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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 25 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" 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. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Moose Temple
other names/site number College Building; Maze Building

2. Location

street & number 17 - 23 Forest Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Fond du Lac N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Fond du Lac code 039 zip code 54935

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

No. of contributing resources
previously listed in the
National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer - WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

3/4/93
Date

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 and bureau

5. 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:) _____

Entered in the National Register

[Signature]

4/22/93

Signature of the Keeper
Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall
EDUCATION/college
COMMERCE/business

COMMERCE/business
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

foundation concrete
walls brick
roof asphalt
other wood
stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Description

This fine Neo-Classical Revival style three-and-one-half-story-tall building was constructed in 1923 as the temple of the then rapidly expanding Fond du Lac lodge of the Loyal Order of Moose (L.O.M.) fraternal organization. The design of the temple was the work of Frank J. Stepnoski, a prominent Fond du Lac architect, and the temple was constructed by the Fond du Lac-based Immel Construction Company. Together, client, architect, and contractor created a building which, at a cost of \$225,000, immediately became an object of civic pride in Fond du Lac. The temple occupies a prominent corner site located at the juncture of South Macy Street and Forest Avenue in the heart of the commercial district of downtown Fond du Lac. The original building is approximately eighty-feet square in plan and its principal facades face south and west. These facades are still largely intact and consist of walls that are clad in reddish-brown brick and supported by reinforced concrete columns and steel beams. Ornamental trim is of cast stone, windows have wood casings and mullions and the roof of the temple is flat and is hidden by tall brick parapets.

When built in 1923, the temple was surrounded by predominantly two and three-story-tall nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. Today, the surrounding area contains a mixture of both restored and unrestored examples of these historic commercial buildings. Most of the older buildings on the block in which the temple is situated, however, (including all the historic buildings that were once located immediately adjacent to it) have now been demolished and new buildings have been built in their place. This demolition activity also made visible for the first time the east elevation of the temple, which had previously been covered by a now-demolished building next door. This elevation (which, being a party wall, never had any architectural features) was recently remodeled in accordance with National Park Service (NPS) Title 36 CFR Part 67, using the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. As a result, this elevation was resurfaced in brick, windows were added, and a one-story ell was built at the foot of the elevation that was then linked to a new four-story elevator tower placed at the rear (north) end of the elevation. This remodeling activity was also accompanied by the renovation of the temple's main facades and the restoration of the previously remodeled first story storefronts.

When the Moose Order first developed its plans for a new temple building early in 1918, a prominent downtown site was desired in order to provide a visible focus for the Order's activities. The Order began assembling the site later in that year by purchasing three contiguous three-story-tall nineteenth century brick commercial buildings belonging to the Columbus Smith estate.¹ Six months later, a fourth building was purchased, giving the Order a nearly square 80 by 92 foot parcel that

¹ Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. January 19, 1924, Section 2, pg. 2.

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formed the northeast corner of the intersection created by the juncture of the east-west running Forest Avenue and north-south running South Macy Street. The block that contained this parcel was bounded on the south by Forest Avenue, on the east by South Main Street, on the north by Division Street, and on the west by South Macy Street. One block to the west of Macy Street, the north-south running Fond du Lac River bisected the city. Placement between Macy and Main Streets, Fond du Lac's principal commercial arteries, provided the Moose Order with the prominent downtown site it sought. The older buildings on the site were demolished in 1922 and construction of the temple began in 1923.

Except for a 10-foot-wide service drive along the northern boundary of the site, the Moose Temple building completely covers the parcel of land the Order purchased in 1918. The building is 80 feet by 82 feet in size with an 80-foot frontage on Forest Avenue and an 82-foot frontage on South Macy Street. It is constructed with reinforced concrete columns and steel beams, the walls between the columns being filled with hollow tile and the exterior being faced with a reddish-brown brick. The floors are also built of reinforced concrete and are supported by steel beams. Because the temple was designed to fit a corner site bounded by earlier buildings to the north and east, architectural treatment of the exterior was confined to the west and south-facing facades. These facades utilized the same materials and the same design vocabulary and they were both executed in a restrained version of Neo-Classical Revival style.

