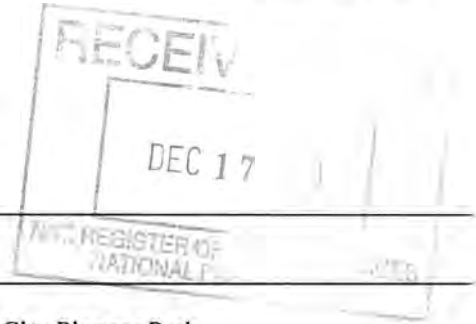


1195

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

other names/site number Barnes County Pioneers Memorial Park Open-Air Theater

2. Location

street & number southwest of the intersection between 5th Street and 8th Avenue NW not for publication N/A

city or town Valley City vicinity X

state North Dakota code ND county Barnes code 003 zip code 58072

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 nationally X statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr. 12-15-10
Signature of certifying official Date
Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr. SHPO
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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 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 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register See continuation sheet.
- other (explain):

Edson H. Beall 2-1-11

for
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

(Property Name)

Amphitheater and WPA Fieldstone Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

(County and State)

Barnes County, North Dakota

(Page 2)

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(s)

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
3	1	objects
3	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: "Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943" (pending MPDF)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Landscape Sub: City park

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Landscape Sub: City park

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Picturesque, WPA-Rustic

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

roof none

walls Stone

other Stone, Concrete

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7 Page 1

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park Amphitheater

Narrative description:

Site description:

The subject of this individual nomination is limited to three features dating from the WPA-era association with the site (1936-1939). Overall, Pioneer Park is one of several dedicated park properties within Valley City, ND. At least ten named parks are identified with pride by local residents, although the principal parks with longstanding historic "presence" in the community are historic City Park (1880s), historic Chautauqua Park (1911), Tourist Park (established 1910s and enhanced during the Depression-era 1930s), and contemporary Veterans Memorial Park (originally dedicated as Northern Pacific Park). Pioneer Park was established in the 1930s to honor the memory of early pioneering settlers in Valley City and surrounding Barnes County. Pioneer Park is a 4.41 acres dedicated park in the northwestern part of Valley City, with the primary park entrance from Fourth Street NW between Eighth and Ninth Avenues NW. The overall park is 640 feet north to south by 300 feet east to west, all within the corporate limits of Valley City.

WPA historic feature 3:

The primary entrance to Pioneer Park is identifiable by a gateway set of four fieldstone, gatepost pillars or "cairns" (with decorative wrought ironwork), all erected in 1936 with local sponsorship under a public works grant from the Works Progress Administration. Reportedly, some sections of fencework that historically defined the park boundaries were removed many years ago to facilitate park maintenance. The gateway stonework consists of four pillars positioned flanking the entrance drive. The two inner pillars are 28-inches square by 7'-4" tall. The two outer cairns are 28-inches square by 4'-8" tall. All the stonework in the entrance gateway is uncoursed, random cobblestones with fairly deep-set mortar. All four pillars are capped with a 3-inch thick concrete pad, topped with a shallow pyramid-shaped concrete top piece set back slightly from the concrete pad below it. Anecdotally, the slender metalwork that fills in between the outer sets of pillars is understood to be relatively modern (within the past 30-years), replacing heavy boards or horizontal log planking that appears in some historic photos of the entrance gateway. There is no discernable indication that the stone pillars were ever surmounted by any type of lighting fixtures or other capping ornament.

The south end of Pioneer Park includes several historical features that were relocated to the park in memory of the pioneers, most notably a frame country school building (the former Heimes School). Two other historic buildings that had been erected on the park land were removed sometime before the 1960s. They included a sod house erected in 1938 and a historic log cabin building relocated to the park site in 1939, and relocated off-site a second time in 1958. Both features were reportedly removed due to extensive deterioration and safety concerns. A small arched bridge crossing a drainage swale near the park entrance is a relatively recent, non-historic feature.

From the entrance gate on the south boundary, the park slopes steeply upward toward the WPA amphitheater (feature 1) that is the main subject of this nomination, located near the park's north boundary. To encourage increased utilization of the park, an outdoor hockey rink was erected within the park about halfway up this hill, placed directly to the south of the amphitheater. Though some re-grading of the original terrain was necessary to form a level spot for the hockey facility, its position some 10-feet below the historic amphitheater allows for this contemporary "active recreation" usage. Though the hockey rink fails to take maximum advantage of the amphitheater as a potential viewing area, the ice rink does not intrude to any significant extent on the historic character and context setting of the amphitheater.

In very recent years, the Parks and Recreation department of city government (charged with finding the most suitable uses of park property for contemporary recreation activities) has been presented with a suggestion that

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7 Page 2

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

the pioneering vision of this park as a public memorial may be incompatible with more active recreational uses. As a familiar historic feature to many community residents, the amphitheater retains both material integrity and associative meanings that are historically and culturally important in honoring the vision of the park's founders in the 1930s. WPA features from the historic period lend to interpretation of the overall park landscape resource and provide insight into the planning and design judgments through which many municipal parks were established and presented to the public as a civic amenity in the 1930s.

*Amphitheater configuration:**WPA historic feature 1:*

The amphitheater is inscribed into the sloping grade near the north boundary of the park. It is most easily accessible "on foot" from Eighth Avenue NW (along the east boundary of the park). The podium area of the amphitheater is defined by a 10-foot square area of broken concrete pavers, each sized about 2-feet square. This platform at the focus of the amphitheater seating exists in a somewhat deteriorated material condition. It shows extensive weathering and deterioration in its material fabric, likely resulting from weathering, erosion at the raised edges, and uneven settlement of the grade around and below the platform.

Starting from the centerpoint of the podium platform, the amphitheater tiered seating deploys radially to the north, with the first tier sized 34-feet in radius. There are a total of nine concentric tiers extending up the hillside with each tier rising 1'-4" from the one below. The lowest four tiers are nearly semicircular, while the upper five tiers of seating are cut back gradually to enable their embedment into the natural hillside. Except for the tiered seating the grade all around the amphitheater is grass lawn, maintained by mowing. The footrest area of the tiered seats appears to have originally been well-drained gravel. In recent times a fine-grained groundcover (spreading clover) has established itself in most parts of the amphitheater. For maintenance reasons that material is being removed at the time of this writing.

The four tiers that complete their semicircular arc terminate in two sets of casual, site-cast concrete steps. Alongside the tiered seating, the steps consist of a comfortably "syncopated" rhythm of a one-foot tread followed by a two-foot tread alongside each three-foot rise in the amphitheater seating. (Thus, each stairstep riser is a gentle 10-inches, making for a very gradual descent on the steps, even by contemporary accessibility standards.) A third set of steps 4-feet wide is placed at the center line of the amphitheater arc, and extends all the way up to the highest point of the amphitheater feature, where it terminates into a 4-inch, site cast concrete curb that directs attention to the uppermost step. The total rise of this center stair is, then, 15-feet to the topmost tier, beyond which is a level area of grade. None of the three sets of steps has a handrail, but their gradual descent and clear visibility minimizes any potential falling hazard. The outer sets of steps are in generally sound condition. The center stairsteps evidence some fairly substantial deterioration in their topside traffic (wear) surface.

Just to the north of the center steps, a single-bottom breaking plow was placed within a fenced enclosure in 1978.¹ Thus, in this location the plow is not treated as an historic feature contributing to interpretation of the amphitheater's period of historic significance. (The plow is addressed in this nomination as a non-contributing feature.)

WPA historic feature 2:

Ten feet further up the hill from the last tier of amphitheater seating is another landscape feature (object) associated with the amphitheater's construction. Stone cobbles have been brought to the site and laid flush with the sloping hillside to form large block letters (approximately 9-feet tall with a "stroke" thickness of roughly 16-inches), spelling out the word "PIONEERS". The cobbles are laid in masonry mortar that appears in a good state of maintenance. This decorative stonework, groundset signage feature has been painted white for greater visibility,

¹ Historian Gordon Iseminger notes that ALL breaking plows were, by definition, single-bottom.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7 Page 3

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

presumably within the period of historic significance. Parks and Recreation maintenance workers have done a commendably careful and painstaking job of maintaining this feature, along with the difficulties of lawn maintenance all around the amphitheater. A flush, ground-set service box is set into the grade near the uppermost seating tier, toward the northeast quadrant of the seating arc.

The amphitheater orients generally toward the south, which would appear to present some solar glare difficulties for daytime performance activities. However this is also a preferred orientation for absorbing the warming heat of the sun on summer evenings and in the cooler spring and fall seasons. Some shade is afforded to the south of the amphitheater by relatively recently established boxelder trees. Other surrounding landscape plant materials appear to be more consistent with the original planting design. Clusters of Black Hills Spruce trees (*Picea glauca densata*) shelter the amphitheater from winds toward the southwest, west edge, and to the northeast. Low cedars (*Thuja occidentalis*) and juniper shrubs (*Juniperus sabina* and *Juniperus chinensis* "maneyi") are planted as clustered beds alongside the west and east stairsteps, appearing to be original to the planting concept.

