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SEP 20 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS FORM 10-900 (Rev. 8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018 [SD-SHPO # ECA-OH-597-1/89] [use paper with at least 25% cotton rag content, use NLQ or LQ printer]

United States Department of the Interior -- National Park Service NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES -- REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering "NA" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property historic name: Reeve's Resort other name/ site number: CD-FU-9

2. Location street & number: 6 miles south of Florence /NA/ not for publication city, town: Florence /XX/ vicinity state: SOUTH DAKOTA code: SD county: Codington code: SD 029 zip code: 57235

3. Classification Ownership of Property: Category of Property Number of Resources within Property: Contributing Noncontributing buildings sites structures objects Total Name of related multiple property listing: NA Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

11. Form Prepared by name/title: Barbara Beving Long, Consultant organization: Four Mile Research Company street & number: 3140 Easton Blvd. city or town: Des Moines date: July 13, 1989 telephone: 515-266-4964 state: Iowa zip code: 50317

page 2: Reeve's Resort  
property name

, Codington  
county

, SOUTH DAKOTA  
state

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

*[Signature]* Signature of certifying official      9/16/87 Date

S. D. Dept. SHPO  
State or Federal agency or bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

Entered in the  
National Register

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) \_\_\_\_\_

*Aelores Byars*      10/19/89

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper      Date

page 3: Reeves Resort  
property name

, Codington  
county

, SOUTH DAKOTA  
state

6. Function or Use (enter categories from instructions)

Historic functions:

Recreation and Culture/Outdoor recreation  
Health Care/Resort

Current Functions:

Recreation and Culture/Outdoor recreation

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7. Description

Architectural Classification:

(enter categories from instructions)  
No Style

Materials:

(enter categories from instructions)  
foundation Concrete  
walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

/XX/ see continuation sheet

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8. Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in  
relation to other properties: / / / / /XX/

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria /XX/ A / /B / /C / /D

Criteria Considerations / /A / /B / /C / /D / /E / /F / /G

Areas of Significance (enter from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance  
circa 1920-1939

Significant Dates  
NA

Significant Person  
NA

Cultural Affiliation  
NA

Architect/Builder  
Monbloch, Clem  
Monbloch, Sylvester

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations,  
and periods of significance noted above /XX/ see continuation sheet

page 4: Reeve's Resort  
property name

, Codington  
county

, SOUTH DAKOTA  
state

9. Major Bibliographical References

/XX/ see continuation sheet

Previous documentation by 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:

- /XX/ State historic preservation office
- / / Other State agency
- / / Federal agency
- / / Local government
- / / University
- / / Other

Specify repository:

South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: 2 acres

UTM References:

A = /14/	/629-700/	/4981-600/	B = / /	/ /	/ /
C = / /	/ /	/ /	D = / /	/ /	/ /
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

Quad: Kampeska

Scale: 1:24000

/ / see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description:

/XX/ see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification:

/XX/ see continuation sheet

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Perched on the southern tip of Medicine Lake, Reeve's Resort has been a popular recreational facility in Codington County, South Dakota, since 1917. The lake is noted for its unusually high mineral content, which provides uncommon buoyancy and purportedly cures skin diseases. Although the owners still sell lake minerals in dried form for relief from skin problems, most bathers now enjoy the lake for its scenic charm, remarkably clear water, and simple mien. Six buildings including a pop stand, dance hall, change house, two small privies, and a noncontributing dwelling, are clustered along the sloping sandy shores. They share such characteristics as gabled roofs, white-painted weatherboard, smallness of scale, rectangular shape, and axial alignment with the lake. Distinctive resort features include huge tree stumps for seats, Portland cement "logs" for steps, and a bench along the lake side of the change house. Picnic tables and shade trees are situated along the lake at the east end of the compact site.

In 1917, Howard Reeve, grandfather of the present owner, bought the south shore lake property to accommodate bathers. By this time Medicine Lake was well known for its unique properties. Reeve had initially built two small bathhouses (no longer extant) on the north side of the lake. As the popularity of his new resort grew, he built a dance hall in circa 1920, the present pop stand in circa 1920-22, and the present change house in circa 1930. After being destroyed by a wind storm, the dance hall was rebuilt in 1938. The first house on the site burned in 1947, and the present altered replacement was moved in from a nearby farm two years later.

