topography, design intent and circulation systems. The significance of the park as a designed landscape and for its architecture is based on the plan not changing or suffering from serious alterations. What remains are: spatial relationships, engineering features such as the circulation system, and the structure of the landscape including vegetation and buildings. Prentis Park is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C for its association with the Works Progress Administration and the landscape design.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 9

---

## Bibliography

- Dennis, Michelle. *Federal Relief Construction in South Dakota, 1929-1941*. SDSHPO: Pierre, 1998.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred Knoff, Inc.: New York, 1984.
- Schell, Herbert. *Clay County: Chapters Out of the Past*. Broadcaster Press, Inc.: Vermillion, 1985.
- Schell, Herbert. *History of Clay County South Dakota*. Broadcaster Press, Inc.: Vermillion, 1976.
- Vermillion: A Civic Picture*. WPA Municipal Government Research Project. USD: Vermillion, 1942.

## Verbal Boundary Description

Commencing at a point two rods east and two rods north of the southwest corner of the southeast quarter and the southwest quarter, thence north 65 rods, thence east 789.43 feet, thence south 65 rods, thence west 790.33 feet to the point of beginning of section 18, township 92, range 51.

## Verbal Boundary Justification

All the land that has historically been associated with the park. This includes the initial land donated by Prentis in 1923 and the additional property he donated in 1930.