WPA Concrete and Stonework for the amphitheater:

Random, uncoursed and uncut stonework that forms the amphitheater appears very rough and informal in material character. Heavily-rusticated mortar is recessed well back from the exposed faces of the granite boulders, giving the general appearance of dry-laid rubble stone. Boulders are granite fieldstones, generally no larger than one foot in any dimension. The rustic quality of the work is suggestive of a naturalistic, picturesque design intent associated with many parks and historic site features in all parts of North Dakota. In part, this was a matter of design taste intended to minimize the visual impact of interpretive features built during the 1930s. The naturalistic quality of stonework is also reflective of a material palette that depended on materials being provided by local sponsors, with the cost of labor furnished by federal work relief programs like the WPA.

Each riser is comprised of a 13-inch high stone retaining wall, capped with 3-inch thick, site cast concrete benched seating platforms forming the amphitheater's gently sweeping arcs. The stonework risers are spaced horizontally 2'-10" from one riser to the next. Each concrete bench is 1-foot in depth by 3-inches thickness, extending outward beyond the stonework risers about an inch. The hand-placed concrete work was meticulously formed and hand-finished with half-inch radius on all exposed edges. Allowing for 75-years of weathering in the harsh North Dakota climate, the concrete work and the stonework are in a remarkably sound state of material integrity. Anecdotally, the amphitheater has experienced occasional vandalism and rough wear, but wherever pieces of stonework or concrete have been broken out, some unknown conscientious individual has gathered them and restored them to their original place, such that the amphitheater is materially almost entirely intact.

Distinctive characteristics of National Register properties eligible under Criterion C include:

- use of hand labor and fine craftsmanship in stonework, timber work, or concrete construction,
- use of local building materials and construction methods,
- regional adaptations of architectural styles, including the then-popular picturesque-Rustic, as well as the use of standardized plans for certain property types,
- documentary evidence of work performed as "relief work" by persons employed under one of the New Deal federal programs, or
- documentary evidence of design work or construction supervision that distinguish the work as being associated with an identifiable architect, engineer, or agency.

These conditions of integrity are well-met by the entrance gateway, the amphitheater, and the ground-set "PIONEERS" sign. Overall the park has good material integrity and integrity of setting, feel, and historical associations. The WPA features that are subject of this nomination are materially sound and in generally good condition for an outdoor property 75-years old.

(Property Name)

Amphitheater and WPA Fieldstone Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

(County and State)

Barnes County, North Dakota

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

See 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 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.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Landscape Architecture
- Conservation
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

While the individual features can be demonstrated to be significant based on NRHP criteria, the overall park landscape in which they are situated lacks the overall integrity of setting and design that would justify nominating it as an encompassing historic landscape.

Period of Significance 1936-1939

Significant Dates 1937 work relief construction and dedication date for fieldstone site features

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder work of the Works Progress Administration

Frank Cook: project construction supervisor

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

See continuation sheets.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 1

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

Statement of Significance:

The Depression-era work relief features in Valley City's Pioneer Park are considered in the historical context of Valley City as a progressive community, interested in promoting the prosperity and well-being of its citizens and the residents of surrounding Barnes County. Valley City has long been identifiable in North Dakota as a politically and socially "Progressive" community. Since the city's founding, community leaders actively promoted civic activities including progressive farming practices, agricultural fairs, public schools, a state-chartered Normal School, bands and a music academy, the Chautauqua lecture circuit, churches, temperance groups, lodges and fraternal organizations, business associations, and public utilities, Progressive politics, early hospitals and (perhaps with less public pride than for the other enterprises) a necessary county poor farm.

Three features in Pioneer Park are associated with local response to unemployment and the economic collapse of the 1930s. They are historically significant under National Register criterion "A" insofar as they reflect a prevalent attitude about municipal parks as important features of Progressive community and civility as local social concerns during the Depression years. The features associated with WPA work relief construction further reflect historical events associated with local and federal response to unemployment. The three features are also significant under National Register criterion "C" because of their distinctive architectural style, materials, and labor-intensive method of construction. While the individual features can be demonstrated to be significant based on NRHP criteria, the overall park landscape in which they are situated lacks the overall integrity of setting and design that would justify nominating it as an encompassing historic landscape, and no work beyond the three features can be demonstrated as having been connected with work-relief design or implementation.

Two main city parks ("City Park" and "Chautauqua Park") were already well-established civic and recreational features in Valley City before Pioneer Park was ever contemplated. Pioneer Park was first proposed in the mid-1930s on land that had previously been a somewhat blighted part of the city landscape. Local civic leaders associated with the Pioneers Club and the Pioneer Daughters were seeking a venue to celebrate the heritage of founding families and their role in establishing successful agriculture and urban culture in Barnes County from the Dakota Territorial Period onward. A park location was identified on the northwest edge of the community, adjacent to the place where U.S. Highway 10 (the historic "Red Trail") entered Valley City from the west. The connection with historic Highway 10 is not merely incidental. Soon after the park's dedication, the Greater North Dakota Association (GNDA) sought to promote tourism by disseminating literature from a cluster of modest historic buildings that were relocated to the southwest corner of the park. Pioneer Park was also identified as bearing relationship to Valley City's public tourist camp, as enhancements and attractions for the traveling public. The amphitheater is referenced in *North Dakota: A Guide to the Northern Prairie State*, an important depression-era publication of the Federal Writers Project.¹

Pioneer Park took shape on a parcel of land that had served a variety of purposes throughout the town's history. Block 15 of B.W. Benson's Addition to Valley City -- known since 1937 as "Barnes County Memorial Pioneer Park" -- was originally part of a Northern Pacific railroad land grant. Investor B. W. Benson established a real estate speculation business in 1879, and the site of this park was one of his early business successes. His

¹ Schlasinger, Ethyl. *North Dakota: A Guide to the Northern Prairie State*. [1990 reprint edition by the State Historical Society of North Dakota, as *The WPA Guide to 1930s North Dakota*]. "Tour 8", p.281.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 2**Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota**

holdings included town and rural properties in Barnes, Lamoure, Stutsman, Griggs and Trail Counties. Benson was a vice president of the First National Bank, a member of the Territorial House of Representatives, director of the Barnes County Agricultural and Mechanical Association, one of the committee involved with the incorporation of the city of Valley City, a Barnes County Commissioner, President of the Hillside Cemetery Association, and a member of the school board.

Mr. Benson bought the southwest quarter of Section 21 in Township 140 North Range 40 West on May 22, 1880, from the Northern Pacific Railroad for the sum of \$1,000. In 1881 he platted this acreage as "B.W. Benson's Addition to Valley City." According to that plat, all of Block 15 and part of Block 10 was the site of the Valley City Brick and Tile Company, a venture that Mr. Benson started with the help of Walter F. Jones in the spring of 1881. The company was a manufacturer of pressed brick and sewer tile. On the first day of operations on June 15, 1881 the brick enterprise consisted of an iron brick machine powered by a "Minnesota Giant" steam engine, a kiln, several large sheds to house the machinery and operations, and a stable for the accommodation of the teams used in the business. Using local clay, in the beginning months the brick machine molded just 6 bricks at a time (one "stroke"). By September 1881, at its peak of production the brickyard reportedly turned out 20-25,000 brick per day that were marketed as "white as snow".²

The Valley City Brick & Tile Company legally incorporated on January 10, 1882, with B.W. Benson as President. By June, the company employed thirty men and was contemplating the purchase of another machine. Orders for brick were received from Jamestown, Tower City, New Buffalo, Mayville, Casselton, Mapleton and Fargo. An artesian well was dug to supply water to the brick works. Mr. Benson sold the property (land) to the corporation on October 6, 1882. Despite its successful beginnings, on October 22, 1895 the property of the Valley City Brick & Tile Company was foreclosed upon by the Farmers & Merchants Bank of Valley City, which held the \$2,500 mortgage on the property.

On April 14, 1897, the bank transferred ownership of the brickyard property to Barnes County, which held the land in a generally disused condition for the next 38 years. For a time (from 1883 to 1908), a two-story frame building on the site served as the residential feature of the Barnes County poor farm. The house was relocated from the poor farm to a different site in 1909. Barnes County transferred the derelict poor farm property to the Valley City Parks Department on December 14, 1935.

