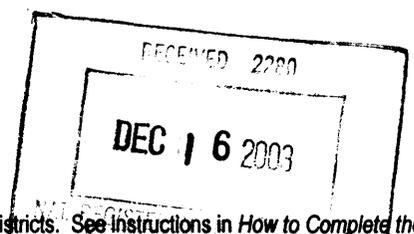


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Trego County Fairgrounds Exhibit Building
Other name/site number 195-5590-0014

2. Location

Street & number Tract 10-12-23, Trego County Fairgrounds not for publication
City or town Wa Keeney vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Trego Code 195 Zip code 67672

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Richard A. Conroy DSHPO December 12, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society
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 official /Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 1/28/04 Date of Action

Trego County Fairgrounds Exhibit

Building

Name of property

Trego County, KS

County and State

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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: fair

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: fair

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: functional

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Wood: weatherboard

roof Metal: tin; Wood: shake

other

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property Trego County Fairgrounds County and State Trego County, KS
Exhibit Building

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- 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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1916- 1953

Significant Dates

1916, 1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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): Primary location of additional data:

- 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 # _____

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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The Exhibit Building (c. 1916) is located at the Trego County Fair Grounds which is on the east side of WaKeeney (pop. 3,500) at the junction of Russell Avenue and North Highway 283. The building is a simple rectangle structure with a gable roof. Overall measurements are approximately 87 feet 8 inches, north to south, and 124 feet 2 inches, east to west. The current roof and clerestory roof are wood shake shingles (north side) and corrugated metal (south side). The original roof material would have been traditional wood shingles, which are thinner, less rustic looking (texture) than shakes and were hand split. The clerestory roof is missing several sections of glass and has been covered with corrugated plastic panels. The clerestory roof rises 3 feet 6 inches above the lower roof and measures 15 feet 8 inches north to south and 72 feet and 9 inches east to west. The building is clad with wood shiplap siding and stands on a concrete foundation.

The interior of the building is open for easy movement, with traces of an old catwalk that provided access to open the windows of the clerestory roof. Along the north and south interior walls, smaller cubicles have been partitioned to allow for better display and protection of fair exhibits. The hardwood floors contribute to the rustic atmosphere and memories of times past.

On each corner and at the point of the roof, flag poles are placed for flying flags on special occasions. The main entry doors are sliding barn doors with concrete ramps leading into the building. A concrete sidewalk lies next to the west and south sides of the building. Restrooms were added to the north side of the building in the mid 1920s and removed due to health concerns in 2000. Drinking fountains were added in the 1950s. One was on the southwest corner (removed in the 1980s) and one is on the east side of the building (currently not in working condition). Electricity was added to the entire building and a large circulation fan was put in the west wall (dates for these two additions are not available).

In the late 1960s or early 1970s a large concrete slab was poured directly to the east of the building for an ice skating rink. This was used for many years as a show arena, also. It is now filled with sand and the area is used for a large tent during the fair. In 1997, a pipe fence was placed around the perimeter of the building to prevent parking and damage problems. Also in 1997, two gazebos were built and placed west of the building. Picnic benches were also purchased to put in the gazebos. In 1998, Flowering Crabapple, Aristocrat Pear, Green Ash, and Burr Oak trees were planted inside the pipe fence, both for future shade and for the aesthetic value of a park. In 1999, the area was also re-seeded with buffalo grass to fill in bare spots.

The gable and clerestory roofs, hardwood floors, shiplap siding, and wooden shingles are not commonly used in today's society for county fair buildings and community event rooms. The Exhibit Building is one of the few of this type still standing and holds years of heritage and ethnic traditions waiting to be shared with future generations, thus insuring that the Trego County Fair Grounds will attract the eyes of the public and visitors as they pass through the community.

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The Exhibit Building (c. 1916) is being nominated to the National Register under criterion A for its historical association with the Trego County Fair. The Exhibit Building was the hub of the community attracting thousands of people from all corners of Trego County and surrounding counties. The County Fair was the celebration of the farm family and farming community.

