

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received **JUL 2 1986**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Center Building, Minnesota Hospital for the Insane
and/or common Center Building (Old Main), St. Peter State Hospital

2. Location

street & number Freeman Drive N/A not for publication
city, town St. Peter N/A vicinity of
state Minnesota code 22 county Nicollet code 103

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Hospital

4. Owner of Property

name Minnesota Dept. of Human Services - Leonard Levine, Commissioner
street & number 4th Floor; Centennial Office Building
city, town St. Paul N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 55155

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Nicollet County Courthouse
street & number N/A
city, town St. Peter state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State-Owned Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1977-1978 federal state county local
depository for survey records Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
Minnesota Historical Society -- Fort Snelling History Center
city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on the brow of a hill overlooking the Minnesota River Valley, the Center Building dominates the campus of St. Peter State Hospital. The building as it stands today is all that remains of a much larger complex built between 1867 and 1878 after the widely-used "linear" or "Kirkbride" plan, whereby a central administration/services building designed to resemble a large house was flanked by extended dormitory wings housing the patients. These wings were demolished in the late 1960s.

The Center Building is a four-story, gable-roofed rectangular block of rather severe Classic Revival design. The bearing walls are of limestone ashlar quarried on the site and laid up in coursed broken range, the body of the building hammer-dressed and the trim rubbed smooth. The three-bay southeast entrance front is capped by a low-pitched pedimented gable and features the building's principal gesture toward "home" imagery, a flat-roofed cast-iron portico protecting the arched second-story entry and approached by a single flight of limestone stairs. These stairs, with their sweeping stone side rails and ornamental newels, are in poor repair and have been closed since 1970; entrance to the building is now only on the ground floor, through the arched openings under the porch behind the stairs. The paired Tuscan columns and single square pilasters of the portico support a simplified Corinthian entablature; a low balustrade surrounds the roof deck. Also in cast iron is the buildings modillioned roof cornice.

On the front (southeast) and back (northwest) facades, the double-hung, six-over-six-light windows are arranged in pairs. The openings are treated in an Italianate manner, with stone sills and round-arched (second and third stories) or stilted segmental-arched (first and fourth stories) heads on the front. On the other facades, straight lintels are also used. Aluminum combination storms added by the early 1970s close the tops of the arched openings. The side facades are divided into nine bays of single windows, with other windows, including two bull's eyes, placed in an ad hoc fashion around the former wing connections. These connections are clearly visible where the masonry surface has been plastered and incised with lines to imitate stone joints. Metal fire escapes have also been added at these areas.

Besides the cornice, portico, and window trim, this deliberately plain building is ornamented only by a water table above the low basement windows, quoins at the corners, and a tablet in the front pediment bearing the date 1866 -- the year the state legislature established the St. Peter hospital. The rear pediment carries a bull's eye window, now filled by a ventilating louver.

A usual feature of Kirkbride-plan hospitals was a tower or cupola to emphasize the importance of the center, to serve as a landmark, and to add "distinction." The St. Peter Center Building had such a cupola, a squat octagonal drum with round-arched lights and a dormered, concave-profile spire. By 1908 this had been replaced with the four large metal ventilators that currently occupy the ridge. The building's first elevator was also in use by 1908; the current elevator, its penthouse penetrating the roof at the center of the northeast slope, was installed in 1959. High on each slope of the roof are four tiny eyebrow dormers, and of numerous small chimneys that originally existed at the outside wall lines, two on each side remain. The roofing material, originally slate, is now asphalt shingles.

(See Continuation Sheet)

**United States Department of the Interior
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Center Building, Minnesota Hospital for the Insane, St. Peter
Nicollet County, Minnesota

Continuation sheet

Owner

Item number 4

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Date entered

Mr. Joseph Solien
Chief Executive Officer
St. Peter Regional Treatment Center
St. Peter, Minnesota 56082

Ms. Sandra J. Hale
Commissioner
Department of Administration
200 State Administration Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

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Center Building, St. Peter State Hospital

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number 7

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A single-story wing extends northwest from the back of the Center Building, formerly to connect with the power plant building. The wing, of the same limestone as the Center Building, is divided into six bays, with flat-lintelled windows on the southwest facade and large, segmental-arched door openings on the northeast. The power plant has been demolished, and a concrete block shop addition built in its place. The wing itself has been reroofed, and some of its openings have been infilled with brick, glass block, and metal windows.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1867-1878 **Builder/Architect** Samuel Sloan, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Center Building at St. Peter State Hospital, the original permanent building of the first mental hospital established in Minnesota, was built between 1867 and 1878 to designs by the nationally-known architect Samuel Sloan, and embodies the hospital design theories of Dr. Thomas Kirkbride, a pioneer in the treatment of mental illness who also served as consultant on the design of this building. It is the earliest surviving representative of a long line of monumental buildings commissioned by the state for its social institutions.

