

849

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Potter and Barker Grain Elevator

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Multiple Property Listing \_\_\_\_\_

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

### 2. Location

street & number 1N298 La Fox Road  not for publication

city or town La Fox  vicinity

state Illinois county Kane zip code 60147

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria: x A \_\_\_ B x C \_\_\_ D

[Signature] 11-01-16  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)

[Signature] 12-27-16  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
		buildings
		site
1		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agriculture/Subsistence/Storage

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture/Museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Vernacular

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Limestone

walls: Wood

roof: Wood and Metal

other: \_\_\_\_\_

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator

Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois

County and State

---

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

#### Summary Paragraph

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is located in La Fox, Illinois at 1N298 La Fox Road in Blackberry Township, Kane County. The grain elevator was constructed in 1868 by Benjamin F. Dean for local businessmen Lemuel Potter and Henry Barker. The elevator served as a market place for farmers to sell their grain, and also to purchase seeds and fertilizer for crops and feed for livestock. The structure is an example of a transitional design from the early one story flathouse elevators to a second stage elevator. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator was recently restored and retains a high degree of historic significance and architectural integrity, making it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

---

### Narrative Description

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is a small 7,000 bushel grain elevator located in La Fox, Illinois. It is adjacent to the Union Pacific railroad tracks and La Fox Road. The elevator is part of the locally landmarked La Fox Historic District. The structure is comprised of three sections: the elevator, the powerhouse or engine room, and the bin area. The grain elevator is oriented on an east-west axis, running parallel to the railroad tracks. The grain elevator is ninety-five feet long. The gable front faces La Fox Road, and measures about twenty-six feet wide with a scale and drive-through bay measuring about seventeen feet across.

The elevator section of the building sits on twenty, tapered, stone foundation piers. The piers are two by three feet at the base and one and a half by two feet at the top. The structure's floor beams, sills, and framing are eight-inch square timbers. The elevator area is post and beam construction. The floor joists are rough-sawn two by eights set on twelve-inch centers. The roof supports are also rough-sawn two by eights. Supplemental four by four-inch uprights are found throughout the first and second floors, as well as in the roof vent system.

The exterior is clad in wood clapboards. A sliding door is still in place on the north side of the building. Wood shingles cover the elevator roof. The wood working floor is west of the elevator's center and has a single staircase leading to the boot pit, and two staircases leading to the grain distribution level on the second floor.

Immediately south of the elevator is the scale house and grain receiving pit. The scale house is located in the center of structure and sheltered by a roof plane which extends south from the gable roof of the elevator section, creating a saltbox roof. Wagons with grain entered the scale platform from the west and exited at the east side of the elevator. Once the wagon was weighed, a wooden trap covering the receiving pit would be opened, and the grain in the wagon would be unloaded into the pit with an auger. The receiving pit is of concrete construction with an auger extending under the first floor of the south wall of the elevator to the grain boot. The scale pit has a stone foundation measuring eight feet by twenty-two feet. The scale platform is wood double planked. A small eight foot by four foot, six inch enclosure for the operator is attached to the south wall. The beam scale located there is a 10,000 pound capacity, manufactured by Howe.

Another auger extends the length of the building, the floor of which had openings to permit the transfer of bulk grain from storage bins to the elevator. Both augers deposited the grain at a central point from which a conveyor with small buckets raised the material to a headhouse where it went into a chute that was used for loading railroad cars situated on the north side of the structure. The entire auger system and a portion of the conveyor

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator

Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois

County and State

system have been restored and remain in place today. The scale house is of frame construction, measuring thirty-six feet deep by seventeen feet across with wood clapboards and a wood shingle roof.

Grain was moved north to the leg by a belt driven, eight inch auger in a wooden trough. The leg moved the grain up to the cupola with a nine inch wide belt carrying eight by six inch buckets on twenty inch centers. When the grain reached the head of the leg, it was distributed by a wood chute to bins or out the north side of the elevator into railroad cars. Two wooden spouts on the first floor emptied the bins into an eight inch auger running in a wooden trough that brought the grain back to the leg for loading rail cars. The head pulley on the leg and both augers were belt driven from a line shaft that was belt driven by a 8HP single cylinder hit and miss gasoline engine with a clutch pulley to engage and disengage the power to the leg. This was installed in the early 1900s and used until the last time the elevator operated in 1945. The space inside the elevator and the scale house area remain intact and convey the historic use of the structure.

Attached to the west side of the elevator is a one story wood powerhouse/engine room and bin area. The powerhouse measures twenty-four feet by twenty-five feet. The bin area measures thirty-two feet by twenty-five feet. Both spaces have been converted into a display space for the museum and house historic farm implements. The area has a concrete slab foundation and frame construction with a metal roof. The powerhouse and bin area is sided with wood clapboards.

On the south façade there are three sliding doors. One standard size door is located in the powerhouse compartment for humans and two oversize doors are located in the bin area for access for larger machinery or trucks. To the east of the standard door is a nine-light fixed window.

There are four sliding doors on the north side of the powerhouse and bin area which served as access to the grain by rail cars parked on the adjacent track. One sliding door is located in the center of the powerhouse space and the remaining three are symmetrically placed along the bin area.

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator has experienced minor changes over time, but the form of the building, scale, unloading pit, and auger system all remain and clearly identify the historic function of this building and the process which occurred at the site.

In 2003, the grain elevator was relocated (see Figure 1) to accommodate the installation of Metra's third rail. Because, the grain elevator was previously determined eligible, Metra was required to mitigate any adverse impacts to the historic resource under Section 106. In lieu of demolition or removal of the grain elevator to an out-of-context site, Metra and the owner, with review by the State Historic Preservation Office, agreed to move the grain elevator roughly 260 feet west, maintaining the structures original configuration, setting, and historic context along the railroad. Metra was responsible for the relocation and for installing a historically accurate new fieldstone foundation for the grain elevator, using the existing foundation as historic evidence.

Under the National Register of Historic Places guidelines a moved or relocated property is usually not eligible for listing, however the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator was previously determined eligible and moved in accordance with National Park Service Section 106 regulations.