Pioneer Park was the location of an important Works Project Administration (WPA) project that encompassed all three features that are the subject of this nomination; the entry gates, the amphitheater, and the ground-set cobblestone signage feature that bears the message "PIONEERS". In 1936, with the cooperation of the federal government, the Barnes County Commission, the City of Valley City and its park board; the Barnes County Pioneer Club sponsored and managed the construction of the park, located along Highway 10, also known as the Red Trail or National Parks Highway. On September 30, 1937, the park was dedicated in commemoration of the pioneers of Barnes County and was officially called the Barnes County Pioneer Memorial Park. The dedication ceremony accorded an opportunity for local speakers to call attention to their notion of the park as a place to celebrate the pioneering spirit as well as reflecting upon the past history of the

² *Valley City Times-Record*. (September 28, 1881):1. This anecdote was recounted at the park's dedication and reprinted in later editions of the *Times-Record* newspaper.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 3

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

park site and a renewed vision for its future. These were timely and appropriate affirmations of commitment and civic optimism during the dark years of the Depression.

As one of the most well-known work relief agencies of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, WPA was established in 1935 to provide immediate jobs in public works. Under the leadership and advocacy of its national director, Harry L. Hopkins, the WPA encouraged projects that contributed to the national wealth in the form of civic and infrastructural improvements.

Each of these civic improvements represents an increase in our national wealth, and in the day-to-day pleasure or comfort of many people. . . . The Federal Government appealed to local officials everywhere to plan and put forward essential civic improvements and services which could employ their own local unemployed who were certified by local agencies as in need. Local officials rallied to this appeal, carefully planning widely varied, useful projects in their communities to meet the wide variety of skill and experience among the unemployed. The WPA paid the wages of the workers; local money paid most of the cost of materials. . . . Literally thousands of local officials, of many political faiths, have praised the workmanship on these projects. Hundreds of thousands of WPA workers have returned to private industry, able to hold their old jobs because the Works Program kept them from going rusty and losing hope.³

The targeted investment in public infrastructure served several simultaneous purposes, not the least of which was the pride it instilled on the part of workers whose labors and talents were valued as meaningful contributions to their community. Together with the delightfully proportioned amphitheater, the entry gates on the south end of the property, and the unusual sign at the north end of the park were all constructed as part of this project. The stone masonry was typical of WPA projects. WPA grant-supported projects required a substantial material contribution by local sponsors (in this instance primarily in the form of fieldstones brought in from surrounding agricultural lands). The federal contribution was, then, targeted primarily to labor for unemployed person, generally working at the established rate of \$10.40 per week.

Other incidental, extant features of the park, though historic, are not associated with the federal work relief initiatives and thus are not regarded as contributing features for the purposes of this nomination. The old school building located in the park was previously known as the Heimes School of Hobart (rural) School District No. 10. When it was replaced by a new building in 1932, the old Heimes School was bought by Frank P. Cook. On June 20, 1935, a special meeting of the Barnes County Pioneer Club was held to discuss the purchase of the building from Mr. Cook. Frank Cook, President of the Pioneers Club and one of the first pupils of the original Heimes School, offered the building to the club for the original purchase price of \$51. It was agreed to purchase the building and move it to the park location. It cost \$80 to have the building moved and an additional \$5.21 for the privilege of crossing the Northern Pacific Railroad tracks. The Pioneer Club used the school building as their meeting place for years. (It now serves as warming house for the skating rink during the winter months.) Rex Beck of Buffalo donated the breaking plow to Pioneer Park in August of 1978. It was mounted in the area directly behind the amphitheater.

A sod house was constructed on park property, also under the direction of Frank Cook of the Pioneer Club. This construction took place in 1938. The sod house was later dismantled, and its location is unknown. In 1939, Mrs. Mina Stevens Olson, a member of the Pioneer Daughters donated a log cabin in memory of her

³ WPA, "Work Pays America - 1937 Works Progress Administration Brochure", (accessed online May 13, 2010 at web site), <http://www.gjenvick.com/WPA/1937-02-WorkPaysAmerica.html>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 4

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

parents, Steven and Maria Stevens, to stand in Pioneer Park as a symbol of the faith, courage and fortitude of the founders of this country. Steven Stevens, who built the log cabin himself, was an early pioneer who homesteaded south of Valley City on the Kathryn Road in 1878. The dedication was held on September 23, 1939, in conjunction with Valley City's Golden Jubilee Celebration. Unfortunately, the building was allowed to deteriorate and the city had it condemned. In order to save the building, Melvin Olson, son of Mina Olson, moved the cabin from the park to his property in 1958.

Municipal Park Improvements during the Great Depression

Social and recreational facilities like the Pioneer Park amphitheater are historically significant for their association with the political, cultural, and economic impact of the Great Depression. Properties of this kind also afford insight into the subsequent development of federal relief programs that enabled their construction. Social and recreational facilities often provided the focus for the social, civic, cultural, and recreational activities within a particular community, but also as an amenity for the touring public. Their development was a response to a perceived need for social and recreational activities as a result of the impact of the automobile and a growing interest in travel and tourism.

In the context of North Dakota, social and recreational features like the amphitheater are often architecturally significant as outstanding examples of the use of native building materials in the construction process. Comparable examples include significant examples of the Rustic Style as well as finely crafted masonry construction. Parks, waysides, and scenic overlooks are often significant for incorporating the principles of landscape architecture into the design process in an attempt to achieve non-intrusive and environmentally sensitive development. The amphitheater meets criteria suggested by a pending National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) titled, "North Dakota Depression-Era Work Relief Construction, 1931-1943".

1. The amphitheater was financed and constructed (wholly or in part) by the Federal government under the auspices of one of the federal relief programs that carried out construction, engineering and/or conservation efforts in North Dakota. In this instance, the implementing agency was the Works Progress Administration. Federal funds were utilized for materials, labor, and supervision of the project, locally sponsored by the Barnes County Pioneers Club and the Valley City Parks Department.
2. Design and construction were accomplished within the era of the Great Depression, notably in the years 1935 to 1937. Construction was substantially completed well before the end date of the MPDF context (prior to 1943).
3. The amphitheater is locally significant as a distinctive architectural type, in terms of the vision it embodies for a system of municipal parks as civic amenities, and in terms of the work-relief employment opportunities it afforded during the Depression. Statewide, the amphitheater represents the only known example in the state of this particular property sub-type within a general property type, although there are other instances of bandshells and open-air performance venues.
4. A building or structure constructed as part of a larger complex (such as this municipal park) would not be considered eligible unless the original landscape design, spatial and functional relationships remain intact. These criteria are satisfied in the instance of the amphitheater and park entrance gateway. Other features of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 5

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

park, and the overall park layout, do not reflect the period of historic significance, nor can they be demonstrated to reflect design or implementation of the park under any work relief initiative.

5. A Social or Recreational Facility should possess integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association, and should be without major alterations. Original materials and prominent features should remain intact, and any alterations should be modest in scale without impacting or obscuring major facades, elements, or design features. A building or structure should represent new construction rather than an additional or expansion. Again, in the instance of the amphitheater, all these criteria are satisfied.

Planning, construction, and dedication of the Pioneer Park amphitheater

Social and recreational amenities were among the most prevalent property types of Depression-era relief construction in North Dakota. Based on the idea of making cultural amenities more enjoyable and publicly accessible, parks, campgrounds and picnic grounds were constructed throughout North Dakota. Construction and improvement projects were funded through several federal relief programs and resulted in the development and improvement of numerous parks, camp and picnic grounds in all parts of the state. A large number of these projects were funded through the WPA. During the 1930s, recreational amenities were regarded as civic investments that could potentially help compensate for public frustration and physical suffering in an exceptionally adverse environmental circumstance. In various communities around the state of North Dakota, the WPA alone was responsible for building or improving 10 municipal parks, 30 playgrounds and athletic fields, and 10 swimming pools.

In keeping with the emphasis on nature for parks and recreational features, the amphitheater reflects a picturesque "rustic" vocabulary of architectural design (sometimes referred to as "WPA-Rustic"). The use of native building materials, such as fieldstone and cobblestones, was common. WPA funding paid for the development of a variety of park amenities, and for construction of the impressive native stone amphitheater (currently somewhat endangered by neglect) in Valley City's Pioneer Park. The labor-making aspect of the stonework betrays a public emphasis on hand labor and hard work as virtues for relief employment.

Planning for the amphitheater and entrance gates was initiated in December of 1935, with a request from the Barnes County Pioneers Club to the Valley City Park Board for funds to pay "for gasoline to be used in the trucks furnished by the City, on the WPA project at the Corner of 7th Street and 13th Avenue, which is being made into a memorial park for the Pioneers." An application for a small WPA grant was made to the federal government in the early spring of 1936, ostensibly for up to \$10,000 to cover the labor costs of the park improvements. Stones were gathered and hauled to the project site in April 1936, and construction of the amphitheater proceeded in earnest through the month of May. Construction labor for the amphitheater was supervised by Mr. Frank Cook, on behalf of the Pioneers Club.

