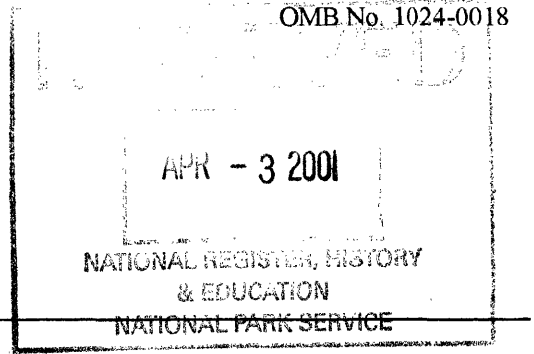


501

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name 1916 Buffalo High School
other names/site number Buffalo-Tower City Senior High School / 32CS2154

2. Location

street & number 303 Pearl Street North N/A not for publication
city or town Buffalo N/A vicinity
state North Dakota code ND county Cass code 017 zip code 58011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title *Shelva E. Powers*
State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)

3-15-01
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the
 National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the
 National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Edson A. Beal
Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action 5/10/01

1916 Buffalo High School
Name of Property

Cass, ND
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
(Check as many boxes as apply)	(Check only one box)	(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/ NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

WOOD: shingle

other WOOD

METAL: tin

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

1916 Buffalo High School
Name of Property

Cass, ND
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1916

Significant Dates

1916

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: O'Shea, A. J. - Assumed

Builder: Meineke Building Co. Fargo, ND

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:
Buffalo Historical Society, Inc.

1916 Buffalo High School
Name of Property

Cass, ND
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	Zone	Easting	Northing	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
	14	610420	5197200				
2	Zone	Easting	Northing	4	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet.

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dale Roland Bentley -Chairman

organization City of Buffalo Historic Preservation Commission date 12-20-2000

street & number 305 4th St N telephone 701-633-5259

city or town Buffalo state ND zip code 58011-0113

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets:

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

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

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

name Buffalo Historical Society, Inc.

street & number 204-206 Wilcox Avenue North telephone 701-633-5259

city or town Buffalo state ND zip code 58011-0014

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

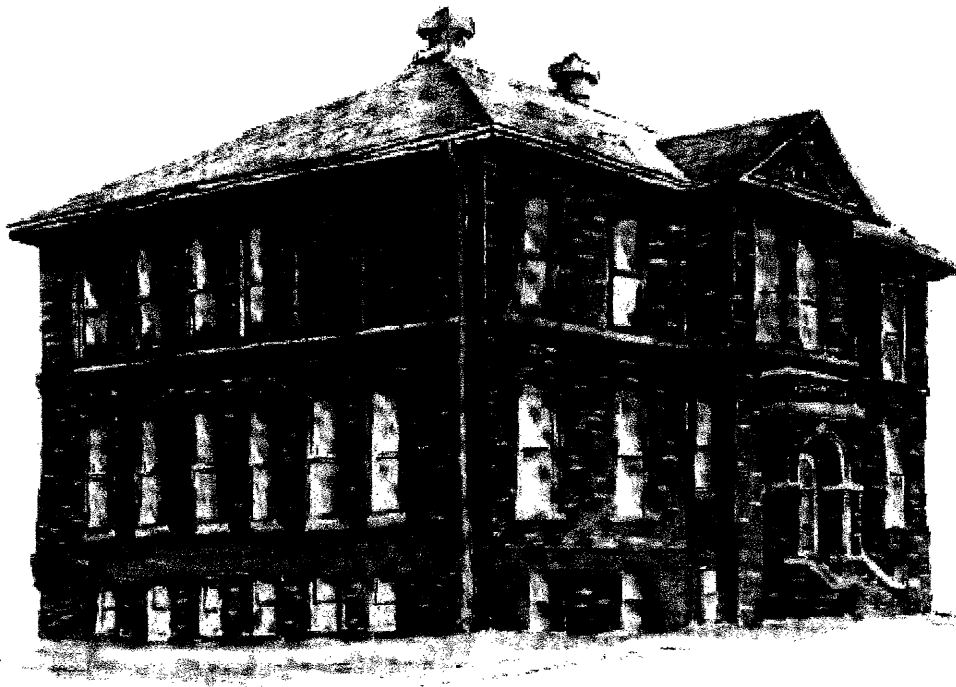


Figure 1. Sketch of the 1916 Buffalo High School

The 1916 Buffalo High School located at 303 Pearl Street North, sits almost directly in the center of the city's original townsite plat of New Buffalo, Dakota Territory, now Buffalo, North Dakota. The structure is one block north of Main Street and the local business section. The area surrounding the high school contains three historic church buildings, numerous historic homes, and the village blacksmith shop. The tree lined gravel streets are shaded by mature ash trees, a variety of oak trees, and enormous cottonwoods. A "snowstorm" in July is one of nature's beautiful gifts as one walks the sidewalks here under the cottonwoods.

The Buffalo High School building itself faces south and is set near the center of the southwest quarter of the block; its front is located about forty-five feet from the sidewalk that parallels Pearl Street North. The sidewalk leading to its entrance is wide and spacious. Walking north toward the front steps of the school, one is reminded of a time when buildings were constructed to "set a tone", or more simply put, to inspire awe and respect. Young people were most certainly reminded of just how small in scale they were, as they ascended these steps making their way inside to attend classes for the day. It seems that all features of the building were designed on a grand scale.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (continued)

The building is a statement of Classical Revival architecture, with its rectangular shape, symmetrical facades, windows aligned horizontally and vertically in symmetrical rows and projecting front gable with pediment. As in their Georgian and Adam prototypes, the principal areas of elaboration in Classical Revival buildings are the entrances, cornices and windows. The decorative entablature on the 1916 High School, with carved sandstone dentils and keystone above the archway at the main entrance, adds classic detailing to the front façade. The elegant half round lunette windows placed as a fanlight above the double door front entrance, compliments the smaller half round lunette window located in the pediment at the roof line of the building. The doors themselves are recessed inward in the manner of an early Classical Revival portico. The inscription "High School" is engraved in the cast concrete stones above the arch. Inside the archway on either side of the doors are "hand-carved" names, initials and other graffiti:

Pinky, Cole, Kathy, Randy, Gary, Ries, Amy, J.G., A.N., C.C.; and the lovebirds: NP & TS, DC + EK, and Tracy + Tim.

One feature of the building that doesn't follow the standards for Classic Revival style is the wide overhang of the eaves. This seems to be an element included in the design to suit the weather conditions encountered in North Dakota, or maybe a hint of the "Italianate" style that was predominant in the architecture of the earlier 1902 Public School building. The eaves are almost three feet wide, and the soffits are lined with tongue and groove wainscoting. Under the eaves are broad and heavy looking decorative modillions, which in earlier Adam styles supplanted the rather blocky looking dentils of the Georgian style, a curved cornice moulding lies underneath the modillions.

The two-story building atop the raised basement appears massive, solid and impressive. Sitting on a foundation of poured concrete, the building is constructed of a reddish colored brick and joined together with a similarly colored reddish mortar. The building is sixty feet wide and forty-five feet deep, making it the largest building in town. The first floor of the arched entrance section projects out about three feet and is capped with carved sandstone, while the section above the entrance on the second floor projects about two feet from the rest of the building, continuing up to the gabled pediment. The water table of the building is located sixteen brick courses above grade level. It is five courses high, then two courses of half-brick width corbeling are noted before the main body of the wall begins.

The forest green painted wood windows on the building are enormous; each full window measures eight feet, ten inches tall and forty-four inches wide! There are seventy-one windows in the building. Thirty-three of these windows are full size and make up a significant portion of the wall space. The window design consists of two sets of double hung sashes. The outer set of sashes is meant to function as a storm window by creating a insulative pocket of air, and accomplishes this without the hassle of removing a traditional stationary storm to allow the windows to open in warmer weather. Owing to the number and size of the windows, this was certainly a planning consideration incorporated into the building's design by an innovative, experienced architect. Window sills are made of carved sandstone and have a rusticated appearance. A belt course of similar cast concrete encircles the building at the sill height of the second floor windows.

The wide overhang of the eaves is complemented with cream colored cornice molding, substantial modillions, soffits lined with wainscoting, and a decorative fascia board. The hipped roof is covered by asphalt shingles with wooden shakes

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (continued)

remaining on the west side. It was originally constructed with integrated gutters which, with no maintenance over the years, have failed. Two large tin vents, part of the ventilation system, protrude from the roof-line at the peak, while a decorative tin globe finial graces the peak of the gable above the entrance.