Under Criteria Consideration B a moved property may be eligible if:

*"A moved property significant under Criterion C must retain enough historic features to convey its architectural values and retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association."*

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator retains significant architectural integrity and was not altered to accommodate the move. The property was moved to be preserved in lieu of demolition or unsympathetic alterations. The move and new foundation work was reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office under the National Park Service Section 106 requirements.

Additionally, a property; whether moved before, during, or after the property's period of significance, may be eligible for the National Register, if it meets the requirements of maintaining "*an orientation, setting, and general environment that are comparable to those of the historic location and that are compatible with the property's significance.*"

The original site and current site has a consistent and uniform appearance of the natural and built environment, at only 260 feet apart, and the new site is compatible with the property's significance and historic location, directly adjacent to the railroad.

After the grain elevator was moved the current owner, Michael Zoch, completed restoration and reconstruction work in 2006 to repair deteriorated elements and open the structure as a local history and farming museum (see list of work below).

Following is a list of completed work during the 2003 relocation and 2006 restoration:

**Relocation:**

- A new historically-accurate fieldstone foundation was installed at the current site. Five original foundation piers remain at the original site as a historic marker and educational interpretation. (See Figure 4).

**Restoration:**

- The cupola was restored. (See Exterior Photographs).
- The original grain elevator/scale was restored. (See Interior Photograph Key, Photographs 13-16, 25, and 30-31).

**Repair:**

- Some deteriorated rafters were replaced. (See Interior Photograph Key, Photograph 8).

**Reconstruction:**

- Reconstruction of the lean-to along the south elevation. The original lean-to had rotted and was replaced with a greenhouse in 1986. The greenhouse was then removed before the relocation and the existing lean-to reconstructed in the fourteen by thirty-two foot footprint of the original lean-to after the relocation. (See Exterior Photograph Key, Photograph 1).
- Clapboards were replaced with historically accurate reconstructions. The original clapboards had been covered with sheet metal and had rotted to reveal large gaps in the siding. (See Exterior Photographs).
- The doors on the south elevation of the rear were reconstructed based on historic photographic evidence. The sliding mechanisms and frames are original. In the 1980s the owners converted the existing door openings to storefronts. In 2006, the owner removed the storefronts and installed the reconstructed doors. (See Exterior Photograph Key, Photograph 4).

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

*New:*

- Installation of museum exhibits (See Interior Photographs).
- A ramp and staircase were installed for accessibility to the first floor. Historically, the floor was only accessible by climbing up the wall. (See Interior Photograph Key, Photographs 10 and 18).
- An opening in the east wall of the storage space at the rear of the building was cut to allow for circulation through the museum. (See Interior Photograph Key, Photographs 21 and 22).
- The pair of doors located at the front and rear of the grain elevator were added. Historically, the grain elevator would have been continuously open to the elements and people. The doors were added to secure the grain elevator and museum exhibitions and protect the structure from rain, wind, and snow. The doors were designed to complement the exterior and existing doors and do not deter from the grain elevator. (See Exterior Photograph Key, Photograph 1 and 3).

The architectural work completed by the owner has preserved the grain elevator and restored or reconstructed elements which had deteriorated beyond repair. The owners have also installed the museum displays in a sensitive and reversible manner. Because of the care taken with the relocation and restoration, the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator retains sufficient integrity to convey both its historic and architectural significance.

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

**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 old or achieving significance Within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce  
Transportation  
Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1868-1945

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation** (if applicable)

**Architect/Builder**

Builder: Benjamin Dean

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

---

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator located at 1N298 La Fox Road in La Fox meets Criterion A for Commerce and Transportation and Criterion C for Architecture, as an example of a transitional design from the early one story flathouse elevators to a second stage elevator, for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This grain elevator is directly associated with grain handling, an important commercial enterprise in La Fox and the immediate vicinity. Its location adjacent to the railroad illustrates the inter-relationship of the local elevator and the railroads in the transportation of agriculture produce.

According to Heritage Research Ltd, in the "Report of Historical Investigation (La Fox Garden and Landscape Supplies)" written in March 2000, the flathouse character is apparent in its small bushel capacity and its lack of large storage cribs. This elevator segregated and stored grain by placing low height partitions between various timber supports in the flat bin area. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator reflects the second stage elevator through its mechanical system which permitted the unloading of bulk grain and the elevation of the grain to a height that could be easily loaded to railroad cars.

In 2003, the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator was relocated 260 feet west from its original location. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator remains eligible for listing under Criteria Consideration B as the relocation maintained "an orientation, setting, and general environment that are comparable to those of the historic location and that are compatible with the property's significance."

The period of significance for the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is 1868, the year it was constructed, to 1945, the year the structure ceased operating, as an elevator. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator retains sufficient integrity to convey both its historic and architectural significance.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Development of Kane County and La Fox*

*Kane County*

Settlement of Kane County first began in the mid-1830s at the conclusion of the Black Hawk War. In 1832, members of the Sauk and Fox tribes led the Black Hawk War of 1832 in an effort to regain their homelands. To aid against this uprising, United States Army troops under the command of General Winfield Scott were sent from the east to Chicago. While there were no battles in Kane County, Scott's men marched through the area on Army Trail Road and forded the Fox River north of the present day city of St. Charles near the Blackhawk Forest Preserve.

Within two years, Army Trail Road was followed by settlers of European descent west of Chicago from the Ohio River region and New England who settled the area along the Fox River. In 1836, the eastern end of the Army Trail was integrated into a new state road between Chicago and Galena that crossed the Fox River at Elgin and passed through the northern tier of townships in Kane County. On January 16, 1836, the Illinois legislature formed Kane County.

By the mid-1840s farmers, predominantly from New York State, had settled on the rich agricultural land in northern Blackberry Township in Kane County that would become La Fox. As the population grew, early pioneers settled further west in Kane County via trails and plank roads; however it was the railroad that propelled Kane County out of the settlement era.



Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

The first railroad to arrive in Kane County was constructed in 1850. It was soon followed by other lines, including the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad, which ran east-west through the center of the county in 1854. Ten years later, this line merged into the Chicago & North Western Railway.

The Galena & Chicago Union and other railroads carried Kane County's significant agricultural production to markets in Chicago. Corn, wheat, and oats dominated the area's grain production as early as 1850. That year Kane County farmers produced 337,593 bushels of corn, 316,493 bushels of wheat, and 206,386 bushels of oats. By 1860, Kane County farmers were producing 550,392 of corn, 501,038 of oats, and 421,416 of wheat.