The amphitheater and WPA park improvements were publicly dedicated on September 30, 1937. Mr. Alvin L. Arneson, Assistant Director of the North Dakota WPA was in attendance. An October 1, 1937 article in the *Valley City Times-Record* commemorated this civic and social event, and gives an excellent overview of the public pride in infrastructural improvements during the Depression:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 6

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

*"D.W. Clark Accepts Pioneer Park In Behalf Of Valley City Park Board
Appropriate Program Given at Dedication Ceremonies Yesterday" [quoted at length from the Valley City Times-Record]*

"Pledging the best efforts of the city park board to see that the new addition to the city park system serves the purpose for which it was created, D.W. Clark, president of the board since it was instituted in 1918, accepted the picturesque Pioneer Park at dedication ceremonies in the park's open-air theater Thursday afternoon. Selections by the municipal band, directed by A.L. Fromke, opened the program, followed by the invocation by Dr. J.F.L. Bohnhoff. An excellent address was made by Mayor Fred J. Frederickson and appropriate talks were given by Alvin L. Arneson, WPA director, Frank Cook and Mrs. R.C. McGee, after which Mr. Clark made his acceptance speech. The band closed the program with the National Anthem.

"A true pioneer of Valley City, having resided here since 1881 he [D.W. Clark] praised the work of those responsible for the new park addition and recalled many historical facts in the development of Valley City's park system." Addressing the audience he [Mr. Clark] said:

Mr. Arneson, representing the United States government and its whole hearted generosity in providing the necessary financial support of this great enterprise; Fred J. Frederickson, our popular mayor, whose untiring efforts brought this splendid project to a successful conclusion; Mrs. R.C. McGee, secretary of our Pioneer Club, who always has the best interest of our club at heart; Mr. Frank Cook, president of the Barnes County Pioneer Club, who so unselfishly devoted so much of this time and energy towards carrying on the work and watching every little detail during its construction; all pioneers; and fellow citizens:

It is with great pleasure that we are gathered together at this time to dedicate, in memory of our early pioneers, this lovely park. It seems but a few weeks ago that the commissioners of Barnes county offered to donate Block 15, B.W. Benson's addition to the city of Valley City, to the Valley City Park Board for park purposes. The very thought of making a park of this particular block seemed at first thought to be ridiculous. As a matter of fact it was the most unsightly, the most repulsive block of land to be found anywhere within the confines of the city of Valley City. A very poor approach to a handsome little city like ours.⁴

The early pioneers came here from nearly every corner of the globe. They came here to find homes. After building their homes they built school houses for their children. It is a noted fact that North Dakota has less illiterates than any other state in the union, and well it might. Our great state may well be proud of this high class intellectuality and morality of our early settlers. They came to us from Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany and many other countries; from Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. The finest bunch of people that ever came to any country. Is it any wonder that schools were built for the children.

In the southwest corner of this beautiful park stands one of the first school houses ever erected in Barnes county. In this school our worthy president, Mr. Frank Cook, learned his A B C's, as did the Heimes boys and girls, the Starkes, the Messners, the Stacks, the Passmels, and many others. It stands here today as a monument in memory of these fine people, the early settlers of Barnes county.

We take great pleasure in seeing this wonderful new Pioneer Park and appreciate the work of all who have helped to complete it. It is a worthy memorial to the pioneers.

The Valley City park board was ushered into existence in the spring of 1918, when our old friend, I.J. Moe, was mayor. Its officers being T.H. McFarland, Karl J. Olsen, C.E. Moore, L.E. Hedstrum and your humble servant (D.W. Clark). At its first meeting I was elected president, and have continued to serve in that capacity ever since.

I am pleased to say this board has acquired and improved many very attractive locations. Our first purchase was

⁴ The Park site was, effectively, the gateway entrance into the community of Valley City from the west along the route of U.S. Highway 10, the popularized "Red Trail".

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 7

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

our Chautauqua grounds, with its splendid auditorium with a seating capacity of about three thousand people. We have added to this a very attractive and comfortable bungalow for the home for our caretaker, a very attractive and commodious dining hall, a swimming pool, and other attractive and necessary adjuncts.

Our city park is a beauty spot, and with its new swimming pool and the finest band shell to be found anywhere in the state, play grounds, tennis and horse shoe courts, picnic ground, and other worthwhile attractions, makes a very attractive place, and one we feel proud of.

Our steam heated, electric lighted tourist camp has proven to be a very popular resort to the many tourists passing through our city. We also have acquired the beautiful piece of property on the right of way of the Northern Pacific railroad.

As president of the Park Board, I gratefully accept this fine gift with thanks to all those who have in any way assisted in its construction. I assure you that I take great pleasure to be the one to receive this fine park, and pledge the best efforts of the Park Board to take care of Pioneer Park and see that it serves the purpose for which it was created.

The very notion of an open-air amphitheater may seem a bit surprising in a moderately sized North Dakota community. The amphitheater in Pioneer Park is the only example of such a feature known to date from the 1930s. In the context of the Great Depression and the increasing federal role in promoting community enhancements, construction of an amphitheater bears further consideration. The concept appears to have originated with the Pioneers Club as local sponsors. The amphitheater is an architectural feature type (somewhere between a "building" and a "landscape") that has historical associations with oratory and democratic values in classical Greece, and with public ceremony and civic commemorations in Imperial Rome. Placing an orator or performer on a central "stage" and surrounding them with an audience seated on tiers that rise gently up the hillside is a decidedly "civic" form of ceremony. In the context of the 1930s this may be seen as an affirmation of civic and democratic *vox populi* (the People's voice). As a focal architectural feature of the park, the amphitheater played to the Progressive virtues of public discourse and rhetorical debate.

Who comprised the Pioneers Club, and what were their civic objectives? Valley City historian Rebecca Heise notes that the Barnes County Pioneers Club included members of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Pioneer Daughters, and the Federation of Women's Clubs. Membership rosters included men and women members of equal status, and members from a wide range of immigrant and ethnic backgrounds. The unusual "civic" purposes of an amphitheater for public oratory begs the question, "who spoke or performed there?" Very little is recorded in the local press about events held in the amphitheater, although Pioneer Park seems to have remained popular as a recreational gathering place. Valley City resident Sharon Clancy has gathered recollections from her sisters about operatic performances staged in the amphitheater, as well as high school choir and band concerts. She also recalls there being occasional pageants and historical re-enactments that celebrated the efforts and memory of Barnes County's early pioneering families and the hardships they experienced.⁵

Pioneer Park's diminutive, but nonetheless impressive amphitheater has been characterized as historically "little-used" within the Valley City park system. In a passing conversation at the Barnes County Historical Society museum, former Valley City resident Bill Lydell reminisced with the author of this nomination about having attended numerous band performances at the amphitheater in the 1940s and 50s. He also recalled that Hires Root Beer was available from one of the small temporary buildings in the southwest corner of the park.⁶ An attempt by the Pioneers Club to raise funds for a commissioned statue to the pioneer spirit was unsuccessful in raising the necessary

⁵ Sharon Clancy. Correspondence with Steve Martens, October 7, 2010.

⁶ William "Bill" Lydell, conversation with Steve Martens at the Barnes County Historical Society museum, October 1, 2010.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 8

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

subscription funds.⁷ Even before the amphitheater's dedication, an article in the May 1937 *Valley City Times-Record* advocated "pushing people to use it." Dr. J.H. Shepperd, president of the North Dakota Agricultural College in Fargo, praised the idea of an annual festival to commemorate the importance of Barnes County's agricultural pioneers. Perhaps the civic aspiration of the pioneering sponsors exceeded the sustaining power of the landscape setting.

The National Register process does not require disclosure of current plans for the care and treatment of an historic property, but it is worth acknowledging that there are currently competing visions for stewardship of the amphitheater. Recent questions have been raised by the Parks and Recreation department and their insurance underwriter about the safety, maintainability, and accessibility of the amphitheater's tiered seating.⁸ One rather ill-considered proposition from a group of university design students suggested that a more active recreational use, such as a sliding hill, might justify demolition of the historic amphitheater. Yet a number of spirited interactions with longtime local residents and an article in the *Valley City Times-Record* demonstrate that there remains a significant amount of public care and concern over preservation of these features associated with North Dakota's history.⁹

The three Pioneer Park features associated with Depression-era relief construction work in Valley City are locally significant based on historic events of economic revival and civic investment in the well-being of unemployed persons and the traveling public. The park reflects a pattern of commitment to parks as an important feature of civic improvement and Progressive values. The amphitheater "PIONEERS" sign, and park entrance gates are significant under National Register criterion "C" as representative examples of "picturesque-Rustic" architectural design promoted on many WPA projects in North Dakota. The amphitheater, in particular, has statewide significance as an example of a style and method of construction associated with the only known feature of its type and purpose in North Dakota. Though comparable to other historic resources associated with social and recreational usage, the amphitheater is of singular "archetypal" importance in celebrating the civic values of work relief and community gathering.