Located off a gravel road, the property lies in the midst of an isolated, but by no means remote, rural area characterized by little tree cover, pleasingly rounded low hills, and highly dispersed farms, including one on the north side of Medicine Lake. (See photo #7.) Arriving bathers proceed down a sandy path running along the pop stand to the change house north and west of the pop stand. Those who do not need to change go directly on to the 100-yard-long sand beach through a relatively narrow passage between the change house and dance hall.

The wood frame one-story concession or pop stand (#3, contributing) is a center for activity. A raised porch extends the gabled roofline on two sides and lends the rectangular building a squared and inviting appearance. It was once open on three sides, but has been enclosed on the east. The owner "preserves" or seasons the porch floor and the tree stump seats placed along it with a washing of the mineralized lake water. Thus, the floor and seats exhibit a dull gray hue. Simple squared posts pierce the wood porch floor to rest on concrete piers. The foundation of the pop stand is constructed of poured concrete. Most of the cladding on the building consists of shiplap siding, except on the northeast corner where horizontal boards have been

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applied to the wall surface. Round "logs" of Portland cement, leftover from University of Minnesota tests on the effect of Medicine Lake water on certain compositions of concrete, are laid on their side forming steps to the porch. Modern refrigeration has replaced large galvanized metal tanks. Ice harvested from the lake during the winter was used in the tanks to cool soft drinks.

The wood frame one-story bathhouse or change house (#2, contributing) measures 34-feet by 12-feet and is oriented with its axial side facing the lake. A small boardwalk extends to the lake just east of the change house. Originally reserved exclusively for women, the change house is sheathed with horizontal boards. It has been modified slightly on the west end in order to provide an entrance for a men's section. A wood partition separates the two changing areas. Inside are small square lockers on the south wall for storing clothing and ten simple wood changing bays. On the east end, north of the entry door, is a former office and its hinged wood enclosure. This door could be raised, and bathers rented suits and towels here. No longer in use, the small office is now the eleventh changing bay. Long since removed from the property, a separate men's change house once ran parallel to the present facility.

An immense cottonwood tree shades the change house and shields the resort area somewhat from the owners private house (#1, noncontributing). Located west of the change house. The original portion of the gabled wood frame house is sheathed with clapboard and shiplap siding and wood shingles stained a dusty red color. Several additions give the house an altered and complex shape. It was moved to the property in 1949.

The dance hall (#4, contributing) once hosted regular Friday night dances. With changes in liquor laws eliminating "key clubs," it is now rented for family reunions and other private gatherings. Like the change house, the dance hall is situated with its long axial facade along the lake. It measures 70-feet by 32-feet, with small extensions at both gable ends. Gabled with asphalt shingles, the wood frame one-story building is covered with shiplap siding. Small exposed rafters run along the narrow overhang. At the west end is the pumphouse and storage extension as well as an outside shower. Bathers use the shower to rinse off the lake minerals.

Dancers entered the hall at the west end of the south facade. A separate entrance for the band next to a simple recessed stage is located at the east end of the building. The interior is appointed with all wood fixtures, including exposed wood trusses. Located between the entries are screened rectangular windows. Lake view openings, in an enclosed extension of the gabled roofline, are also screened and normally covered with hinged wood doors.

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West of the dance hall are two small gabled privies (#5 and #6, contributing) also covered with shiplap siding.