In 1870, the wheat harvest had decreased to 188,826 bushels, due to the soil exhaustion, while production of corn and oats continued to rise, recording totals of 785,608 and 674,333 bushels, respectively.

By 1880, the agricultural census indicated that the corn crop had more than tripled to 2,315,126 bushels while the oat crop yielded 1,267,133 bushels. At the turn-of-the-century, Kane County farmers were producing 3,395,080 bushels of corn and 2,195,050 bushels of oats.

A number of small communities evolved along Kane County's railroads in order to transport crop yields to local markets. La Fox was one of these settlements, located in Blackberry Township along the Galena & Chicago Union line.

#### *La Fox*

In 1854 Otis Jones and Joseph Shepard sold part of their farmland to the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad for construction of the Dixon Air Line and the first era of development (1854-1890) in La Fox began. Slowly, La Fox grew perpendicular to the railroad tracks. By 1859 the railroad depot and the few houses located in its vicinity became Kane Station. A post office was established at Kane Station in 1860 and L.C. Carlow, a native New Yorker, moved to the Station to become its first postmaster. Carlow was also a merchant and businessman. He opened a store near the depot and operated a nursery in the area. The post office was called La Fox, the name originally given to Kane County's first post office (1836) which was renamed Geneva in 1850. The depot and post office names were consolidated in 1860 and the community became known as La Fox.

La Fox continued to grow and benefit because of its location on a railway line into the twentieth century. The railroad provided transportation for agricultural products to markets and jobs for local residents. Residences were constructed to house railway employees. Railroad structures including a depot, gate keeper's house, can shanty (a building where empty milk cans were cleaned before being returned to the farmers), and a warehouse/elevator were also built.

In 1890, a second stage of development (1890-1931) in La Fox began when the railroad constructed sheepyards in the community. The sheepyards were located south of the railroad tracks and east of La Fox Road and were capable of holding at least twelve thousand sheep. Sheep being shipped by rail from the west to Chicago and points east rested and were fed at the yards. During this period, sheep sheds, a fertilizer plant, and a grain elevator were constructed at the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company Feed Yards. A hotel was constructed to house transient employees of the sheepyards while resident sheepyard employees owned or rented houses in La Fox. The sheepyards were moved to West Chicago in 1931.

During the post-railroad era (1932-present) in La Fox, most of the structures associated with the railroad were destroyed including buildings located in the sheepyards (demolished after 1931), the depot (dismantled 1952), the can shanty (destroyed 1959), the gate keeper's house (destroyed after 1930), and the hotel (demolished 1931). In 1979, the cheese factory/creamery/town hall collapsed under heavy snow. Three residences and the blacksmith shop have

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

been destroyed sometime during the twentieth century. Only eight buildings, commercial and residential, were constructed after 1931.

The character of La Fox was shaped by the community's industry, commerce, and the people who lived there. It is a late nineteenth century railroad town whose predominant growth period was between 1860 and 1900. The community's buildings reflect the architectural styles popular at this time and include Greek Revival, Carpenter Gothic, Queen Anne, and Italianate. The linear plan of La Fox remains as it was in 1860. La Fox Road is the core of this community, a rural village surrounded by farm lands.

*The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator*

Industry in Kane County began with the establishment of saw and grain mills along the banks of the Fox River and tributary waterways in the 1830s. Through the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup>- century and into the 20<sup>th</sup>-century, industry continued to expand along the Fox River, with industrial complexes devoted to creameries, cheese factories, quarries, and brick and tile factories. Warehouses, train depots, factories, mills, and grain elevators, like the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator, were built in communities along rail lines to assist with the manufacturing and transportation of agricultural products and products from the Fox River industries.

In 1868, the grain elevator for Potter and Baker was constructed south of the railroad tracks in the village of La Fox and is the last structure in the town that was serviced by the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad. Built under contract by Benjamin F. Dean for local businessmen Lemuel Potter and Henry Barker, the elevator served as a market place for farmers to sell their grain, and also to purchase seeds and fertilizer for crops and feed for livestock.

Little is known about Barker, except that he was Potter's brother-in-law. Lemuel Potter, a sea captain of a whaling ship from New Bedford, Massachusetts, settled in La Fox in 1863. He bought an interest in Benjamin Dean's store (opened by Carlow in 1860) and later bought the business which carries the family name today and has been operated continuously by generations of Potters.

In 1869 Lemuel Potter constructed a cheese factory which was converted to a creamery in 1877. Eventually, when the building had outlived its industrial purpose, it became a meeting place, the La Fox Hall. Potter commissioned carpenters from Massachusetts to build a large residence and town barn for his family in 1870. Both buildings were distinctly decorated with porthole windows, reminiscent of Potter's whaling days, and are community landmarks today. Over the last 125 years the Potter family has constructed or owned twelve buildings in La Fox. The residences owned by the Potters were inhabited by family members or store employees, or were rented. The Potters at one time owned land on three of the four corners at the intersection of La Fox Road and the railroad tracks.

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator served primarily as a grain transfer point rather than a storage elevator. The storage area was comprised of small bins located on the first floor at the west end of the structure, with a capacity of 7,000 bushels. Local farmers could weigh wagonloads of grain and have it transferred to waiting railcars. Historic plats indicate the presence of a side track adjacent to the elevator to facilitate loading. An early county history indicates the elevator was "a valuable aid in handling and shipping the large supply of grain delivered at this station." Since this elevator had limited storage, higher capacity grain storage occurred at the larger La Fox elevator along the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad line and at Elburn and/or Maple Park.

Both Potter and Barker operated the elevator business, but Barker was the owner of record until he sold it to Potter's son, James, in 1888. James Potter eventually moved to California leaving his brother-in-law, William Finn, as the business's managing partner. The elevator also began to be used as a lumber and coal yard.

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

Following World War II, farming became more mechanized. With faster harvesting and improved yields from hybrids, came larger volumes of grain to be handled. This placed an enormous strain on elevator handling capabilities. Elevator owners began upgrading their facilities to handle the increasing volume. Farmers began shipping direct from the farm to the processor using semi-trailer trucks. This change in grain handling reduced the need for rural elevators. The small capacity Potter and Barker Grain Elevator was relegated to emergency or overflow use because of this change. It had not been modernized to keep up with the increased grain handling requirements.