⁷ There was a well-documented fund raising effort, seeking donor funds for a commissioned statue by artist Paul Fjelde, entitled "The Little Old Sod Shanty on the Claim", but the project never proceeded beyond the "maquette" phase.

⁸ It would be understandably difficult for readers of this nomination to comprehend how a gently-tiered open-air theater presents any greater hazard than a hockey rink or a sliding hill. Local pride and expressed interest in the amphitheater suggest that there is even grassroots financial support for a more balanced plan that would rehabilitate the modest deterioration of the amphitheater's stonework, which is fundamentally in very sound condition with a high degree of material integrity and integrity of historic setting.

⁹ See, "Restoration of Pioneer Park amphitheater considered", in *Valley City Times-Record*, (September 23, 2010):1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

See 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: Barnes County Historical Society; Valley City, ND**10. Geographical Data****Acreege of Property** 0.52 acre portions of a 4.41 acre parcel**UTM References; NAD 27** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

14	575 140	5 197 460	Centerpoint of stone WPA feature (amphitheater object 1)
Zone	Easting	Northing	
14	575 135	5 197 290	Centerpoint of stone WPA feature (entrance gateway object 3)
Zone	Easting	Northing	

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See continuation sheets.

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheets.

11. Form Prepared By**name/title:** Steve C. Martens; Architectural Historiansteve.martens@ndsu.edu

with substantial research assistance from Wes Anderson and Rebecca Heise

organization: for the Barnes County Historical Society**date:** December 10, 2010**street & number:** 315 Central Avenue North**telephone:** 701.845.0966**city or town:** Valley City**state:** ND **zip code:** 58072**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

See Continuation Sheets

Maps:

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

Photographs 1-10:

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Property Owner

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

name: Valley City Parks and Recreation Department; Tyler Jacobsen, Director
City of Valley City**street & number:** 140 Fourth Street SW**telephone:** 701.845.3294**city or town:** Valley City**state:** ND **zip code:** 58072-3311

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 1

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

9. Major Bibliographic References

- Bakken, Gordon Morris. *Surviving the North Dakota Depression*. Pasadena, CA: Wood & Jones, 1992.
- Busching, Lowell. Oral interview at the Barnes County Historical Society, Valley City, ND; August 30, 2010.
- Carr, Ethan. *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture & the National Park Service*. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press; 1998.
- Clancy, Sharon. Correspondence with Steve Martens; October 7, 2010.
- "D.W. Clark Accepts Pioneer Park on Behalf of Valley City Park Board," in *Valley City Times-Record*; October 1, 1937.
(Transcription provided by Wes Anderson, Barnes County Historical Society, June 16, 2010.)
- Federal Works Agency; *Final Report on the WPA Program 1935-43*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946.
- Flynn, Kathryn A. and Anna Eleanor Roosevelt. *The New Deal: a 75th Anniversary Celebration*. Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2008.
- Good, Albert H. "Park and Recreation Structures, Part III". Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938.
- Hopkins, Harry L. *Spending to Save, the Complete Story of Relief*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1936.
- Howard, Donald S. *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943.
- Martens, Steve C. "Depression-Era Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943". National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form; (2010).
- McClelland, Linda Flint. *Building the National Parks*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- McClelland, Linda Flint. *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service; 1916 to 1942*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1993.
- MacMahon, Arthur W., John D. Millett and Gladys Ogden. *The Administration of Federal Work Relief*. New York: DaCapo Press; 1971. [reprint of Chicago: Regional WPA Office; "1941 Public Administration Service Bulletin".]
- Meinig, D.W. (ed.), et al. *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. New York: Oxford University Press; 1979.
- "Records of the Barnes County Pioneer Club, April 1936 to December 1942." Topic research file excerpts from official ledgers and record books, provided by Rebecca Heise at the Barnes County Historical Society, Valley City, ND; August 30, 2010.
- Robinson, Elwyn B. *History of North Dakota*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966.
- Taylor, Nick. *American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA*. New York: Bantam Dell, 2008.
- Tweed, William C., and Laura E. Soulliere and Henry G. Law. *National Park Service Rustic Architecture, 1916-1942*. San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Regional Office of Cultural Resource Management, 1977.
- Tweton, D. Jerome, and Theodore B. Jelliff. *North Dakota: The Heritage of a People*. Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1976.
- Tweton, D. Jerome and Daniel F. Rylance. *The Years of Despair: North Dakota and the Depression*. Grand Forks: University of North Dakota Press, 1973.
- Valley City People's Opinion* newspaper, 1935-1940 excerpts; microfilm accessed at State Historical Society of ND; Bismarck.
- WPA Federal Writers Project. *The WPA Guide to 1930s North Dakota*. Bismarck: State Historical Society of ND; (1990 reprint).
- Works Progress Administration. *WPA Accomplishments; 1935-39*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940.
- Works Progress Administration. *Inventory: An Appraisal of Results of the Works Progress Administration*. Washington, DC: Superintendent of Documents, 1938.
- Works Progress Administration. "WPA and Relief Project Files". NARA Records Group 69, Microfilm.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 1

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

10. Geographical Data.

Acreage of property:

An area 150'-0" north-south by 150'-0" east-west in the northeast part of Pioneer Park (features 1 and 2); consisting of 0.52-acres; (0.18 ha) within a 4.41-acre dedicated city park 640-feet by 300-feet (192,000 sf); and an area 20'-0" x 100'-0" at the midpoint of the south boundary of Pioneers Park (feature 3); consisting of 200-square feet.

UTM References (NAD 27):

14	575 140	5 197 460	Amphitheater (Feature 1) and PIONEERS sign (Feature 2)
Zone	Easting	Northing	

14	575 135	5 197 290	Centerpoint of entrance gate posts (Feature 3)
Zone	Easting	Northing	

Verbal boundary description:

Features 1 and 2: Beginning at the northeast-most corner of the parcel legally platted as Pioneers Park, consisting of a 4.41-acre city park within the City of Valley City, North Dakota, beginning from the edge of street right-of-way intersections between 5th Street NW and 8th Avenue NW, proceed south along the park boundary 150-feet, thence west 150-feet, thence north 150-feet to the park northern boundary, thence east 150-feet to the point of origination.

Feature 3: Beginning at the centerpoint of the south park boundary of Pioneers Park in the City of Valley City, North Dakota (on the street right-of-way for 4th Street NW) proceed west 50-feet, thence north 20-feet, thence east 100-feet, thence south 20-feet, thence west 50-feet along the park boundary to the point of origination.

Boundary justification:

The two discontinuous parcel boundaries encompass all areas and extant features (three contributing features) historically associated with documented Depression-era work relief construction activities in Barnes County Pioneers Park, Valley City North Dakota.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional documentation Page 1
Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

Photo caption/identifier continuation sheet:

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
5. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneerPark_0623.tif (BW digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; entrance gateway to Pioneer Park
Photographer facing north
Photo number 1

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
6. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0634.jpg (BW digital JPEG image)
6. Subject description; west half of amphitheater facing "PIONEERS" sign
Photographer facing north
Photo number 2

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
7. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0646.tif (BW digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; letter "R", typical ground-set stone letter in "PIONEERS" sign
Photographer facing north
Photo number 3

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
8. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0651.tif (BW digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; sweep of amphitheater tiered seating
Photographer facing northwest
Photo number 4

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
9. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0638.tif (BW digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; stonework on amphitheater tiered risers
Photographer facing northwest
Photo number 5

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional documentation Page 2
Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
10. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0637.tif (BW digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; detail of tiered risers and east stairsteps at amphitheater
Photographer facing north
Photo number 6

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
11. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0640.tif (color digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description;
Photographer facing west
Photo number 7

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: June 16, 2010
12. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_VCPioneersPark_0641.tif (color digital TIFF image)
6. Subject description; detail of upper fieldstone risers with concrete seating cap
Photographer facing northwest
Photo number 8

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: George
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
13. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_Dutton VAPPC_1005.jpg (color digital JPEG image)
6. Subject description; southeast terminus of amphitheater sweep showing stairsteps
Photographer facing east
Photo number 9

1. **Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park**
2. Barnes County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: George Dutton
4. Photo date: October 21, 2009
14. State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_BA_Dutton VCPA_1004.jpg (color digital JPEG image)
6. Subject description; amphitheater platform foreground, with "PIONEERS" sign and hill beyond
Photographer facing north
Photo number 10

