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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
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 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 Sunnyside Farm Barn
other names/site number Sunny Farm Barn, 32 MO 147

2. Location

street & number Approximately 1.7 miles west of Mandan; 0.5 mile south of West Main Street
on the south side of Dead Heart Slough Not for publication N/A
city or town Mandan vicinity X
state North Dakota code ND county Morton code 059 zip code 58554

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 ___ nationally X statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James E. Sperry
Signature of certifying official James E. Sperry
State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)

11/29/95
Date

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 _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

1-19-96

Entered in the
National Register

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 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> 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.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: animal facility

GOVERNMENT: correctional facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other/Gambrel-roofed barn

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

Narrative Description: (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more 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 associated with the lives of persons significant in 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 religious institution/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 old/achieved significance within past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/Government
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance 1926-1945

Significant Dates 1926 (date of construction)

Significant Person N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance:

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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:

Sunnyside Farm Barn
Name of Property

Morton County, ND
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>14</u>	<u>351484</u>	<u>5186862</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John F. Lauber, Senior Research Historian
organization Hess, Roise and Company date July 1995
street & number 405 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 200 telephone (612) 338-1987
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55454

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)

Property Owner

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

name Elaine Little, Director, Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation, State of North Dakota
street & number P. O. Box 1898 telephone (701)328-6390
city or town Bismarck state ND zip code 58502-1898

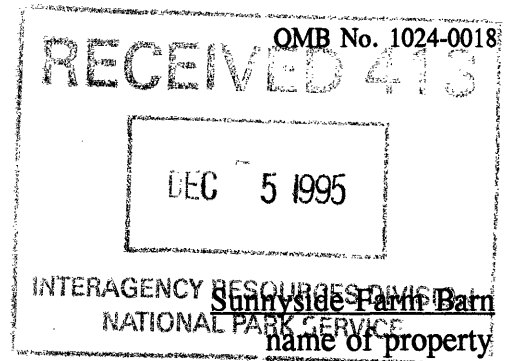
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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 time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and review 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

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DESCRIPTION

Site

The Sunnyside Farm Barn stands on a broad, roughly triangular terrace located on the west bank of Dead Heart Slough, approximately one-half mile south of Highway 9 (West Main Street) and 1.7 miles west of Mandan, North Dakota. Access to the site is provided by a gravel road that turns south from the main highway, crosses the slough and winds through a dense stand of mature oaks before opening onto the level, gravelled clearing that provides a site for the barn. The terrain to the west and south of the barnyard consists primarily of rolling pasture land.¹

Sunnyside Farm Barn

The Sunnyside Farm Barn is a two-story, wood-frame dairy barn with a concrete foundation and a trussed gambrel roof. Rectangular in plan, the structure is long and narrow, measuring 36 by 180 feet, with its main axis oriented north and south. The barn's sidewalls have horizontal wood drop siding with corner boards. The roof has overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails and beadboard soffits. A hay hood projects from the peak of the gable at each end of the building to provide shelter for the hay loft doors. Five shed dormers are spaced evenly along each side of the roof. All exterior woodwork is painted white. The roof deck is covered with light green asphalt T-lock shingles.

Twenty rectangular windows are spaced evenly along each side of the barn on the lower level. Two windows flank the entrance doors at each end of the barn, and there are two additional windows on the second level at each end. All windows in the main part of the barn have 4/4 wood, double-hung sash, and are equipped with wood, divided-light storm windows. Each dormer contains a pair of fixed, four-light wood sash.

Small, white-painted, metal ventilator hoods project from the building's sidewalls at regular intervals. Five large, galvanized iron ventilators are distributed along the ridge line of the roof. Each ventilator is capped with a decorative weather vane. The vanes on the north end of the barn feature silhouettes of horses, and those on the south end feature silhouettes of cows. The decorative motifs selected for the silhouettes reflect the barn's original purpose as a shelter for both kinds of livestock.

A large pair of sliding, wood, frame-and-panel doors is centered in each end of the barn at ground level. Directly above each pair of main entrance doors is a small, rectangular, wood, flush-board door. Nestled

¹The description of Sunnyside Farm Barn is based on field inspection by John F. Lauber on 1 May 1995. The building is also described in a cultural resource survey completed in 1990; Barbara Beving Long, "The Evolution of the North Dakota State Reform School, 1890-1940," TMs, 1990, at North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, Bismarck.