William Vern Cox bought the structure in 1945 and opened the La Fox Farm Service and Supply Company. He managed the company with Sydney Shepard and sold coal, fertilizer, seed, and other farm-related products. In 1980, W. V. Cox closed his business and the building remained vacant until Paul and Holly Zoch purchased the property in 1987. The Zochs operated a landscaping business in the historic elevator. In the last ten years, the Zochs have worked to rehabilitate the elevator into a La Fox history and agricultural museum and have restored the structure as previously discussed in Section 7.

In the Kane County Rural Structures Survey publication, "Built for Farming: A guide to the Historic Architecture of Kane County", fifty-one industrial buildings were documented throughout the county. Buildings included factories, mills, railroad buildings, and grain elevators. The survey only identified two grain elevators, noted as constructed between 1910 and 1945. The survey did not document the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator, constructed in 1868. With the inclusion of the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator in the survey, the grain elevator is among the rarest industrial building types in Kane County. Additionally, with the information provided in the survey, the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is the oldest known grain elevator in Kane County.

#### Grain Elevator Development

Grain handlers in the late 1700s and early 1800s sacked and stored their grain in flat storage warehouses. Occasionally shippers would use barrels to transport grain, especially wheat. These methods were clumsy, slow, and very labor intensive. This system of handling and storage was inefficient, susceptible to contamination by vermin, and costly. The sacks or barrels had to be stored carefully to avoid spoilage from heat. They had to be opened for inspection and grading, then closed, causing immense slowdowns in shipping. The advent of increased mechanization and production placed pressure on the existing transport and storage system of grain handling.

The development of the elevating system of grain handling removed this pressure. As early as 1785, the elevating of grain by an endless chain bucket system was developed for moving the grain into storage and transport. This allowed the farmer to move his grain in bulk to the elevator for easier and rapid handling.

The following section is an excerpt from the "Report of Historical Investigation (La Fox Garden and Landscape Supplies)" written by Heritage Research Ltd:

*"The evolution of storage elevator construction has been chronicled by Historian Robert M. Frame III. Frame identifies three periods in grain storage architecture. The first period utilized a one-story structure, sometimes called a "flathouse," in which bagged grain was stored. Frame suggests that any capability this early type of structure had for retaining bulk grain was limited by the weight of the grain and the structure's inability to withstand the corresponding pressure.*

*The second period is characterized by the wood-cribbed elevator. This design utilized two by eights or two by tens which were laid flat and spiked one on top of the other, which Frame indicated, formed "strong, pressure-resistant bins." This type of elevator was*

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

*developed in the 1860s and 1870s. Because of the height of these buildings, a new system had to be developed that raised the grain to the level of the cribs. Oliver Evans was responsible for that system, which consisted of small buckets attached to a belt that operated vertically. The mechanism was very methodical, grain would be discharged by wagons in to the elevator's lower level; the bucket/conveyor would scoop the grain, lift it the height of the structure in a shaft called the "leg," then discharge it into chutes from the top of the elevator known as the "headhouse;" those chutes would direct the grain into any one of a number of cribs.*

*Given the frame construction of the early grain elevators, fire was a major concern, and various materials other than wood were experimented with during the last part of the nineteenth century. Materials included steel, brick, and hollow tile. This experimentation ultimately led to the third type of elevator, which was developed near Minneapolis in 1899. It was a cylindrical, concrete tank, and became the model upon which all modern concrete elevators were patterned."*

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is an example of a transitional design from the early one story flathouse elevators to a second stage elevator. The flathouse character is apparent in its small bushel capacity and its lack of large storage cribs. This elevator segregated and stored grain by placing low height partitions between various timber supports in the flat bin area. The second stage elevator is reflected through its mechanical system which permitted the unloading of bulk grain and the elevation of the grain to a height that could be easily loaded to railroad cars.

The following definition of terminology was taken from "Grain Elevators in Minnesota", National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, September 30, 1989, written by Robert M. Frame III.

*"In contrast to the massive and complex terminal elevator, the rural elevator is relatively small and simple. The rural elevator's function is to receive grain from the farmer/producer in wagon or truck loads for shipment to a terminal elevator via rail in rail car lots. It will have more or less of a storage function depending on the flow of grain in the market. It will have little to do with grain cleaning and treating. A rural elevator will have a small addition atop the roof ridge, known as the cupola. The cupola may be small and shorter it may be "full length" extending from gable end to gable end. The cupola houses the "head" and drive mechanism of the grain leg and the bin distributor spout or chute.*

*The "elevator leg", "grain leg", or "leg" is the unit containing the power-driven vertical bucket conveyor which raises the grain. The top of the "leg" is called the "head"; the bottom of the "leg" is called the "boot".*

*The first floor is usually the working floor, located at about grade level and below any overhead internal storage bins.*

*A "garner bin" is a hopper-bottomed container for the temporary gathering of grain, awaiting its input to a machine or "scale bin". The "scale bin" is a hopper-bottomed bin mounted on scale beams for weighing the grain being prepared for shipping or processing. In the engineering and design of an elevator, grain is stored in the storage area which is comprised of bins. Bins are usually round or rectangular with sloped bottoms called hopper-bottoms to allow the grain to move down and out by gravity.*

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

*Located below the elevator driveway floor will be a hopper -bottomed bin called a "receiving pit" used to receive grain delivered by the farmer via wagon or truck. From this "receiving pit" the grain flows by gravity through a chute into the "boot" of the "elevator leg".*

*Rural elevators may also have a separate building near the elevator as the power house and another building as a combination office and scale house.*

*While the bucket elevator in the "leg" moves the grain up, it discharges at the "head" into storage bins through spouts, called chutes. The spout or chute is attached to the head of the leg and directs the grain into a selected bin.*

*"Dump logs" are narrow wooden ramps flush with the driveway floor on which the grain wagon is positioned allowing the elevator operator to tilt the wagon dumping its load into the receiving pit.*

*A "line shaft" is a steel shaft driven by a single power source on which are mounted pulleys or sprockets used in driving one or more machines. The "line shaft" will be of varying length dependent upon the distance required to transmit power and the number of machines to be driven from that single power source."*

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator followed the previous description of a rural elevator from "Grain Elevators in Minnesota" with few exceptions. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator did not use hopper-bottomed bins. First floor bins were unloaded through chutes in the floor then augered back to the "boot". The bucket conveyor brought the grain to the "head", then distributed by chute to rail car or wagon. The second floor bins were unloaded by gravity through chutes. Additionally, the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator had no "dump logs" which meant all wagons were shoveled empty.