Another factor which influenced the overall design of these facades was the multipurpose nature of the activities the temple was designed to house. The first story of the temple originally contained four income-producing retail stores and a barbershop, the club rooms of the Order occupied the second story, and an auditorium occupied the whole of the third and mezzanine stories. This functional division of the interior space of the temple was also reflected on the exterior, where a wide cast stone cornice encircles the building above the first story, clearly demarcating the first story retail activities from the fraternal activities above.

The south-facing Forest Avenue facade contains the principal entrance to the temple and it was thus more elaborately treated than its west-facing counterpart. The south facade is five-bays-wide and its second, third and mezzanine stories have a symmetrical composition while its first story is asymmetrical. The four left-hand bays of the first story originally each contained four identical storefronts that served four 17-foot-wide by 30-foot-deep retail spaces. These storefronts were slightly inset into the main facade and each was separated from its neighbor by a simple brick pilaster that rested on a tall concrete pedestal that was in fact a part of the raised plinth that encircled the south and west elevations of the temple. Each storefront originally consisted of a single large plate glass display window with a kickplate below, an adjacent entrance door, and a large triple-light transom window, which surmounted both the door and the display window. The fifth and slightly smaller easternmost right-hand bay contained the principal

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entrance to the building, which consisted of a rectilinear-shaped opening enframed by a simple cast stone surround. This opening was filled with a six-light transom placed above a pair of wood and glass entrance doors.²

The upper stories of the south-facing facade have a five-bay-wide symmetrical composition. The middle three bays are emphasized by being framed by four two-and-a-half-story-tall brick pilasters, each of which has a simple carved stone base and capital. A small triangular cast stone plaque is set into the brick of these pilasters just below each capital. The center of these three bays is wider than the two flanking ones and both its second and third stories contain a tripartite window surmounted by a wide semi-circular-arched lunette window in the mezzanine story. The two flanking bays are similar in design but each story contains only a pair of windows and the semi-circular lunette window in the mezzanine story above is smaller as a result. This three-bay-wide center portion is flanked by two wide end bays, both of which feature a paired window group in each of their second, third, and mezzanine stories. The verticality of the whole composition is emphasized by the use of progressively smaller window units on each story. The second story windows consist of six-over-one-light flat-arched, double hung units, each of which has a single rectilinear transom light above it. The third story window units are identical but lack the transom light. The windows of the mezzanine story are smaller still and feature flat-arched nine-light units in the two end bays and semi-circular-arched eighteen light units in the three center bays. All the window openings above the first story are emphasized by slightly projecting header course brick surrounds. In addition, rectangular brick panels form the spandrels between the second and third story and between the third and mezzanine story window groups in each bay. These panels are filled with header coursed brick laid in stack bond, and those panels between the second and third stories are also each decorated with a small centered diamond-shaped cast stone plaque.

A simple cast stone stringcourse acts as a lintel above the mezzanine story windows. Just above this stringcourse is the wide cast stone upper cornice of the building. This cornice is very similar to the cornice above the first story windows and both cornices serve to define the building's composition horizontally. Terminating this facade is a tall brick parapet that originally featured a repeated step design culminating in a somewhat taller segmental-arched middle section to which was affixed a large concrete moose head. When the building ceased to be used as a Moose Order temple this moose head was removed and the parapet line was straightened.

² The first stories of both the main facade and the west-facing side elevation were altered in the 1950s, but a recent renovation effort has largely restored them. This later work will be discussed at the end of this section.