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beneath the hay hood at each end of the building is a pair of wood, frame-and-panel hay loft doors. The loft doors slide open on diagonal tracks. There is a single, wood, service door on the west side of the barn. Four service doors and a horizontal sliding door are distributed long the east side.

The main doors open onto a full-length center aisle flanked by open pens and stalls. A transverse aisle intersects the main aisle near the building's midpoint. The floor on the lower level is concrete with formed-in gutters for drainage. Pens near the south end are enclosed with low, concrete parapet walls and iron pipe rails. Stalls near the north end are enclosed with wood planks. Two enclosed granaries flank the main aisle north of its intersection with the transverse aisle. Access to the hay loft is provided by a stairway at the north end of the building. The floor of the hay loft area is decked with wide, wood planks.

Integrity

The barn was originally equipped with two silos. One silo stood on each side of the building near the north end. The silos had smooth sides and hipped, conical roofs. Each was connected to the barn by a wood-frame hyphen with a gabled roof. The original silos were replaced in 1951, when North Dakota state officials approved the purchase of a 14-foot by 35-foot concrete stave silo, and a 14-foot by 36-foot tile stave silo for the farm.² By 1989, only one silo (on the west side of the barn) remained standing. Built on a concrete foundation, the remaining silo had walls of striated, clay tile staves, set in tar-like mortar and reinforced by metal rods. The structure had a domed cap made of segmental, sheet metal panels, with deep reinforcing ribs. The silo was linked to the barn by a wood-frame hyphen, sheathed with drop siding. Both the silo and hyphen were removed sometime between 1989 and 1994.

Historic photographs show that there have been very few other alterations to the Sunnyside Barn.³ The building was originally painted in a dark color with light colored trim, and the small rectangular doors above the main entrances were added sometime between 1926 and 1946. Thus, despite the loss of the silos, the Sunnyside Farm Barn retains historic integrity, and continues to look much as it did during the period when it was the focal point for the North Dakota State Training School's vocational training programs.

²Director of Institutions, Board of Administration Minutes, 1939-1953, entry dated 9 July 1951. Series 749, Box 1.

³12th Biennial Report of the State Training School, Mandan, North Dakota, July 1 1924 to June 30, 1926 (n.p., 1926): 23. 22nd Biennial Report (n.p. 1946): between pages 2 and 3.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Sunnyside Farm Barn has statewide historical significance under National Register Criterion A under the areas of state government and agriculture as the central focus of vocational training activities at the North Dakota State Training School from 1926 to 1971.¹

The Training School was one of 14 state institutions authorized by delegates to the state's constitutional convention in 1889. The legislative assembly formally established the school the following year, but for more than a decade, lawmakers failed to provide the appropriations needed to make it a reality. Plagued by a chronic lack of funding, the school's board of trustees was unable to acquire a site until 1901.

The legislature had made it clear from the beginning that vocational training was to play a central role in the institution's curriculum. When the first inmates arrived in 1903, however, the Training School still lacked the resources necessary to offer a comprehensive program of trade education. Instead, administrators exploited the school's rural location and concentrated the institution's vocational training efforts on agriculture.

The school's farming operations were initially conducted on an extremely small scale, and were intended primarily to provide sustenance and meaningful work for the institution's young inmates. By 1914, however, farming had also become an important component of North Dakota's official institutional philosophy. Government leaders hoped that by establishing demonstration farms at all public institutions, they could encourage farmers throughout the state to adopt the principles of modern, scientific agriculture.

Hindered by inadequate facilities and a chronic shortage of land, the Training School struggled to meet this goal until 1923, when it acquired a 634-acre farmstead located west of its main campus. This property, called Sunnyside Farm, nearly doubled the school's land holdings and enabled the institution to fully implement the model farm policy.²

The Sunnyside Farm Barn was erected in 1926 after the farmstead's original barn was destroyed by fire.

¹The school has been operated under three names. From 1903 to 1920, it was known as the State Reform School. From 1920 to 1961, it was called the State Training School. In 1961, it was renamed the North Dakota State Industrial School. The institution is called the State Training School throughout this nomination.

²The property was also known as Sunny Farm.