The front façade of the building features three levels of symmetrically placed windows. Two sets are located at each level on either side of the gable projection of the front elevation. The windows at the basement level throughout the building are just under four feet high. On the two sides of the entrance projection there are slim windows at the basement and first floor levels. There are two windows located on the front of the projection on the second floor above the main entrance that are slightly smaller than the rest of the windows on the front elevation. As mentioned, there are also two lunette windows, one above the doors and another in the gable. The two metal front entrance doors are not original.

The west elevation of the building contains three levels of six symmetrically placed windows. To preserve the symmetry of the Classical Revival design on the second floor, the northern most window and the two southern most windows are merely indicated by a recessed area that is bricked in. This is original. Inside, the space is utilized by an architect-designed air exchange ventilation system. Historically there was a fire escape on this elevation exiting from the second floor.

The north elevation of the building contains the rear entrance on the first floor. The entrance was a single, forty-two inch wide and seventy-six inch high wooden door, with a nine pane section of glazing -- three rows of three panes. The doorway has a large rectangular window above it and is flanked by two of the massive eight foot, ten inch tall and forty-four inch wide windows. The rear entrance was located on the north wall of the superintendent's office. A set of three window openings flanked this entrance on either side of the first floor. Those to the west of the entrance were all bricked in, while of those to the east, one was bricked in when the gym was added in 1936. The remaining two on the east side were originally half windows bricked-in accordingly. Again, the indication of windows with recessed brick was an attempt by the architect to achieve a symmetrical façade. The second floor contains a row of ten windows. There is one window on the eastern end of this level that is bricked in, and one that is a half window bricked in accordingly; this was done to accommodate the interior needs of the space, while keeping the symmetrical appearance of the building on the exterior.

The east elevation of the building contains rows of windows that are more or less hit and miss, as dictated by interior spatial needs. The attempt to keep the building's exterior facade symmetrical was apparently not as important an asset on the side of the building facing the old public school. Five half windows are located at the basement level. Four full size windows are located on the north end of the first floor. The last window on this level is narrow and located in the walk-in closet where the sink was located for the science laboratory. The windows in the second floor level are all half windows and are located at random.

Back on the front of the building, six exterior steps ascend from the sidewalk up through the wide sandstone capped stoops to the entrance of the building. Inside the front doors lies a small entry with a floor made of white hexagonal ceramic tiles, believed to be original to the building. Here, a short flight of four more steps leads up to a set of original swinging doors, with a rectangular glass transom light above them. Once inside the spacious main hall, there are doors to

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (continued)

three rooms: a classroom to the east, superintendent's office on the north, and a second larger classroom on the west. On either side of the entrance there are small cloak rooms with narrow windows. The open stairways to the other floors of the building are located in the southeast corner. The hall has ceilings over fourteen feet high; three-foot high fir wainscoting surrounds the room. The maple floors are covered in this area with an aging carpet.

The three interior rooms on the first floor have similar features. All open by a wooden door, with a single glass pane and an overhead glass transom. The rooms are large and well lit with windows. Fir door and window trim surrounds each opening, while wainscoting of fir, three feet high, surrounds the entire room. Blackboards and built-in closets take up most of the remaining wall space. A picture rail is located about a foot and a half below the decorative pressed tin cornice. The fourteen foot high pressed tin interior ceilings are decorated with classic motifs; these include: swags of garland, wreaths, torches and geometric patterns. Fluorescent lights were installed in the classrooms in 1956; however the art deco design fixture in the superintendent's office seems to pre-date the others. The floors are maple; considering the years of harsh treatment, they are in good condition. Each of the two classrooms, east and west, has a walk-in closet with windows. Large vents, which are evidence of the building's air exchange system, are found in both classrooms; most of the steam heat radiators are still in place.

Descending the wide open staircase to the basement, the first thing to be noticed are the six-inch square, pressed cement tiles, covering the entire floor. They are placed in a checkerboard pattern of alternating gray and black. Rooms here were planned to be used for classroom space and were finished with plaster layered over square clay tiles designed with a system of grooves. These were used in place of furring strips and lathe on the exterior walls throughout the building. Doorways and windows are trimmed with the same wood trim as the first floor. There are five rooms and a walk-in closet on the basement level of the building: one large room, which originally housed the home economics classes and four smaller rooms. Radiators were mounted on the ten foot high ceilings. The basement floor and lower wall space show evidence of water damage owing to years of neglect. The floor will have to be replaced, as it was originally poured only about an inch and a half thick and is in poor condition. The plaster on the walls is not beyond repair. Structurally the foundation is good and solid with two structural brick walls running the length of the building, north - south. The footings of the foundation and structural walls are separate from the poured floor. A profusion of twenty-three windows light all but one classroom on this level.

Ascending the stairs, lined with fir wainscoting, decorative posts, and banisters to the second floor, leads to another large hallway area. Most of the second floor is taken up by the assembly room. The room, located along the north wall, measures fifty-three feet long and twenty-nine feet wide. A stage area was originally located on the east end of the room, where an archway with French doors and interior windows is now located. The stage was raised several feet off the main floor, with a proscenium arch decorated with pressed tin that was fifteen feet wide and twelve feet high. The stage floor itself was about sixteen feet wide and nine feet deep. A raised locker room area was located off each side of the stage. The south locker room still remains; it measures eleven feet by nine feet and contained a shower. The floor was tiled with the same hexagonal white tile used in the first floor entry. These facilities allowed the use of the assembly room as a gymnasium. Basketball games were played here and evidence of the pipes that held the basketball hoops is still visible in the ceiling. Many plays, concerts, programs and community events were held in this room. After the new gymnasium was

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (continued)

built in 1936, the stage area and north locker room were removed to utilize the floor space as a library. The fourteen foot ceilings in the assembly room are covered in pressed tin similar to that used on the first floor. Flooring is maple and is in good shape. The fifteen huge windows in this room are almost overwhelming! A forced-air and steam heating system was retrofitted in an area near some of the air exchange vents; the room retains some of its steam radiators. A picture rail is located about a foot and a half below the ceiling. The walls appear to have always been painted a dull peach color. An item of note here: there is evidence that all windows and doors in the assembly room were covered with wire mesh on the interior, to protect the large expanses of glass from stray balls. These have since been removed and several were re-used on the exterior of the building.

Two smaller classrooms open off the south wall of the assembly room. Each has a wood door with a single pane of glass and a glass transom overhead. The rooms have maple flooring, fir door and window trim, and are also outfitted with fir wainscoting and blackboards. Each room had two southern exposure windows. Both have picture rails, though the ceilings in both rooms are simply plaster. At some point, most of the wall separating the two rooms was removed; the two rooms functioned as one.

Back in the hallway, a large opening provides access to the attic. The only window in the attic is the small, decorative, semi-circular, lunette window. It casts a faint shadow of light displaying elements of the air exchange system, as well as remnants of the original knob and tube wiring. The building was re-wired in conduit to meet code in 1956.

The 1916 Buffalo High School building is nestled in the center of many of the city's most historic properties. There are three church buildings: First Presbyterian Church designed by William Kurke (1928); St. Thomas Catholic Church designed by the architectural firm Hancock Brothers (1900); and Calvary Episcopal Chapel (more commonly known as the Old Stone Church) designed by architect George Hancock (1885). The Old Stone Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. There are numerous historic homes located on the blocks adjacent to the school as well: Dr. Clark's uniquely designed, wheelchair accessible home and carriage house, which held one of Buffalo's first automobiles; Smith Griffin More's first, small, folk victorian house, built in the late 1880s; S. G. and his wife Emma More's seven-thousand square foot, Milton Earl Beebe architect designed residence (1900) and all of its outbuildings: barn, carriage house, and ice house -- the More's success as owners of the local bank was apparent in the construction of their residence; T. A. Quirk's substantial home and carriage house; the former high school superintendent's house, constructed by local builder Isaac Corby (1922); and the historic Episcopal Rectory (1887-1895) and barn (1900).

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Buffalo High School is nominated to the National Register under criterion 'C' for significance in architecture. It is a solid, well constructed example of Classical Revival architecture. The building is the largest structure in town, and the only remaining example of this style used on a public building in the community of Buffalo, North Dakota.