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 3

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

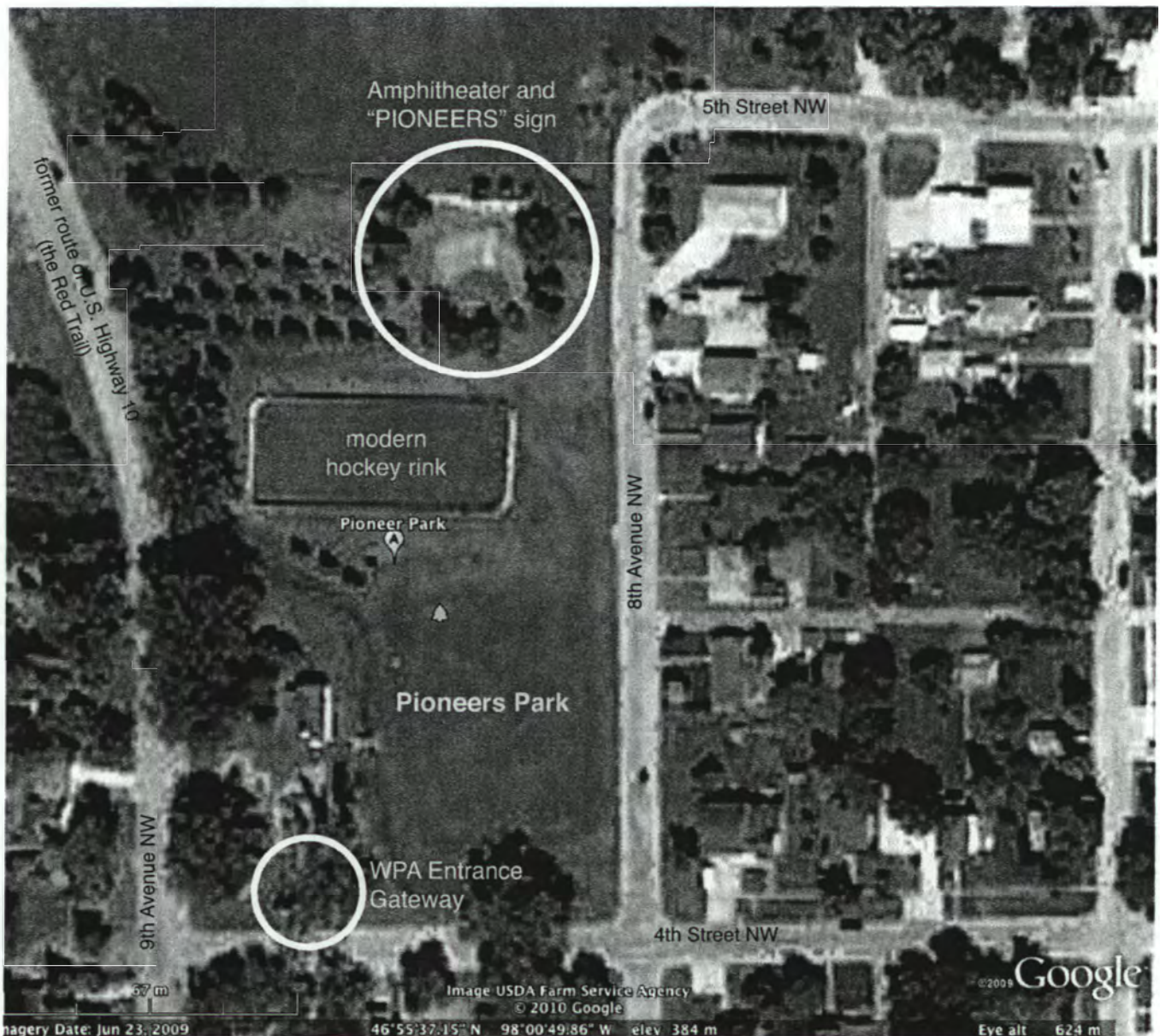


Fig. 1: Aerial photo locational map for Valley City Pioneers Park Amphitheater site; modified from *Google Earth*

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 4

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

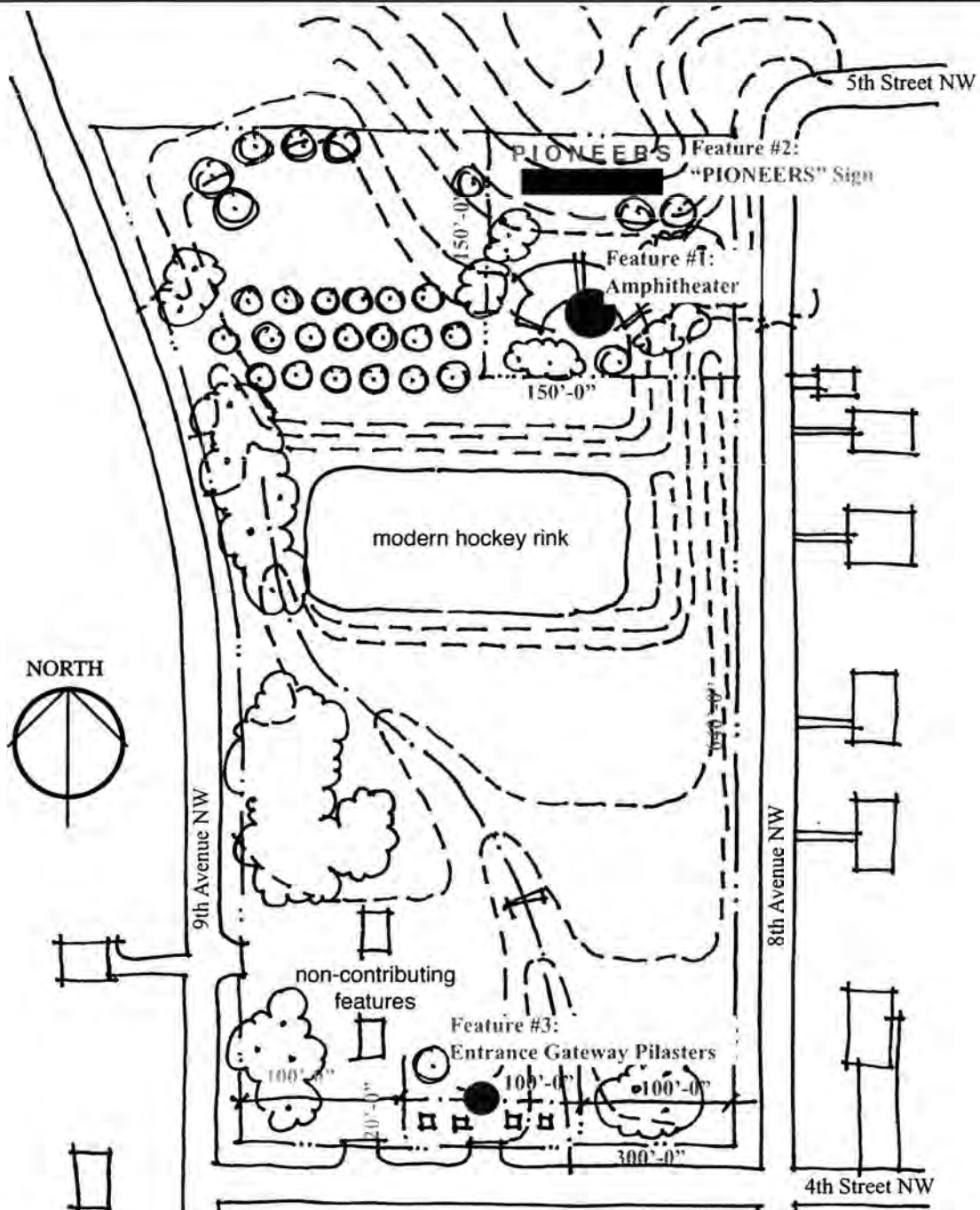


Fig. 2: Sketch map diagram of Valley City Pioneer Park Amphitheater site; modified from Google Earth aerial photo