The Exhibit Building was used to display agricultural commodities of the area. Community residents gained self-esteem and pride by earning ribbons and premiums on their exhibits in the Exhibit Building which still pays homage to our agricultural and ancestral heritage. In those early days, the Exhibit Building was the only place in the county large enough to accommodate county-wide gatherings such as: All Schools Day; Decoration Day crowds; Farmer's Picnics; Armistice Celebrations; County Poor Farm; High School Athletics; Agricultural Experiments; 4-H clubs; and to store county equipment. The Exhibit Building had the space in which community organizations held fund raising events.

In 1910, the first discussions were held by the Wakeeney Commercial Club pertaining to a Trego County fair and a committee was appointed to gather information. From 1910 to 1916, documentation and/or evidence that the Fair Association mentioned above ever organized and followed through with selling stock can not be found. News articles in the Western Kansas World during this time show evidence of successful fairs and mention making the fair a permanent institution in Trego County. In 1916, an article stated that the shareholders of the Trego County Fair Association met at the County Clerk's office to elect directors (June 18, 1916, Western Kansas World). Therefore, an association of shareholders and directors was organized and formed prior to 1916 as had been instructed by the Commercial club in 1910.

The Sixth Annual Trego County Fair premium list was published for county residents. The premium list indicated that during the past years the Fair Association had existed and proven that an annual agricultural and livestock fair could be a success. "With this fact in mind, this same company of fair enthusiasts decided early this year that the fair association should be a permanent organization and a permanent home should be secured for the annual place of meeting, hence, they got together, decided that the capital stock should consist of shares of \$25.00 each and that these shares should be held by the citizens of Trego County. The capital stock was placed at \$5,000 and the greater part of this stock has been purchased by business men and farmers of Trego County. A state charter has been secured and a site, just east of the High School Building has been purchased, buildings are being erected and other improvements are being made to have things in proper shape for the fair this fall." (Sixth Annual Trego County Fair Premium List).

The significance of securing funds to build the Exhibit Building as the permanent home of the fair was described in the Sixth Annual Premium List as follows: 1) The mission of the Fair is to encourage better agriculture, horticulture, stock raising and manufacturing. It induces men to think, and urges them to put forth better efforts for farming and stock raising. It is the place for those who have learned the lesson to demonstrate results; 2) That the

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Fair helps to increase the value of livestock, agricultural products, and real estate in the county; 3) That the fair tends to promote friendly rivalry and brings greater unity to the community. It is the annual meeting place of friends, and tend to better acquaintance; and 4) That you should attend the Fair, and profit by the experience of others.

In the September 23, 1916 Western Kansas World, a news article stated, "Without doubt from all standpoints this was the most successful fair ever held in Trego County. The large new exhibit building more than does credit to the place and makes it possible to show all exhibits to the best advantage. The crowds were the largest that ever attended a feature of this kind in Trego County. The fair has come to stay and this county should feel proud that her enterprising citizens are building up such a good solid association that will represent Trego County and her best interests to all our adjoining friends and neighbors as well as her own people."

In 1925, the Trego County Fair Grounds were sold to W.A. Riggs at the December 28, 1925 sheriff's sale for \$5,800.00 (the amount indebted). After six months the Trego County Fair Association was to have no further interest in the title to the fair grounds. Trego County then purchased the property for fair purposes in addition to other countywide gatherings such as: All Schools Day; Decoration Day crowds; Farmers' Picnic; Armistice Celebrations; County Poor Farm; High School Athletics; Agricultural Experiments; Four H Clubs; and also to store county machinery. (Western Kansas World , September 2, 1926)

The status of the County Fair changed with the purchase of the fair grounds by the county. No longer would there be gate fees to view exhibits at the County Fair, now it was a Free Fair. As noted in the September 9, 1926 issue of the Western Kansas World, "according to the best information received, Trego County is the first county in the state of Kansas with a similar population to put on a free fair under the new law." This statement indicates Trego County made history by becoming a free fair.

Newspaper articles indicate that the 1927 Trego County Free Fair was the biggest and best ever due to being county organized and operated. The attendance on one given day in 1927 was placed at over 7,000. In 1928, the grandstands were enlarged to accommodate crowds while other improvements were made on the fair grounds. The crowds in 1928 again met the 7,000 plus attendance numbers.