Twentieth century Classical Revival architecture draws its inspiration from several earlier styles, interpretations, and revivals of the classical architectural details of the Greeks and Romans. The Adam style in America can be traced back to the 1780s - 1820s when it was the dominant style of the "new" United States. The style reached its zenith in the prosperous areas of the east coast, including the nation's new capital. The Adam style was a development and refinement of the previous English Georgian style. It drew on contemporary European trends, particularly the work of the Adam Brothers, who at that time, had the largest architectural practice in Britain. They had traveled throughout Europe and incorporated their interpretations of classic Greek, Roman and later Italian designs into their work.

The early Classical Revival structures in most details, resemble those of the contemporaneous Adam style. Following the American Revolution, there was an immediate need for public buildings to house the newly organized government at both state and national levels. It was natural to have taken Rome as a model, with its republican ideas and monumental architecture, a choice that symbolized the mood and politics of the new country. Roman Revival architecture thus became fashionable and a number of well known architects were working in the style. The most influential of all was Thomas Jefferson, who not only designed Classical Revival buildings himself, but used the influence of his political office and his considerable powers of personal persuasion to push the United States toward his classical ideal.

Late in the nineteenth century, several exhibitions played an important part in bringing about a renewed interest in the Classical Revival. At the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893, its planners mandated a classical theme; many of the day's best-known architects contributed. The exposition was widely photographed, reported and attended. These Classical Revival models soon became the latest fashion throughout the country. The buildings of the exposition were of monumental scale and inspired countless public and commercial buildings in the following decades. Architects such as: Charles B. Atwood; McKim, Mead and White; Henry Bacon; and John Russell Pope contributed to the proliferation of the style. Classical Revival architecture remained popular in public buildings well into the 1920s; however, the economic depression of the 1930s, World War II and changing postwar fashions led to a simplification of style and design in public architecture.

The 1916 High School was built in a solid Classical Revival style. Decorations found on the original public school, such as the porch and cupola, were not included. Instead, a building of symmetrical proportions and even more mass was constructed. The symmetry of the building with its gabled front pediment, and the detailing of the main entrance solidifies the style's nature.

Buffalo had already outgrown its first one-room schoolhouse, and had lost its second wooden schoolhouse to fire in 1901. As with most rural settlements, education of children was considered a type of luxury; therefore, school buildings showed the level of pride a community placed on its youth. After fire destroyed the second Victorian style wood-frame school, a petition was circulated and enough emphasis was placed on the construction of a new "brick" schoolhouse to

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

bring in one of the premiere architectural firms in the area, Hancock Bros. of Fargo, ND. The 1902 Buffalo Public School was a fine example of the Hancock Bros.' distinctive style of work. The Classical Revival style, with Victorian and Italianate suggestions, was typical of their work at the time.

The 1916 High School building represents the growth of larger, better equipped high school facilities in rural communities as a result of changing trends in education during the early part of the twentieth century. Another factor was the growing number of students that continued their education beyond the required eighth grade level. As small one-room country schools closed, cities had to provide larger and more well rounded educational facilities. The 1902 public school connected by a short hallway, was then converted to serve as a grade school only. The high school, being built within a relatively short period of time after the construction of the public school, indicated that Buffalo was experiencing significant growth, as well as consolidation of several small, one-room country schools.

The new high school was built with materials that resembled those used in the construction of the earlier public school section of the property. It is speculated, based on photographs, that the wooden porch on the 1902 public school was removed at this time and replaced with an entrance that more closely resembled the one on the new high school. The architect for the 1916 Buffalo High School is assumed to be Fargo, ND architect A. J. O'Shea. Although our research has been unable to substantiate the claim, he was working on other commissions in the Buffalo area for the school treasurer and town banker S. G. More. Mr. More was a leading citizen in the campaign to build the 1902 public school, and was again directly involved in the 1916 high school construction. It is also known that architect A. J. O'Shea loved to design schools, and designed many of his commercial and institutional structures in the Classic Revival style.

Andrew J. O'Shea was born on August 12, 1869 in Tralee, Ireland. He immigrated to Ontario, Canada in 1884 at the age of fifteen. He lived there until emigrating to the United States in 1893, when he relocated to Fargo, ND. After the 'great fire' of 1893 when nearly the entire business community of Fargo was razed, there were ample opportunities for an architect to get commissions. In 1898, O'Shea took rooms at 323 NP Ave in Fargo. He married May Keeny Stanford on May 18, 1907. City directories list his office at 61 Kennedy Block in 1912-13. His architect office by 1922 was located at 701 4th St S with his residence next door at 703 4th St S. He held ND Architects License #16, and kept offices for the Ajos Co. (a property management company) in the old deLendricies building at 624 Main Ave in Fargo, in fact, he designed the upper three floors of that National Register property in 1904. The Ajos Co. owned apartments at the corner of 10th St S and 9th Ave S and also at the corner of 4th St S and 7th Ave S, as well as other property in Fargo, ND.

Mr. O'Shea was proudest of his design for the Casselton, ND High School. His obituary attributes many buildings across the state and especially many other public and school buildings to him. He was outspoken about doing public projects properly when doing them initially. When a problem developed with the roof of Agassiz School in Fargo, ND, he was instrumental in finding the solution to strengthen it. He was also a member of the American Institute of Architects in New York City. O'Shea enjoyed mechanical inventions and was one of Fargo's leading radio enthusiasts. He was a lifelong student of "novel" mechanical inventions, and he had an elaborate set of equipment with which to experiment with mechanical devices at his home.

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

A. J. O'Shea collapsed several days after having surgery for gall stones, and passed away on April 27, 1923. His obituary was entitled "A. J. O'Shea - Pioneer Fargo Architect - Dead After Stroke". He was survived by his wife, and a sister Mrs. Annie Rose Coppinger of New York City. These were the only surviving relatives. His body was laid to rest in Crypts number 33 and 34, of section 'H' in the Mausoleum at Riverside Cemetery, Fargo, ND. His estate at the time of death totaled over \$34,208.29.

Best known through his Fargo work, O'Shea practiced actively from about 1893 until about 1922. He designed such buildings as the Monticello, Vernon, and Arlington apartments at 711-719 N Broadway in 1909, noted as some of the first apartment buildings in the area. O'Shea designed the McKone Block at 206 Broadway and the Moore Brothers building at 415-417 Main Ave (1908) as well as many commercial buildings on NP Ave, including: 206-208 (1919), 309-311 (1901), 323 (1896), 415 (1914) 619 (1897) and most likely many others. Aside from his commercial properties, he also designed residences, including: Frank Chin home at 1101 S 8th St (1900), James McDermott House at 1117 1st Ave S (1902), K. M. Hagen House at 1121 4th Ave S (1902), Dr. Charles L. Rose house at 815 3rd Ave S (1904). During the summer of 1915, A. J. O'Shea was commissioned by S. G. More, banker of Buffalo, to design a residence as a wedding present for his only daughter Edith Messenger More and her fiancé Arthur Peterson at 305 4th St N in Buffalo, ND. It was at this time that A. J. O'Shea would have built a working relationship with Mr. More, who was also treasurer of the Buffalo School District.

The last section of the school, a gymnasium, was constructed behind the high school in 1936. The Works Progress Administration was responsible for the construction of the auditorium, in a manner and style characteristic of Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works funded buildings. A shower facility was added to the west end of the gym in 1973.

Owing to school consolidation in 1979, the entire building complex was abandoned. Vacant for over twenty-one years, subject to sporadic interior salvage raids, no maintenance, and constant vandalism, the buildings showed serious signs of neglect and deterioration. Water entering the building from the bell tower and basement near the coal shed caused the stone foundation on the 1902 public school to collapse. The building was condemned and demolished during the winter of 2000-2001, just before its 100th anniversary. The Buffalo Historical Society, Inc. hopes to salvage the cupola, to be included in a memorial park outlining the area formerly occupied by the building. The 1936 gymnasium was not used after the school was closed in 1979. Subsequent years of no maintenance and random material salvaging left openings and allowed the flat roof on the structure to fail, undermining the floor. Rehabilitation was not financially feasible and the building was condemned and demolished during the winter of 2000-2001.