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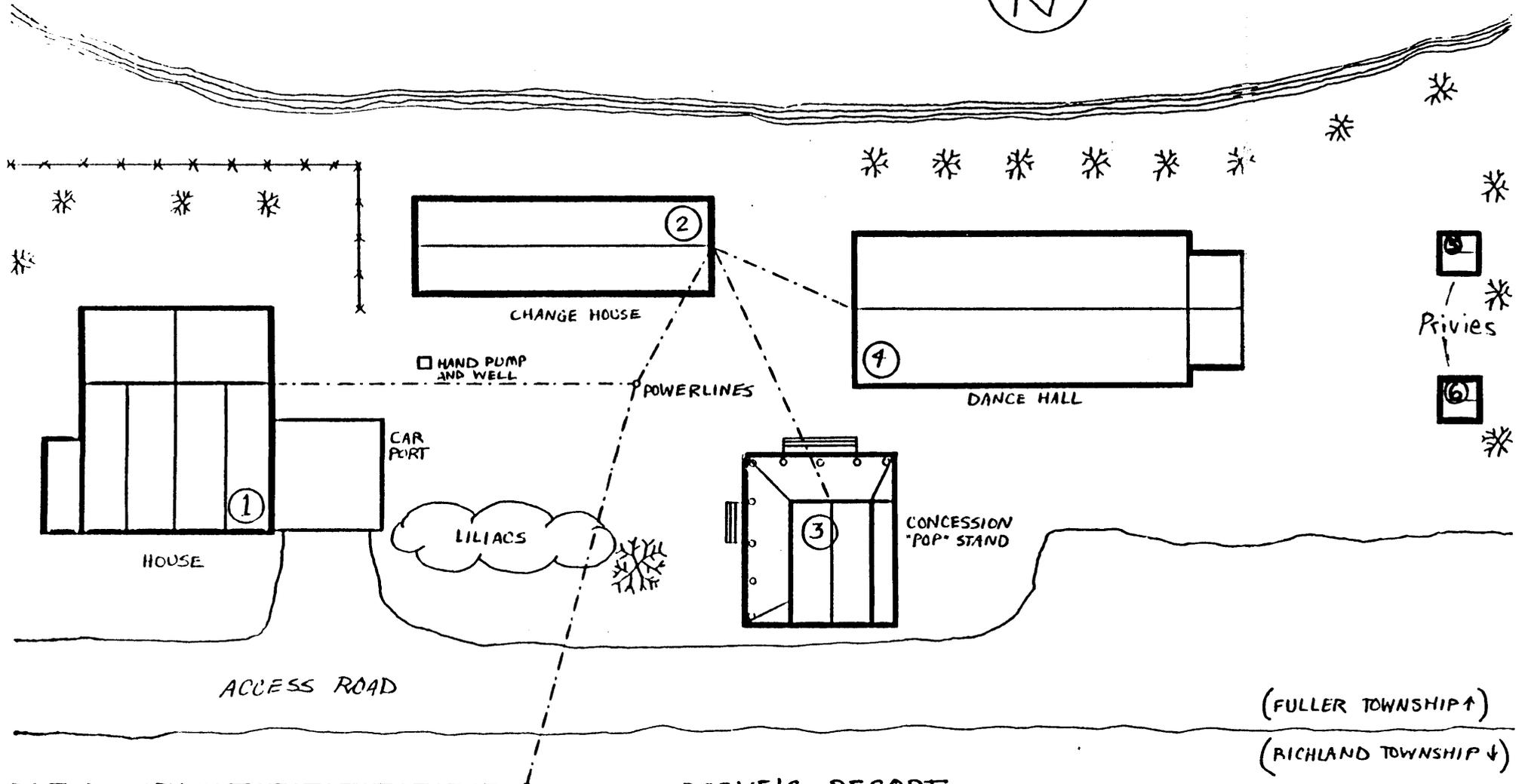
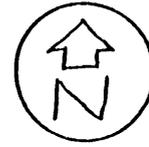
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SKETCH OF SITE PLAN ON REVERSE SIDE

MEDICINE LAKE



REEVE'S RESORT  
Codington County, South Dakota

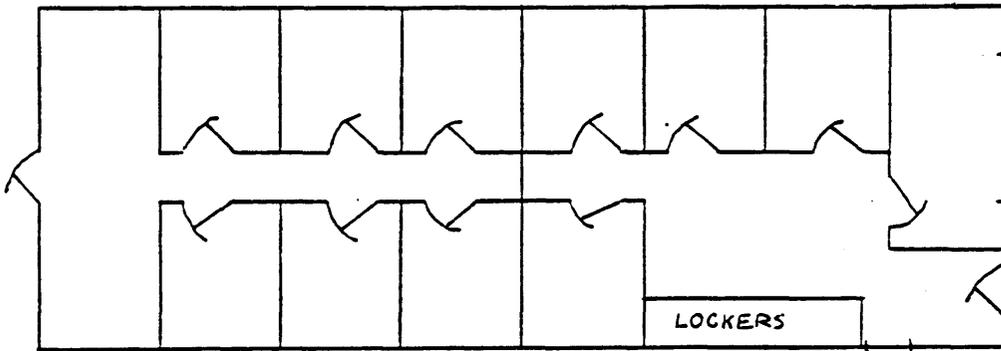
(FULLER TOWNSHIP ↑)  
(RICHLAND TOWNSHIP ↓)