### Conclusion

The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator was constructed in 1868 and served the community as an elevator until 1945. In 1994 the elevator was locally landmarked by Kane County, as part of the La Fox Historic District. This structure was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, as part of the Section 106 review for the proposed METRA extension of the Union Pacific Lines West, Geneva to Elburn. The Potter and Barker Grain Elevator is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with local commerce and transportation of products to market and under Criterion C for its transitional elevator design from a one story flathouse to a second stage elevator. This structure retains sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

---

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Divine, Lois, History of La Fox, 1987.

Frame, Robert M., III. "Grain Elevator in Minnesota." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1990.

Henning, Barbara J. "Armour's Warehouse." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1997.

Heritage Research, Ltd. "Report of Historical Investigation (La Fox Garden and Landscape Supplies)". 2000.

Kane County Development Department. Built for farming: A guide to the historic rural architecture of Kane County. Aurora, IL: Kelmscott Press, Inc, 1991.

Kane County Development Department. Rural Structure Survey: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Farmsteads and Rural Landscapes of Kane County, Illinois. Geneva, IL: Kane County Development Department, 1987.

Le Baron, Jr., William. The Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois Containing a History of the County, Its Cities, Towns, &c., a Directory of Its Citizens, War Record of Its Volunteers in the Late Rebellion, Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men, General and Local Sta. Chicago, Illinois: Wm. Le Baron Jr. &, 1878.

Schlebecker, John T. Whereby We Thrive- A History of American Farming 1907-1972. Iowa University Press, 1972.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: Kane County Historic Preservation Commission

---

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .659

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>41°53'11.39"N</u> Latitude	<u>88°24'40.02"W</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Part of the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 2, Township 39 North, Range 7 East (Blackberry Township), Kane County. The property is located immediately south of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Line and roughly 385 feet west from La Fox Road.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected are the legal boundaries of the existing Potter and Barker Grain Elevator parcel.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Erica Ruggiero date June 8, 2016  
organization McGuire Igleski & Associates, Inc. telephone (847) 328.5679  
street & number 1330 Sherman Avenue, Suite A email erica@miarchitects.com  
city or town Evanston state IL zip code 60201

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
**City or Vicinity:** La Fox  
**County:** Kane **State:** Illinois  
**Photographer:** Erica Ruggiero  
**Date Photographed:** February 04, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

**Photo 1 of 30:** View of grain elevator look west with reconstructed lean-to.

**Photo 2 of 30:** View of grain elevator looking southwest.

**Photo 3 of 30:** View of grain elevator looking northeast.

**Photo 4 of 30:** View of grain elevator looking northwest.

**Photo 5 of 30:** View of grain elevator looking southeast.

**Photo 6 of 30:** View looking west into the scale platform area.

**Photo 7 of 30:** View looking up at the rafters, including original and new rafters.

**Photo 8 of 30:** View looking east into the scale platform area.

**Photo 9 of 30:** View looking east in the scale platform area with the installed accessibility ramp.

**Photo 10 of 30:** View of the working floor converted to museum space looking southeast.

**Photo 11 of 30:** View of the working floor converted to museum space looking west.

**Photo 12 of 30:** View of the elevator bucket conveyor (leg) and drive belt looking southeast.

**Photo 13 of 30:** View of the (head) pulley and drive pulley looking up from the first floor.

**Photo 14 of 30:** View of the receiving pit screw conveyor leading to the boot located below grade.

**Photo 15 of 30:** View of the working floor screw conveyor leading to the boot located below grade.

**Photo 16 of 30:** View of the working floor converted to museum space looking northeast from the southwest corner.



Potter and Barker Grain Elevator  
Name of Property

Kane County, Illinois  
County and State

**Photo 17 of 30:** View of the new staircase between the working floor and engine house floor looking east.

**Photo 18 of 30:** View of the railroad loading area converted to museum space looking north.

**Photo 19 of 30:** View of the railroad loading area converted to museum space looking west.

**Photo 20 of 30:** View of the railroad loading area converted to museum space looking west and opening cut in storage wall for museum circulation.

**Photo 21 of 30:** View of the opening cut in storage wall for museum circulation looking west.

**Photo 22 of 30:** View of lean-to addition converted to museum space looking east.

**Photo 23 of 30:** View from the top of the stairs between the first and second floor looking west.

**Photo 24 of 30:** View of the grain elevator looking south.

**Photo 25 of 30:** View of southwest corner of the second floor.

**Photo 26 of 30:** View of the second floor looking southeast from the northwest corner.

**Photo 27 of 30:** View from the top of the stairs between the first and second floor looking east.

**Photo 28 of 30:** View of the southeast corner of the second floor.

**Photo 29 of 30:** View from the center of the second floor looking southwest.

**Photo 30 of 30:** View inside the cupola showing drive assembly for the (head) section of the leg.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator

Name of Property

Kane County, IL

County and State

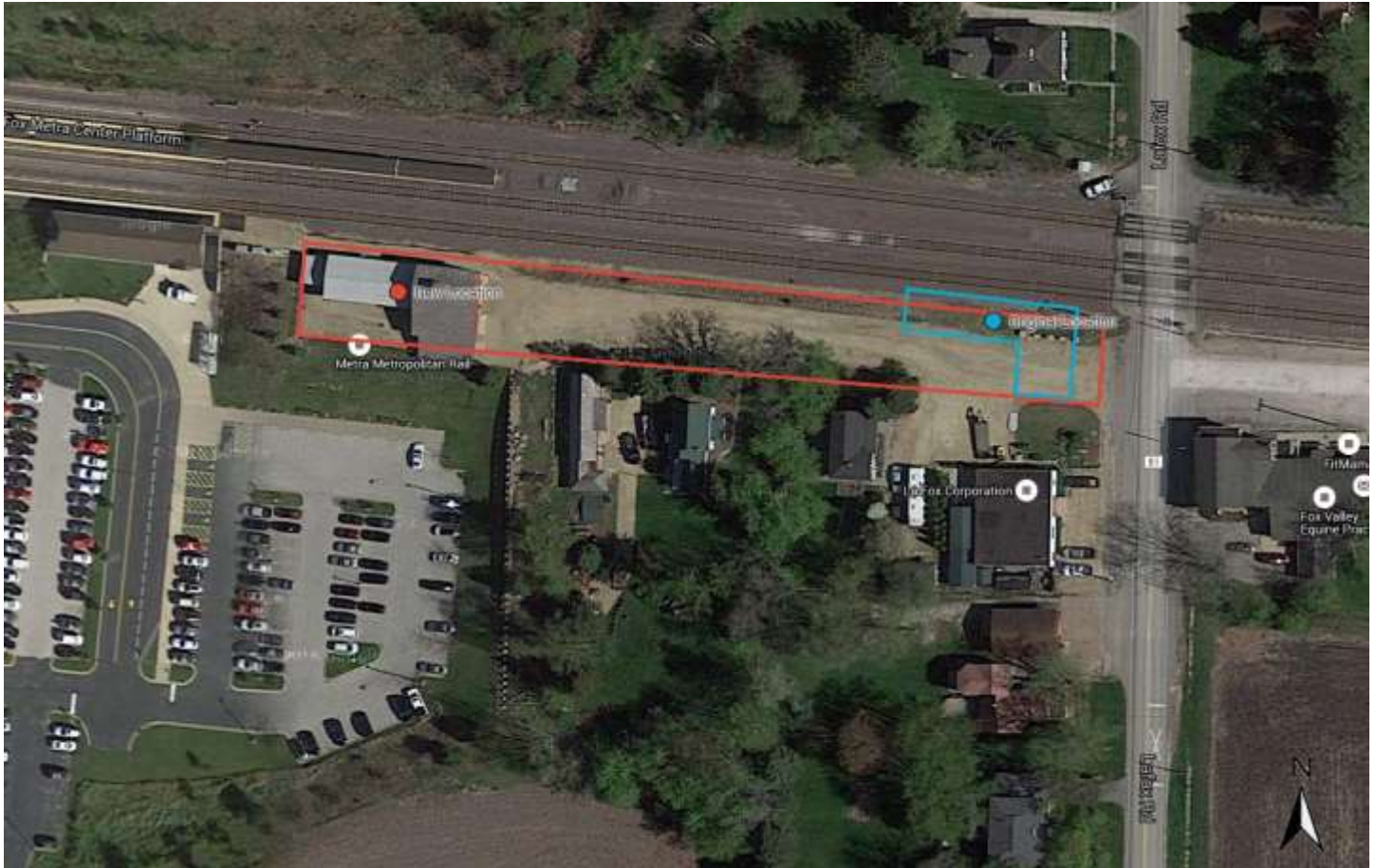
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 18

### List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.



**FIGURE 1: SITE MAP**

\*The area in red identifies the current location and related parcel for the Potter and Barker Grain Elevator. The area in blue is the original location of the structure before it was moved in 2003.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator
Name of Property
Kane County, IL
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 19



**FIGURE 2: GIS MAP FOR THE POTTER AND BARKER GRAIN ELEVATOR**

La Fox, Kane County, IL  
41°53'11.39"N  
88°24'40.02"W

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator
Name of Property
Kane County, IL
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 20



FIGURE 3.A: EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPH KEY \*Photograph number identifies location of camera.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator
Name of Property
Kane County, IL
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 21