The 1916 high school building is the only one of the three inter-connected structures to remain in restorable condition within the means of the small rural community of Buffalo. It is hoped that its restoration effort brought about by the determined efforts of the local citizens of Buffalo can be accomplished. The restoration would provide extra space for the Buffalo Heritage Center and allow the residents to reclaim some of the pride placed in the community by their ancestors, as few things carry such a demoralizing sense of community failure, as that conveyed by abandoned and vandalized public buildings.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 9

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The 1916 Buffalo High School demonstrates a remarkably high level of integrity. Original windows and original doors add to the integrity, as does the interior of the structure with its wood floors, trim, wainscoting and the beauty of the pressed tin ceilings. While showing definite signs of neglect and deterioration, the solid construction of the building is evident. Built to stand on its own, the school building is the only remaining example of Classical Revival architecture in a public building in Buffalo, North Dakota. The growth and development of the community of Buffalo, necessitating the construction of the 1916 Buffalo High School, signifies the importance placed on education in rural communities of early North Dakota.

The classic design and painstaking detailing evident in the construction of the 1916 Buffalo High School is monumental when compared to today's cost saving, modestly designed public buildings. One really wonders about the intentions, ideals and attitudes of the school's designer, builders, and those who envisioned the need for this space in the community of Buffalo. A quote by Winston Churchill on the significance of architecture seems to sum it up best:

"First we shape our buildings, then our buildings shape us."

-Winston Churchill

The period of significance for the 1916 Buffalo High School property is its date of construction: 1916.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY



Figure 2. Buffalo, Dakota Territory in the late 1880s.

The area around what was known as New Buffalo contained very few settlers prior to 1880. A few hardy individuals, however, had come in 1879 to secure homesteads. Mary Strong Wilson and her sister, Laura Strong Letchworth donated the land on which a school was to be built. The sisters were heirs to the estate of John C. Strong, a wealthy New York landowner. Lots were donated to anyone who would build a business, church, or school in the city of New Buffalo. In 1883, the name of the town was shortened to Buffalo by the postmaster, as he tired of writing "New" Buffalo all the time.

The early growth of the community is evident as described in the Daily Argus, a Fargo newspaper.

"Buffalo is one of those marvelous examples of Dakota's progress, and shares freely in the general prosperity of Cass County. The location of this flourishing young town is on the main line of the great Northern Pacific system, thirty nine miles west of Fargo and 163 miles east of Bismarck, and surrounded by an area of country unsurpassed in richness by any in the Territory."

On April 2, 1880, the records of Cass County Clerk John Hanson indicated the formation of School District #38. The minutes of the organizational meeting of the school district, dated August 6, 1880, included the names of the members of the local Board of Education: James A. Winsloe, William Lakey, and Andrew Gilbertson. The first schoolhouse was built at this time, and located on what is now Pearl Street, in the center of Block 6. The building was also used for church services and other town and community functions.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

The school is also mentioned in another account from the Daily Argus,

"The citizens of Buffalo have amply provided the youth of their town and vicinity with the advantages of educational facilities. The school building which is a comfortable and commodious one at present is being enlarged to make room for the increasing attendance. Two good teachers are employed and every incentive for emulation in the pursuit of knowledge is held out... There is also that spirit of courteousness and culture among the citizens that impress the visitor to Buffalo with the best feelings for the town and its citizens."

Education was indeed an important part of life in the new village and also the subject of some debate. An example appeared in the Buffalo Herald on May 22, 1885;

"NOTICE - Special School Meeting, Buffalo, Dakota Territory. Notice is hereby given to the voters of School District #38, of Cass County, Dakota Territory, that a special meeting of the said district, will be held at the School House in the Village of Buffalo on the SIXTH DAY OF JUNE, 1885, at three o'clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of reconsidering the vote which was sprung upon the voters at the special school meeting of this district, March 9th, 1885, WITHOUT NOTICE and carried without discussion, to employ a male teacher to teach our summer school and to hire the present teacher. Also to take a vote at the said meeting, requesting the present teacher, Mr. J. W. Plunkett, to resign."

Signed, (by seventy-five of Buffalo's citizens).



Figure 3. Buffalo's first schoolhouse.

A summer term of three months was held and attended mainly by the girls and small boys; winter term added all the older, and rougher boys who were unable to attend the summer term on account of farm work. That summer, it is noted in the minutes that, "Moved and Carried that we hire a female teacher for the summer term, and that it be left discretionary with the board whether it hire a male or female teacher for the winter term." Unfortunately she didn't stick, in fact she did not even last the summer term, as the pupils made it too tough on her. She was replaced by Professor A. D. Burnham, who by 1887 was credited with a school 'overflowing' its space, and ranking second to none in Cass County, thanks to his pains-taking effort.

As the school enrollment continued to grow, the need for more space resulted in the erection of a new building on the southeast corner of Block 10 on Pearl Avenue in 1890. Buffalo Township purchased the old school building at a cost of \$500.00 for use as a township hall. (The building is currently used as a residence.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)



Figure 4. Buffalo's second wood-frame schoolhouse built in 1890.

The second school, a two-story, wood-frame structure with an elaborate bell tower, was built at a cost of \$7,500.00. The primary and intermediate grades were on the main floor and the grammar and some high school classes were on the second. A substantial amount of history is missing because many of the early records were lost when the county court house burned.

An angry letter to the editor of the Buffalo Herald shows the many purposes served by the school in the community,

"As a tax-payer in School District #38, I think (they) have and are going beyond their authority in allowing dances where such large numbers attend as they do to public dances in Buffalo in the school house. By the appearance of the primary room with the cracked wall and propped ceiling, there should be some objection by the people of the district who have paid or will pay in round numbers, \$7,000 or \$8,000 for the building."

The minutes of the school-board shows that dances were permitted upon remittance of a \$2.00 fee, and religious use of the building was also noted at a cost of \$2.00. This was quickly amended to read: Dances \$2.00, religious use 50¢, and again later to state: Dances \$2.00, religious use FREE.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

The first graduation exercises in Buffalo were held on June 12, 1896. Class schedules included reading and numbers classes for the youngest pupils. Language, geography and physiology were added as the work became more extensive. There was usually space in the daily program for memory exercises. In 1899, the Buffalo Express notes, "Our school can now boast a new twelve inch globe - a much needed article - and of great interest to the pupils, most of whom had never even seen one." Early photos show the school equipped with desks, numerous pictures, maps, and a small pump organ. At graduation that year, the benediction was pronounced by the Episcopal Reverend Arthur Chard.

In 1901, the wood-frame school was destroyed by fire. At an impromptu board meeting with the community, a petition was presented to erect a brick building which would be more fire resistant. So in 1902, the brick and stone structure was constructed. The new building was designed by the Hancock Bros. for a services rendered fee of \$295.

George Hancock (1849-1924) was born in Uley, Gloucestershire, England. He studied building construction and architecture during a four year course in the science and arts department of the South Kensington Institute in London (now the Victoria & Albert Museum). Hancock came to Dakota Territory in 1882, at the age of 32. George Hancock's previous work in Buffalo includes designing Calvary Episcopal Chapel on a block adjacent to the building site of the new school. In 1890, with his brother Walter, the architectural firm of Hancock Bros. was formed in Fargo, ND. Hancock Bros. had just completed the design of St. Thomas Catholic Church, Buffalo, ND in 1900.

Walter Hancock (1863-1929), like his brother, was born in England. He worked as a draftsman for George from 1883-1885. After studying architecture at Syracuse University in New York until about 1887, he returned to ND, and was made a full partner in 1891. Walter became a director of the Dakota National Bank and the Northern Dakota Trust Company in Fargo. Both Walter and George served as members of many of Fargo's leading civic clubs.

Hancock Bros. was responsible for numerous structures throughout the state, including several schools in the region: Buffalo, Cleveland, and Lisbon. Because each building was similar to the previous one, they could easily and accurately project the cost of the next school they designed. The materials were simple, as they had to be in ND. Typically, they had arched windows, string courses, and a cupola on the roof. Hancock Bros. architecture has been described as conservative but sophisticated, and they had the unique ability to adapt "high" architecture to suit the simple needs and materials of the Dakota landscape. Surviving examples of this institutional building type designed by the Hancock Bros., comprise a significant architectural body of work.

The Buffalo school building had standard classrooms, a library, a science laboratory, and a gymnasium in the basement. A modern steam-heat coal furnace was installed in a boiler room. Lighting was provided by kerosene lamps, and receipts for a victrola and many music recordings still exist. No cooking facilities were available, so students brought lunches or went home to eat. The cost of construction was over \$12,000. The Board of Education at the time of completion was H. E. Brown, William Lakey, Frank S. Talcott, T. G. Ravelling -Clerk, and S. G. More -Treasurer. The grounds were complete with outhouse, barn, and artesian well. The barn was used to stable horses of both teachers and students.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)



Figure 5. 1902 Buffalo Public School

Enrollment grew steadily until 1907 when the first four year high-school students graduated from the Buffalo School. The standards of the school were high, so the graduates were accepted by colleges and universities without qualification.