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The west-facing side elevation of the Moose Temple is very similar to the south-facing facade in size and design. This elevation is also five-bays-wide and the second, third, and mezzanine stories are also symmetrical while the first story below is not. Here too, the first story is demarcated from the upper stories by a continuation of the same cast stone cornice that performs this function on the south-facing facade. Unlike the south-facing facade, however, the first story of the west-facing elevation has a continuous raised concrete plinth at its base and its five bays are not separated by pilasters. This reflects the subordinate role of this elevation, and of this story in particular, which originally served as the side wall of the westernmost of the four retail stores once located within. The right-hand (south) bay of the first story of this elevation originally contained a corner window for this store. This consisted of a large plate glass display window and a triple light transom unit -- features that were nearly identical to those used on the storefronts of the south-facing facade. The fifth bay at the opposite (north) end of this elevation originally contained a side entrance that served the upper stories of the temple and which was almost identical to the main entrance on the south-facing facade. The three equal-width center bays that are located between the two end bays were originally defined by three triple-light transom window units that punctured the exterior wall at regular intervals. These transom units formed the upper portion of each bay -- bays that were further defined by corbelled rectangular header course brick frames. These frames outlined the space between the transom units and the foundation wall and they were further decorated with square cast stone corners. The wall space between each of these bays was then left blank.

The design of the upper stories of the west-facing elevation is a simplified version of the design of the upper stories of the south-facing facade. This elevation is also five-bays-wide, its end bays are identical to those on the south-facing facade, and it is divided horizontally by continuations of the cast stone stringcourse and cornices used on the principal facade. Also identical is the use of different size windows to emphasize verticality, corbelled header-course brick surrounds around window groups, and rectangular spandrels between the stories that are faced with header course brick laid in stack bond. The principal difference between the two facades lies in the treatment of the three center bays. Here, instead of being framed by pilasters, each bay is suggested instead by using pairs of vertically-running mortar joints to define the edge of each bay, extending from the first story cornice to the mezzanine story stringcourse. In addition, the three center bays of the west elevation are equal in width, their second and third stories each contain a window group, and the three semi-circular arched lunette windows found in the mezzanine story of the south-facing facade are here replaced with triple groups of flat-arched nine-light windows. This elevation is terminated vertically by a tall brick parapet whose original appearance was very similar to the one found on the south-facing facade.

The east-facing side elevation of the temple was originally designed to be covered by the side elevation of a now-demolished neighboring building, 15 Forest Avenue.

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When this building was demolished, the hollow tile wall surface and the structural gridwork of this elevation were temporarily revealed in a manner never intended by the architect. This elevation has since been refaced, as related below.

The original north-facing rear elevation of the temple was designed to face an adjacent building across a ten-foot wide service alley. As a result, this elevation was faced with a cheaper, tan-colored brick and it was given a purely utilitarian design, being punctured here and there by windows and doors as internal needs dictated. This elevation has also now been altered by recent construction activity, as related below.

After the Moose Temple ceased to be used as a fraternal lodge, later owners modified the building to serve other uses. The first story storefronts were first boarded up and then removed and the openings were rebuilt so as to be flush with the main wall surface. Modern aluminum and glass entrance doors were also installed in the main and side entrances in the 1950s, the transom above the main entrance was removed, and the wide cast stone cornice that forms the lintel of the first story bays and that demarcates this story from the ones above was first painted and then boxed in with aluminum. The interior was also changed at this time and all the space within was altered to meet new needs.