When the Minnesota legislature established the state's first hospital for the mentally ill at St. Peter in 1866, the trustees followed the most advanced current thinking in adopting the "linear" plan espoused by Dr. Thomas Kirkbride of Philadelphia in his On the Construction, Organization and General Arrangements of Hospitals for the Insane (1854, expanded edition 1880). Kirkbride's widely-followed formula called for a central administration building flanked by extended dormitory wings housing the patients. The administration building was intended to provide a sense of stability both functionally, by housing such community services as kitchen, dining rooms and chapel in addition to administrative offices and staff quarters; and visually, by physically resembling a fine, large house which patients and staff alike could identify with and think of as their own.

Samuel Sloan, also of Philadelphia, had received national recognition for his popular pattern book The Model Architect (1852, reprinted 1860, 1868, 1873). Possibly more important to the trustees in selecting him as architect for the new facility was the fact that Sloan had begun his career as Kirkbride's protege, designing in all 32 hospitals organized on his system. For the St. Peter building, Kirkbride himself was engaged as a consultant, one of thirteen such collaborations known to have taken place.

The dormitory wings of St. Peter State Hospital were demolished in the late 1960s. Architecturally, it is a testimonial to the success both of Kirkbride's concept and of Sloan's realization of it that the Center Building retains its integrity as a complete and unified design, while clearly exhibiting the evidence of its former dependencies. The Center Building remains the symbolic "head" of the St. Peter State Hospital.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre.

Quadrangle name St. Peter, Minn.

Quadrangle scale 1 : 24000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	2	2	0	0	0	4	9	0	6	0	8	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

From the west corner of the intersection of T.H. 295 and Freeman Drive, proceed 30° west of south 1300' to Point 1; thence 30° north of west 600' to Point 2.

Thence 30° north of west 300' to Point 3; thence 30° west of south 100' to Point 4; thence

30° south of east 300' to Point 5; thence 30° east of north 100' to return to Point 2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert Ferguson, Research Associate

organization MacDonald and Mack Partnership date 30 September 1985

street & number 305 Grain Exchange Building telephone 612-341-4051

city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota 55415

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Russell W. Fridley

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6/24/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Alloren Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 7-31-86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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Center Building, Minnesota Hospital for the Insane, St. Peter,
Nicollet County, Minnesota

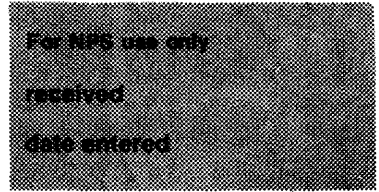
Continuation sheet

Resource Count

Item number

8

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The Center Building, Minnesota Hospital for the Insane nomination
contains 1 contributing building.

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Center Building, St. Peter State Hospital

Continuation sheet Bibliographical References Item number 9

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bond, Earl D., M.D. Dr. Kirkbride and his Mental Hospital. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1947.

Hurd, Henry M., and others. The Institutional Care of the Insane in the United States and Canada. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1916.

Murphy, Patricia. The Public Buildings of the State of Minnesota: An Architectural Heritage. St. Paul, Minnesota: State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society, July, 1985.

Sloan, Samuel. Sloan's Victorian Buildings. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1980. Reprint of The Model Architect, Philadelphia: E. S. Jones & Co., 1852, with introduction by Harold N. Coledge, Jr.

First Annual Report of the Board of Trustees and Officers of the Minnesota Hospital for Insane to the Governor of the State of Minnesota, for the Year 1867. St. Paul: Press Printing Company, 1868.

First Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Minnesota Hospital for Insane from the Opening of the Institution, Dec. 6, 1866, to Nov. 30, 1867. St. Paul: Pioneer Printing Company, 1868.

"The Kirkbride Plan." Hospital and Community Psychiatry, XXVII (7 July 1976), 473-477.

Various historic photographs on file at the Hospital Museum, St. Peter State Hospital.

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

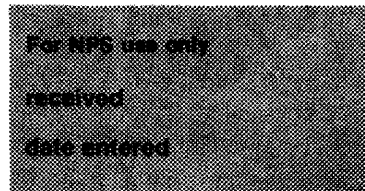
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Center Building, Minnesota Hospital for the Insane, St. Peter,
Nicollet County, Minnesota.

Continuation sheet Verbal Boundary Desc.