Author George Birdsall in his book A North Dakota Boy tells of his experiences attending Buffalo School in 1910,

“Our new home, the Episcopal Rectory which we rented for just \$12.00 a month, was only a short block away from the school, so we could not put off going to school any longer. We talked to the first teacher we met and she introduced us to our teachers. I was in the fifth grade. It was a large room with the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades all in the same room. It is always embarrassing the first day of school until everyone looks you over and makes some remark about you... The teacher in the sixth grade announced the school was going to give a play in the Opera House. I was surprised when I was asked to play a small part. The teacher was surprised when I turned out to be a good actor.”

The first receipt for a telephone appears on file dated July 10, 1907; the amount listed is for \$9.00 payable to More & O’Neil, the local switchboard operators. The first additional land to be annexed to the Buffalo District included the east half of Section 22 Township 140, Range 55 in 1909. Electricity was brought to the city of Buffalo in 1912 with funding from S. G. More. The Buffalo Electric Light, Heat & Power Co. began operation that same year in a brick building located behind the bank. A canceled check for \$109.08 was made out to Mr. More for "electric fixtures" for the school on November 22, 1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

Though graduates usually numbered several each year, the graduating class of 1914 consisted of only one graduate, Harvey Barnby. At the commencement exercises he delivered an oration entitled "The Single Tax", music was provided by a girls' quartet, and superintendent J. W. Riley handed out the diploma.

In 1914, plans for the expansion of the school were underway. According to canceled checks, the lots needed for the planned addition were purchased from the Talcott family for \$1,185.40, and deeds registered and abstracts updated by S. G. More. Bids were taken for the removal of the Talcott home in April and May of 1915.

A petition was circulated to construct a high school building, as noted in the Buffalo Express,

"Last week a petition to call an election to bond the school district to build an addition to the school was handed to us. This is a good move in the right direction on the part of the people. There seems to be some opposition to this on account of the taxes... When you talk about taxes, send one of your children to Fargo for a year and compare the expense... Besides costing a great deal more, your child is subject to all the evils and temptations of the city... We have sixty children here asking for a better education... Now will you as an American citizen, deny these children the privilege of an education which is the very foundation of our government?... Take away our free school system and we will soon go back to the dark ages when women were slaves and men, beasts."

That fall brought to the Buffalo Public School a class of twenty shy but adventurous beginners. As they entered the first-grade room, they were greeted with as much care and understanding as possible by their teacher, Miss Lydia Geyer. Since many spoke only the Norwegian language, it must surely have been a trying year for Miss Geyer as well as her pupils.

Enrollment continued to grow reaching 116 students by September of 1915, necessitating more supplies and finding classroom quarters filled beyond capacity; another call to build a high school was heard. Finally on March 20, 1916, the Buffalo School District #38 voted fifty-four to nine to bond the district in order to build a high school on the west side of the existing public school and connect the two buildings with a small hallway. The Meineke Building Company of Fargo was awarded the contract for the construction of the high school.

In June of 1916, an account of the school construction as follows was noted in the Buffalo Express,

"A large crew of carpenters, bricklayers, and plumbers are rushing the erection of the new school building, which when completed, will be one of the finest in the state and a credit to our people. It will be equipped with the latest and the best equipment for school-work. The school board has selected an able corp of teachers, and now it is up to you."

A week later, the news was not so encouraging,

"One of the carpenters who has been working on the school building suffered a very painful accident

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 16

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

yesterday morning. He was adjusting a window frame when he fell to the ground. The sill stone went too, which struck his hand and badly crushed it."

By July 27, 1916 the brick-work was completed, and occupancy was projected within a month. The new high school contained the superintendent's office, three more classrooms, a laboratory, an assembly room which served as a gym, stage and locker rooms. The home economics rooms, manual training department and lunch room filled the basement. This building was constructed at a cost of \$20,000. According to photographs, it was at this time that the wooden porch was removed from the original public school. The two structures were plumbed by the Moorhead Plumbing & Heating Company for \$3,000.00. The bathrooms were installed in the original school and kitchen facilities in the new building. No longer needed, the old outhouse was torn down. Leftover brick from the construction of the new high school was used to build the Buffalo Garage on Main Street. As livery stables were on the way out, it was necessary for the town to have a modern auto-filling station. (The garage has since been demolished.)



Figure 6. 1916 Buffalo High School constructed next to the 1902 Buffalo Public School.

The new school was very well equipped and offered courses in English, history, mathematics, sciences, manual training, home economics, and physical education. This clipping from Glimpses of Cass County, 1917 describes...

"Buffalo, the third station out of Fargo, is one of the most enterprising villages in the state. It's business men are not only commercially wide awake, but they are always on the go when it comes to improving the town... An up-to-date high school and excellent public schools look after the welfare of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

the children in this community... Healthful, prosperous, industrious, with public spirited and contented people, Buffalo is a happy town."

These early years saw a very active participation in the Buffalo "Literary Society", which was a group of students dedicated to the arts and culture of the community. Meetings consisted of vocal and instrumental recitals, readings of short stories and poetry, debates and speeches, as well as plays and operettas. Meetings were held in the school, or the opera house, and were open to the community.

The school year 1916-1917 was a big one for basketball teams in Buffalo, as both boys' and girls' teams were organized that year. Teams played their home games in the Opera House in Buffalo. The first boys' game was held in Erie, ND, a town about fifteen miles from Buffalo. The boys' team drove to Erie in two open surreys on a cold winter night. They lost 60-10, and stayed overnight in a small hotel there. Girls' basketball has played an important role in Buffalo for many years as well; early team photos date back to 1909. Cheerleaders, too, were part of the festivities. The early records indicate that there was one cheerleader 'elected' to serve the boys' and girls' team for the year. Later, groups of cheerleaders numbered up to five young girls. In 1931, this cheer was heard;

*Here's to Buffalo -- Rah! Rah! Rah!
Best old town you ever saw;
Do we love her -- well I guess!
Grandest town in old U. S.!*

During World War I the smaller students served their country in a limited way by learning to knit, and knitting squares to be used in sweaters. The squares were sent to the Red Cross and used for the soldiers at home and overseas. In the winter of 1918, the students lost many days of school owing to the terrible Spanish influenza epidemic which swept over the entire nation. All public meeting places, schools, and churches were ordered closed in an attempt to prevent spreading the flu. In 1920, wheat was selling at \$2.34 a bushel, but by 1921, post-war depression had set in. This was the era when radios first became available to the people in Buffalo. A young student remembers, "The first radio in town was in the Nils Nilsen Implement on Main Street and was almost entirely made by Clarence Beyers. We were allowed to go to the Buffalo High School gymnasium to listen to the inaugural address delivered by Calvin Coolidge, March 4, 1925. According to Mr. Coolidge we were launched into an era of good will and prosperity. How wrong he was! By the time we graduated in 1932 we were in the middle of another depression. Wheat was thirty-five cents a bushel, eggs were six cents a dozen and butter was ten cents a pound."

As remembered by a student of the graduating class of 1927, "Upon promotion to the fifth grade in 1920 we were also promoted to the second floor of the elementary building where the upper four grades were located. Here we finished our elementary education. At the close of our year in the eighth grade, we received our eighth grade diplomas at commencement time and eagerly looked forward to becoming high school freshmen. Several classmates did not continue with their high school education after completing the eighth grade and the legal requirements for school attendance." They also noted that, "The gym and science department were located on the second floor of the high school building, and the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

agriculture and home economics departments were in the basement."



Figure 7. Buffalo High School Band. circa late 1920s

Music has always played a large role in the lives of the students who roamed the halls at Buffalo High School. The early commencement programs list an Arion Quartet, an Ossian Choir, a Mozart Quartet and an orchestra. In the 1920s, Victor Phersson was the instructor of the Buffalo High School Band and the conductor of the Buffalo town band. He also had a five or six piece dance orchestra. Many dances were held in the horse and buggy days, and Buffalo was well known for its musical abilities. Orchestras continued in importance until the 1930s, when a gradual shift to bands was experienced. Buffalo bands received many highly superior ratings at the various contests. 1948 saw an increase in band members and a "new" orchestra as well. By the early 1960s, under the direction of J. A. Holvik (formerly of Concordia College), band participation reached its height of seventy members. Interest and participation continued at a high level until a decline in enrollment in the 1970s also brought a decline in the number of music students.