The temple remained in this altered state until 1988, when the current owners began a program of renovation and restoration designed to replicate those exterior features which had been lost and to restore the ones that had survived. This work was an outgrowth of a redevelopment plan that called for turning the first story of the temple into rental office space and the upper stories into apartments. The resulting work was done in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and in consultation with the National Park Service's district office and the State of Wisconsin's State Historic Preservation Office. Restoring the four non-extant first story retail stores proved to be economically unfeasible, so the decision was made to remodel the entire first story into office space. Since this space did not require the four entrances that were a feature of the original Forest Avenue storefronts, these entrances were eliminated and the storefronts were recreated using the original triple light transoms, below which were placed new two-light display windows that closely replicated the appearance of the original windows. The cornice above these storefronts was restored and the concrete plinth of the temple (which originally formed the pedestals of the pilasters that defined each of the first story bays on the main facade) was made continuous like the still intact plinth at the base of the west-facing elevation. The original first story corner window on the west-facing side elevation was also replicated using the design described above and new window openings containing two-light display windows were placed below the original triple-light transoms in the three center bays on this elevation in order to bring more light into the interior. Both the front and side entrances were restored by replacing the later aluminum doors with single-light and wood doors that replicated the original ones. The missing transom above the main entrance was also rebuilt and the one above the side entrance was restored.

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Exposing the unfinished east elevation of the temple to view made it necessary to give this elevation a more suitable and more permanent appearance. Turning the upper stories of the temple into living units also necessitated providing new access routes, including elevator service and a second stairway. As a result, the east elevation was given a veneer of red brick, pairs of modern one-over-one light metal frame windows were placed in the elevation's second, third and mezzanine stories, and a flat-roofed one-story rectilinear plan ell was added across the full-width of this elevation. A large new square plan flat-roofed multipurpose four-story brick-veneered tower was constructed at the north end of this ell (the northeast corner of the building) in such a way as to span the service drive that separates the temple from a large new modern automobile parking ramp that is now located just to the north. This tower contains new utilities, an elevator, stairway, and rooms connected with the upper story apartment units and it also provides each of the upper stories of the temple with covered all-weather access to the parking ramp.

The rear or north-facing elevation of the temple was also altered in a similar way. The elevation was resurfaced in red brick, new metal frame windows were placed in the upper stories, and a one-story flat-roofed ell was constructed across its entire width.

While the historically significant exteriors of the temple are still largely intact and have been beautifully restored, the interior has fared differently. Originally, most of the first story of the temple was taken up by four retail stores that fronted onto Forest Avenue and by a smaller barbershop located in the northeast corner of this story. The main entrance doors opened into a vestibule that gave access both to the first story and to a staircase which ascended to the second and third stories. The second story contained the lodge rooms of the Moose Order and included a 17 x 28 foot reception room, an 18 x 22 foot ladies room, a 17 x 18 foot secretary's office, a 33 x 33 foot lounging and reading room, a 24 x 33 foot billiard room, a kitchen, and the 30 x 51 foot dining and lodge room. This interior featured terrazzo floors, decorative stucco cornices, walnut-stained gum wood trim and the latest in hardware and furnishings. The third story and the mezzanine story contained what was called "Fond du Lac's finest auditorium" when it was built.³ This room measured 68 x 68 feet and it had a maple floor and a slightly raised platform that ran around three sides of the room. A balcony that was lit by the mezzanine story windows also encircled the room as well. Subsequent owners, however, remodeled these spaces to suit greatly differing needs so that by the time the present owner purchased the building virtually nothing of the original interior was left intact. These spaces have since been remodeled into office space on the first story and apartments on the upper stories, but no attempt was made to recreate an historic appearance.

³ Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. January 19, 1924, Section 2, pg. 1.

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While all the changes detailed above have substantially altered the east and north elevations of the Moose Temple, neither of these elevations was architecturally significant. The recent renovation work done to the architecturally much more significant west and south elevations, however, has returned these elevations to a state that is very close to their original appearance. As a result, the exterior of the Moose Temple is now in excellent condition and the temple has been rescued from a near derelict state and once again takes its place among Fond du Lac's important architectural resources.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X A B X C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