It was noted in the August 29, 1929 issue of the Western Kansas World, "the main exhibition building is a wonderful place with its displays of education and fancy work, culinary, many beautiful flowers and a great display of vegetables and farm products." In 1930, the fair continued as usual with improvements made to the grandstands and race horse barn. 1931 brought additional improvements including a new poultry shed and an addition to the hog barn, along with graveling the driveway from the entrance gate to the exhibit building. Finally, the attendance at the 1931 fair was recorded at over 8,000 which was an all time record.

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In 1932, the fair boasted over 2,000 entries on display. "The large exhibition building is a beautiful place with many displays of flowers, vegetables, fruits, farm products, domestic science and art displays and everyone visiting the fair should take the time to visit the exhibition building and see the many prize-winning articles on display." (Western Kansas World, September 1, 1932). Expansion and improvements on the fair grounds were done to the race track, the grandstands, and the barns that were completed prior to the 1933 Fair.

The Exhibit Building was one of the focal points of the fair grounds and brought many visitors into it to see the entries, catch-up on old friendships and make new ones. "Visitors were present from all parts of Trego County and adjoining counties and families drove here for the day from a distance of 60 to 100 miles. Thursday and Friday were the two largest days for attendance and the crowd Thursday afternoon was estimated at over 10,000 people, while Friday afternoon the crowd was over 12,000. On Friday afternoon, 3,416 cars were counted on the grounds, showing auto tags from 17 different counties." (Western Kansas World, September 7, 1935).

The fair continued to be successful with record crowds and entries in throughout the next three decades of twentieth century. Premiums and entries continued to increase and the monies received from the grandstand and concessions paid for the expenses of fair and for continued property improvements. The Exhibit Building is still used today to exhibit entries at the Trego County Free Fair and bring friends and families together to celebrate the fruits of their labor and reminisce about the days gone by and to discuss current events.

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Bibliography

Clerk of District Court, Trego County, L. H. Galloway et al vs. The Trego County Fair Association et al. Order of Sale No. 2383. Docket H. Page 439.

Filed November 21, 1925.

Clerk of District Court, Trego County, L. H. Galloway et al vs. The Trego County Fair Association et al. Confirmation of Sale No. 2383 Book G. Page 46.

Filed March 2, 1926.

Sheriff's Sale Notice, Western Kansas World, 26 November 1925.

Sheriff's Certificate of Sale. Clerk of the District Court, Trego County, #40-249.

Sixth Annual Trego County Fair Premium List, September 13, 14, 15th, 1916.

Trego County Commissioner Journal E. 17 June 1926. Page 133.

Trego County Fair Association Stock Certificate dated 30 April 1920.

Western Kansas World; 10 June 1910; 18 June 1910; 10 September 1910; 14 September 1912; 26 August 1915; 8 July 1916; 2 September 1916; 23 September 1916; 20 September 1917; 27 September 1917; 26 September 1918; 11 September 1919; 9 September 1920; 16 September 1920; 8 September 1921; 15 September 1921; 31 August 1922; 14 September 1922; 2 August 1923; 4 September 1924; 11 September 1924; 18 September 1924; 31 December 1925; 10 June 1926; 17 June 1926; 24 June 1926; 22 July 1926; 2 September 1926; 9 September 1926; 1 September 1927; 8 September 1927; 23 August 1928; 30 August 1928; 6 September 1928; 8 August 1929; 22 August 1929; 29 August 1929; 21 August 1930; 13 August 1931; 27 August 1931; 10 September 1931; 1 September 1932; 22 June 1933; 17 August 1933; 7 September 1933; 6 September 1934; 29 August 1935; 5 September 1935; 26 August 1937; 2 September 1937; 25 August 1938; 1 September 1938; 24 August 1939; 22 August 1940; 21 August 1941; 28 August 1941; 20 August 1942; 3 September 1942; 15 August 1946; 21 August 1947; 19 August 1948; 25 August 1949; 17 August 1950; 24 August 1950; 31 August 1950; 16 August 1951; 23 August 1951; 30 August 1951; 21 August 1952; 28 August 1952.

Western Kansas World; 100th Anniversary Edition, 29, March 1979.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located on the northwest corner of the south half of the northwest quarter section of 10, township 12, south range 23. The nominated property is located in tract 10-12-23 in WaKeeney City. The property is located at the junction of Russell Avenue and North Highway 283 in WaKeeney City.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property that is historically associated with the Exhibit Building.