

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

**1. Name**

historic Potosi Brewery

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Highway 133, Main St. \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Potosi \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 3rd

state Wisconsin code 55 county Grant code 043

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: none

**4. Owner of Property**

name Eastman Cartwright Lumber Co., & William Schaht, Pres.

street & number RFD 3, Highway 61

city, town Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53813

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grant County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53813

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Wisconsin  
title Inventory of Historic Places \_\_\_\_\_ has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53706

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The two buildings included in this nomination are the brewing plant and the bottling plant. Both structures are located on the south part of the town of Potosi, along state highway 133. The brewing plant is a very large rectangular building, three stories in height, about 100 feet in length by 30 feet in width, constructed of red brick and covered with a flat tar roof. A central brewing tower, also of red brick, is located along the center of the front (east) facade of the building. The building is in deteriorated condition, with most of the numerous windows broken out. The interior is empty, save for discarded crates and a random assortment of trash, but the floors and walls are intact and sturdy. All brewing machinery has been removed.

The bottling plant is also of red brick, with the right (south) side of the front facade consisting of an ornamental false front with round-arched windows and denticulated. The left side is plain and, at three stories in height, is one story taller than the right side. Like the brewing plant, the bottling plant is covered with a flat tar roof and has many windows broken out. At the rear (east) of the building, a large aluminum-sided warehouse has been added as a wing. The interior of the bottling plant is in similar condition to the brewing plant. Several other buildings at the site, including empty frame warehouses, and a company tavern, are either privately owned or unused, and do not contribute to the nomination. At the present time, plans have been made for the remaining brewery properties, including the brewing and bottling plants, to be renovated for use as a brewery museum.

## 8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1852<sup>1</sup> Builder/Architect unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Potosi Brewery represents the once prevalent occurrence of breweries as local industries in Wisconsin. The Potosi Brewery's market, which centered about the village of Potosi, provided sufficient business to keep it operating for over a century. The Brewery acted as an important economic force in the community. Wise management by the Brewery owners, as well as a good location, enabled Potosi beer to be sold over much of Wisconsin and portions of Iowa and Illinois. Potosi's reputation, as a result, was much more extensive than most breweries of a comparable size.

### Industry

The Potosi Brewery was originally known as the Gabriel Hall<sup>u</sup> brewery, that being the name of the man who built the original structure. Hall's operation, however, lasted only until 1879, and the brewery was vacant for 7 years. Then, in 1886, a German immigrant named Adam Schumacher purchased the site, gave the brewery his name and together with three brothers began producing a "traditional German lager beer."<sup>2</sup> This inaugurated the business controlled by the Schumacher family for almost 90 years. In 1906, the brothers incorporated under the name Potosi Brewing company, with Adam Schumacher as president and members of his family in the major positions of treasurer and brewmaster. This was to be the habit for rest of the brewery's operation: Schumachers supervising every facet of production and sale.<sup>3</sup>

During the twentieth century, the Potosi Brewing Co. was able to outlast most other small breweries due to foresight and carefully planned expansion. With the advent of prohibition, for instance, the Schumachers installed dealcoholizing equipment and maintained production.<sup>4</sup> At its height, the brewery produced over 75,000 barrels of beer annually. It also acted as the town's single largest employer. In 1972, however, the business succumbed: a losing struggle to larger competitors and the fact that the business "ran out of Schumachers willing to continue the enterprise" forced it to be closed. During the next year all major brewing equipment was sold; the buildings have been vacant ever since.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Wayne L. Kroll, Badger Breweries, Past and Present (1976), p. 114.

<sup>2</sup>Grant County History (1976), Edward Ragatz, "History of the Potosi Brewing Company," p. 418-419.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 419-421.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 422-423; the State Historical Society of Wisconsin has recently obtained the Potosi Brewery's old records on operations and production. These are currently on deposit at the archives division, but access is restricted.

<sup>5</sup>Ragatz, p. 423-425; Kroll, p. 114.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Wayne L. Kroll, Badger Breweries, Past and Present, Madison, 1976.

Grant County History, Lancaster, 1976.

# 10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 3-1/2

Quadrangle name Potosi, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>5</u>	<u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>5</u>	<u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
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D			
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E			
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F			
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G			
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H			
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

All of lots 25,26,27,28,29, 33 and 35, and the southern 1/3 of lots 30 and 31 of the Plat of Van Buren, a part of the village of Potosi, Wisconsin.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laverne C. Ihm, President

organization Potosi Township Historical Society date March 17, 1980

street & number 2627 N. 114th Street telephone (414) 774-3966

city or town Potosi state Wisconsin 53226

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Richard Kenny

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 4/28/80

For HCRS use only

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

Joseph W. Ray Keeper of the National Register date 11/19/80

Attest: Grada Hunt Mc Clelland date 11-17-80

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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POTOSI BREWERY, Main Street, Potosi, Grant County, Wisconsin

Continuation sheet

1

Item number 7,8

Page 1

Corrections and Additions:

7. Description:

The lower stories of the brewing plant are constructed of locally-quarried limestone and date from 1852. The brick portions of the brewing plant were added about 1900 along with the frame brewing tower which is located at the south end of the plant. The brick bottling works located across the street were constructed in 1902 and feature a "boomtown" facade on the north end(left side in the photograph) and a two-story false-front brick building with a metal cornice on the south end(center of the photograph) of the group. Numerous additions have been made to both plants over the years, including a large aluminum-sided warehouse located to the rear of the bottling works, none of which contribute to the nomination.