 Social History

 Architecture

Period of Significance

 1924-1941

 1924⁴

Significant Dates

 N/A

Cultural Affiliation

 N/A

Significant Person

 N/A

Architect/Builder

 Stepnoski, Frank J.⁵

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Significance

The building located in the city of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin that was known historically as the Moose Temple has recently been rehabilitated and remodeled as part of work done under National Park Service (NPS) Title 36 CFR Part 67. The Temple was determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register (DOE - 5/25/88) and Parts 1 & 2 of this certification process have now been successfully completed. This nomination is thus the final part of the Certification process. The earlier research embodied in the previous DOE led to the identification of the Moose Temple as a building having potentially local significance under National Register (NR) criteria A and C because of its associations with the significance areas of social history and architecture, both themes identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). More specifically, research was undertaken utilizing the fraternal organizations and architectural styles study units of the CRMP. The results of this research is detailed below and support the nomination of this property to the NRHP using the NR criteria listed above. The building is significant under NR criterion A as the last and grandest of the several historically significant buildings built in Fond du Lac specifically for use as a fraternal lodge. The temple is the greatest physical achievement of the Fond du Lac lodge of the Loyal Order of Moose (L.O.M.), an important fraternal organization in Fond du Lac during the early part of the twentieth century, and it symbolizes the pinnacle of achievement reached by such organizations in that city before the onset of the Great Depression precipitated their general decline. The Moose Temple is also significant under NR criterion C as one of the best works of prominent Fond du Lac architect Frank J. Stepnoski (1881-1952) and it is also a fine local example of Neo-Classical Revival style design, a style used sparingly in Fond du Lac and then only for major institutional buildings. In addition, the Moose Temple is an excellent example of an urban area fraternal lodge, a resource type specifically cited as threatened in the Threats to Resources section of the introduction to the

⁴ Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. January 19, 1924, Section 2, pg. 1.

⁵ Ibid.

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Social and Political Movements Theme portion of the CRMP because of its location in an "historic central business district."⁶

Social History

The Moose Temple building represents the pinnacle of the physical legacies of the many fraternal organizations which played a significant role in the social life of Fond du Lac before World War II. The fraternal organizations study unit in the CRMP states that such organizations "Formed an integral part of American culture and society, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,"⁷ and it divides such organizations into two basic types: "Those whose primary purpose is social . . . and those that exist as a means of accomplishing specific ends, providing life insurance, bringing about moral reform, etc."⁸ The study unit then divides the history of such organizations in Wisconsin into four distinct periods. The first of these lasted from 1823 - 1865 and began with the founding of a Masonic Lodge in the city of Green Bay in 1823. This event followed a pattern similar to most other early Midwestern cities wherein fraternal organizations were organized shortly after white settlement began. Fond du Lac followed this pattern as well. The first settler, a man named Colwert Pier, settled on the future site of the city in 1836 and by 1847 the village contained nearly 400 inhabitants. The first fraternal organization in the village was Fond du Lac Lodge No. 30, Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), chartered on September 4, 1848. The second such organization was Fountain Lodge No. 26 of the Masonic Order, chartered on September 13, 1849. Both of these groups were primarily recreational and social organizations of English origin whose early presence in Wisconsin was due to the fact that many of the state's earliest settlers were from New England and were of English descent.

The importance of fraternal organizations to the social history of America increased as the general population increased and as the number of such organizations and their local lodges grew. The years from 1866 - 1910 represented a period of enormous growth for fraternal organizations, both nationally and in Wisconsin. The CRMP calls this the period of "Peak Activity" in Wisconsin and lists such Orders as the Knights of Pythias (K.O.P.), the Fraternal Order of Eagles (F.O.E.), and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elk (B.P.O.E.) as being both typical of this period and representative of Orders prevalent in Wisconsin during these years. All of these Orders and many others besides were represented by lodges in Fond du Lac. The Fond du Lac City Directory for the years 1880 - 1884, for example, lists lodges of the Masonic Order, the I.O.O.F, the United Ancient Order of Druids, the Sons of Herman, the Ancient Order of United Workmen, the Royal Arcanum, and the K.O.P. as being located in the city during this interval. Two years later, on November 27,

⁶ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986. Vol. 3, 1-4 (Social and Political).