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 5

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

PIONEERS

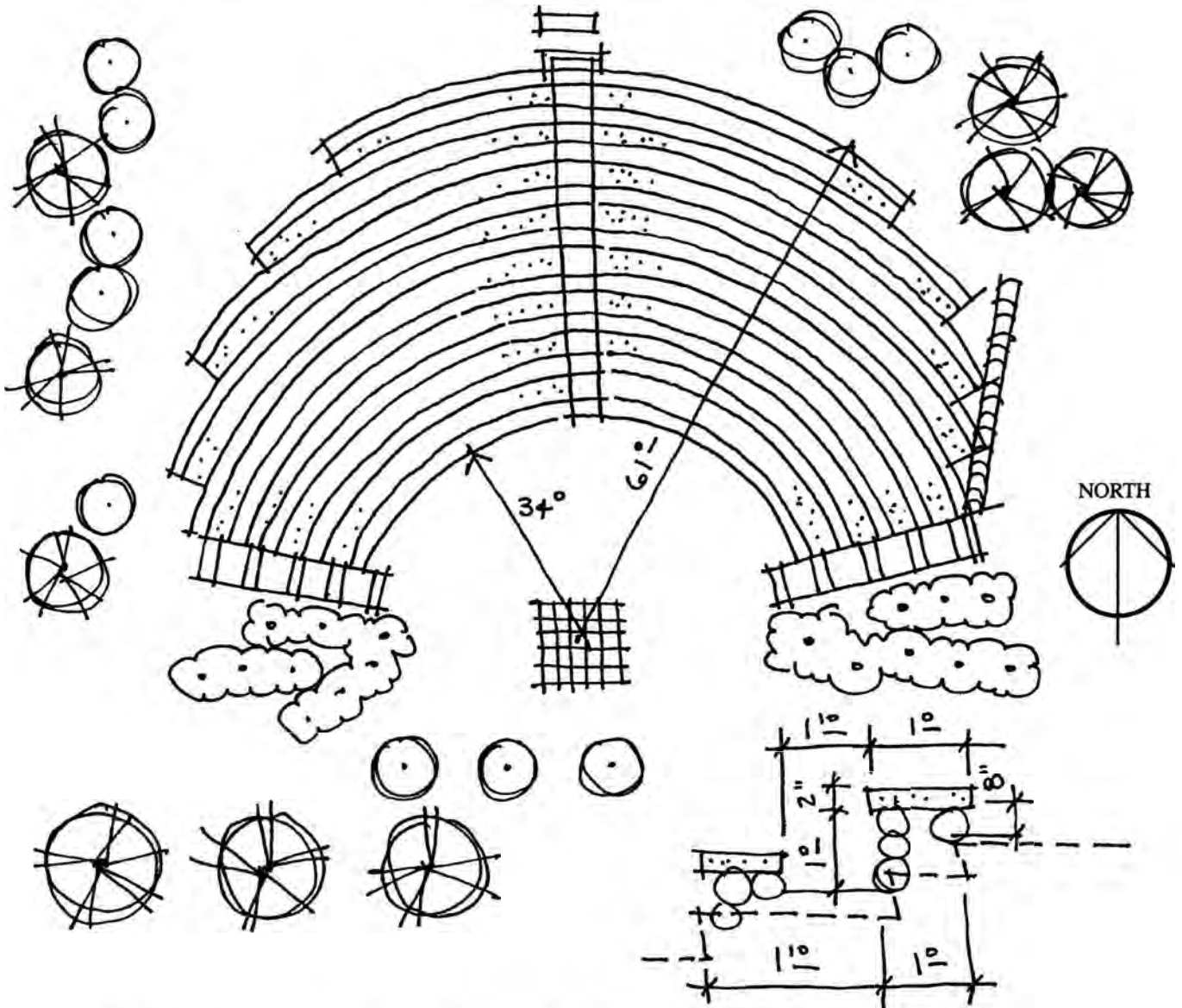


Fig. 3: Sketch map diagram of Valley City Pioneer Park Amphitheater feature

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 6

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota



Pioneer Daughters — June 1941. Top Row, Left to Right: Hilma Olson Lybeck, Evelyn Monson Melhouse, Gertrude Bergan, Marie Ramseth Brown, Ida Moe Berger, Zoa Wylie Hamilton, Julia Myhre Seanson, Julia Ramseth Peake, Unknown, Sally Krug, Kathleen Sheehan Korsmo, Esther Emery Martin, Eleanor Smith, Oleanna Opperud Evenson, Hannel Smith Kenly, Jennie Wedin Westergaard, Anna Larson, Mary Winkler Heiling, Mary Loendorf Gray, Bessie Marsh Grasswick. Second Row: Hazel Belle Nielsen, Myrtle Bjerke Monson, Sophie Framer Passmel, Frances Starke Clancy, Clara Huber Zaun, Lavina Crandell Bignall, Bina Brady Kelly, Margaret Seward Lavey, Nettle Tolstad Climie, Anna Lee Hogstad, Mae Stee Sad, Bertina Barden Heckel, Maude Miller McIssac, Daisy McPherson Noxon, Nettle Nelson, Ruth Cooper Ottinger, Unknown. Third Row: Fay Stillings Shaw, Pearl Critchfield Krug, Hazel Hennesey Davis, Jessie Coddling Froysoa, Kate Loendorf Monson, Louise Gulden Simenson, Lena Cook Starke, Unknown, Unknown, Nettle King Brudevold, Clara Olson Chulise, Mrs. D. W. Clark, Jessie Stearns Ecker, Hilda Lee, Unknown, Bertha Pray Laird, Mabel Campbell Finkenhagen, Dora Large, Ruth Butterfield Davis. Fourth Row: Mary Bealy Carlton, Evelyn Gaylord Atherton, Margaret Sandy Shearer, Gertrude Starke, Hattie McPherson Haimes, Leona Noecker Luessen, Mable Milton Norris, Carolyn Tyrell Cooper. Fifth Row: Christina Peterson Mortenson, Elizabeth Clark Worley, Clara Bush Krug, Florence Noxon Elstrom, Minnie J. Nielsen, Dena Nelson Johnson.

Fig. 4: Historic photo of Pioneer Daughters, (ca. 1941) reproduced from *Barnes County History*

Sharon Clancy, a knowledgeable local informant who was very helpful to the research for this nomination, identified the following individuals from the historic photo who had ties to the WPA project. Ms. Clancy's observations were reported in October 7, 2010 correspondence to Steve Martens.

- Ms. Clancy noted that among those pictured above;
- Frances Starke Clancy was Sharon Clancy's mother,
- Gertrude Starke was Sharon Clancy's aunt,
- Lena Starke was her grandmother and sister to Frank Cook who supervised the WPA construction project.

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional Documentation Page 7

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota



Fig. 5: Historic photograph; "Valley City WPA Workers"

(NOTE: This photo, furnished courtesy of Barnes County Historical Society collections, is identified as being taken on the south bank of the Sheyenne River near McFarland Hall on the Valley City State University (former Normal School) campus. It is included with the Pioneers Park nomination as a reference example for the kinds of activities and working methods of typical Valley City WPA crews contemporary with the Pioneer Park project.)

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional Documentation Page 8

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota



Fig. 6: Bronze dedication plaque commemorating Valley City Pioneers (1937)



Fig. 7: Unidentified person posed alongside Pioneer Park entrance gateway; (ca. 1950) photo from the collections of the Barnes County Historical Society

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional Documentation Page 9

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota



Fig. 8: Historic photo of Pioneer Park amphitheater; (ca. 1970)
photo from the collections of the Barnes County Historical Society



Fig. 9: Historic photo of VFW band posed on Pioneer Park amphitheater; (ca. 1995)
photo from the collections of the Barnes County Historical Society

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Additional Documentation Page 10

Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park; Barnes County, North Dakota