Item number 10

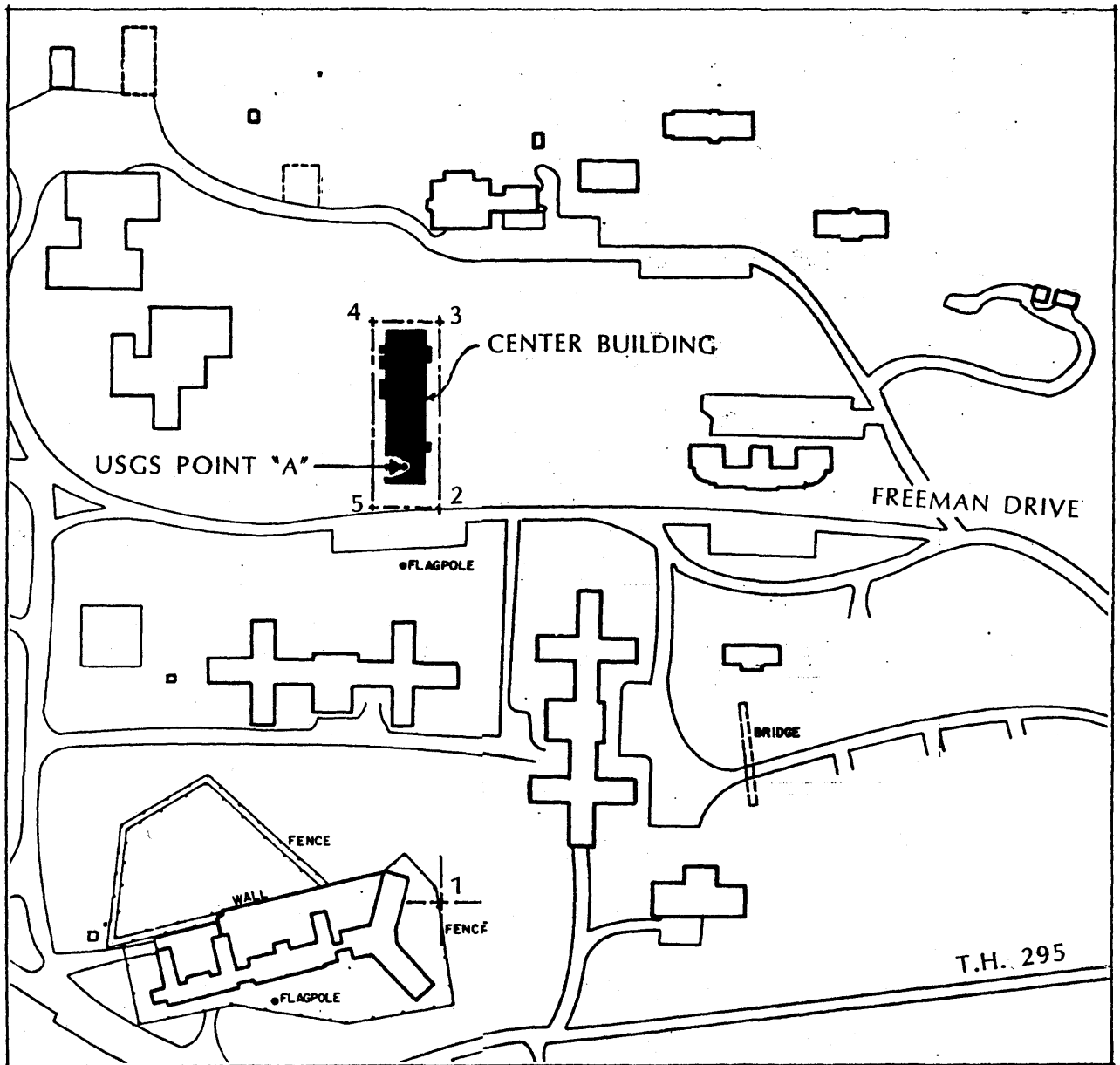
Page 1



From the West Corner of the intersection of Trunk Highway 295 and Freeman Drive, proceed 30° west of south, 1300 Feet to Point 1; thence 30° north of west, 600 Feet to Point 2; thence 30° north of west, 300 Feet to Point 3; thence 30° west of south, 100 Feet to Point 4; thence 30° south of east, 300 Feet to Point 5; thence 30° east of north, 100 Feet to return to Point 2.

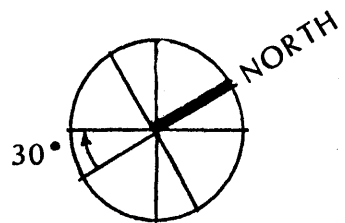
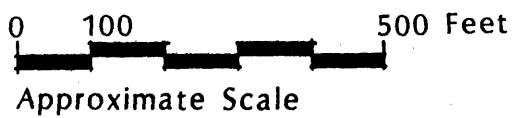
[Verbal Boundary Description and Justification corresponds to map entitled "Center Building St. Peter State Hospital" submitted with this nomination]

This Verbal Boundary Description and Justification is exactly as it appears on the original nomination form in Item 10. However, for reasons of clarity, it has been re-typed on a continuation sheet with reference to the corresponding map.



CENTER BUILDING

St. Peter State Hospital



Source: American Appraisal Company map, "St. Peter's State Hospital."
June 30, 1977.