⁷ Ibid. Vol. 3, 5-1 (Social and Political).

⁸ Ibid. Vol. 3, 5-2 (Social and Political).

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1886, Fond du Lac Lodge No. 57 of the B.P.O.E. was founded, followed later by Fond du Lac Aerie No. 270 of the F.O.E. on October 29, 1902 and the Fond du Lac Lodge No. 281 of the Loyal Order of Moose (L.O.M.) on June 9, 1910. During this period most of the city's fraternal lodges rented rooms in the upper floors of commercial buildings located in the downtown business district, a common practice in cities of the period and one which is specifically noted in the CRMP study unit.⁹ In Fond du Lac, most of these buildings were located on North and South Main Streets or on adjacent side streets. Some of these buildings have since been demolished but others still remain. One of the best surviving examples is the commercial vernacular style Carey Block located at 19-21 Sheboygan Street which was bought by the Knights of Pythias for their clubhouse in 1919¹⁰ and which was later occupied by the Lions Club. Another outstanding example is the High Victorian Gothic style Reuping Block (1880) located at 181 South Main Street, which was occupied by several organizations including the G.A.R.

The maturation of several of the largest and most influential fraternal orders in Fond du Lac in the early years of this century led to the erection of the first buildings in that city built solely to house the activities of a single Order. The earliest of these was the excellent brick Queen Anne style lodge of the Elk Order (B.P.O.E.) located at 33 - 39 Sheboygan Street (extant) designed by local architect Adolph D. Werner (1870-1906). This lodge, built between 1903-1904 for approximately \$20,000, immediately became one of the city's showplaces.¹¹ A second and even more impressive example was the excellent early Neo-Classical Revival style lodge of the Masonic Order located a few doors away at 49 Sheboygan Street (extant). This lodge was built of brick between 1906-1907 for \$40,000¹² and is still in use today as the Masonic lodge of the city just as the Elks Club is still in use by members of that Order. While these two buildings were the most notable buildings of this type in Fond du Lac during this period, other organizations in the city also built their own club houses or leased space in one of the several buildings built primarily to house organizational activities. Examples of both kinds included the Turnverein Hall at 17 North Portland Street (non-extant) built in 1912 and Armory "E" located at 33 East Second Street (non-extant) built in 1911.

The new lodges of the Masonic Orders and of the Elk reflected not only the growth of these two organizations, but also, the dominant role such organizations played in the social life of Fond du Lac in this period. Between 1847 and 1912 the city grew from 400 to 20,000 inhabitants¹³ and local social organizations grew accordingly. By 1911, however, many of these organizations began to undergo major changes, transforming themselves, in the words of the CRMP, into organizations "moving beyond

⁹ Wyatt. Op. Cit. Vol. 3, 5-4 (Social and Political).

¹⁰ Fond du Lac Daily Reporter. January 8, 1919.

¹¹ Ibid. May 26, 1904.

¹² Ibid. May 23, 1906.

¹³ McKenna, Maurice. History of Fond du Lac County. Vol. 1, pg. 331.

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purely recreational activities and assuming active leadership roles in their communities."¹⁴ Increasingly, the largest of the old fraternal organizations and several new ones became national organizations whose members sponsored nationwide charitable works.

