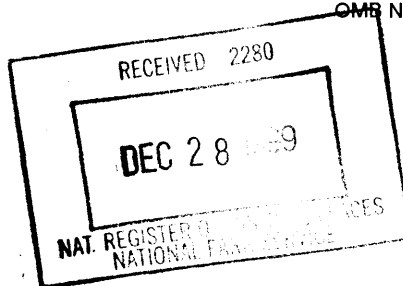


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



7

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Delhi Municipal Baseball Park

other names/site number Billy Bryan Memorial Park

2. Location

street & number Chicago and Louisiana Sts. NA not for publication

city or town Delhi NA vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Richland code 083 zip code 71232

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jonathan Fricker 12/17/99
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

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 certifying official/Title 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):

Olson W. Beall
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action
1-28-00

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
—	1	buildings
1	—	sites
—	—	structures
—	—	objects
1	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Recreation and Culture

Sub. Sports Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Recreation and Culture

Sub. Sports Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NA

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls _____

roof Metal

other Wood

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" next to the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X 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

NA

(Mark "X" next to all that apply.)

- 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)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1948

Significant Dates

1948

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

NA

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 5.7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 15 641300 3591700

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date August 1999

street & number P.O. Box 44247 telephone (225) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 Town of Delhi

street & number P. O. Box 277 telephone (318) 878-3792

city or town Delhi state LA zip code 71232

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 7 Page 1

The Delhi Municipal Baseball Park includes a wooden grandstand and accompanying playing field. Built in 1948, the facility occupies part of a large block near the small town's old business district. Abutting the baseball park (but not part of this nomination) are livestock judging barns from about the same period. With the exception of more recent vintage dugouts and the loss of the original board fence, the facility looks much as it did when dedicated.

The basically V-shaped grandstand has viewing stands to each side. A section at the center houses a box for the announcer and scorekeeper with a small concession stand below. The wooden grandstand rests on concrete blocks. A metal roof provides protection from the elements. (Some of the roofing material is missing due to a recent storm.) Originally there were traditional below ground dugouts; today there are two small wooden shelters. (These two sheds are not being included in the count because they are not "substantial in size and scale.")

The playing field is grassy except for the areas where players run from base to base, the pitcher's mound, and the batter's box. The baseball park is now enclosed by a chain link fence which roughly follows the location of the original wooden board fence. A chief novelty of the field when dedicated in 1948 was that it was equipped with lights for night games. The creosote posts remain, although the lighting devices are modern.

Non-contributing Element:

Immediately behind the grandstand (see map) is a small frame restroom building. Because it is believed to be less than fifty years old, it is being counted as a non-contributing element.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 1

The Delhi Municipal Baseball Park is of local historical significance because its construction in 1948 was a major event in the small town's recreational history, as detailed in newspaper coverage at the time. It was the community's first permanent baseball facility and the first to provide lighting for night games.

To fully appreciate the significance of the Delhi Baseball Park, one must remember that in small town, rural America sporting events were a major source of recreation and entertainment – especially baseball, the quintessential American sport. Delhi is in the Northeast Louisiana delta, a very rural region where cotton was and is king. In 1950 there was one city (Monroe, with about 41,000), Tallulah with about 8,000, and numerous small towns under 5,000. Delhi in 1950 had a population of 1,861; the parish seat of Rayville, about 3,000. It is clear from the local paper, *The Delhi Dispatch*, that amateur baseball competition was fierce among the various towns and that acquiring a permanent baseball facility with bleachers and lighting in 1948 was an event of considerable magnitude in the life of the town. News chronicling the development of the baseball park was typically in a prominent place on the front page.

Coverage began in March 1948 when the Delhi Baseball Club, Inc. was chartered for the purpose of securing the town's team, the Delhi Oilers, an up-to-date grandstand with lighting for night games. The Oilers were in a six team amateur league and played two games a week for a total schedule of 40 games per season. Previously the Oilers played home games in a field with no seating accommodations and certainly no ability to play night games. The club issued stock to be purchased by citizens at \$10 per share, with profits from gate receipts to be used to retire the stock. The corporation charter for the Delhi Baseball Club, Inc. was filed in late March 1948 as soon as the first 200 shares of stock had been paid for, a requirement set up by the group's attorneys. Formed by local citizens, its president was Dr. Sheldon Teer. A large ad in the April 14 paper with the heading "**BUY NOW**" read in part: "Your money will be used to pay for permanent improvements that will be used and enjoyed by Delhi people and visitors to Delhi for many years. . . . About \$4,000 worth of stock has been subscribed and **PAID FOR**. But more money is **NEEDED**. . . . Delhi can afford – and deserves – an up-to-date, adequately lighted baseball field where young and old can see high-class, amateur ball games on weekday nights. . . . Other towns are getting facilities of the type planned for Delhi – is Delhi to take a back seat?" The message was paid for "in the interest of progress for Delhi" by five local businesses and one individual.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section	<u>8</u>	Page	<u>2</u>
	9		1
	10		1

By the April 28, 1948 issue of the *Dispatch* the stock drive must have been successful, for work was underway on Delhi's "modern, new baseball field," with completion expected in three weeks. Dr. Teer boasted that "Delhi is the only town of its size in North Louisiana which will have an elaborate baseball field for amateur ball." The first daytime game was played there in late May. The first night game was later than planned because of a delay in getting all the lighting equipment in place. Delhi's "first night game in history" (as it was described in the paper) occurred on July 15.

A front page story in July boasted that a "capacity crowd" was expected for the formal opening and dedication of the park on July 20, "when the Oilers attempt to take the measure of the vaunted Winnsboro Red Sox. . . . Nearly 2,000 comfortable grandstand seats will be available for ball fans from Rayville, Tallulah, Oak Grove and other neighboring towns who are expected to see the Oilers dedicate the new park and facilities recently completed at a cost of \$12,000." Standard prices (50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children) were to be in effect for dedication night.

Baseball parks with covered wooden grandstands such as the one dedicated in Delhi in 1948 were once a common feature of small town America – before they were superseded by metal bleachers. Baseball fans in Delhi supporting this nomination remember when every town of any size in Northeast Louisiana had a baseball park like theirs. As far as anyone can determine, this is the only survivor in the region.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Delhi Dispatch. January - September, 1948. Copies of pertinent articles in National Register file, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Please refer to attached sketch map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

Boundaries were chosen to encompass the baseball grandstand and playing field, said property being located in the southeast corner of a large city block (see map). Streets define the east and south boundaries. Immediately to the north is the property of the Northeast Louisiana Livestock Show. To the west is the Delhi Civic Center property.

DELHI MUNICIPAL BASEBALL PARK

Richland Parish

Louisiana

DEPOT



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA LIVESTOCK SHOW GROUNDS

NORTH

GEORGIA

1" = 130'

-  contributing
-  non-contributing

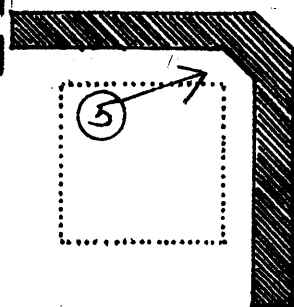
--- Boundary
restroom bldg.

DENVER



DELHI CIVIC CENTER

PARKING



5

6

CHICAGO

TENNESSEE

3

2

4

1

DELHI MUNICIPAL BASEBALL FIELD

LOUISIANA