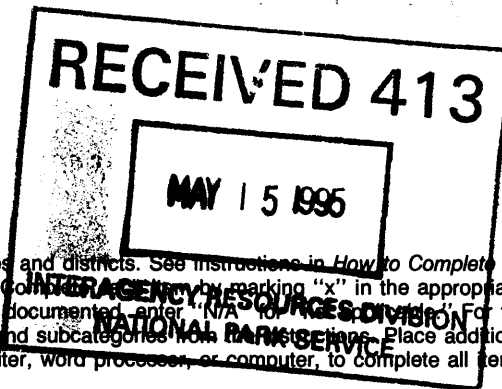


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 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 functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name TERRY PARK BALLFIELD

other names/site number Park T. Pigott Memorial Stadium

2. Location

street & number 3410 Palm Beach Boulevard not for publication

city or town Fort Myers vicinity

state Florida code FL county Lee code 071 zip code 33902

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.)
Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 5/11/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State of 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 certifying 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:)

for
Edson B. Ball Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action 6/20/95

Entered in the
National Register

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 0 | 0 | buildings |
| 1 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

Historic Resources of Lee County, Fl.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ Sports Facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1925-1940

Significant Dates

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approx. 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | 1 7 | 4 1 6 2 0 0 | 2 9 4 8 5 6 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen Olausen/ Sherry Piland, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date May 1995

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Fl. ~~32399-645~~ zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**Section number 7 Page 1

Terry Park Ballfield is located on the south side of Palm Beach Boulevard (SR #80), just to the east of its intersection with Palmetto Avenue, in Fort Myers, Florida. The ballfield contributes to the Historic Resources of Lee County, Florida, multiple property group under property type F.4., **Government and Public Resources.**

SETTING

Terry Park, a city park facility, is approximately two miles from downtown Fort Myers. The thirty-eight acre park originally served as the Lee County Fair Grounds. It presently contains the county's Parks and Recreation Department and other facilities. The ballfield is located in the center of the eastern half of the park and is flanked on the north and south by practice diamonds. A number of non-contributing resources are immediately adjacent to the field but are not within the boundaries.

DESCRIPTION

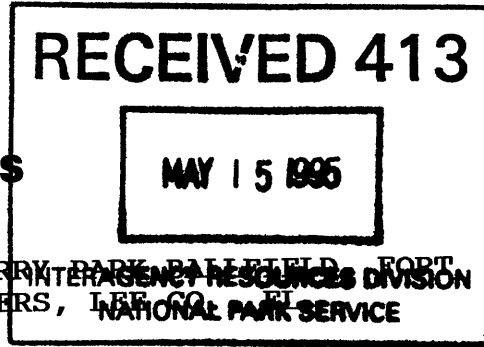
The Terry Park Ballfield consists of a standard major league-size baseball diamond with a pitching mound, grass infield, and cutout dirt baselines (photo 1). The dimensions from home plate to the outfield wall are 360 feet down the left and right field lines, 380 feet to the left and right fields, and 415 to center field. The dirt portions of the field consist of red Georgia clay, a soil used in ball field construction since the early twentieth century. The grass outfield is surrounded by a warning track and concrete block wall, which was constructed in 1955 (photo 2).

NON-CONTRIBUTING SURROUNDINGS

A V-shaped steel beam and truss grandstand wraps around home plate and the right and left lines (photos 3, 4, and 5). It was constructed in 1955, replacing an original wooden grandstand that was built in the 1920s. Other non-contributing features associated with the ballfield include bathrooms off the left and right field stands, a locker room along the left field line, and a bathroom and office building south of the grandstand.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



Section number 8 Page 1

Terry Park Ballfield is one of the oldest remaining major league baseball spring training sites in Florida. Initially constructed in 1925 to accommodate the Philadelphia Athletics, the ballfield has hosted a number of major league clubs during its history. It is locally significant under criterion A for its associations with the development of tourism and recreation in Fort Myers during the 1920s. The impact of having a major league team on the local economy was significant during the historic period, as it is today. Fort Myers received a significant boost in prestige through newspaper coverage as the Philadelphia press chronicled the progress of the Athletics during each spring training season of the 1920s and 1930s. The publicity attracted new tourists and enhanced the city's reputation as a resort community. It contributes to the Historic Resources of Lee County, Florida, multiple property group under property type F.4, **Government and Public Resources** and historic context III, **The Florida Land Boom, 1919-1927** and historic context IV, **The Great Depression and World War II, 1928-1945**.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Major league baseball spring training in Florida dates to 1888, when the Washington Statesmen (later the Washington Senators) spent three weeks in Jacksonville preparing for the upcoming season. Connie Mack, a member of that team and long-time manager of the Philadelphia Athletics, recalled later that the team was repeatedly turned away from hotels because of the negative view held of baseball players at the time. Spring training sites were subsequently established in many southern states, including North Carolina, Arkansas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, and Mississippi. Over the years, however, Florida was able to attract a great number of teams and grew in favor as a spring training site. Florida had two major advantages: the consistently warm climate needed for players attempting to get in shape and hone their skills, and its proximity to many of the teams' home cities, located in the Northeast and Midwest.

Between the late 1880s and 1923, spring training in Florida was loosely organized and training camps were operated intermittently. The first team to make regular spring trips to Florida was the St. Louis Browns, who were enticed to St. Petersburg in 1914 by Al Lang. More than anyone else, Lang was

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**

Section number 8 Page 2

responsible for popularizing spring training in Florida. A native of Pittsburgh, he had moved to St. Petersburg in 1911 and later was elected mayor. He believed that hosting baseball clubs during the spring would bring valuable publicity to the city, and he made it his mission to lure major league teams. During the 1920s he was successful in bringing two additional teams, the New York Yankees and the Boston Braves, to the city.

Officials and promoters of other west coast Florida communities followed Lang's example, and by 1929, ten of the sixteen major league clubs had established camps there. With this number of teams, it was possible to schedule a number of games with each other, and a "Grapefruit League" was established. The only real competition Florida had in attracting teams for spring training came from Arizona and California, whose teams had formed a spring "Cactus League."

Because of travel restrictions, spring training in the South was interrupted during World War II. After the war, spring training in Florida was renewed with vigor. During the late 1940s and 1950s, twelve to fourteen teams made the journey to camps in Florida. A number of teams acquired new facilities and were able to attract larger crowds.

Between 1961 and 1977 the major leagues expanded from sixteen to twenty-six teams, and as a result, Florida's Grapefruit League increased from a twelve- to an eighteen-team circuit. During the past thirty years, training complexes have grown from simple practice fields to modern complexes with state-of-the-art stadia, batting cages, offices, clubhouse facilities, and exercise rooms. For example, in 1988, the St. Lucie County Sports Complex was built near Port St. Lucie for the New York Mets. The new stadium provided seating for over 7,500 spectators, and the field was identical in dimensions to the team's home field, Shea Stadium in Flushing, New York.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

In 1892 Ambrose M. McGregor and his wife, Tootie, came to Fort Myers from New York. McGregor, an associate of John D. Rockefeller, was one of the largest stockholders in the Standard Oil Company. He became a prominent land owner in Lee County and established extensive orange groves and experimental farms.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**Section number 8 Page 3

After his death in 1900, his widow married Dr. M. O. Terry. Tootie McGregor Terry continued to improve the property of her first husband, acquired additional holdings, and in 1912 sponsored the construction of McGregor Boulevard. In 1906, she had donated land for use as the County Fairgrounds and Terry Park was named in her honor.

In 1923, the Fort Myers Kiwanis Club initiated a campaign to attract a ball team to the city. The club's president, Richard Q. Richards, was appointed chairman of the Baseball Committee. After contacting several teams, Richards traveled to Philadelphia to meet with Connie Mack, who was then in his twenty-second year as part-owner and manager of the Athletics. Impressed with Richards' presentation, Mack agreed to visit Fort Myers. He arrived in the city on January 20, 1924, and during the next three days toured the city and visited the proposed site for the ballpark. Impressed with the beauty and climate of the area, Mack signed a contract to bring the Athletics to Fort Myers in the spring of 1925. As part of the agreement, the Kiwanis Club underwrote a fee of \$6,000 to be paid to the Athletics upon their arrival. In addition, the Lee County Commission agreed to supply funds for the erection of a new ballpark and grandstand at Terry Park.

Work on clearing the site for the ballfield began in the fall of 1924. The specifications for the field were provided by Mack. A one-half-mile horse race track, encircling the ballfield, was constructed at the same time. Local architect William O. Sparklin provided plans for a wooden grandstand capable of seating 1,500 spectators.

The Athletics, who featured such future Hall of Fame stars as Lefty Grove, Mickey Cochrane, Jimmie Foxx, and Al Simmons, arrived in Fort Myers on February 22, 1925. Accompanying them was the team president, Thomas Shibe, and a contingent of Philadelphia newspapermen. A large, enthusiastic crowd and the town band greeted the group at the railroad station. The team held its first workout at Terry Park the following day. The first game with another major league club was held on March 12 against the National League Philadelphia Phillies. The event was marked by an appearance by New York Yankee great Babe Ruth, who was recruited for the day to help the Athletics win what was billed as the "Philadelphia City Championship."

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**Section number 8 Page 4

By the end of the spring training season, Mack was so pleased by the Terry Park facilities and the reception of this team by the city of Fort Myers that he signed a contract to continue training there for the next ten years. He later credited the experience at Fort Myers for the successful start his team made during the regular season of 1925 when the Athletics finished in second place. In the ensuing three years the team finished second twice and third once. Beginning in 1929, the Athletics won the American League Pennant three times and won the 1929 and the 1930 World Series.

Like other businesses, major league baseball franchises felt the economic impact of the Great Depression. Mack suffered severe losses as a result of the stock market crash. Despite the successes of the team, attendance dropped precipitously from 830,000 in 1929 to 300,000 in 1933. Mack, as he had done once before during an especially lean season in 1924, began selling his star players to other teams to keep the Athletics solvent. The economic belt tightening ultimately led to the cancellation of spring training in Fort Myers after the 1935 season.

After losing the Athletics, local businessmen began seeking another franchise for Terry Park. With the exception of a brief stay by the Cleveland Indians in 1939 and 1940, they met with little success. In the fall of 1954 the old wooden grandstand was demolished and a new steel truss grandstand capable of seating over 3,500 was constructed in expectation of the arrival of the Pittsburgh Pirates the following spring. The Pirates trained in Fort Myers until 1968, when they moved to Bradenton. The final major league team to train at Terry Park was the Kansas City Royals who used the facility from 1969 to 1987. During that period, the field was renamed Park T. Pigott Memorial Stadium in honor of a long-time director of the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department. In the hopes of attracting another major league club to Fort Myers, a new state of the art baseball stadium was erected in 1991 at the Lee County Sports Complex, an eight-acre site off Daniels Road. That complex presently hosts the Minnesota Twins during spring training. Terry Park is now used as a community recreation facility.

Although the original grandstand no longer exists, the historic playing field remains as one of the oldest spring training sites for professional baseball in Florida, representing a major component in Florida's historic tourism industry. Almost

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Continuation Sheet**

**TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**

Section number 8 Page 5

all the other historic ballfields have been demolished or altered. Only Henly Field in Lakeland is as old as Terry Field and is likely to be considered for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Both these fields retain the intimate ambiance of the older and smaller ballparks.

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TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.

Section number 9 Page 1

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Grismer, Karl H. The Story of Fort Myers. St. Petersburg, Fl.:
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Zinser, William. Spring Training: The Unique American Story of
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 7, township 34S, range 25E, south of County Road 80, more specifically described as follows: Begin at a point at the NE corner of the right field grandstand then proceed NE approximately 150 feet to a chain link fence, then follow chain link fence in a NWLY direction along the outfield wall to a chain link fence along the left field line, then south along the fence approximately 150 feet to the NE corner of the left field grandstand, then south along the east side of the grandstand approximately 200 feet to a point directly behind home plate, then east approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary, as shown on the site plan, was drawn to include only the playing field. Adjacent non-contributing resources, including a grandstand, locker room, two bathrooms, and a combination office/bathroom were excluded because they were constructed after the historic period.

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Continuation Sheet**

**TERRY PARK BALLFIELD, FORT
MYERS, LEE CO., FL.**

Section number Photo Page 1

1. Terry Park Ballfield
2. Fort Myers, Lee County, Florida
3. Stephen Olausen
4. March 1994
5. Historic Property Associates, P.O. Box 1002, St. Augustine, Fl.
6. Baseball diamond, looking northeast from center grandstand
7. Photo 1 of 5

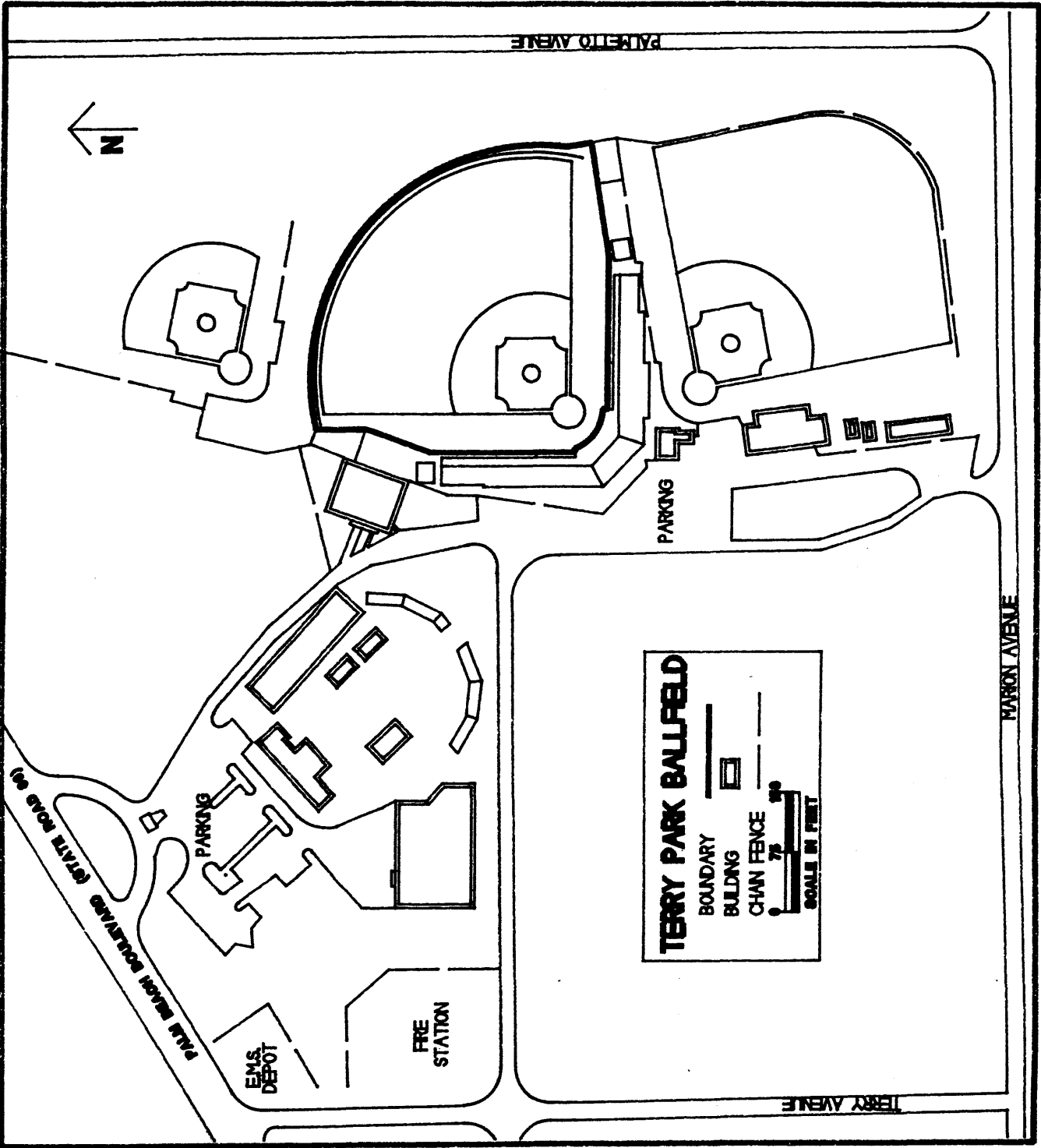
Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs

6. Outfield wall, looking north
7. Photo 2 of 5

6. Grandstand facade, view looking northeast
7. Photo 3 of 5

6. Press box and left field grandstand; view looking northwest
7. Photo 4 of 5

6. Grandstand, view looking northwest
7. Photo 5 of 5



PARETO AVENUE



PARKING

PARRON AVENUE

TERRY PARK BALLFIELD

- BOUNDARY
- BUILDING
- CHAIN FENCE

75' 0"

SCALE IN FEET

PARKING

EMS
DEPOT

FIRE
STATION

TERRY AVENUE

PARK ROAD (SEE MAP FOR LOCATION)