One of the most prominent examples of a fraternal order which transformed itself into a national, charitably oriented organization in this period is the Loyal Order of Moose (L.O.M.). The Moose Order was founded in Louisville, Kentucky in 1888 by a physician, John Harry Wilson, and four men associated with the Buckingham Theatre in that city. The original purpose of the Order was purely social and membership was limited to theatrical persons. Organizational efforts were haphazard at best in the early years and in 1905 the Order had only 246 members, mostly located in four lodges in Indiana. However, in 1906 the Order was rejuvenated by the activities of James J. Davis, a labor activist and political organizer who would later be Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor in the Cabinet of President Warren G. Harding. Davis proved to be a tireless and effective leader whose efforts to boost the membership of the Order galvanized the existing members. By 1908 the Order had 3000 members; by 1909, 30,000; and by 1912, nearly 300,000. Davis was made Supreme Director of the Order and at its national convention, held in Detroit in 1911, it was decided to focus the national energies of the Order on work related to children. The convention directed Davis to "acquire property for purposes of establishing a "Moose College," "Institute," or "School."¹⁵ Davis decided to focus the energy of the Order towards providing a home for dependent children of deceased members, and in 1912 he purchased a two-hundred acre dairy farm just north of Aurora, Illinois, a location forty miles west of Chicago. The following year the Order purchased an additional 1000 acres and work commenced in the first buildings of the institution which was known formally as Mooseheart, Illinois and informally as "Child City". The intent of this institution was to provide dependent children, ranging in age from the newborn to teenagers, with all the benefits and advantages of a home-like setting, including providing each child with a high school degree and a trade by the time they graduated. The school was financed by a levy of two dollars per member per year and by 1924 Mooseheart had become a nationally known institution with 147 buildings of modern construction housing 1150 children. This institution, and a retirement center for members of the Order founded in 1916 called Moosehaven located near Jacksonville, Florida, continue to flourish to this day. In 1980, Mooseheart, now the headquarters of the Moose Order housed some 500 children and the Moose number over 1,700,000 members worldwide located in 2215 lodges.

Fond du Lac lodge No. 281 of the L.O.M. was founded on June 9, 1910 with 164 charter members. Membership increased to 384 by 1918 by which time the lodge, chafing under the physical limitation of the rented hall it then occupied, began a serious search for a site on which it could build a lodge of its own. This search was pushed

¹⁴ Wyatt. Op. Cit. Vol. 3, 5-5 (Social and Political).

¹⁵ Schmidt, Alvin J. Fraternal Organizations. Pg. 230.

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energetically forward by newly elected lodge leader William S. Dyhr, who played a role in the Fond du Lac lodge similar to that played at the national level by James Davis. The lodge purchased a choice corner location at the intersection of Forest Avenue and South Macy Street on May 8, 1919 and Dyhr spearheaded the fund-raising and membership drive necessary for the erection of a new lodge building. During his first term in office, from 1918 - 1920, membership grew to 1224. Plans for the new temple expanded accordingly and the original goal of \$50,000 in 1918 was upped to \$125,000 in 1922 and to \$225,000 by 1923. A plan was announced to partially defray the cost of the proposed building by issuing bonds to cover the mortgage and with Dyhr once again the head of the lodge, construction was begun on April 19, 1923 and completed on January 19, 1924. A building of this scale made the new temple the third largest building built in the city between 1922-1924 along with the Commercial National Bank Building (1922-3) located at 102-106 South Main Street (extant) and the Hotel Retlaw (1922-3) located at 15 East Division Street (extant-NRHP-9/7/84). The Moose lodge officially opened their new temple to the public with a week of festivities, all duly featured in the Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth newspaper, which devoted a whole section of its January 19, 1924 issue to the new building under banner headlines which stated that "Civic Pride is stirred as date Arrive to open model structure."¹⁵ At this point membership in the lodge stood at nearly 1500, making the Fond du Lac lodge the second biggest in Wisconsin after Milwaukee. At this time when the largest Moose lodge in America, located in Philadelphia, had 3000 members, nationwide membership stood at 600,000, and the total population of Fond du Lac was approximately 27,000.

The Moose continued to occupy their new building until 1930 when they were forced to abandon it due to financial pressure occasioned by the onset of the Great Depression. During this six year period, the Moose Order was the largest fraternal organization in the city and the temple was the scene of many important civic functions. This was not enough to save it, however, and the bonds which had been used to secure the mortgage went into default. In December of 1930 the Fraternal Order of Eagles made the temple their new home, occupying it until 1941. In that year the building was taken over by the Fond du Lac Commercial College under the direction and ownership of Lavelle T. Maze who proceeded to rename the temple : "the College Building." The College occupied it until the mid-1950 s. In 1957, the old temple building became the regional headquarters of the A.C. Nielsen Co., a major marketing research firm which continued to occupy it until the early 1980s when they moved to a new and much larger building in the same block. The building then stood vacant until purchased by its present owner.