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Designed by institutional staff and built by inmates, the immense new structure was touted as a model dairy barn. It quickly became the central focus of the school's agricultural activities. Over the next 45 years, hundreds of Training School inmates worked in the Sunnyside Farm Barn on a daily basis, learning skills that would equip them to be productive members of North Dakota's predominantly agricultural society after their release from the Training School. In 1971, the State Penitentiary assumed management responsibility for Sunnyside Farm. The barn remained in use until 1989.

The highly intact Sunnyside Farm Barn stands as an important and increasingly rare reminder of North Dakota's long experiment with institutional agriculture.

HISTORY

The Origins of the North Dakota State Training School

On 22 February 1889, the United States Congress passed a bill authorizing the division of Dakota Territory into two separate states. During the summer of that year, 75 delegates from the area that would soon become North Dakota convened in Bismarck to begin framing the new state's constitution. One of the most important discussions at the convention focused on defining the scope and location of the state's custodial and educational institutions. Four institutions had already been established in North Dakota during the territorial period. These included the capitol and penitentiary in Bismarck, the hospital for the insane at Jamestown, and the university in Grand Forks. By the time the convention was over, the delegates had also agreed to establish two normal schools, an agricultural college, schools of forestry, science and industry, schools for the blind and deaf, a soldier's home, and a reform school.³

This ambitious program of institutional development was probably motivated less by altruism or a sense of social responsibility than by political expediency and a strong instinct for survival. Recognizing that large, publicly funded institutions would virtually guarantee the long-term economic vitality of their host cities, the astute convention delegates had assiduously assigned an institution to almost every major settlement. Thus, when North Dakota was admitted to the Union on 2 November 1889, it already had, on paper, at least, fourteen state institutions. But with a population of well under 200,000 people, it utterly lacked the financial resources to support them.

³For a concise account of the debate over locating state institutions, see Elwyn B. Robinson, History of North Dakota (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1966): 210-211.

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This lack of money had a direct impact on the development of the North Dakota State Training School. Although the legislature dutifully enacted a law establishing the school in 1890, and appointed a five-person board of trustees to administer it, lawmakers consistently failed to appropriate enough money to allow the board to buy land or erect buildings. Operating on a shoestring budget for more than a decade, the board struggled unsuccessfully to overcome this obstacle. Meanwhile, the state continued to send its youthful offenders to the former territorial reform school in Plankinton, South Dakota.

The situation improved dramatically following a change of state administrations in 1901. Shortly after taking office, the new governor, Frank White, replaced the Training School's original board of trustees. The new board secured passage of legislation allowing it to issue \$20,000 in bonds to finance construction of buildings. At about the same time, a Morton County landowner offered to donate a site for the facility. The board quickly accepted the land, issued bonds, and set out, at long last, to make the North Dakota State Training School a reality.⁴

Growing a Farm

The Training School's new property was in a rural area on the bank of the Heart River, southwest of Mandan. The choice of a rural site for the facility was consistent with a well-established national trend. By 1900, penologists and social reformers generally believed that delinquent juveniles should be reformed rather than punished. They also agreed that the best way to accomplish this reformation was to remove the young offenders from cities, move them to the country, and expose them to the beneficial effects of fresh air and hard work. To keep inmates occupied in their new setting, the new "reform schools" were encouraged to establish rigorous and broad-based vocational education programs, offering training in trades such as printing and cabinetmaking. The idea, said one reformatory official, was to equip inmates with "some handicraft which will enable them . . . to care for themselves when released from the institution."⁵ The problem was that such trade-based education was expensive, requiring costly equipment and skilled, highly paid instructors. Consequently, many early reform schools, even those located in predominantly urban states, tended to focus their attention on agriculture, which required a substantial amount of land, but much less equipment. In North Dakota, with its overwhelmingly rural economy, an emphasis on agriculture made

⁴For an excellent overview of the Training School's history, including a detailed discussion of the site selection process, see Barbara Beving Long, "The Evolution of the North Dakota State Reform School, 1890-1940," TMs, 1990, 12-15, at the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, Bismarck. Long points out that the Training School had been endowed with a 40,000-acre federal land grant in 1889. By 1892, however, the board of trustees had still not received title to the land. Concluding that it would be a long time before the school would be able to use the grant, the board sought appropriations from the state legislature. When those funds were not forthcoming, the land grant was offered as collateral for the bonds.

⁵Quoted in Robert M. Mennel, Thorns and Thistles (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1973), 104.

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perfect sense.

