

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wisconsin	
COUNTY: Sheboygan	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.10.55.0006	DATE 10/26/71

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Old Wade House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
 Wade (Sylvanus) House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Intersection of Wis. 23 and Kettle Moraine Drive in Old Wade House State  
CITY OR TOWN: Greenbush Park

CONGRESSMEN TO BE NOTIFIED:  
Sen. William Proxmire  
Sen. Gaylord A. Nelson  
Rep. Wm. A. Steiger

STATE Wisconsin	CODE 53026	COUNTY: Sheboygan	CODE 117
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

STREET AND NUMBER:  
816 State Street

CITY OR TOWN: Madison

STATE: Wisconsin

CODE: 53706

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Sheboygan County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Sheboygan

STATE: Wisconsin

CODE: 55

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1941  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: District of Columbia

CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Wisconsin

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

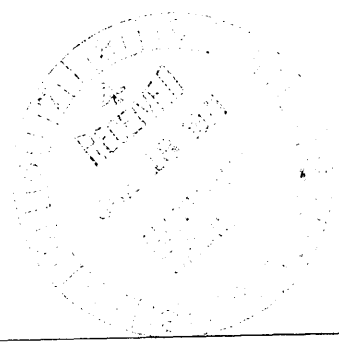
A 2 1/2 story wood, Greek Revival structure with definite New England atmosphere, Old Wade House is a large, very substantial structure with a 1 1/2 story wing and a single story wing in tandem at the rear. The main building and the first rear wing have frieze windows under the cornices and the cornices are returned at the ends. The entire roof is shingled with hand-cut cedar shakes. Walls are clapboarded. The principal windows are of double-hung, six-pane sash with green, louvered shutters. The house has some twenty rooms including a number of closet-size "cells" or tiny bedrooms off the third floor ballroom where the stagecoach drivers bedded down.

Native woods of the area were used in the construction: butternut, walnut, white pine, oak, beech, ash and basswood. Most of the interior woodwork is of butternut, often beautifully hand-tooled. One detail that intrigued the restoration workers was the gracefully thin window sash made with hand tools. Small parts of the sash were fastened with solid wooden pegs; others had firm mortise and tenon joints as did doors and some joists. The design, detail and expert craftsmanship of the Wade House make it almost certain that Charles Robinson, son-in-law of the builder, was responsible for much of the architectural detail. Robinson helped with the construction of Wade House, and other buildings he is known to have designed and built in Greenbush confirm his hand in both the design and crafting of many of the inn's fine details of structure and trim. The Wade House was built in 1847-1851.

Alterations have occurred only in that the original wallpaper has been replaced with exact reproductions, deteriorated plaster has had to be replaced, and rotted beams or other structural members, parts of window sash, trim, and so on, had to be replaced. Whenever this was necessary, however, the replacements were of the same kind of wood as the original and were made in the same manner with hand tools. The architect for the restoration, which was done in 1950-1953, was Richard Philipp, F.A.I.A., and no detail was overlooked in maintaining fidelity. As much original material as possible was repaired and/or reinforced and reused.

Fortunately, although the Wade House had earlier been sold, the great bulk of the Wade family's original furnishings had remained stored in the ballroom. In addition, Wade House furnishings and equipment which had been taken away were assiduously tracked down, purchased or donated, and returned. As a result, few of the restored Wade House's furnishings were not there originally.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1847-1851

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

During the middle 1800's when Wisconsin's population was growing and on the move, many stagecoach inns or taverns were built to provide meals and lodging for travelers on roads between centers of population. The Wade House, built halfway between Fond du Lac and Sheboygan by Sylvanus Wade, was "unusually large and pretentious..for its day, became a famous landmark, and is mentioned in all the accounts of early inns and stage lines in the state. Not only did it serve as a relay station for stagecoaches, but as the stopping place for emigrants, settlers and travelers of all kinds. Its rooms were filled to capacity practically every night. It is said that as many as 200 people sought shelter there at a time, but only a portion could be accommodated. A fine example of colonial architecture, and well preserved and imposing, it remains to this day a picturesque and historic feature...,attracting the attention of all who pass by."<sup>1</sup>

As mentioned in the description of the property, much of the excellence of both the design and workmanship of Wade House is attributable to Sylvanus Wade's son-in-law, Charles Robinson, who helped to build it. Around 1937, after serving as director of the Historic American Buildings Survey in Wisconsin, the late Alexander Carl Guth wrote that he wished every architect would visit Greenbush and examine the excellence of Robinson's work.

As perhaps the most famous stagecoach inn in Wisconsin's history, Wade House illustrates a phase of transportation history in depicting the best of accommodations available to the weary stagecoach traveler. Its food was of excellent quality and its rooms and beds as comfortable as could be found in the state at the time. Stagecoach drivers and passengers alike termed it "the best on the road." In addition it was at meetings held in the Wade House that plans were made for the construction of the Sheboygan and Fond du Lac Plank Road. Sylvanus Wade was one of the commissioners who had earlier laid out the route for the territorial road between Sheboygan and Fond du Lac which was completed in 1845. Before that time, Wade had already established a blacksmith shop and simple hostelry and it was undoubtedly the arrival of settlers moving inland from Sheboygan, plus the establishment of a stage and mail route, that prompted Wade to build the Wade House. Wade and his family had come to the area in 1844.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Newcomb, Rexford, Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1950, 132-133.  
 "Wade House. One of Wisconsin's First Stagecoach Inns, Its Preservation and Restoration," Kohler of Kohler News, Vol. 41 (Special Issue), Kohler Company, Kohler, Wisconsin, October 1957.  
 Perrin, R. W. E., Historic Wisconsin Buildings, Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History No. 4, Milwaukee, 1962, 32, 38.  
 Whyte, Bertha K., Wisconsin Heritage, Chas. T. Branford Co., Boston, 1954, 24-41.  
 Buchen, G. W., Historic Sheboygan County, pub. by author, Sheboygan, Wis., 1944, 252-258.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 43° 46' 36"	W 88° 05' 06"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.4

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Donald N. Anderson, Asst. Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division

ORGANIZATION: State Historical Society of Wisconsin      DATE: March 11, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 816 State Street

CITY OR TOWN: Madison      STATE: Wisconsin 53706      CODE: 55

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: James Morton Smith  
 James Morton Smith

Title: Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Date: June 15, 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connally  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: OCT 26 1971

ATTEST:

William J. Montoye  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: OCT 4 1971

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

OLD WADE HOUSE

8. The Kohler Foundation of Kohler, Wisconsin, provided financial backing for the full and complete restoration of Wade House, which was one of the most ambitious such undertakings ever attempted in this part of the United States. The fidelity of the architectural phase of the restoration lay in the hands of master architect Richard Philipp; that of [redacted] furnishing the interior completely with original Wade family items which had been used in the house during its entire period as a hostelry operated by the Wades was overseen personally by Mrs. Ruth de Young Kohler. Today Old Wade House stands as a tribute to the pioneers who cut their way through wilderness to make their homes in Wisconsin.

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1. Buchen, Historic Sheboygan County, p. 255.