In 1922, the school board funded construction of a small home north of the school. The bid was given to Isaac Corby for \$2,844.00. The home was for the superintendent but was sometimes rented to teachers. It has been remodeled several times, was eventually sold to a private party and continues as a private residence.

The graduating class of 1928 remembers, "In the fall of 1924, after being important eighth-graders, we were suddenly only freshmen who were made to feel very uncomfortable under the ever watchful eyes of the sophomores. Initiation into high school was an important part of our education during the 'assigned new duties' every morning by the Sophomore Class, such as carrying their books, or cleaning the front steps of the school building with a tooth brush."

Students of Buffalo High School have published a variety of school and class papers: The Buffalo High School Broadcast, The Tattler, Buffalo Bee-Bop and more recently the Bison Briefs. Each is filled with information, and insight into the lives of the decades of high school students to put pen to paper in the classrooms of the Buffalo School.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

What follows is a selection from a 1924 issue of The Tattler:

SENSATIONAL MURDER!!!

"Members of the High School were shocked and greatly horrified Monday morning when they unwillingly witnessed one of the cruelest and most bloody murders ever committed in Buffalo. While Mr. John J. Flye was tripping lightly across the window pane on his usual morning rounds, he was assaulted and then brutally killed in cold blood by one of our citizens, Mr. Loren Muir. The murderer employed a new deadly weapon which proved much more deadly than the hatchet, so commonly used. The innocent victim was pounded with a swatter and died almost instantly. Friends of Mr. Muir assert that he has been acting queerly of late and they believe that Mr. Flye was the cause of much distress and uneasiness."

A 1924 newspaper clipping tells of an active Parent-Teachers organization. At its regular meeting on December 3, the following program was given: Song by the audience; Talk, "The care of the Teeth." Dr. Heller; Vocal Solo, Prof. Rolf T. Harbo, principal; song by the audience. A business meeting was then held to discuss the community Christmas tree. On Senior skip day, the last Friday of May in 1924, the eight students brought their lunches, and met at the schoolhouse. They then walked the wonderful new 'cement' sidewalk the two-three blocks out of town, to the Buffalo Cemetery, there they visited, joked, and examined the headstones. After they had eaten lunch they visited some more, and then decided there was nothing else to do, so they went back to school!

The Class of 1926 was also a memorable one. Only one student lived in town, the rest were all from farms out in the countryside. Owing to road conditions at the time and the lack of any type of school bus service, the other students stayed either with relatives, friends, or rented rooms in town during the school week and went home on Friday night to spend time with their families. How different it is today with the school-buses picking students up right at their homes. The girls that year were noted as being very liberated. Several of them took the Smith-Hughes course in agriculture, and they received several awards given at the North Dakota Agricultural College for county achievements. Not to be outdone, one of the boys took a cooking class in Home Economics, another first in Buffalo!

The graduating class of 1929 shared these memories of the high school, "What a treat it was in the winter when the home economics girls took turns making cocoa one day and baked potatoes or soup the next. The town kids went home for lunch, but the country kids brought syrup pails in which we carried our lunch." This one-item lunch supplement was the beginning of the "hot-lunch" program for the school. Female students in the class remembered the, "Middy blouses and big black sateen bloomers worn for physical education."

In the 1930s, band concerts were held during the summer in the Buffalo Bandstand in City Park with Evan Berg as director. The home economics class continued to serve a one-item hot lunch at school, the charge was three cents. The school library was a "coffee house" -- general meeting place for many of the junior and senior high students, not always just for knowledge but sometimes a little fun too!

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 20

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

Ice skating reached its zenith in Buffalo during the 1930s and 1940s. It was a school-sponsored project. The area east of the high school was sprayed with hot water which made the smoothest kind of ice. A garage north of the school was used as a warming house and was fondly referred to as the "Rinky Dink". It was open every evening and on weekends. Skaters came into the "Rinky Dink" seeking the warmth of the wood burning stove or an active game of ping-pong. There were tables and chairs to accommodate card players. A path of ice led to the rink which was lit for night skating. Adults, as well as the school crowd, enjoyed the rink. The war years brought an end to one of Buffalo's most popular recreation centers, the "Rinky Dink".

A new gymnasium was the next addition to the school buildings. As quoted from the 1935 school column in the Buffalo Express,

"Talk of building an addition to our school is now current and it is receiving the favorable support of our people it deserves. The addition to house a decent gym and auditorium that our school has needed for years. Enrollment has been increasing steadily the past years until now there is an urgent demand for more school room and the space in the present building used for a gym now should be used for class purposes. Right now we can get a gift of about 30% off the cost of the building from the government... as it is only a matter of time until we would HAVE to build. Wouldn't it be good business to do so right now? It is our aim to make our community attractive to new families, and the first thing the people of the better type look into is the school. Lets make our school of the high standard that our community should have by supporting and pushing this movement across."

To make way for construction, the school-barn was put up for bids and moved off the property in 1935. The gymnasium was designed by Joseph E. Rosatti of Fargo, an architectural graduate of the University of Michigan. In 1916 he came to Fargo and took charge of the W. D. Gillespie office. Rosatti worked with Ole E. Braseth from 1918 until 1922, but worked solo from 1923-1924 until around 1941-1942. He is responsible for many schools, banks, homes, and churches around the state including Roosevelt Jr. High School in Fargo, Farmers & Merchants State Bank in Kindred, ND and St. Vincent's Church in Mott, ND. The gymnasium, which included a new kitchen and locker rooms in the basement as well as a new stage for theatrical and musical productions, was completed as a government project costing \$24,000. The cost greatly exceeded the request made to the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works for \$16,000 in May, 1935.

The WPA (Work Projects Administration), was a federal work program for the unemployed (1935-1943). President Franklin D. Roosevelt created this national program, which was approved by Congress in 1935. The name was officially changed in 1939 to the Works Progress Administration. This work/relief agency was one of the most important of the New Deal programs. It provided the vast legions of unemployed in this country a job, an income, and self-respect. Between the years of 1935 and 1943 the WPA provided about eight million jobs, and the cost over the eight years was only eleven billion dollars. While critics called the WPA an extension of the dole or a device for creating a huge patronage army loyal to the Democratic Party, the stated purpose of the program was to provide useful work for millions of victims of the Great Depression. The economy would in turn be stimulated by the increased purchasing power of the newly employed whose

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

wages under the program ranged from \$15 to \$90 per month.

The projects included basic work on infrastructure such as street building and repair, as well as sewer construction. The structures produced by most of these projects are, after sixty years, still in use today. Many municipal projects such as airports were also constructed using WPA funds. Additional construction projects funded by the WPA included schools and recreation facilities. Related to construction projects were the water projects such as flood control, drought relief and coastal conservation, as well as work at stone quarries. Community service projects included such things as collecting and managing historical records, hospital and health related projects, and basic skills projects. The WPA also funded fine arts projects such as Federal Theater productions. In addition, there were other projects which do not fit into any of the above categories.

Previously, many of the school functions had been held at the Opera House, about three blocks from the school. The high school plays, the commencement exercises, operettas, and the Christmas programs were presented there because of the larger stage and greater seating capacity. When a fire that started in the Sands Implement building burned three buildings including the Opera House in 1936, it became imperative that an auditorium and gymnasium addition be made to the school; it became a center of many community activities.



Figure 8. Construction of the 1936 Gymnasium by the WPA work crew.

Foreman for the local WPA crew that worked on the project was Mike Corby, a local contractor. Several other local crew members were Carl (Chink) Johnson, Evan Johnson, and Pete Buttke. Earth was moved by horse and shovel for the foundation footings on the new gymnasium. The receipts for the construction materials show that Meineke-Johnson Company of Fargo was the holder of the charge account. The Clay Products & Material Co., Inc. of Fargo supplied the bricks, and the Dakota Plate Glass Co. of Fargo supplied the windows for the auditorium. The building project was completed by August 18, 1936 and formally dedicated on September 11, 1936. A record crowd attended the services. A

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 22

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

splendid program was rendered and enjoyed by all, especially the address by attorney Lester Sproul, a Buffalo High School alumnus, and numbers by Buffalo Band and the Little German Band of Erie, ND.