When the state legislative assembly formally established the North Dakota Training School during the 1890 session, it had ordered the institution to provide inmates with "instruction and employment."⁶ Even before the school officially opened its doors, it was apparently assumed that much of this activity would take place on the farm: "Work and activity are the best reformatory measures in an institution of this nature," observed Superintendent J.R. Brown in the school's first biennial report, "[but] as no workshop of any kind has yet been built, the only and best means of employment at present will be farming and gardening."⁷

Even so, Training School officials found it difficult to implement anything but the most skeletal farm program during the institution's early years. The school property included only 40 acres, and at least three-quarters of that land was unsuitable for cultivation. "For a state that is chiefly noted as an agricultural state, and that now abounds in good, cheap lands," wrote Brown in 1906, "less than ten acres of tillable land is an exceedingly small amount . . . for all building and agricultural purposes." Brown felt that the school should acquire at least a half section of land as soon as possible:

We believe there can be no better thing done, both for the boys of this school and for the state, than to secure a suitable tract of land, . . . raise water from the Heart River for irrigating purposes, and teach the boys practical farming under irrigation and also dry farming. . . . This can . . . be made to pay a large dividend on the investment, and will be an object lesson of great value not only to the boys of this school, but to all the farmers in this section of the state.⁸

Brown's pleas eventually elicited a modest response. By 1914, the school had managed to increase its land holdings to 200 acres, 75 of which were suitable for cultivation. This land enabled the school to raise oats, corn, cabbage and potatoes, and to maintain small hog and dairy operations. A "modern" concrete-block dairy barn and a 100-ton silo had been erected at the south end of the school's main campus. Built with inmate labor, the barn was furnished with steel stanchions and mangers, and provided accommodations for

⁶Chapter 164, Laws Passed at the First Session of the Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota (Bismarck: Tribune, 1890): 484. Quoted in Long, "Evolution," 12.

⁷Quoted in Long, "Evolution," 18. The quote is taken from page four of the Training School's 1900-1902 Biennial Report. Subsequent references to the institution's biennial reports will be identified by the abbreviation BR, followed by appropriate date and location information.

⁸2nd BR (1906), 11-12.

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thirty head of cattle.⁹

The farm had originally been established to provide employment and food for the Training School inmates, but by 1914, it was also expected to serve a larger purpose. Agriculture had become an important part of North Dakota's official institutional philosophy:

The policy of the Board [of Control of State Institutions] has been to farm to meet the specific needs of each institution, to farm well and on a strictly business basis. . . . In other words, the Board, in co-operation with the institution heads, has endeavored to make a practical demonstration of the North Dakota Better Farming idea. In the belief that the state itself should take the lead in the state-wide campaign for more and better live stock, the Board has purchased none but good grade she stock and full-blooded sires. If this policy is continued for a few years, the live stock at the institution farms . . . will not only be high-class, but they will serve as object lessons to the surrounding localities.¹⁰

Despite this policy, the Training School's farming activities continued to be limited by a shortage of good land. The situation improved somewhat in 1915, when the school annexed a half section located south and west of the main campus, but several several subsequent requests for land went unheeded. There was no significant addition to the institution's property until 1920, when the school acquired 232 acres from Louis and Philomena Tavis of Mandan. This purchase brought the Training School's land holdings to more than 750 acres, including 175 acres of cropland and large tracts of pasture and woodland.¹¹

The school's farming operation was also hindered by a lack of adequate buildings and equipment. In 1916,

⁹6th BR (1914), 6.

¹⁰Second Biennial Report of the Board of Control of State Institutions of North Dakota, 30 June 1914 (Devils Lake, ND: Journal Publishing Company, 1914): 49. The Training School and other state institutions were administered by individual boards of trustees until 1911, when the Board of Control assumed responsibility for all state institutions. The Board of Control was replaced by a state Board of Administration in 1919.

¹¹ School Superintendent W.F. McClelland traced the growth of the Training School's land holdings in a letter to E.G. Wanner, Executive Secretary of the North Dakota Board of Administration, dated 16 December 1927. The letter and a 1927 plat map of the School Property are included in the collection of the State Industrial School, Mandan. According to historian Barbara Beving Long, the Tavis family had played a prominent role in the life of Morton County beginning in the 1880s. Louis Tavis established a roller mill in the area in 1896, and later became a successful real estate trader and businessman. See Long, "Evolution," 56, note 95.

