


MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

JUN 25 1987

Site # PE #218



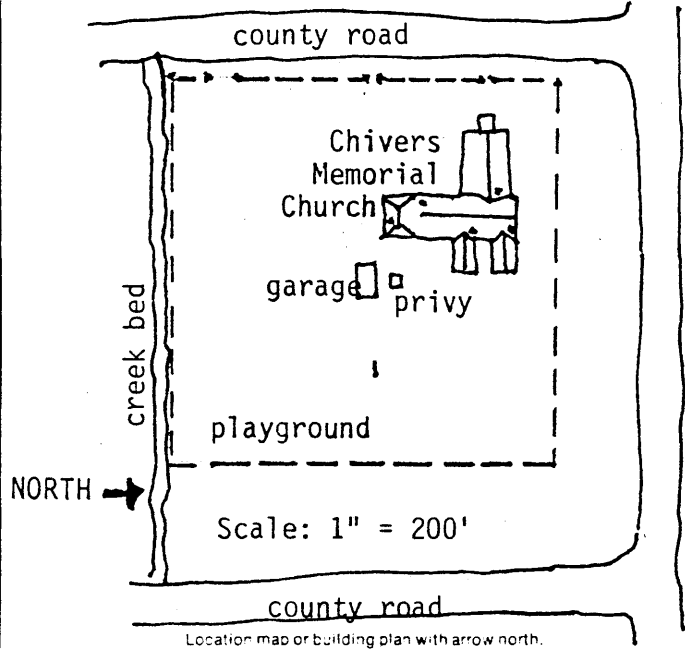
Legal Description: East of the RR tracks, Lodge Grass, Montana

Address: _____

Ownership: Name: National Ministries of American Baptists

private address: Valley Forge, Pennsylvania public

Roll # 14 Frame # 13



Historic Name: Chivers Memorial Church

Common Name: same

Date of Construction: 1927-1928 estimated documented

Architect: unknown

Builder: multiple

Original Owner: Home Mission Society of America

Original Use: church and pastorage

Present Use: same

RESEARCH SOURCES: Note all records consulted to determine dates of construction, original owners, builders, uses, etc.

Title Search: X Tax Records: n/a

Bldg. Permit: n/a Census Records: X

Sewer/Water: n/a Sanborn Maps: X

Directories: n/a Newspapers: X

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Interview with Joe Medicine Crow, Lodge Grass, Montana, February 19, 1987

Piff, David M. "Records of the Crow Indian Agency, 1872-1958: A Preliminary Inventory of the Records at the Seattle Archives and Record Center." Seattle: Rederal Archives and Records Center, n.d.

Noblett, Mrs. John, "'Greasy Grass' Attracted Early Traders," Hardin Tribune Herald, Golden Anniversary Edition, 16 May 1957.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Describe present appearance of structure/site, then contrast and compare that with its original appearance, noting additions, alterations, and changes in materials. Discuss significant architectural features.

The Chivers Memorial Church complex consists of a gable-ended, wood frame church building with a central bell tower over the entry vestibule, a council lodge hall, Sunday-school room, and parsonage - all under one roof. The building is oriented toward the west, and the church portion projects from the main body of the building. The roof is an intersecting gable, with the church on the north-east, the council lodge in the center, the parsonage at the south, and the Sunday school room projecting from the east (rear) elevation. The entire building is sheathed with beveled siding with metal corner coverings. A small water table encircles the building above the concrete foundation. Windows in the parsonage are 6/6 wooden, double hung units and those of the council lodge are 9/9. The double hung windows of the church are fitted with stained glass windows that were installed at the time of construction. Stained glass transoms above the entries to the church and council lodge bear the words "Chivers Memorial" and "Council Lodge", respectively. The bell tower of the church is centrally placed over the entry vestibule. A fence with stone pylons marks the west boundary. Mature cottonwood trees and concrete walks surround the church complex. A small garage with shiplap siding is located to the rear of the church complex, and a three-hole, wood frame privy is situated to the north of the garage. A basketball court and playground with swings, merry-go-round, etc. are included within the boundaries of the church complex.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION: Describe the persons, important events, and/or historical patterns associated with the structure/site and surrounding area.

When the original Baptist Mission complex in Lodge Grass burned to the ground in 1926, Reverend William A. Petzholdt began to travel throughout the western and mid-western states to solicit money for the construction of a new church complex in Lodge Grass. Petzholdt's fund-raising efforts were very successful and \$55,000 was available within a year. Crow members of the Baptist congregation in Lodge Grass purchased approximately 5 acres of land from Mr. White Arm's allotment just outside of the city limits of the town. Volunteer labor was used throughout the building process, under the supervision of George Pease, the grandson of Fellows Pease. Because Crow children were allowed to attend public schools since 1921, there was no need to re-build the mission school. Upon completion, the new mission church was dedicated in the fall of 1928 as the E.E. Chivers Memorial Church. Governor Erickson of Montana was the guest speaker at this ceremony, and White Man Runs Him, one of the old Crow scouts who had served in the Army during the Custer campaign of 1876, gave his name to Dr. Petzholdt, which was a great Indian honor.

The Chivers Memorial Church was considered to be for Native Americans only. A Baptist church for white residents had been built in 1917, also with the assistance of Reverend Petzholdt (see PE #117). The Chivers Memorial Church's council lodge was the largest meeting space in town and was used for high school graduation exercises, town meetings, volleyball matches, banquets, pageants, and weddings. The building served as the primary social and cultural institution for Native American residents of Lodge Grass and the outlying area for over 60 years.

INTEGRITY: Assess the degree to which the structure/site, and surrounding area accurately convey the historical associations of the property.

The Chivers Memorial Church retains a high degree of historic architectural integrity and is virtually unchanged in appearance since its construction in 1927-28. In recent years, plexiglass storm windows were affixed to the exterior of the wood frame, double hung, stained glass windows of the church, thereby rendering the church windows inoperable.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: Justify how the persons, important events, or historical patterns associated with structure/site lend the property significance and/or describe the ways in which the structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular period, building type, or style.

The Chivers Memorial Church complex is significant due to its association with the establishment of Native American cultural institutions in the town of Lodge Grass, Montana. The original Baptist mission complex in Lodge Grass was erected in 1904 and consisted of a log mission church and day school for Crow children. After this complex burned in 1926, the present Chivers Memorial Church was built, with the land and construction labor donated by Crow residents. Chivers Memorial Church is also significant due to its association with Reverend Dr. William A. Petzholdt, the Baptist missionary who came to Lodge Grass in 1904, helped in the solicitation of funds for the replacement church, and was a prominent member of the Lodge Grass community for over 35 years.

In addition to the religious activities that have centered upon the Chivers Memorial Church over the past 60 years, the church has played an important role in the social and cultural life of the Crow residents in the Lodge Grass area. The Council Lodge was built to be a recreational center in addition to being the largest meeting space in the community during the historic period. Volleyball games as well as weddings, town meetings, political rallies, banquets, etc. were held here.

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Patricia Bick

Address: SHPO

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Acreage: less than one

USGS Quad: Lodge Grass, Mont.

1213149201 501 350