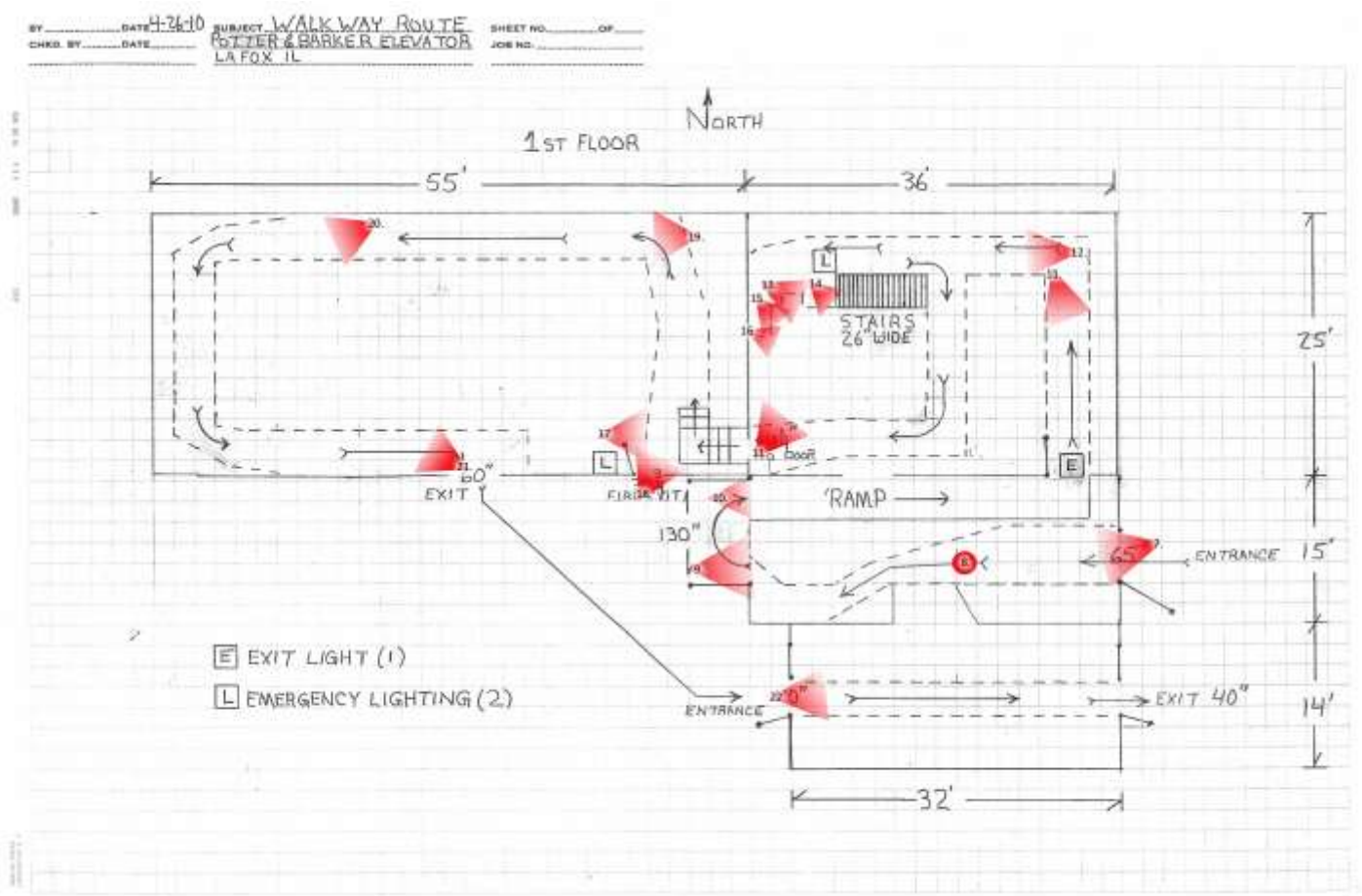


FIGURE 3.B: INTERIOR FIRST FLOOR PHOTOGRAPH KEY \*Photograph number identifies location of camera.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator

Name of Property

Kane County, IL

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 22

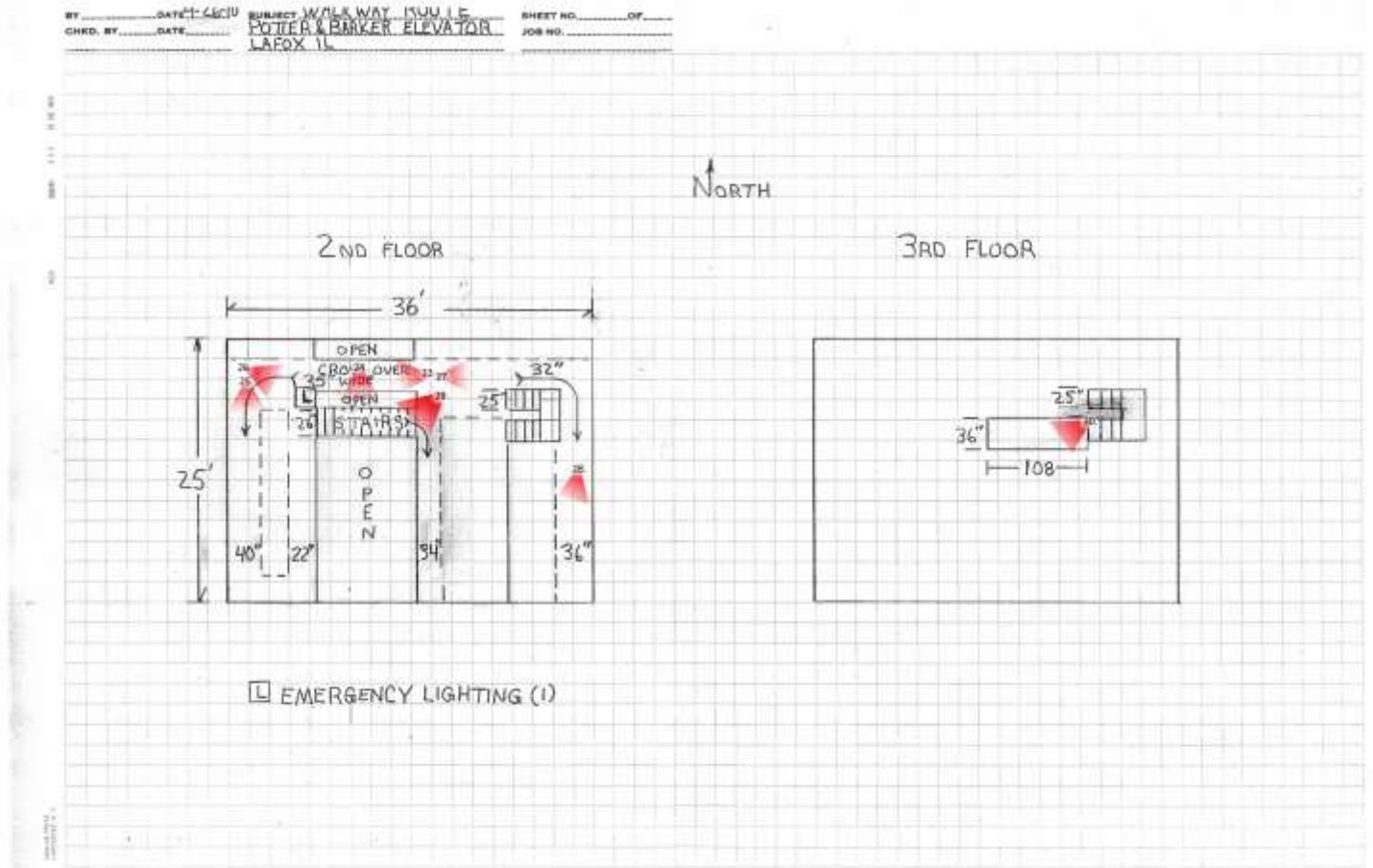


FIGURE 3.C: INTERIOR SECOND & THIRD FLOOR PHOTOGRAPH KEY \*Photograph number identifies location of camera.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Potter and Barker Grain Elevator
Name of Property
Kane County, IL
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 23



**FIGURE 4: HISTORIC FOUNDATION PIERS AT THE ORIGINAL SITE.**



FIGURE 5: 1920 VIEW OF THE GRAIN ELEVATOR LOOKING WEST.