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Superintendent J.M. Devine reported that the original dairy barn had already reached its full capacity, and asked the legislature to appropriate funds for a new barn.¹² Construction was delayed by a general moratorium on building during World War I, and by legislative apathy immediately afterward. The project received new impetus in 1921, when William F. McClelland arrived from New York to take over as the institution's third superintendent. Shortly after his arrival, McClelland significantly expanded the farm staff, hiring H.W. Crawford to work as an assistant farmer, and appointing Charles Cadoo, a fellow New Yorker who had studied agriculture at Cornell University, to serve as the school's farm superintendent. Under Cadoo's expert direction, school inmates finally began to erect the much-needed and long-awaited second dairy barn at the foot of the bluffs south of the main campus. Superintendent McClelland justified the changes to the farm program in his 1922 biennial report:

Agriculture we must class as the chief vocation taught, and this . . . is as it should be, because of the fact that North Dakota is so largely an agricultural state and so many of our boys will go back to work on the farms. . . . Agriculture is not only taught as part of the school work, but our farm work is under the general management of a practical as well as scientific agriculturist. He is an experienced dairyman, and the almost immediate effect of his taking charge of our dairy about a year ago was the more than doubling of our milk supply. All along the line we have had like increases in farm products. The boys do all the work on the farm under the direction of this superintendent and his two assistants.¹³

Despite significant improvements in the school's agricultural facilities during his first year in office, McClelland still was not satisfied. He concluded his 1922 report with yet another plea for more farmland.

Sunnyside Farm

In 1923, the Training School nearly doubled the size of its farming operation by purchasing a 634-acre farmstead from the Tavis family. The property, lying directly to the west of the school's main campus, included an artesian well, a large barn, a cottage for an assistant farmer, and a bunkhouse big enough to accommodate the inmates assigned to work on the farm. "While there are some hills and timber on this section," wrote McClelland, "it is an excellent piece of ground for agricultural purposes."¹⁴

¹² 7th BR (1916), 10-11. Devine became the Training School's second superintendent in 1915.

¹³ 10th BR (1922), 12.

¹⁴ 11th BR (1924), 6. The purchase is described in McClelland's letter to Wanner, 16 December 1927. According to Barbara Long, the Tavis family resided in Mandan by 1914, and "there is no evidence that they lived on the land that became Sunny[side] Farms." See Long, "Evolution," 56, note 95.

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On 2 January 1926, the barn on the recently acquired property was destroyed by fire. At a Board of Administration meeting a few days later, Superintendent McClelland reported that the loss totalled more than \$13,500. He also pointed out that the damage would have been considerably worse had it not been for the heroic efforts of three inmates who entered the burning barn to rescue livestock trapped inside. The board voted to give each of the boys a \$50 reward.¹⁵

On 21 March 1926, McClelland submitted plans for a new barn to the Board of Administration for review. The board immediately approved the plans and ordered the superintendent to obtain estimates for materials. He returned on 30 March with a bid from the Mandan Mercantile Company for \$6945, and a second bid from the Bengenhheimer Mercantile Company for \$7014. The Board awarded the contract to Mandan Mercantile, and told McClelland to proceed with construction of the new barn. The building was probably nearing completion by early June, when McClelland was authorized to purchase \$1391 worth of steel stanchions for the barn from the Lowden Manufacturing Company.¹⁶ In his biennial report for that period, McClelland described the building as "a model dairy barn," and noted that it had already started to serve its educational purpose by giving the boys who built it "much practical knowledge of the right methods of barn construction."¹⁷ For the next 45 years, the Sunnyside Farm barn was the centerpiece of agricultural activity at the State Training School.

Life on the Farm

The Training School finally succeeded in establishing a formal vocational education curriculum in 1937, offering coursework in auto and tractor mechanics and electricity. These activities did not, however, diminish the importance of agriculture at the institution: "Since so many of our North Dakota boys come from farms and will subsequently live on farms," wrote Superintendent McClelland in 1938, "our farm is properly our major industry."¹⁸

¹⁵Director of Institutions, Minutes of the Board of Administration, 5 January 1926. Collection of the North Dakota State Archives, Bismarck, microfilm roll 6947. Subsequent references to materials from the State Archives will be identified with the abbreviation NDSA, with appropriate locators.

¹⁶Board Minutes, 5 June 1926. McClelland's appearances before the board with plans and bids are discussed in the entries for 21 and 30 March 1926.