Site Plan (Complete Inventory of Structures and Features) with North Arrow

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

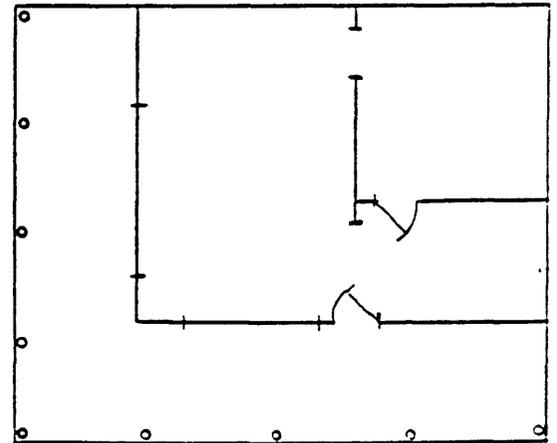
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MEN'S/WOMEN'S  
CHANGE HOUSE (2)

CONCESSION "POP" STAND (3)



REEVE'S RESORT, Floor plans of two major buildings

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Under Criterion A of the National Register Criteria, Reeve's Resort is significant in the area of entertainment/recreation, because for over seventy years it has served as a popular recreational facility in the glacial lakes region of northeastern South Dakota. Located along Medicine Lake, a natural body of water containing a unique and unusually high mineral content, the resort has been promoted as a refuge or spa for those seeking the alleged medicinal value of the waters as well as a safe place for swimmers. The property has changed remarkably little since the late 1930s. Under the South Dakota Historical Preservation Plan, the nominated property relates to the following context: V.F. Depression and Rebuilding/Recreation and Tourism.

This glaciated region is dotted with lakes of various sizes, but only Medicine Lake has high concentrations of mineral salts (magnesium, sodium, calcium sulfate, sodium chloride, calcium bicarbonate and carbonate, in that order). Nearby Horseshoe Lake also has a mineral content but not nearly as high as that of Medicine Lake, which is located in a low valley and thus receives water from surrounding lakes and streams along with minerals from area soils. As the water evaporates, salts remain in concentrations of 47,215 parts per million. The skin curative claims of Medicine Lake's minerals have not been proven conclusively. Yet, a contemporary advertisement for the resort avers that "It is Nature's natural laxative and a remarkable cure for many skin diseases," such as poison ivy, eczema, and dandruff. Clarence Reeve, father of the present owner, stated that "Farmers haul water from the lake to their farm and let the hogs wallow in it. It cures the mange." Indian tribes were aware of the unusual properties of Medicine Lake and visited it for its supposed restorative qualities. The Sioux called it Minnepjuta or "medicine water."

Later white settlers in the area also visited Medicine Lake and enjoyed both its recreational and medicinal attributes. In 1917 Howard Reeve, who moved to South Dakota in 1901, bought this parcel on the south shore of the lake. He had operated a bathhouse and swimming facility at another location on the lake as early as 1914. Local carpenters, brothers Sylvester and Clem Monbloch, built many of the buildings comprising Reeve's Resort. Howard Reeve planted the trees and shrubs that shade the property in the otherwise generally treeless prairie shore.

Bathers came from far and wide to partake of the waters. Local farm families came for daylong outings, storing their belongings in change house lockers. A photograph from the 1920s shows a sizable number of automobiles parked at the resort. In the 1920s and 1930s the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad offered special excursion trains to Florence, a small farming community six miles north of the lake. They advertised that Medicine Lake waters "are providing a great benefit to persons troubled with skin and stomach ailments." Also in

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the early 1920s the Watertown Carbonation Company bottled and sold the water as "nature's laxative" under the name Laxo-Vim. Although the present owners sell lake minerals in dried form for relief from skin problems, most bathers now visit the lake for its recreational opportunities.

At one time there were two other resorts on the lake. Allen's Resort was directly west of Reeve's place and is shown in a historic photograph from the 1920s. Roe Resort was located on the west side. No buildings remain from these other recreation ventures.

Dancers filled the dance hall for some forty years on hot summer Friday nights. Promptly at 11:45 p.m., the Reeves served coffee and hot dogs by the dozens. Howard's son, Clarence, operated the resort between 1939 and 1967. He stopped holding dances in the 1950s. Clarence's son, Devon, the present owner, took over operations in 1967. Between 1969 and 1974 he too opened the dance hall for public dances, but it is now only rented for private functions.

Medicine Lake has repeatedly been the subject of university studies and master's theses. Under the sponsorship of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, engineers from the University of Minnesota conducted a lengthy study to test the corrosive effects on various compositions of Portland Cement beginning in the 1920s. Cement cylinders were placed in four feet of water at the resort. In 1937 nearly 30,000 cylinders, corralled in crates, were submerged for testing. Any cylinder that lasted five years in the salt-laden water was considered a success. The project continued for around thirty years, and each summer the engineers returned to Reeve's Resort to examine the cylinders for deterioration. These cylinders, in the shape of 16-inch long logs, left at the close of the project are now used as steps to the pop stand.

The period of significance for Reeve's Resort begins in circa 1920 with construction of the oldest extant resource, the Pop Stand, and extends through the time of peak use and interest in 1939, which also corresponds to the established 50-year cut-off date for the National Register. This period includes the time when bathers were interested in both the medicinal and recreational uses of the lake water, the dance hall was most popular, the University of Minnesota began scientific studies at the lake, and when its founder, Howard Reeve, operated the resort.

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Beaver, George R.T. "The Geology of the Medicine Lake Area and Its Relationship to Lake Water Quality." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of South Dakota, 1973.

County Public Dance Hall License. For Howard Reeve for August 18, 1933.

Deed Records. Codington County Register of Deeds.

"The First 100 Years" in Codington County, South Dakota. n.p.: Codington County History Book Committee, 1979. pp. 51, 312-313.

Historic Photographs (of Reeve's Resort). 1920. In possession of Devon Reeve.

Kant, Joanita, et al. Pictorial History, of Codington County, South Dakota. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1987. pp. 143, 150, 152.

Peterson, E. Frank. Map of Codington County, South Dakota. Vermillion: n.p., 1902. Shown as "Bitter Medicine Lake".

Stockdale, Richard G. "A Geologic Study of the Chemical Quality of Medicine Lake." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of South Dakota, 1971.

Stokke, Vel, comp. Heritage Sampler. Watertown: Public Opinion, 1975. pp. 121-122.

Undated newspaper articles in possession of Devon Reeve:

"Medicine Lake Offers More Than Just a Refreshing Dip."

"Waters of Medicine Lake May Kill Dandruff, Cure Rheumatism."

"S.D. Lake Repels Fish, Seems to Help People."

"Medicine Lake: A Gentle Healer."

"You Can Get Medicine Lake by Mail!" (quoting Clarence Reeve.)

"Medicine Lake Scene of Interesting Tests on Cement Qualities."

Receipt from E. P. Stacy Fruit Co. to Howard Reeves [sic]. August 24, 1931. In possession of Devon Reeve.

Receipt from Sanitary Food Manufacturing Co. to Howard Reeves [sic]. June 16, 1931. In possession of Devon Reeve.

Reeve, Devon (current owner). Personal Interview with Barbara Beving Long. June 27, 1988.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nominated property is bounded by a set of imaginary lines that intersect to form a polygon around the entire resort complex. The western boundary line lies 15 feet west of the westernmost wall of the house (resource #1) and runs parallel to that wall. The northern boundary line lies along the south shore of Medicine Lake. The eastern boundary line lies 15 feet east of the east wall of the northernmost privy (resource #5) and runs parallel to that wall. The southern boundary line lies along the boundary line between Fuller Township (118 North) and Richland Township (117 North). The property is located in the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 31, Township 118 North, Range 54 West, 5th Principal Meridian, in Codington County, South Dakota.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries of the nominated property are set to include all features of the resort complex including the belt of shade trees along the south shore of Medicine Lake. Specifically not included are county roads, lands outside of the resort complex, lands not owned by the Reeve family, or surface area of the lake.

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PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

1.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota

by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

House, camera facing west

Photo #1

2.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota

by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

Change house, camera facing northwest

Photo #2

3.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota

by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

Pop stand, including Portland cement "log" steps,

camera facing southwest

Photo #3

4.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota

by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

Dance hall, camera facing northwest

Photo #4

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5.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota  
by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center  
Privies, camera facing northeast

Photo #5

6.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota  
by Rolene Schliesman

July 1986

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center  
Pop stand, with dance hall beyond, camera facing northeast

Photo #6

7.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota  
by Barbara Beving Long

June 1988

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center  
overview showing resort and lake, camera facing southeast

Photo #7

8.

Reeve's Resort

Florence Vicinity, Codington County, South Dakota  
by Barbara Beving Long

June 1988

Neg: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center  
From L to R: pop stand, change house, dance hall,  
camera facing west

Photo #8