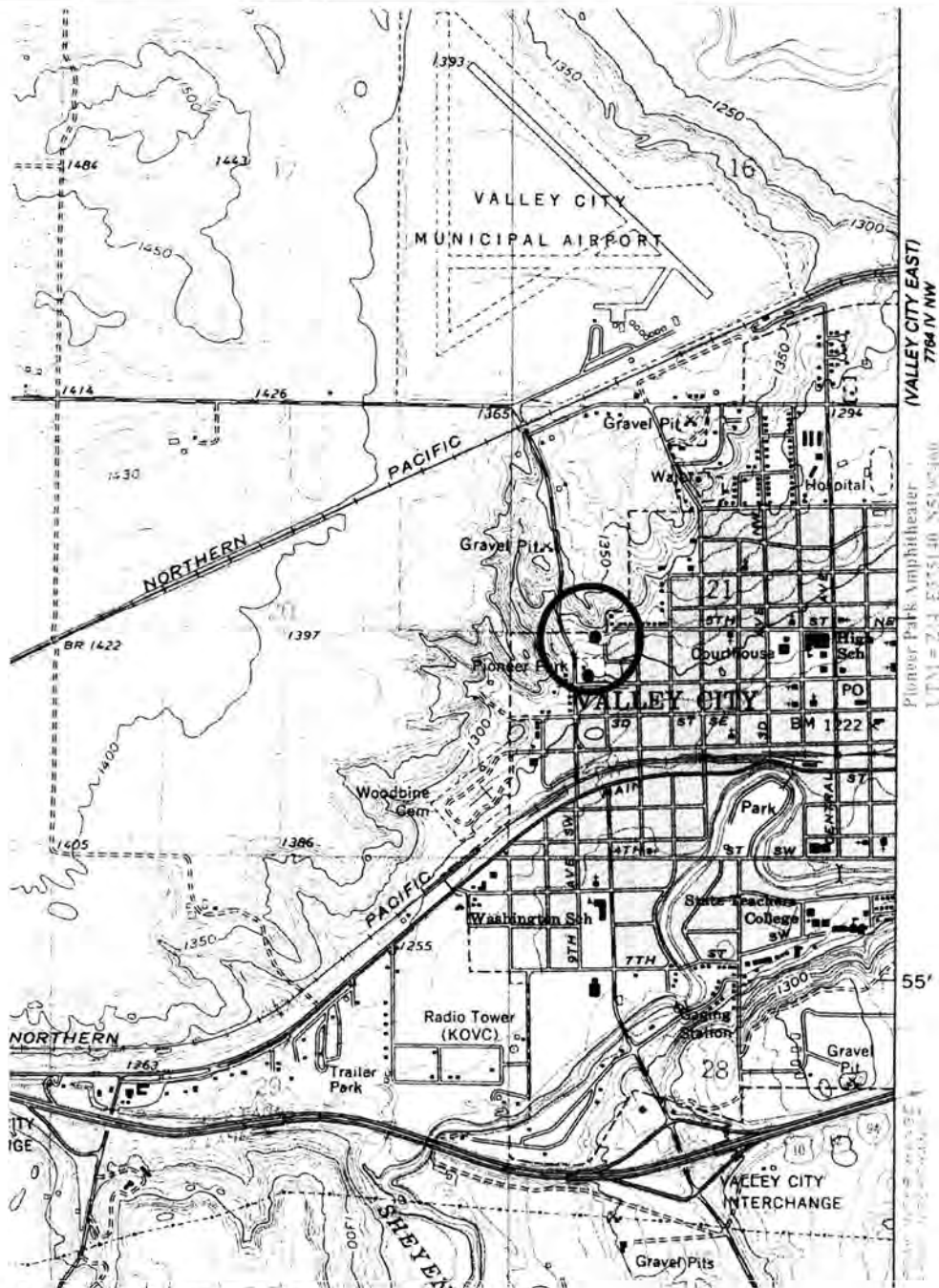


Fig. 10: USGS topographic reference map
Valley City, North Dakota quadrangle

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park

MULTIPLE NAME: Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943, MPS

STATE & COUNTY: NORTH DAKOTA, Barnes

DATE RECEIVED: 12/17/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/07/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/24/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/01/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001195

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2-1-11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



FEATURE 3

WPA FIELDSTONE AT (AMPHITHEATER)
VALLEY CITY, PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND

PHOTO #1



FEATURES #1 AND 2
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO #2



FEATURE 2
WPA FIELDSTONE (AND AMPHITHEATER)
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO # 3



FEATURE #1
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY'S PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO # 4



FEATURE #1
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO # 5



FEATURE #1 (DETAIL)
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO #6



FEATURE #1
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND

PHOTO # 7



FEATURE #1
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND

PHOTO # 8



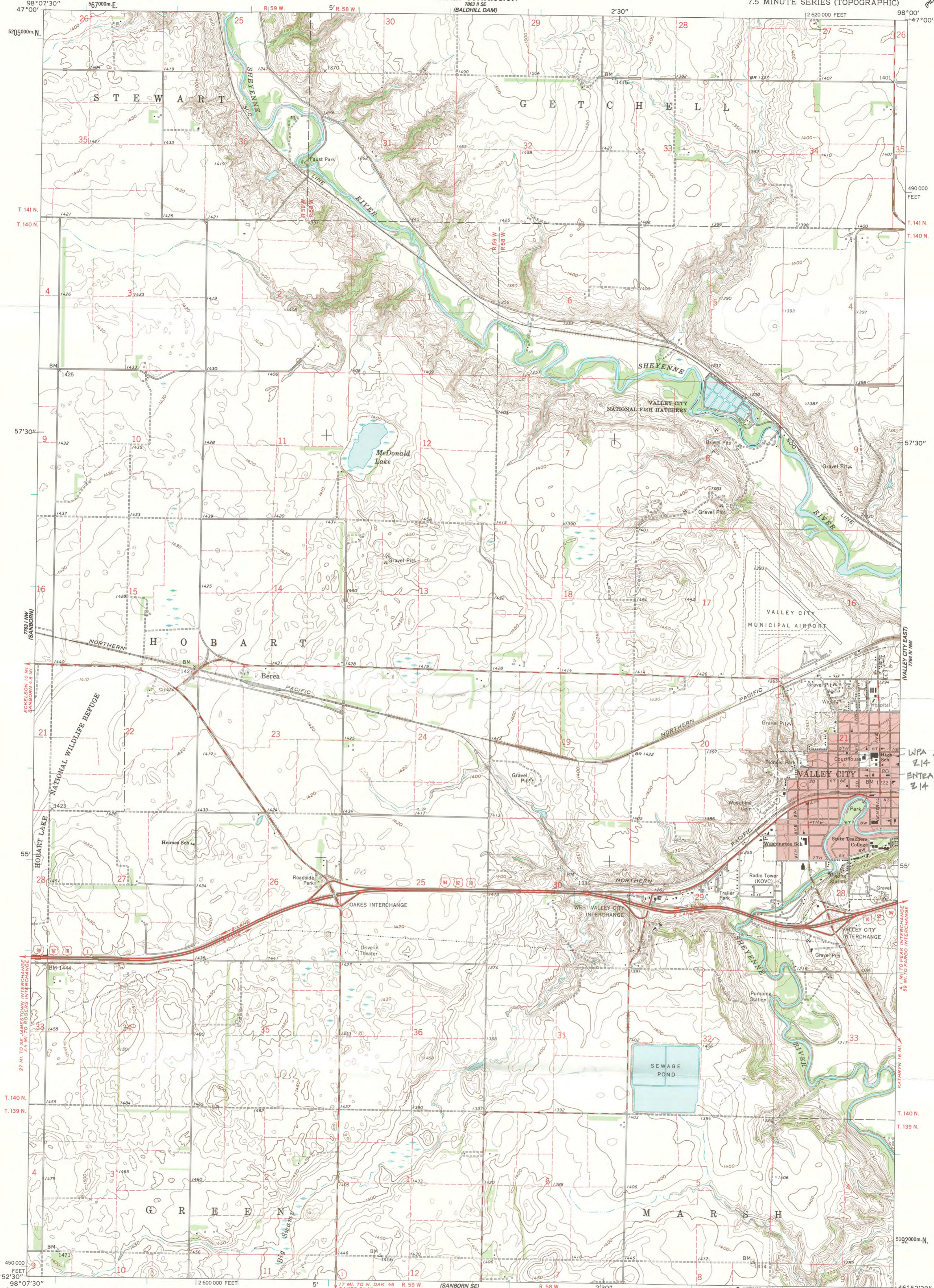
FEATURE #1
AMPHISTHERTZ AND WPA FIELD STONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND

PHOTO #9

PIONEERS

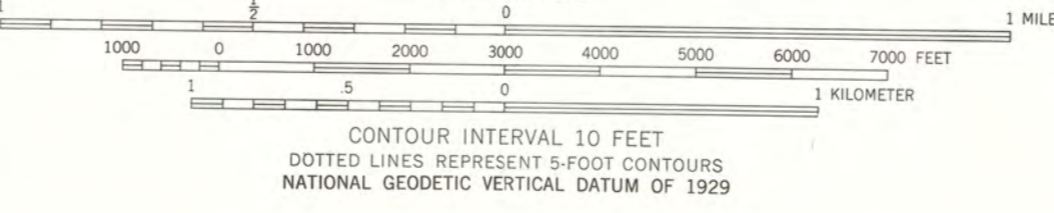


FEATURES #1 AND 2
AMPHITHEATER AND WPA FIELDSTONE AT
VALLEY CITY PIONEER PARK
BARNES COUNTY, ND
PHOTO #10



WPA AMPHITHEATER UTM
214 E 515 140 N 5197460
ENTRANCE GATE UTM
214 E 515 135 N 5197290

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1959. Field checked 1961
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American Datum
10,000-foot grid based on North Dakota coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 6 meters north and
29 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

VALLEY CITY WEST, N. DAK.
46098-H1-TF-024
1961
DMA 7763 1 NE-SERIES V871

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places
From: Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr./ Lorna Meidinger
Date: 15 December 2010
Subject: National Register Nomination

RE
DEC 17
NCE

The following materials are submitted on this 15th day of December 2010, for the nomination of the Amphitheater and Fieldstone WPA Features at Valley City Pioneer Park to the National Register of Historic Places.

- 1 National Register of Historic Places nomination form on archival paper
 - Multiple Property Nomination form on archival paper
 - 10 Photographs
 - 1 Original USGS map(s)
 - Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
 - Pieces of correspondence
 - 1 Other: Photo cd
-

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objections do do not constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: