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(Rev. 8/86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format (NRF.txt)
(Approved 3/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Southern Wisconsin Home Historic District

other names/site number Southern Wisconsin Center for the
Developmentally Disabled

2. Location

street & number 21425 Spring Street N/A Not for Publication

city, town Town of Dover N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Racine code 101 zip code 53182

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>11</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

[Handwritten Signature]

7/28/91
Date

Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

[Handwritten Signature: Beth Boland]

9/27/91

 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH CARE/SANITARIUM

HEALTH CARE/SANITARIUM

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revival
Italian Renaissance
Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

foundation Brick
walls Brick
Stucco
roof Asphalt
other Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

General Setting:

The Southern Wisconsin Home (SWH) is located in a rural agricultural setting approximately two miles northwest of Union Grove, Wisconsin in Racine County. The surrounding landscape is primarily open, rolling fields. The grounds of the institution are wooded and landscaped with mature trees, curvilinear drives and large, ornamental flower beds.

The historic buildings on the grounds have an unified appearance created by the use of red-brick foundations, cream-brick walls, and red-tile or asphalt-shingled jerkinhead or hipped-roofs. They are generally horizontal in massing and have basically rectilinear plans. The "cottages," as they are called, are clustered in interconnected pairs, forming "H" plans, surrounded by broad, open green space which separates them from other groups. The superintendent's residence and service buildings are located on the periphery of these cottage clusters.

Cottage #1 (Map #109):

Construction of Cottage #1 began in 1928 and the building was opened and occupied on September 9, 1929. The main elevation of this 11-bay, two and a half-story cottage faces west. Rectilinear in shape, there are projecting wings on the North, South, and East sides. The building has a low-pitch hipped-roof with broad overhangs, exposed rafter ends, and two hipped-roof dormers. There is a projecting red-brick central pavilion with a recessed arcade entrance. The entrance has tuscan columns and pilasters which support a second-story sun porch. The pavilion terminates in a shaped parapet. The main entrance has a stone surround with sidelights and modern aluminum entrance doors. The raised red-brick foundation, typical of the buildings in this district, is capped with a stone watertable. The upper windows are 12/12 double-hung sash with red-brick surrounds, while the basement level contains 8/8 sash windows. A small one-story addition, built in the late 1960s, extends North of the main entrance to the South wall of the North wing (and contains a basement level chapel.)

X see continuation sheet

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The front entrance opens onto a central foyer and transverse hallway which extends the length of the building with individual rooms on either side. At the North and South projecting wings are large, open rooms which have, depending on institutional population, served as day rooms, dorms or both. The wing projecting East off the first floor of the central foyer provides a single-story link to Cottage #2 forming a larger "H" plan complex. On the first floor of this wing is the dining room for the cottage directly East of which is a shared kitchen facility.

On the second floor are more individual rooms and the larger, open rooms on the North and South ends. The floors in the cottage are terrazzo and the walls are large beige tile with a burgundy tile cove. Room doors are steel. The individual rooms on the first floor are largely used by staff for administrative or service purposes. Some walls have been knocked down, enlarging these offices. The rooms on the second floor still serve as individual sleeping rooms. They are approximately 10' by 8' and are sparsely ornamented with terrazzo floors and wooden floorboards. The large rooms at the ends of the central corridors are still used as both a dorm and day room, housing just six to twelve male clients each.

Cottage #1 has historically housed female residents and has only recently switched to an exclusively male population. The basement of this building has also variously held a medical treatment facility, a bakery, a beauty parlor, and currently, a Protestant Chapel.

Cottage #2 (Map #101):

Cottage #2 is the oldest extant building on the SWH complex. Using Wisconsin State Prison (WSP) inmate labor, construction began in 1918 and the cottage opened for occupancy on February 14, 1919. The main facade of the rectilinear building, which runs parallel to Cottage #1, faces east. This two-story, 15-bay building is very similar in size, scale, and massing to Cottage #1, except that the North and South wings have two-story screen porches on their North and South elevations respectively. The central projecting entry pavilion has a large one-story, wrap-around Mediterranean-style porch with square posts and arcading. Like Cottage #1, the entrance pavilion supports a second-story sun porch, here with palladian motif windows. The raised red-brick foundation supports cream-stucco upper stories, adding to the Mediterranean appearance of the cottage. The end porch wings have tripartite windows with flanking single windows. All others are 9/9 double-hung sash with red-brick surrounds.

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The interior plan, function and materials are also very similar to Cottage #1, except that Cottage #2 contains a grand double staircase with a metal balustrade. Unlike Cottage #1, only the borders of the individual rooms are terrazzo; the centers are covered with linoleum tile. The first floor dorm day rooms also originally had large end wall fireplaces but these were infilled in the 1970s to conserve energy.

When first opened in 1919 this cottage housed the administrative offices of the institution which didn't move out until a new administration building was constructed in 1960. Also in Cottage #2 at that time was the laundry, bakery, sewing room, hospital, school, living space for some employees, and of course, inmates (all female). The basement, at times in the building's history has also been the location of a carpenter shop, an institutional store, a snack bar, and now the Catholic Chapel. One by one all of these facilities have been relocated and a decrease in the institutional population has left the cottage vacant except for the chapel.

Cottage #3 (Map #111):

Construction of this rectilinear cottage and link to Cottage #4 was completed in 1938. With its main elevation facing N., this cottage is again, very similar to Cottage #1. Two and a half-stories and 14-bays wide, it has projecting wings on the East and West ends and on the South side which forms a link with Cottage #4 making another larger 'H' plan complex. The asphalt-shingled hip roof has three-hipped dormers and exposed-rafter ends. The projecting stone entrance pavilion has tuscan columns and a second-story balustrade. The raised foundation, watertable and upper story materials are typical of the buildings in the district. The windows are all modern, aluminum, security replacements in the original openings which have blind arches and stone sills with red-brick feet.

The interior of the building is very similar to Cottages #1 and #2, with a long central corridor flanked by individual rooms and leading to large, open dorm/day rooms on the East and West ends. The connection between Cottages #3 and #4 houses the shared kitchen/dining facility.

This cottage has historically housed both males and females and has been the location of a barber shop, a social room, a pre-school, and an indoor activity area. Currently this building is a high security cottage for violent or potentially dangerous clients.

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Cottage #4 (Map #102):

Although construction of this cottage was begun in 1922, it was not opened for occupancy until late 1924 when the institution was finally able to connect it to the facility's utility plant, giving the necessary heat, light, and power for the building's use.

Located directly behind Cottage #3, the main elevation of Cottage #4 faces south. Cottage #4 is identical to Cottage #3 except that it retains its original 9/9 double-hung sash windows.

Historically, this cottage has housed both male and female clients, though low institutional population has currently left it vacant.

Gymnasium (Map #112):

The main elevation of this 1921, one-story building faces east. It has a jerkinhead gable roof with exposed-rafter ends, in the center of which sits a Colonial Revival style lantern cupola serving as an attic vent. The typical raised red-brick foundation and cream-brick walls have flemish bond coursing and a stone watertable separating them. The building is 9-bays wide with paired 9/9 double-hung sash windows in each bay. The windows also have soldier brick surrounds and stone sills. Concrete stairs lead to a central projecting pavilion entrance with a stepped parapet at the main elevation. This entrance has been infilled leaving an identical ramped door at the South elevation as the primary entry point. A hip-roofed rear entrance provides access to the basement.

This building was originally built to serve as a gymnasium for resident recreation and later housed a bakery. In 1959, it was converted for patient use but now serves simply as a storage facility.

Cottage #12 (Map #108):

Constructed between 1928-1930, this cottage and Cottage #13 together form a larger "H" plan complex; they are the only extant one-story cottages in the district (Cottages #5 and #6, which were also one story buildings, have been demolished). The main elevation of this building faces east. Similar to the two-story cottages, this rectilinear cottage has projecting wings on the North and South ends and the West side (which connects it to Cottage #13). The end wings and the entrance pavilion have jerkinhead gable-roofs and exposed-rafter ends.

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The entrances on the North and South wings are slightly narrower than the wings and project three feet, creating a complex roof line. The entrances are ornamented with arcaded-brick reliefs in the cornice supported by acanthus leaf brackets. The door is flanked by sidelights. The cottage has a typical red-brick foundation, though it is not raised as on the two-story cottages. The upper story is cream-brick. The windows are 6/9 double-hung sash with stone sills.

Cottage #12 was originally designed and built as a much needed hospital with the medical facilities located in the West wing. The main corridor of the cottage, which runs North and South, has individual rooms off of it and ends in larger day room/dorm areas as in the two-story cottages. This design enabled an easy transition to a standard cottage when a new hospital was built at the facility in later decades. Cottage #12 was occupied until recent years when the institutional population decreased leaving its use unnecessary. The cottage is now vacant.

Cottage #13 (Map #107):

The main elevation of this building, connected to Cottage #12 in an "H" plan, faces west. Although it was constructed simultaneously with Cottage #12 Between 1928 and 1930, the two are not identical. Cottage #13 has the same single story, rectilinear shape, red-brick foundation, cream-brick upper story and 6/9 double-hung sash windows with stone sills, as its partner, but its roof line is much simpler. This building has a hipped-roof and hipped-wings but the entrance pavilion is gabled. This projecting central entrance also has hipped dormers with 6/6 sash windows perched on its North and South elevations.

Cottage #13 was built as an infirmary for less severe illness and injury. Its medical facilities were located in the projecting east wing forming one large medical center between the two cottages. The rest of the building has individual rooms and large open rooms at the ends of the main corridor. This building also made the transition from medical to standard cottage when the new hospital was built, but it also now stands vacant.

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Superintendents' Residence (Map #301):

The superintendents' residence sits north of Cottages #12 and #13 and was originally the first building one would encounter upon entering the SWH complex. Built in 1919 it is one of the oldest extant buildings of the facility and was constructed using inmate labor from the WSP.

The house is a two-story hipped-roof structure with a square plan. The massing and style suggest a vernacular simplification of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture. A beltcourse at the second story sill level is the only decorative feature of the white stucco walls. The main (southeast) elevation is symmetrical and has a central entrance adorned with a classical segmental arched cornice with modillion blocks and is supported by tuscan columns. The entrance is flanked by 6/6 double-hung sash windows with flower boxes. The upper story windows are also 6/6 sash with the exception of paired 2/2 sash above the entrance. The entry stoop is accessed by stairs on either end.

The porch on the southwest elevation was originally an open porch but was rebuilt and enclosed in 1934, with 8-light casement windows, three in each opening. The porch is supported by massive red-brick piers. A metal fire escape and fire door has been attached to the northeast elevation.

The interior has plaster walls and ceilings and linoleum tile on hardwood floors. Interior doors are four-panel wood with glass knobs. The entrance leads through a vestibule to a Colonial Revival style central staircase with square rails and newelpost. To the southwest is the living room. Its focal point is a Colonial Revival fireplace surround flanked by double-french doors which lead to the porch. The fireplace has been infilled. The porch is clad with knotty pine paneling. Walls in the kitchen and baths are tiled. The second floor has a sun room on the southwest elevation.

This house was originally built for the superintendent's family in the tradition of other Wisconsin State institutions. The earliest state facilities provided homes for the institutional heads on-site, partially as a "perk" for taking the job, and partially out of necessity since so many of these institutions were remotely located making daily commuting (in those times) difficult if not impossible. The house at Southern Wisconsin Colony was used in this capacity until the late 1970s.

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when state policy changed and it was determined that it was no longer necessary to provide free housing. The Superintendents' house at the Southern Wisconsin Home was converted to a group home in the mid-1980s where a few clients could experience more independent living, but in a controlled environment. The house has been vacant for the last couple of years however, because it was unable to meet safety code requirements for such a residence.

Garage (Map #405):

The garage for the superintendents' residence, also built in 1919 by WSP labor, sits to the northeast of the house. It is a one-story frame garage with an asphalt-shingled hipped-roof and shiplap siding. It has two-bays with wood panel doors and 2/2 sash windows.

Paint Shop (Map #206):

The main elevation of this building faces south and it is located immediately east of the Engineer's building. The building is one-story with a hipped-roof, has exposed-rafter ends, a white-stucco finish and beltcourse. The south elevation has three five-panel wood doors spaced along the facade. On the north elevation there are three window openings, one of which is infilled. The others are 6/6 double-hung sash. A metal garage door appears to have replaced an earlier counterpart on this elevation.

This small building was completed in 1934 and apparently originally consisted of two storage rooms and a paint shop for paint and supply storage. It seems that the building is still used for the same general purpose.

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Engineer's Building (Map #407):

The main elevation of this building faces south. It is one-story with an asphalt-shingled hip-roof, has exposed-rafter ends, clapboard siding, and a concrete block foundation. There is a single-entrance door and three 6/6 double-hung sash windows.

This building was constructed in the early 1930s and used as an office for the chief engineer responsible for the power plant. It has been used in this capacity for many years and is vacant at this time.

Power Plant (Map #201):

Construction of the power plant began in 1922 but it was not until 1924 that it began to supply power to the three-inmate buildings that existed at that time. The building, which faces south, is composed of two distinct sections: the east portion appears to be the earlier, to which the later (west) portion was appended. The east portion is vaguely classical in design and has a prominent bracketed cornice and a parapet-roof. The arched windows have basket-weave brick ornamentation in blind arches. A cornice molding forms a beltcourse at the sill level and there is a raised beltcourse every seven brick courses. Window openings have all been infilled with modern windows.

The west portion has a raised concrete foundation, stone watertable, is of flemish bond brick construction, has brick stone quoins and has a raised beltcourse every seven brick courses to match the eastern portion. Three large arched openings have steel windows and a continuous beltcourse at the lintel height. The windows have blind arches similar to the eastern portion but with keystones. The roof is flat with a parapet.

The original power plant was replaced many years ago with a more modern, higher capacity plant. The original power plant has since been used as the grounds maintenance building.

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Well House #2 (Map #203):

This building is a simple 12' square structure with a raised concrete foundation and cream-brick flemish bond walls. The only ornamentation is a raised beltcourse every seven brick courses. The well house has a truncated hipped-roof clad with asphalt shingles and metal flashing on the truncated portion.

This well house is the second one on this site. The original well house was razed and replaced in 1928 by this one because of brick and roof disintegration.

Machine and Carpenter Shop (Map #211):

This building constructed in 1932, shares the raised red-brick foundation and cream-brick upper story common to many of the other buildings in the district. The one-story building has a jerkinhead tile roof with exposed-rafter ends. The main (south) elevation is seven-bays wide with a central entrance featuring a brick detailed surround. The arched windows have steel windows with center awning type openings and stone sills. The east and west elevations have modern concrete and brick additions which more than double the size of the original building, and are non-contributing additions.

When this building was completed and occupied on June 1, 1932, it was 50' by 40' and housed a machine shop and a carpenter shop. The building maintains a similar function to this day.

Laundry Building (Map #208):

The original one-story jerkinhead laundry building, which was constructed in 1925 and looked very much like the service building, has been almost entirely enveloped by later additions. Only the roof line and a small expanse on the north elevation remain visible. It now appears largely as a long, low-slung, flat-roofed building which is 17-bays wide and faces south. The additions, constructed in the 1950s and 1960s, are of flemish bond cream-brick on a red-brick foundation and have paired 6/6 sash windows.

Although SWH worked hard to keep up with the demands made on its laundry building, it now stands nearly idle. It has become more cost efficient to send the bulk of the facility's laundry out to the WSP at Waupun where it is cleaned, pressed, and returned with a one-day turn-around time. Only minor laundry needs are performed in the SWH laundry building at this time.

This building is non-contributing due to the major alterations to its historic appearance.

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Landscape:

The landscape at the facility is a very important part of the institutional atmosphere. When originally built, the facility sat on a barren, muddy farm field. An early Superintendent, Dr. C. C. Atherton, personally oversaw the landscaping of the grounds, believing that one's environment contributed greatly to one's mental health. Today, the grounds continue to be beautifully maintained with hundreds of large trees (of several varieties), ornamental flower beds, and well groomed shrubs and grass.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: ___ nationally X statewide ___ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

HEALTH/MEDICINE

1918-1941

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Robert A. Messmer and Brother

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN HOME

The Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic is being nominated under criterion A for its statewide historic significance as an early state facility for the treatment and education of the mentally retarded in Wisconsin. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin expresses a need for the identification and nomination of statewide health care facilities, and identifies the Southern Wisconsin Home as a significant institution. The 15 buildings identified in the district represent the facility's historic period 1918-1941, chosen to include the date of earliest construction on the site and continuing to 50 years prior to the present date, and which represents the early phase of growth.

A new more sympathetic attitude toward mental retardation, associated with the Progressive Era, is reflected in the nominated district. The buildings, in a "cottage plan" design, are representative of the treatment philosophy at that point in time.

X see continuation sheet

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Historical Background

Early Efforts in Wisconsin

From Wisconsin's territorial period until the late 1890s, developmentally disabled persons (also referred to as mentally retarded and historically as mentally deficient or feeble-minded) who had become dependent on county and local governments for support were sent to county poorhouses. There they languished, uncared for in any genuine way, along with paupers, epileptics, the insane and the elderly. Since many county poorhouses in the years before the Civil War were merely extensions of local jails (the jails themselves later came under severe criticism for being inhumane), these dependent persons were treated like criminals--subject to harsh disciplinary measures and filthy living conditions, they were poorly fed and forced to work. These mentally deficient and the mentally ill were also often abused by their fellow inmates.¹

As early as 1867 when Governor Lucius Fairchild recommended establishing a facility to provide for feeble-minded children in his annual message to the Legislature², progressive minded forces in the state began to lobby for a separate institution for the mentally deficient. This movement was a direct result of an inspection of the various county poorhouses and asylums by the State Board of Charities and Reform, and its report on the deplorable conditions that they encountered. Also, with the growing trend toward institutionalization came the realization that different classes of inmates needed separate and specialized care. Led by Assemblyman W.W. Reed, reform legislation aimed at establishing such a facility was introduced in 1868, 1869, 1871, 1877, and 1878. All of these attempts proved unsuccessful, but Reed, an indefatigable devotee to the cause, persisted. In 1887 he traveled to Jacksonville, Illinois, and visited the State Home for the Feeble-Minded there. Returning to Madison, he presented his findings to his colleagues in the Assembly, introduced another bill, and lobbied in the Senate for its passage. Both houses approved the bill, but Governor Jeremiah Rusk vetoed it. In his veto message, Rusk reasoned that since Wisconsin had adopted a county system (which put the chronic cases on the care of county facilities and acute cases in state institutions) for the care of the chronically insane, the same system should serve the retarded. Similar bills were introduced in 1891 and 1893, but both also met with failure.³

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The State Board of Charities and Reform, who's function was to maintain and govern all state charitable and correctional institutions supported by the state or which received any money from the State Treasury, participated in the effort by compiling statistics on the number of mentally deficient in Wisconsin. The Board gathered an incomplete list of names of 300 children who were "incapacitated by nature or accident from deriving any advantages from the common school." The Board also recommended that a facility for these children be established, as instruction for this class was "both morally and economically profitable to the people of the state," and it was the right of all children in Wisconsin to receive an education at the level of their ability.⁴

By the late 1880s, the attitude of the State Board of Charities had shifted to emphasize the ideas behind the growing Eugenics movement. This new science sought to improve the hereditary qualities of society (and as a result eliminate problems like poverty, crime and disease) by the control of mating. The approach in the 1890s became to decry the threat of the degeneration of society due to reproduction by "mental defectives". It was necessary, proponents argued, to remove and separate these "abnormal" persons from society at large to prevent their reproduction.

In addition to individual Assemblymen and the State Board of Charities, the State Board of Health, medical societies and teachers' associations joined the lobbying effort for a "home" for the feeble minded, all motivated by eugenic philosophy. In 1895, the Legislature finally passed a bill (Laws of Wisconsin of 1895, Chapter 138) providing for the establishment of a school and home for "the custody, training and education of the feeble-minded, epileptic and idiot of the state."

Included within the term "feeble-minded" were: "idiots", whose mental growth never exceeded that of a four year old; "imbeciles", whose mental growth equaled that of a normal child of four to seven years; low or high grade "morons", whose mental growth equaled that of a normal child of 7-15 years.⁵ The primary goal of the institution was to provide an education and give social experience in the hopes that the inmates would one day be able to return to a useful place in society. The facility was to have educational programs for all levels of intelligence and a custodial department for the helpless grades.

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The Northern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded

The Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded (now known as The Northern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled) was thus established 3 miles east of Chippewa Falls in Chippewa County. The area met the site selection criteria as established by Chapter 138 that the site comprise not less than 200 acres, have good facilities for drainage and sewerage and an abundant supply of pure water. Although the plans were for an eventual capacity of 1000, when the institution opened on June 16, 1897, its initial capacity was 250. Only 42 "inmates" were accepted in the first year of operation, but the population increased rapidly thereafter. These first inmates were transferred from local and county facilities and preference for entrance was given to younger children. During the early 1900s, facilities were expanded to include an administration building, 2 school houses, a hospital, a bakeshop, a carpenter and machine shop, and a total of 8 cottages, with accommodations for approximately 400 inmates. By 1934, additional cottages were constructed, expanding the school to a rated bed capacity of 1000. Later buildings included 2 dairy barns, a greenhouse, several less important agricultural structures and 5 residences for officers and employees.⁶ The inmate population has fluctuated drastically over the years, from 1,876 inmates in 1960 to only 75 in 1975, when the trend was to deinstitutionalize as many people as possible. Currently, the population is approximately 550, with the rated bed capacity now budgeted at 558.

Originally the school grounds covered 600 acres, but by 1901, adjoining lands had been purchased or ceded to the institution by the city of Chippewa Falls, increasing the total acreage to 1,021. In addition, the Northern Wisconsin facility also supported 3 "extramural colonies," two for males and one for females, which provided "pre-parole" preparation for inmates. The women's colony was located on a farmstead adjacent to the institution, while the men's were located on farms six miles from the Northern Wisconsin Home.⁸

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Typical of state institutions in Wisconsin and elsewhere, overcrowding was a problem at the Northern Wisconsin Home virtually from the moment it opened its doors. Before the third inmate cottage (which would give the facility a bed capacity of 400) could be completed in September, 1898, the population was 373 and 200 more were on a waiting list. By 1906, just nine years after the institution opened, the State had committed 650 children who could not be received because of overcrowding. These children were sent instead to the county facilities that the State was trying to avoid. In recognition of this problem, the Legislature of 1909 appropriated \$1000.00 to the Board of Control (successor of the State Board of Charities and Reform) to secure options on suitable sites for a similar home. Thirty sites were subsequently visited. The Report of the State Board of Control of 1911-1912 reiterated the severe problem of overcrowding at the Northern Wisconsin Home and pointed out that further construction of cottages there, while partly alleviating the problem, would also cause more problems. To put up more buildings would mean that they would need to expand all parts of the administrative building, and to overhaul and enlarge the lighting, heating and water systems of the entire institution. They would additionally need to increase the capacity of the dining room and kitchen, but "in the opinion of the Board it [was] false economy to attempt it".⁹ The Board added the thoughts of the superintendent of the Northern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded, Dr. Wilmarth, to their report to add weight to their position. In his opinion:

The thought of any enlargement of this institution should be abandoned. There would be absolutely no economy in such a step. A second institution should be started in the Southern portion of the state. This would save the heavy freight charges on fuel and other bulky articles which are charged to this point; also excessive charges for children coming and going. It would further keep the children near enough to their parents in the Southern section so the parents may occasionally visit such children. Both humane and economic reasons endorse this proposition.¹⁰

Unfortunately, the Legislature of 1911 was unable to appropriate enough money for a whole new facility and the Northern Wisconsin Home was, after all, expanded again.

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The Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic

Finally, in 1913, with the passage of Chapter 689, the Wisconsin State Legislature appropriated \$300,000.00 for the purchase of land and construction of the first buildings for a new facility. It was determined that the new Home should be located in the southern portion of the state, preferably the southeastern part, because of the greater population density in that area. Most of the feeble-minded remanded to care in the Northern Wisconsin Home were from the southern portion of the state and "enormous expense [was] involved in the commitment" of these inmates. It was also costly for their relatives to visit, especially since "many of this class of inmate population come from families which cannot afford to visit their relatives at so great a distance".¹¹ As Superintendent Wilmarth pointed out, the location of the new facility in the southern part of the state would significantly decrease transportation and operational costs.

Several locations were visited but few met the size, location and adaptability requirements of the new institution, which were that it should be located south of the center line of the state and not exceed one thousand acres. Also, it should comply with the specifications that were set down for the Northern Wisconsin Home. Many sites were proposed but comparatively few met the requirements. A few were considered excellent but the prices that were being asked were judged to be much more than the assessed values. Eventually, \$53,937.50 was spent for the purchase of 519 acres from the Crane estate, 2 miles northwest of the village of Union Grove in central Racine County. This site was considered desirable because it was located in the southeastern part of the state near Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha and Burlington and because Union Grove was on the line of Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad.

The firm of Robert A. Messmer and Brother of Milwaukee was chosen as architects for the preparation of plans and specifications for the project. Before any designs were made, however, a committee consisting of the Board of Control and the architect visited the most modern and progressive institutions all over the United States to gather ideas

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and guarantee that it would be "a most up-to-date institution for the care of the feeble-minded and epileptic."¹² Like Northern Colony, the "cottage system" was chosen over the traditional cell block or dormitory design. Implicit in the institution's name, these cottages, whose idea dated back to the 1880s, and which generally housed 40-70 occupants, "promised to deliver a family-like affection to inmates." Progressives expanded this goal and declared that the cottages could "provide the setting in which highly trained and insightful surrogate parents would shape the development of the child, always meeting his individual needs".¹³ The cottage plan was designed to make an institution more like a normal community or home. Inmates were to have their own room and place for their things, thus promoting their individuality, and the atmosphere was intended to be cheerful and inspiring. All these factors were intended to provide a more humane setting and make a smoother transition to society at large.¹⁴ Unfortunately, this ideal system broke down. All institutions in Wisconsin, including those based on the cottage plan, were generally overcrowded preventing privacy and hampering individuality. Staffs were often poorly trained and uncaring, the atmosphere was usually rigid and life regimented.¹⁵

The Wisconsin State Board of Control then canvassed the state to try to determine what percentage of the Southern Wisconsin Home's population would be feeble-minded and what percentage would be epileptic. With this information and the information from the Architecture Search Committee, a plan for the completed institution was drawn up. The original architectural design was a formal axial plan, organized around an administrative hub, and with cottages grouped in four quadrangles. Officers' residences were to be on a cross axis along the approach to the institution (see Appendices A and B). The Board estimated that the facility would take approximately 20 years to complete and would ultimately provide for 660 feeble-minded residents and 816 epileptics, giving a total institutional population capacity of 1476 by the time it was finished. In reality, the formal design was ignored and the buildings were placed randomly wherever drainage or momentary convenience dictated. The projected time line for the completion of the institution also did not follow the original plan. Construction was irregular, always lagging behind a pressing need for more buildings, and continued into the 1960s.

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Cottage and Hoard Cottage), a barn, a silo, and a residence for the superintendent. It was the Board of Control's intention to receive only educable and trainable males in the Hoard Cottage located near the farm buildings so that these inmates could assist in working the farm connected with the institution. This was intended to train them in a practical skill and save the expense of hiring hands.¹⁷ It was typical practice in Wisconsin that any able-bodied inmate was expected to work to help subsidize the institution, usually on an adjacent farm or garden, though occasionally through other maintenance work and crafts. Washington Cottage, in the first year, was used to help alleviate the crowding problem, especially of the younger classes, at Chippewa Falls, and those who were still committed to county asylums for the insane. This cottage also originally housed the administrative offices, the laundry, the bakery, a sewing room, the hospital, school and employees' quarters. The power plant and water systems were located in the farm cottage.¹⁸

As the institution grew and the number of transfers from the Northern Wisconsin Home decreased, entrance to the Southern Wisconsin Home was made in one of three ways: commitment by a judge or jury where defendants were "not guilty" by reason of feeble-mindedness; transfer by the Board of Control of any person under commitment to any state or county institution under the jurisdiction of the Board, who is found to be mentally deficient or epileptic; and voluntary admission.¹⁹ Counties were, when the institution first opened, charged \$2.12 per week for the "maintenance" of any inmate from that county.

Although for a short time after its establishment, the Southern Home's objective was to simply house the inmates, its emphasis quickly changed to one of teaching and training to help them assimilate and adapt to future life in society at large. Once this was accomplished, they would be "paroled" and new inmates could be admitted. In reality, however, generally less than ten inmates were paroled in a year and they frequently returned because of an inability to adapt to life outside the institution.

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Upon admittance to the Southern Wisconsin Home, inmates were classified into one of two groups: educable/trainable and helpless. Those who were determined to be suitable for education received training in academic subjects and were given work which resembled "that given to normal children, except that it is simplified to meet the requirements of retarded minds".²⁰ These children also received vocational training, learning such things as bakery, brush making, mat and rug weaving and chair caning. The lower grade class, whose median mental age was estimated at 8 years old in 1934,²¹ were given some vocational education, but were instructed mostly in sense and habit training. The Southern Wisconsin Home always had a larger proportion than the Northern Home of inmates who were totally dependent, and so more of its education programs were training for self care and less academic.²² Education for inmates of the Southern Home was additionally hampered for years due to the lack of a proper school building. Although one was originally planned, funds were always limited and the priority was, for decades, the enlarging of the bed capacity. For many years, until the early 1960s when an education building was finally built, makeshift facilities were used. Often a day room in one of the cottages was equipped and used for that purpose with males being taught in the morning and females in the afternoon.

Construction of new buildings was steady at the Southern Wisconsin Home for almost 2 decades. In 1922, three cottages (4,5 and 6), a refectory and a power plant were begun. They were completed as scheduled but were not immediately occupied because of a lack of heat, light and power. These were finally opened for use in August, 1924, at which time an employee building and new laundry were being built and a 16 foot wide gravel road from the institution to Union Grove was under construction. 1928 saw the erection of a greenhouse, Lincoln Cottage (#6), a hospital (Monroe Cottage-#12), and an infirmary (Hayes Cottage-#13). The onset of the Great Depression significantly affected construction at the Southern Wisconsin Home. Between 1928 and 1950 only one more inmate cottage (Grant Cottage-#3) was built. Several minor additions were made in the 30s, however, including garages, a service building, a machine and blacksmith shop, kitchens and dining rooms, and a few new farm buildings. Landscaping of the grounds was also begun and by 1939, mostly through the efforts of Dr. C. C. Atherton the grounds were extensively groomed with over 1000 trees, hedges, shrubs, and flowers, and looked considerably better than the barren, muddy surroundings that greeted the first inmates.

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Sterilization

In the late 19th Century the science of eugenics (the improvement of hereditary qualities by the control of mating) developed out of the concept of Social Darwinism. The most enduring aspect of this movement were state sterilization laws. There seemed to be a real fear that America would be deluged by the racially inferior or socially inadequate, particularly the feeble-minded. The realization that permanent institutionalization of these people was prohibitively expensive to the state resulted in the rapid passage of eugenic sterilization laws by 16 states, including Wisconsin, between 1907-1917.²⁴

In 1913 the State of Wisconsin passed its State Sterilization Law which stated that if experts, appointed by the Board of Control, and the superintendent of a state institution unanimously found "that procreation is inadvisable, it should be lawful to perform such operation for the prevention of procreation" on inmates in facilities under management or supervision of the Board of Control.²⁵ For almost 30 years following this, well over a thousand inmates, mostly women, were sterilized--especially those about to be released from custody. This policy derived from the belief that, while there were many causes of feeble-mindedness (including head injury, disease in parents, chronic alcoholism and severe illness of mother during pregnancy), the most frequent cause was a pre-existing feeble-mindedness in the genitors.²⁶ And while mental deficient were not considered to be overtly sexual, they were "easily persuaded." The Board of Control considered the feeble-minded women to be:

perhaps the worst offender. She cannot resist the persuasions and temptations that beset her. Society needs to be protected from her. She often is the source of corruption of young men and boys. Irresponsible and innocent of intentional wrong, she brings to our very doors the most destructive and insidious of evils. The immorality and demoralization which thus often accompany the feeble-minded woman through life leave in their train a harvest of illegitimacy and pauperism beyond

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the power of words to portray. The 3 children of feeble-mindedness... Idiocy... Pauperism... and Illegitimacy are monstrosities from which we must protect ourselves.²⁷

For this reason also, the Board of Control tried to give priority to receiving females of child bearing age into both homes "so as to take them out of society to prevent the increase of feeble-minded persons".²⁸

Sterilization operations peaked in the 1930s followed by a slow down during the war years. After the war, a vastly larger and more outspoken mental health movement, aided in part by federal funding, took a new look at the origins and treatment of mental illness and mental retardation, and at the utility of eugenic sterilization laws. The result was a significant decrease in the number of operations performed in Wisconsin and several other states, either because of a refusal to enforce the laws, a shift from compulsory procedures, or outright repeal of the laws.²⁹ Chapter 428 of the Laws of Wisconsin of 1977 finally repealed Wisconsin's law, though it was used infrequently in the 30 years prior.

Changing Philosophy

The institutional philosophy of the Southern Wisconsin Home (like that of the Northern Home) has evolved and changed in the 72 years since it first opened. In 1921, just 3 years after it was established, the Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic changed its name to the Southern Wisconsin Colony and Training School in recognition of the changing attitudes toward mental retardation. It became more widely accepted that "high grade deficient" could be educated and trained to do useful work in the greater society, rather than just "housed" at an institution. For several decades following, emphasis was on schooling and training in a "sheltered workshop" atmosphere, and the number of teachers employed grew steadily. "Inmates" began to be referred to as "patients", and later still, as "residents" and then "clients". Also, rather than being labeled "feeble-minded", the terms "mentally retarded" and now "developmentally disabled" have become more acceptable. Construction continued through the 1950s and early 1960s to help alleviate overcrowding and make the institutional atmosphere less

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oppressive. The facility's population hit a high in 1960 with an average daily population of 1,521, but then, like Northern Colony, it decreased sharply in the 1970s. As community services expanded to meet the needs of the less developmentally disabled, and as the societal trend was to deinstitutionalize as many residents as possible, Southern Wisconsin Colony began experiencing a trend toward the admission of more profoundly and severely retarded individuals.³⁰ Even so, these residents are known to be capable of more than ever before thought, and so emphasis is still on educating and training them. In 1975 the name of the facility was again changed (Chapter 224), this time to The Southern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled, and the "sheltered workshop" became known as the "work activity training center," both in an effort to be more sensitive to changing perceptions. The resident population was at its lowest in 1988 with an average daily population of 618 and it now has a rated bed capacity budgeted at 653.³¹

Health/Medicine Significance

The Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic represents significant continuing efforts of the State of Wisconsin toward the care, treatment and education of its mentally retarded, which grew out of the social reform movement of the Progressive Era. The Southern Wisconsin Home was constructed as a result of severe overcrowding at the Northern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded at Chippewa Falls, the first institution of this nature in the state. Further, the facility is representative of the treatment philosophy of the early 20th Century. Mental "defective" persons were no longer classified and housed together with no differentiation of problems and needs. Science had progressed to a better understanding of mental retardation and mental illness and separate institutions were established throughout the state. Within these institutions, care and treatment were further segregated. Residents of the Southern Wisconsin Home were evaluated and given training and education appropriate to their ability. The buildings in the nominated district, based on the "cottage plan," reflect the Progressive Era attitude that the mentally retarded were no longer to be considered an embarrassment to be hidden from society. Rather, they could and should be productive citizens, educated and trained in the "home-like" atmosphere of the facility to make a smooth transition back into society at large.

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Archeological Potential

There are no known archeological sites or remains associated with this district. In addition, the extent to which this district was disturbed by earlier agricultural activity and by the construction of the districts' resources is not known, but the potential for such disturbance is believed to be considerable.

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- 1 Barbara Wyatt, ed., "Social and Political Movements," in Wisconsin Cultural Resources Management Plan: Vol. III, (Madison, Wi.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), pp. 7-10.
- 2 Bennett O. Odegard and George M. Keith, A History of the State Board of Control of Wisconsin and the State Institutions, (Madison, Wi.: State Board of Control, 1939), pp.179.
- 3 Wyatt, "Social and Political Movements," pp.7-10.
- 4 Odegard, pp.180.
- 5 Ibid, pp.177.
- 6 Wyatt, "Social and Political Movements," pp.7-11.
- 7 Wisconsin State Blue Book, 1989-1990, pp.845.
- 8 Wyatt, "Social and Political Movement," pp.7-10.
- 9 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1911-1915), pp.17.
- 10 Ibid, pp.17.
- 11 Ibid, pp.17.
- 12 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1913-1914), pp.112.
- 13 David J. Rothman, Conscience and Convince: The Asylum and its Alternatives in Progressive America, (Boston, Mass: Little, Brown and Co., 1980), pp.165.
- 14 Ibid, pp.271-273.
- 15 Ibid, pp.180-183.

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16 Dr. C.C. Atherton, "Colony Background," Unpublished manuscript located in Wisconsin Historic Preservation Division Site Files (N.D).

17 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1919-1920), pp.10.

18 Ibid, pp.17.

19 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1935-1936), pp.380.

20 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1921-1922), pp.88.

21 Wyatt, "Social and Political Movement," pp.7-11.

22 Organization and Services of the Wisconsin State Department of Public Welfare, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1958), pp.32.

23 Henry Klimovicz, "The Story of Southern Colony," Hi-Light, (April, 1964), pp.4.

24 Jonas Robitscher, Eugenic Sterilization, (Springfield, Ill: Charles C. Thomas, 1973), pp.30.

25 Wisconsin Session Laws: Acts, Resolutions and Memorials, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1913), Chapter 693.

26 Odegard, pp.177.

27 Ibid, pp.177.

28 Wisconsin State Board of Control Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1919-1920), pp.11.

29 Robitscher, pp.25.

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30 Wisconsin Public Welfare Department Biennial Reports, (Madison, Wi: Democrat Printing Co., 1964-1966), pp.16.

31 Wisconsin State Blue Book, (Madison, Wi: Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, 1989-1990), pp.806.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Previous documentation on file (NPS): X see continuation sheet
 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:
 X State Historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 37 acres

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/1/1/6/8/0</u>	<u>4/7/2/7/4/7/0</u>	B	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/1/1/4/4/0</u>	<u>4/7/2/7/1/1/0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/1/1/4/4/0</u>	<u>4/7/2/6/9/2/0</u>	D	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/1/1/1/9/0</u>	<u>4/7/2/7/1/9/0</u>

 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

 X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

 X See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tricia Canaday, James Draeger/Architectural Historian
organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 1/24/91
street & number 816 State Street telephone (608)262-1339
city or town Madison state WI zip code 53706

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at the intersection of the south curblineline of Elm Road and the west curblineline of Hickory Road, then south along the west curblineline of Hickory Road approximately 2300 feet to the north curblineline of Oak Street, then west along the north curblineline of Oak Street approximately 2000 feet, then continue west past the south side of cottage #4 (Map #102) in a straight line to the west curblineline of Pine Road, then south along the west curblineline of Pine Road to the northwest curblineline of Parking Lot B, then southwest along the northwest curblineline of Parking Lot B, then northwest along the northeast curblineline of Parking Lot B, then from the northeast corner of the parking lot north to the southeast corner of Parking Lot G, then along the east curblineline of Parking Lot G to the northeast corner, then along the north curblineline of Parking Lot G to the northwest corner of Parking Lot G, then generally west to the southern corner of Well House #2 (Map #203), then northwest approximately 160 feet, then northeast approximately 100 feet, then generally northwest approximately 70 feet, then northeast approximately 75 feet to the west curblineline of the service road, then southeast approximately 70 feet, then northeast along the north curblineline of Parking Lot M, then generally southeast to the south curblineline of Elm Road, then east along the south curblineline of Elm Road to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Southern Wisconsin Home Historic District include only those properties which date from the institution's historic period of significance and are within the perimeter of the present property of the Southern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled.

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Southern Wisconsin Home Historic District, Town of Dover, WI
James Draeger, Photographer; photos taken on August 3, 1990
Negatives on file at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The above information applies to all photos of the Southern
Wisconsin Home Historic District.

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Cottages #2 (Map #101) and #3 (Map #111) looking Southwest
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Cottage #1 (Map #109) looking Northwest
- 3 of 13
Cottage #2 (Map #101) looking Southwest
- 4 of 13
Cottage #4 (Map #102) looking Northwest
- 5 of 13
Connection between Cottages #3 (Map #111) and #4 (Map #102)
looking West
- 6 of 13
Gymnasium (Map #112) looking West
- 7 of 13
Cottage #12 (Map #108) looking Southwest
- 8 of 13
Superintendents' Residence (Map #301) looking Northwest
- 9 of 13
Engineer's Building (Map #407) and Paint Shop (Map #206)
looking North
- 10 of 13
Power House (Map #201) looking West

X see continuation sheet

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- 11 of 13
Machine and Carpenter Shop (Map #211) looking Northeast
- 12 of 13
Laundry Building (Map #208) looking Southwest
- 13 of 13
Well House #2 (Map #203) looking Northwest

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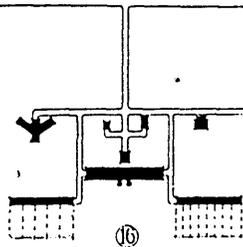
Section number Owner Page 1

Owner:

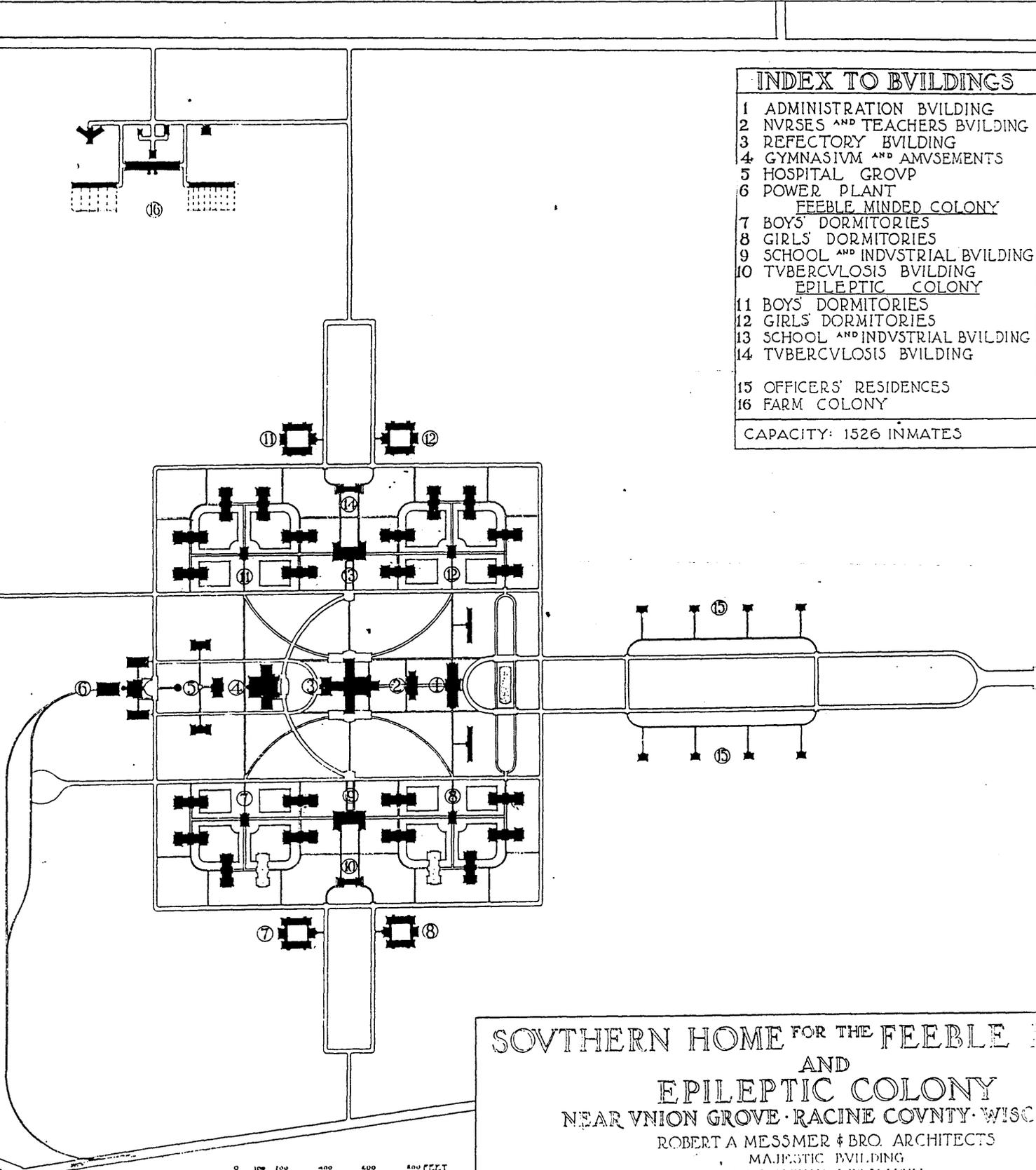
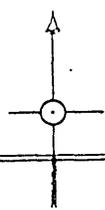
Department of Health and Social Services
1 West Wilson Street
Madison, WI 53703

APPENDIX A

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN HOME HISTORIC DISTRICT
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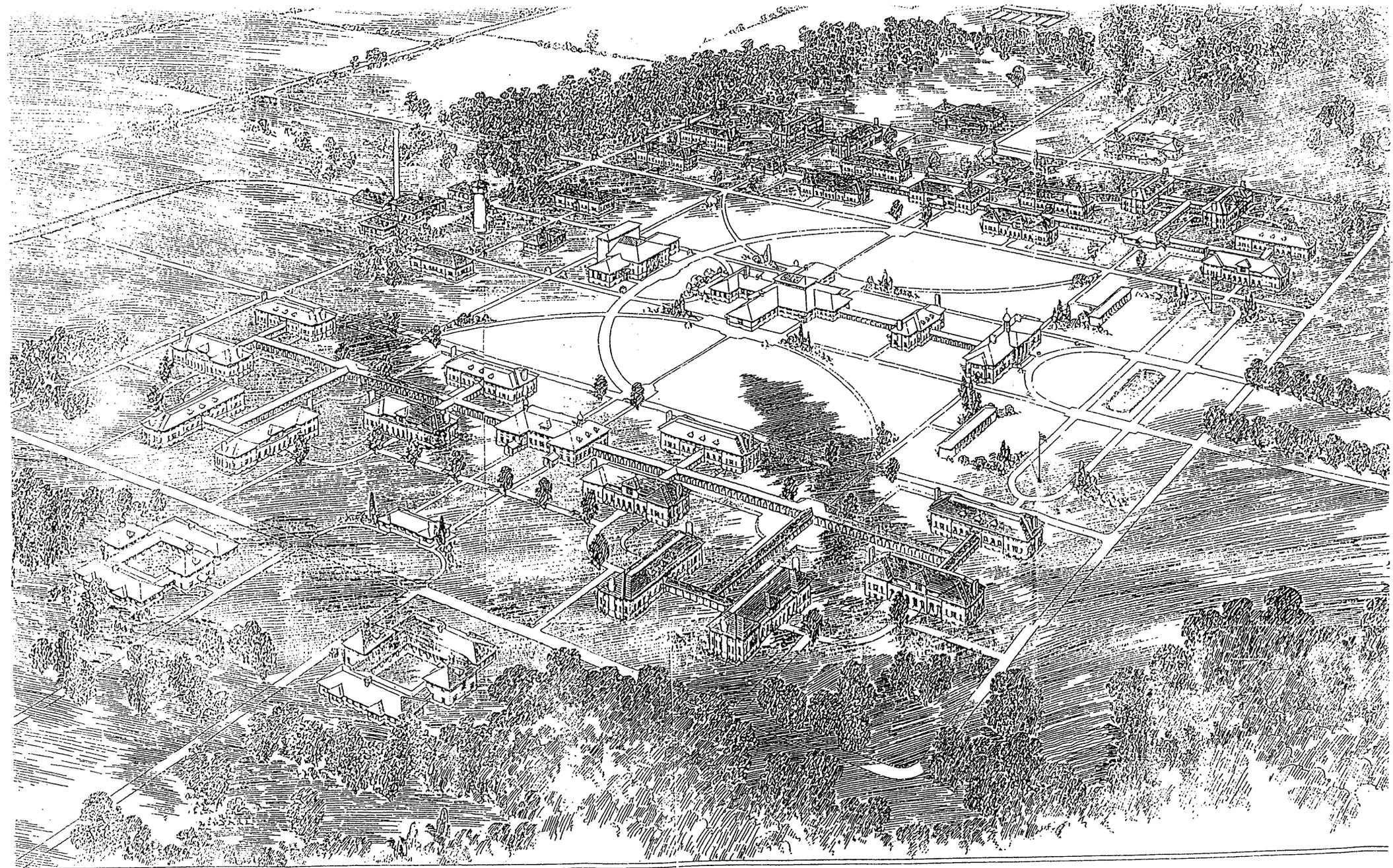