The building of the new gymnasium and stage in 1936 created more space in the high school building, with grades seven-twelve being moved into the old gym (assembly) on the second floor. They now had one home room for the entire high school! Students devised an honorary seating chart whereby seniors sat next to the windows, while seventh graders were positioned the furthest away.

The graduating class of 1936 reminisces,

Happiness was...

- *Running to the window on those rare occasions when an airplane flew over.*
- *Having the teacher take us down to the Northern Pacific tracks to see a huge, smelly whale on a flatcar.*
- *Voting to choose our national anthem.*
- *Having a photographer come to take class pictures outside the school.*
- *Presenting special community programs in the Opera House with Mrs. S. G. More as accompanist.*
- *Finding (or not finding) your pen point for the Palmer Method Penmanship class.*
- *Participating in our annual Declamation and Spelling contest in Casselton, ND.*
- *Recognizing selections of classical music and memorizing the composer's name and nationality so you could be selected to participate in the Music Memory Contest.*
- *Playing Pump-Pump Pull Away at noon and recess.*
- *Sharing double desks in the assembly and being able to join band.*
- *The challenge of selecting our eighth grade class pins, and the finding the money (15¢ plus 3¢ postage) to pay for them.*
- *Playing basketball in the old upstairs gym.*
- *Traveling to Enderlin, ND as a class group on a Sunday night to see a movie -"The Tale of Two Cities", and then ALL being expelled the next day because we were not chaperoned.*

After the new gymnasium addition to the Buffalo School was built, there was a great amount of enthusiasm created in the field of independent basketball. In 1937 the team competed for the first time in the State Independent Tournament and brought home the sportsmanship trophy. After a tough financial year in 1937, the team reorganized as the Buffalo-Absaraka Twins. The Twins then played games with the Chocolate Coeds and the Colored House of David, and ticket prices improved their financial standing. In 1940 the Twins won the championship at the Red River Basketball Tournament held in Fargo and scored third in the ND State Independent Tournament.

The first "Girl's State Consolidated Basketball Tournament" was held in Buffalo in 1938. An article in the Buffalo Express stated that seven hundred and twenty-eight people attended the tournament on a given night. (over three times the population of the entire city!) On March 15, 1941, while the tournament was being held, a blizzard struck and many people were stranded in the Buffalo School Gymnasium overnight. Girls' basketball was dropped at Buffalo in about 1955

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 23

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

but resumed again in 1970.



Figure 9. Graduating Class of 1938 in front of the Buffalo High School building.

Those graduating in 1939 recalled, "As we advanced to the fifth and sixth grades, we were given the added responsibility of ringing the big bell located in the hall outside our classroom, that was a task that had to be done precisely at 8:30 a.m. (warning bell), 9:00 a.m., 12:45 p.m. (warning bell), 1:00 p.m., and at the end of classes for the day. It was fun swinging on the end of the large rope. Our freshmen initiation found the boys dressed in baby bonnets and carrying baby bottles with the girls in outlandish men's overalls. The initiation party was a frightening experience not knowing what the mighty sophomores would require us to do. During our remaining years in high school we could participate in such events as band and glee club with trips to Fargo to enter music contests, basketball for both boys and girls with the state tournament being held in our new gym, girls pep squad which diligently practiced their intricate maneuvers and entertainment during half time at games, class plays where would-be actors and actresses charmed the audiences, school dances where romances began and sometimes ended and watching our six-man football team, without benefit of uniforms, defend their alma mater. Initiation for the ninth graders in 1939, as told by them, "wasn't any fun for us -- we were the freshman. We were told to Jitterbug and we did."

During World War II, students learned to adapt quickly to new things. They were subject to war time, which meant arriving at school in the pitch of night, and attending Saturday classes that began in the middle of the night (8:00 a.m. war time), and ended right after noon. Red Cross classes were held in the gymnasium. Several of the teachers left school midterm to take up the cause, and many boys joined the services before graduation or immediately after graduation. Many girls, too, took roles in the service of their country. The class of 1942 explained the changes as follows, "The last two years in high school for us were war years. Our world was shattered. Mr. Thompson the school superintendent, joined the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 24

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

Navy. We stood in lines for film and silk stockings, used shoe stamps, sugar stamps, and gas stamps. We saw on our parents' dashboards as we went to school, "Is this trip really necessary?" and sometimes we wondered. We listened to the radio and read the newspapers with renewed interest, and some of us waited for letters." Owing to all of this 'change' and possibly owing to extreme rationing making life much more restrictive, discipline reports cite increased, albeit "creative", mischief among the students at Buffalo High School.

Members of the graduating class of 1943 recalled, "I suppose one of the most important events of the year was our Skip Day. One member of the class chose to remain in school and a couple others were home, either sick or helping at home, but the other twelve of us piled into Obert Halland's Model A and went to Valley City for the day! We had a ball, but the teachers had the last word. (Probably the school board, too). It was a Friday and on Monday morning when we arrived at school for classes, we were greeted with a note on the bulletin board. Which stated that before we could be re-admitted to school, we had to have our parents appear with us in the superintendent's office; we would each receive a zero for every class we missed until our parents appeared that day; and we could have no class play. (The class of 1944 presented that play as the school had already received our play books). No wonder we remember that day!"

In retrospect, there are significant credits to be given the class of 1946, as it worked its way through high school it left a trail of destruction in its wake. The list included but is not limited to: "the surreptitious confiscating and ceremonious burning of a bookkeeping class answer book, an occasion of awe second only to the smoke rising from the Sistine; a frozen radiator under a window, carelessly left open, near the fire escape which had been used for entry to ring the school bell New Year's Eve 1946; a gentle satirical skit, criticizing the school board, presented on class night; innumerable festive band concerts scheduled for unique times and places, like greeting the 10 pm train on the Buffalo Depot platform; mysterious ventriloquism in geometry class; barn dances out at Hillcrest; plus the more "regular" activities like basketball, class plays, chorus, and band. Perhaps it was, in part, due to restraints like gas rationing, that gave rise to excessive creative mischief. Yet viewed from today, these antics are seen as far more than treasured lore. They also give testimony to a school and a community that accepted its youngsters with tolerance and patience while it waited for them to grow up. This acceptance provided an atmosphere of security with flexibility that was neither provincial nor stifling, and which never limited the individual learner, even in harmless mischief. It was a learning atmosphere that is highly sought by the best of education today. "

The school initially served only school district #38. A redistricting plan enlarged the school district to 115 sections in 1949. By 1951, it was also teaching students from school district #'s 48, 49, 77, 79, and 104, mostly owing to district reorganization in 1950-1951. In 1956, the school buildings were updated, with modern fluorescent lighting replacing the incandescent lighting that existed. Plans for the project were drafted to bring the building up to the national wiring code of 1953 and current North Dakota standards. Every room in the building was rewired with the exception of the gymnasium.

A separate grade school was built in 1959 to house grades one through six. It was built on Block 22 in the north end of town, about three blocks from the old public school. The old school buildings now functioned solely as a high school. Record levels of attendance forced the use of every available inch of space, including former storage rooms for classes. Enrollment saw a twenty-five percent increase over previous years, and two additional buses were purchased to handle the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 25

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

influx. Buses now carried one hundred forty-four of the school's one hundred seventy-eight students.

The year 1960 was another banner one at B. H. S.. The Bison Briefs, a school newspaper, was published, after a number of years with no publication. The senior class also started a tradition by hosting the first homecoming. They had a bonfire, parade, crowned a queen, and played a "homecoming" football game. This tradition continued throughout the remaining years of high school in Buffalo and into the consolidated school district up until the early 1990s.

In the fall of 1961, the junior class represented by Debra Stenseth, Robert Thompson and Stephanie Fraase placed first on the local Fargo, ND television program "Teen Quiz". In 1963 the local version of American Bandstand, Pepsi Platter Party, was a HIT! Many high school couples, with Margaret Halland as their 'Pepsi Girl', made their television debut there. The class of 1965 remembers during the high school years how the girls planned the FHA Foreign Foods Dinners, Daddy Date Nights, Mother's Day Teas, and FHA Style Shows, while the boys concentrated on having a strong, undefeated eight-man football team, struggled to win basketball games, and started an interest in track. Seventh graders had it tough in 1965, but after a day of wearing baby bonnets, inside-out clothes, and kneeling with their noses to the ground, they were full-fledged high school students. 1965 was also the first year that Buffalo and Tower City held a prom together.