8. Significance:

additional specific dates: 1890-1900: period of construction of brick additions to the brewery and of the frame brewing tower.\*

1902: date of construction of the bottling works.\*\*

correction to text:

The original brewery was constructed by Gabriel Hail(not Hall) in 1852.

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\*Grant County History(1976), Edward Ragatz, "History of the Potosi Brewing Company," p. 420.

\*\*Ibid., p. 421

Submitted by  
Michael R. Matucheski  
Preservation Assistant  
(11/03/80)

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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980

Continuation sheet

Item number 11

Page

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Form Prepared by:

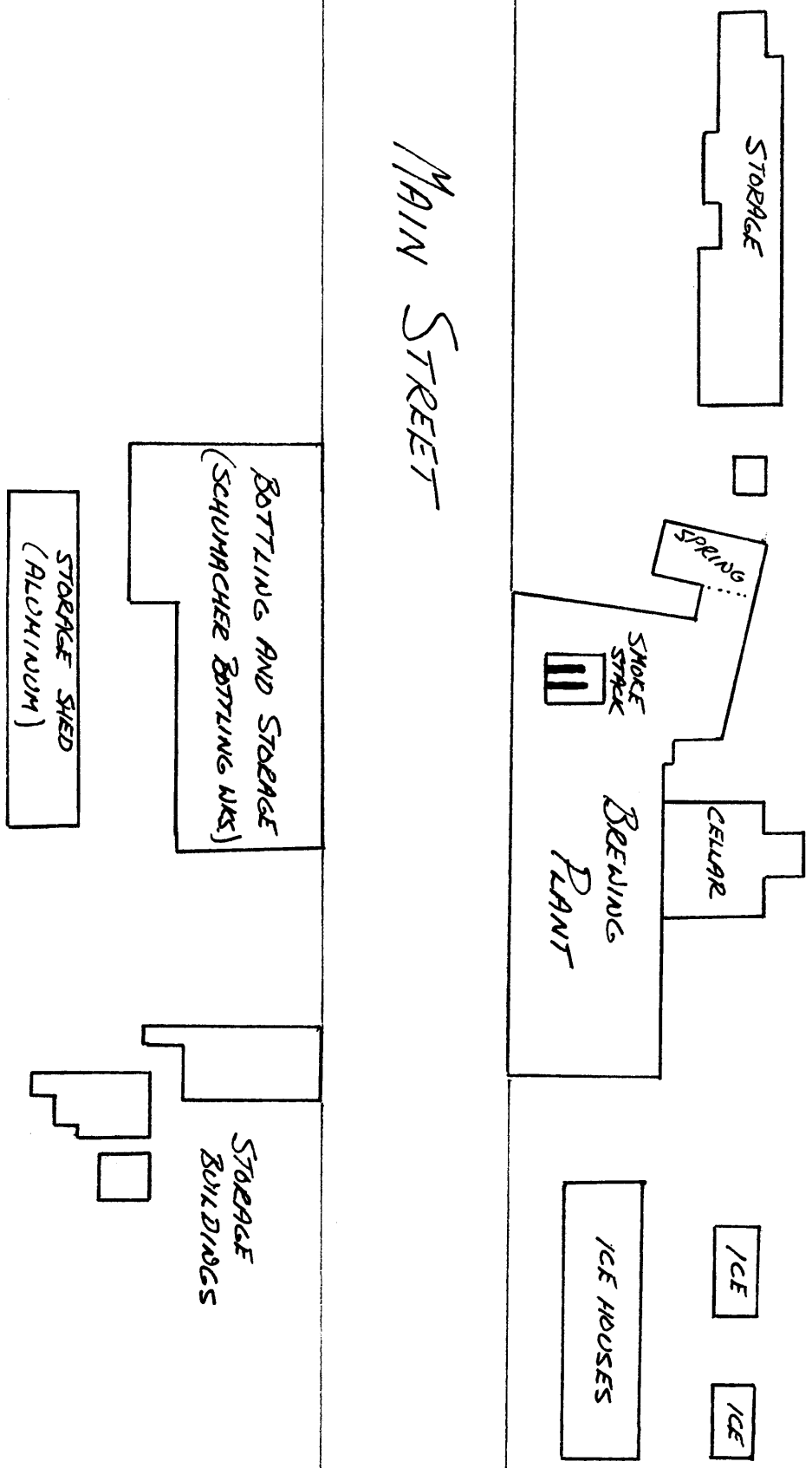
Terry L. Shoptaugh, Historian  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
816 State Street  
Madison

(608) 262-3390  
Wisconsin 53706

POTOSI BEWERY  
SITE PLAN



MAIN STREET



NOV 12 1980