¹⁷12th BR, (1926), 12.

¹⁸18th BR (1938), 160.

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Each year, a small group of students from the school was selected to live and work at Sunnyside Farm. These hand-picked students received intensive agricultural training both in the classroom and in the field. They were taught to tend crops and care for dairy cattle, hogs, and chickens. Throughout the 1930s, much of the work at the farm was still accomplished with the aid of horses. "Whenever possible," wrote McClelland, "a boy is given a team to handle exclusively, and there is considerable competition among these boys as to whose team is in best condition." When machinery began to replace horses, the students received extensive training in the operation of the new equipment. They were also taught the basic managerial skills they would need to operate a farm as a successful business. The intent, said the superintendent, was to provide the farm group with instruction "in all . . . things which would stimulate their interest in farming."¹⁹

The Training School established a small beef operation at Sunnyside Farm in 1942. By 1946, students were helping to maintain a herd of 175 Herefords that supplied a substantial portion of the school's fresh beef. The school continued to expand and diversify its operations at the farm until well into the 1950s. During this period, the barn's original silos were replaced, the farmhouse that provided accommodations for student workers was substantially remodelled, and a new double granary was completed at the site. A large poultry house on the farm contained 1200 chickens and 300 turkeys. A portion of the barn was being used for farrowing hogs, and the school's beef herd had stabilized at approximately 150 head. Requests for more farmland continued to appear on the institution's official wish list. By the end of the decade, the school owned more than 1900 acres of land outright and also rented a substantial amount of additional acreage. The farm operation occupied ten full-time staff members and 50 students, and supplied most of the fresh meat, poultry, dairy products and vegetables served in the institution's dining rooms.

Nonetheless, when officials from the Child Welfare League of America completed a survey of the Training School in 1960, they were less than enthusiastic about the activities at Sunnyside Farm. In their report, the Welfare League officials stated that "it is doubtful that [the farm] results in much savings to the taxpayer. The salaries of ten employees plus the high costs of farm equipment and supplies . . . make any training school farm operation anything but cheap. Of greater concern is the consideration that some boys may be required to participate in farming to the detriment of treatment." The report concluded by recommending "that the present large scale farming operation be abandoned and that the Training School restrict its farming activities to truck gardening."²⁰

¹⁹18th BR (1938), 160-61.

²⁰Child Welfare League of America, "Report of Survey of North Dakota State Training School," TMs 1960: 22-23. NDSA 365.42 C436.

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Despite this recommendation, Sunnyside Farm continued to play an important role in the daily life of the State Training School until 1971, when the state legislature ordered the institution to turn its farming operations over to the State Penitentiary for management. This transfer took place on 1 July, and involved nearly 1350 acres of land, 404 head of beef cattle, five horses, thousands of bushels of barley and oats, tons of hay and straw, and a wide assortment of farm machinery.²¹ After nearly 70 years, the era of large-scale agriculture at the State Training School had come to an end.

The Penitentiary continued to use Sunnyside Farm as headquarters for its cattle-raising operations for nearly two more decades, eventually developing a successful line of breeding stock. But in 1989, this activity, too, came to an end, reportedly because of pressure from local cattle farmers who felt that the state-supported operation constituted unfair competition. Since then, the barn has stood empty, a highly intact and increasingly rare reminder of North Dakota's long-term experiment with institutional agriculture.

²¹Barbara Beving Long, "NDCRS Site Form, SITS # 32 MO 147, Sunnyside Farm Barn, 1989, at the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, Bismarck.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description

The property is a rectangular parcel of land measuring 76 x 220 feet, with its southeast corner located 20 feet south and 20 feet east of the barn's southeast corner. The northwest corner of the property is located 20 feet north and 20 feet west of the barn's northwest corner.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire extent of the Sunnyside Farm Barn, as well as those portions of the original barnyard that originally contained the silos and access roads.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Sunnyside Farm Barn
Morton County, North Dakota
Photographed by John F. Lauber
1 May 1995

Original negatives on file at:
North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office
North Dakota Heritage Center
612 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

Photo 1 North end of Sunnyside Farm Barn, view toward south.

Photo 2 South and west sides of Sunnyside Farm barn, view toward northeast. Gap in roof overhang shows location of one of the barn's two original silos.

Photo 3 North and east sides of Sunnyside Farm barn, view toward southwest. Wood plank stock pens were added after period of significance.