As rural schools continued to close, additional land came from Alice School District in 1969, from the Ayr School District in 1970 and from the Wheatland School District in 1975.

Buffalo "Bison" football players won several conference championships over the years. The popularity of the sport in Buffalo is evident in that many years almost all of the high school boys participated. Their winning streak climaxed in 1973 when the Associated Press polls ranked Buffalo second in the State of ND to Emmons Central. Coach Gary Milbrandt felt so certain of his team's strength that he publicly challenged Emmons Central to a playoff. The game took place on a sleeting day in November at Bismarck, ND. The weather didn't stop the many fans from following their team. Winning hands down, 30 -18, provided Buffalo High School football team #19 with the "Mythical Nine-man State Title." This challenge game lead to the present state football playoffs. Owing to all this athletic success, new locker room facilities were added to the gymnasium in 1973.

The writing was already on the wall, however, and the days of Buffalo High School were numbered. After years of bitter, competitive rivalry between the Buffalo "Bison" and the Tower City "Clams", it looked as though consolidation might be necessary. There was a failed merger attempt in 1966 between the two neighboring schools. The declining enrollment, owing to the shift in population of North Dakotans from rural areas to larger cities, caused class size to dwindle. Teachers struggled to teach several subjects, and the quality of education was in danger. The Class of 1975 took it upon itself to gather further information about the two schools merging. They researched many of the areas that had to be considered. Finding the information took a lot of work. When it was completed, they took it to the P. T. A., and after their presentation action really started on the merger. Parents, not wanting the education of the students to suffer, finally pushed for school consolidation. As a result the last class to graduate from Buffalo High School was the class of 1975.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

The merger resulted in the temporary formation of the Buffalo-Tower City Schools and was considered a trial merger. While negotiations were underway, the high school students in grades nine through twelve from both communities attended classes in the Buffalo High School, grades one through five attended Buffalo Elementary School, and grades six through eight went to classes in Tower City. Classes graduated under the name of Buffalo-Tower City Schools from 1976 through 1978.

The closure of the building at the end of the 1977-1978 school year was the result of a final merger contract with the district of Tower City. Once enrollment levels began to drop and it proved economically more beneficial, the two merged to form Maple Valley School District #4. The elementary grades kindergarten through six attended the Buffalo Elementary School in Buffalo, while the high school grades of seven through twelve attended the newly remodeled high school in Tower City. The football program, however continued at Buffalo, and the playing field and the new locker room section of the school were used until the early 1990s.

Think of walking through the hallowed halls of Buffalo High School. Several sounds, smells, and sights come to mind: the clanging of the pipes; the sound of typewriters as young hands learned to type; the odor of rotten eggs as greenhorn chemists formed sulfur dioxide; the sounds of students building things in shop class; the groans of tired bodies during gym or basketball practice; the smell of sweat, and the sound of shuffling feet as students changed classes; the sound of music (sometimes sour, sometimes sweet); and the ringing of the school bell as classes were dismissed.

The 1902 public school bell that for so many generations summoned children to classes, now rests on a monument near the entrance of the Buffalo Lutheran Church and summons parishioners to services on Sunday.

In 1983, a group of concerned citizens, headed by former Buffalo High School Principal Mary Brustuen and former teacher Margaret Fraase attempted to create enough local interest to maintain the school building and continue to use it for community activities. Such activities included a community recreation room, stage, a library, museum, and meeting rooms. The plan also included listing the building on the National Register of Historic Places. A letter from Historical Architect Bonnie Halda, dated January 21, 1983, stated: "The Buffalo High School is a fine example of early school buildings built in North Dakota. Exterior features such as decorative eaves, the cupola, and the brickwork all combine to produce handsome structures. The interior features, such as the pressed metal ceilings, wood wainscoting and wood window trim, were all impressive. I think Buffalo possesses an important group of school buildings that are worthy of preservation." The school board voted to give the building to the city of Buffalo for the cost of transfer of title; the city council voted down the offer.

Finally the building was sold for the price of \$1.00 to an individual from Fargo, ND. It remained empty and received no maintenance for many years. Lockers, desks, appliances, fixtures, and woodwork were ripped from the building. Anything that could be sold to make a buck was salvaged. Furnaces ripped from the ceiling of the gymnasium left holes for water to run into the building. When the city tried to enforce maintenance compliance, the building was sold to a Fargo contractor for \$500.00 in 1995. Once informed of the liability and back taxes that remained on the building, he donated it to a radio auction in 1996 in return for a case of whiskey, and it was auctioned off to someone unseen for \$1,000.00. The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - PROPERTY HISTORY (continued)

proceeds were to benefit a "Toys for Tots" campaign. When he saw the building's dilapidated condition he quickly lost interest. The title remained unregistered in the Cass County Courthouse. In 1997 the city secured broken windows, and cleaned up the grounds for the All School Reunion and Community Days Celebration. In 1998 a National Register nomination for the complete property was approved by the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Review Board. In 1999, when it appeared that the building would become the property of Cass County as a result of delinquent taxes, a proposal for saving the 1916 Buffalo High School was made to the County Commission. However, as a result of the publicity in the papers, the former owner of the building smelled money, and ran in to pay the \$200.00 tax bill to re-claim ownership of the property. When he realized that a sale of the property was not forthcoming, he stripped the interior further, and left it sitting open to the elements for yet another year.

On October 1, 2000 the building became the property of Cass County. The 1902 public school, the 1936 gymnasium, and the 1973 locker rooms have been condemned and demolished. An effort is underway to preserve the 1916 High School and return the building to community use as an addition to the Buffalo Heritage Center.

Class Poem 1908

*When you are gone from Buffalo
New courses to pursue,
Remember our old class motto
And to our colors prove true.*

*And if anyone should ask you
The way to your success,
Just tell them your a graduate
of the famous B. H. S.*

*If on some lonely evening
Your head and heart both ache
Just think of dear old school days
And the class of nineteen-eight.*

*So may this little banner
Prove a token to restore
Your thoughts of dear old Buffalo
And the days you spent of yore.*

A. L. N.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 28

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 29

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 30

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 31

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places is located north of the railroad tracks in Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota. Specifically: Township 140, Range 54, Section 19, Block 10, Lots 1, 2, 3 and 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 of the original plat of New Buffalo, Dakota Territory, according to the deeds on file at the Register of Deeds office, Cass County Courthouse in Fargo, ND.

The 1916 Buffalo High School and the land associated with the building comprises the entire south half of Block 10. The property measures as follows: from the corner of Pearl Street North and Bush Avenue North three-hundred feet west to the corner of Pearl Street North and Wilcox Avenue North; then one-hundred forty feet north to the alley in the center of Block 10; three-hundred feet east along the alley; and finally one-hundred forty feet south to the point of origin.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The south half of Block 10 is the land historically associated with the Buffalo School buildings. Lots 1,2,3 and 14 were acquired in 1890. Lots 10,11,12 and 13 were purchased in 1914 to construct the 1916 Buffalo High School.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 11 Page 32

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS

1- Historic photograph of the 1916 Buffalo High School, built next to the 1902 Buffalo Public School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: unknown Date: circa 1916
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Front elevation, camera facing north
Photo #1

2- Photograph of the front elevation of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Front elevation, camera facing north
Photo #2

3- Photograph of the southwest corner of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Front and west elevation, camera facing northeast
Photo #3

4- Photograph of the doors and gable pediment on the front elevation of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Front elevation, camera facing north
Photo #4

5- Photograph of the decorative archway above the front entrance to the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 11 Page 33

1916 Buffalo High School
Cass County, ND

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS (continued)

303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Close-up of decoration on front elevation, camera facing north
Photo #5

6- Photograph of the northeast corner of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
North rear and east side elevations, Camera facing southwest
Photo #6

7- Photograph of the interior of the Assembly room on the second floor of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Interior, camera facing east
Photo #7

8- Photograph of the interior tin ceiling in the Assembly room on the second floor of the 1916 Buffalo High School.

1916 Buffalo High School, 32 CS 2154
303 Pearl Street North Buffalo, Cass County, North Dakota
Photographer: Dale Roland Bentley Date: March 12, 2001
Neg. State Historical Society of ND, Bismarck
Interior, camera facing up toward the ceiling on the north wall.
Photo #8