INDEX TO BVILDINGS	
1	ADMINISTRATION BVILDING
2	NVRSES AND TEACHERS BVILDING
3	REFECTORY BVILDING
4	GYMNASIVM AND AMVSEMENTS
5	HOSPITAL GROVP
6	POWER PLANT
<u>FEEBLE MINDED COLONY</u>	
7	BOYS' DORMITORIES
8	GIRLS' DORMITORIES
9	SCHOOL AND INDVSTRIAL BVILDING
10	TVBERCVLOSIS BVILDING
<u>EPILEPTIC COLONY</u>	
11	BOYS' DORMITORIES
12	GIRLS' DORMITORIES
13	SCHOOL AND INDVSTRIAL BVILDING
14	TVBERCVLOSIS BVILDING
15	OFFICERS' RESIDENCES
16	FARM COLONY
CAPACITY: 1526 INMATES	



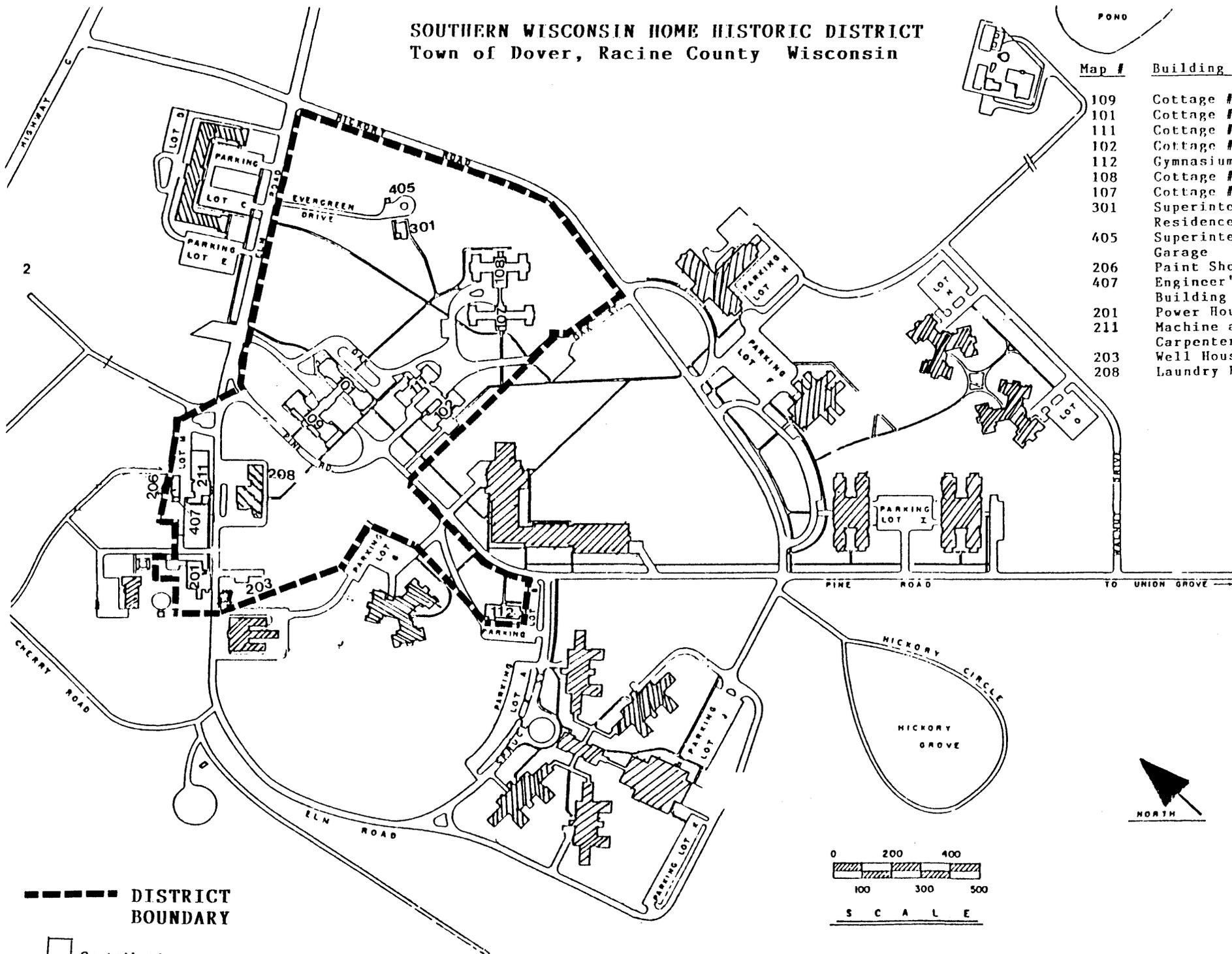
SOUTHERN HOME FOR THE FEEBLE
AND
EPILEPTIC COLONY
NEAR UNION GROVE · RACINE COVNTY · WISC
ROBERT A MESSMER & BRO. ARCHITECTS
MAJESTIC BVILDING
MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN

APPENDIX B



SOUTHERN HOME FOR THE FEEBLE MINDED
SOUTHERN WISCONSIN HOME HISTORIC DISTRICT
Town of Dover, Racine County, WI

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN HOME HISTORIC DISTRICT
Town of Dover, Racine County Wisconsin



Map #	Building Name
109	Cottage #1
101	Cottage #2
111	Cottage #3
102	Cottage #4
112	Gymnasium
108	Cottage #12
107	Cottage #13
301	Superintendents' Residence
405	Superintendents' Garage
206	Paint Shop
407	Engineer's Building
201	Power House
211	Machine and Carpenter Shops
203	Well House #2
208	Laundry Building

----- DISTRICT BOUNDARY

□ Contributing
 ▨ Non-Contributing