**FIGURE 6: 1932 VIEW OF THE GRAIN ELEVATOR LOOKING SOUTHWEST.**



POTTER & BARKER GRAIN ELEVATOR



POTTER & BARKER GRAIN ELEVATOR

STATE  
HW  
298







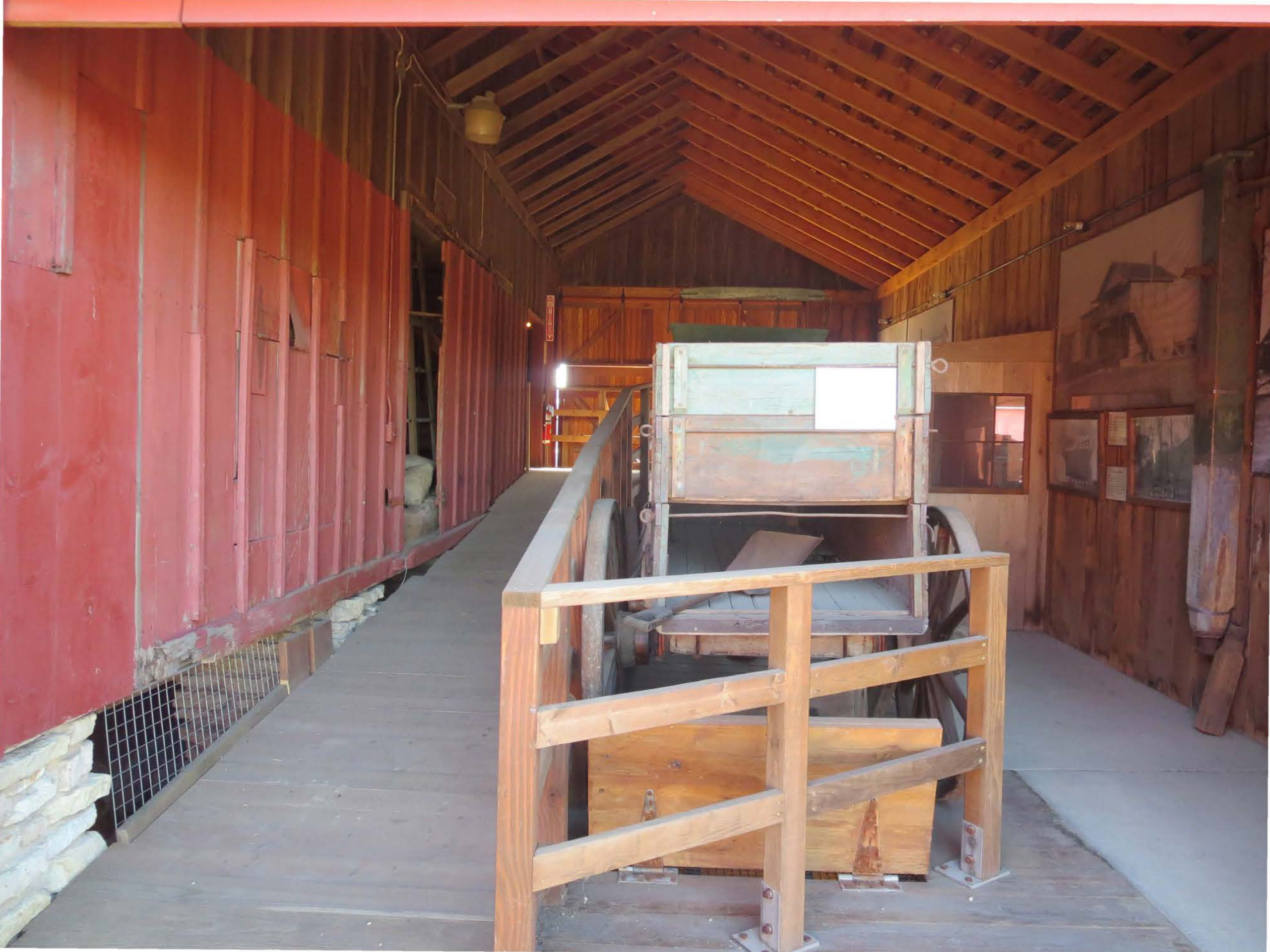


POTTER & FINN CO

NEW STEEL  
A 1900-1910  
A 1910-1920  
A 1920-1930  
A 1930-1940









1850



Small text label or plaque next to the portrait.





OMAHA  
CALIFORNIA

CHICAGO  
CALIFORNIA

OMAHA  
CALIFORNIA

















**PIONEER**  
BRAND  
**SEEDS**  
SOLD HERE  
VERNE COX





PHILIPPS  
1880

LITS  
LITS  
LITS





**CASE**  
FARM SERVICE & SUPPLY

FARM  
COMPOST  
TUBES

FARM MACHINERY

RO &  
GRADER

RESERVATION SLIP













LA FOX  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
KANE COUNTY REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC PLACES DESIGNATED BY  
THE KANE COUNTY BOARD 1994



Walter Scott



Building the Mill



La Fox Mill







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 11/10/2016      Date of Pending List: 12/12/2016      Date of 16th Day: 12/27/2016      Date of 45th Day: 12/27/2016      Date of Weekly List: 1/5/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal           | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request     | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver           | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      12/27/2016 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

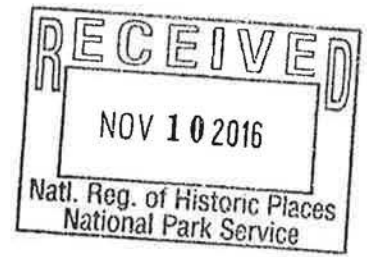
Reviewer Edson Beall      Discipline Historian

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





November 2, 2016

Ms. Barbara Wyatt  
National Register of Historic Places Program  
National Park Service, Department of the Interior  
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Wyatt:

Enclosed are the disks that contain the true and correct copies of the National Register nominations recommended for nomination by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council at its October 28, 2016 meeting and signed by the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer:

Marquette Apartments, Peoria, Peoria County  
Turkey Hill Grange Hall, Belleville, St. Clair County  
Edward D. Brigham House, Glencoe, Cook County  
William and Jennette Sloane House, Elmhurst, DuPage County  
Potter and Barker Grain Elevator, La Fox, Kane County  
Brainerd Bungalow Historic District, Chicago, Cook County

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PACKAGE ALSO CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:**

Middletown Historic District (Additional Documentation), Alton, Madison County

**Approved at the June 24, 2016 meeting**

North Geneva Historic District (Additional Documentation and Boundary Decrease), Geneva, Kane County, IL  
Central Geneva Historic District (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase), Geneva, Kane County, IL

Please contact me at 217/785-4324 if you need any additional information. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew Heckenkamp, Coordinator  
Survey and National Register program

enclosures

1 Old State Capitol Plaza  
Springfield IL 62701

ILLINOISHISTORY.GOV