The period of historic significance for the Moose Temple begins in 1924 with the completion of the building and ends in 1942, the current boundary of the 50 year rule mandated by the National Park Service. This period covers all of the years in which fraternal organizations occupied the building and it was these organizations which were responsible for giving the temple its historic significance.

¹⁵ Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. January 19, 1924, Section 1, pg. 1.

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Architecture

The architect of the Moose Temple, Frank J. Stepnoski, was memorialized as a "widely known architect and civic leader in the community," when he died in Fond du Lac on September 25, 1952 at the age of 71.¹⁷ Stepnoski was born in the province of Galacia, Austria on October 20, 1880, and subsequently attended schools in Stanislau, Lemberg, and Vienna--all in Austria--in preparation for his architectural career. For six years during and after his schooling he worked with his father before emigrating to New York City in 1904, where he worked for three years in the offices of the prominent architectural firm of Smith and Lazarus. In 1907 Stepnoski came to Wisconsin, settling in Oshkosh where he met his future wife, Katerine. In 1913 the couple moved to Fond du Lac where Stepnoski designed a number of buildings on his own between 1913 and 1920. His principal work from 1915 to 1919, though, was as an estimator and designer of high-grade interior furnishings for Fond du Lac's largest lumber dealer, Moore and Galloway Company. This work brought him into contact with all of the principal architects and contractors in Fond du Lac and many of their clients as well, and he quickly gained a reputation for integrity and first-class work. His civic-spirited work as a member of the Fond du Lac Board of Education also brought him favorable notice. In 1919 he decided to apply to become a registered architect in Wisconsin, a goal he achieved in 1920. In 1920, he started his own firm and his excellent contacts and local reputation quickly brought him substantial contracts both in Fond du Lac and in the surrounding area. By the time he began work on the Moose Temple he had designed or was designing large schools in both Green and Chippewa counties, a high school in Rosendale, Wisconsin, a major addition to the Brandon, Wisconsin High School, and the Catholic Church in Osceola, Wisconsin. In Fond du Lac, Stepnoski had already designed the Marcoe Store and flat building, the National Oil Co. filling station, the pavilion in Lakeside Park, and served as the supervising architect for the construction of the Commercial National Bank Building (1922-3), one of the biggest building projects in Fond du Lac between 1920-1924. It was his design for the Moose Temple, however, which was considered his first major work. An article about him that was included in the special section that the Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth devoted to the Moose Temple said that "The beautiful new Moose building . . . represents his (Stepnoski's) greatest endeavor in the two-and-one-half years which he has been in business for himself in Fond du Lac. The result obtained in one upon which he may justly pride himself."¹⁸ Such public praise quickly brought him new commissions such as the one for the St. Peter's and St. Patrick's parochial school buildings in Fond du Lac and his practice prospered accordingly. He served as a member of the city park board and was active as a member of many fraternal and business organizations, including the Moose, the Elks, the Knights of Columbus, and the American Institute of Architects.

¹⁷ Fond du Lac Commonwealth-Reporter. September 25, 1952, pg. 3. Obituary of Frank J. Stepnoski.

¹⁸ Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. January 19, 1924, Section 2, pg. 2.

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Stepnoski continued to design important buildings in Fond du Lac and elsewhere throughout his career. He was later joined in practice by his son, Sylvester J. Stepnoski and together they practiced under the firm name of F.J. Stepnoski and Son until the elder Stepnoski's death in 1952. The built legacy of the firm includes a large number of well-designed buildings of every type and styles ranging from the period revival styles exemplified by the Moose Temple, to modern style buildings of the 1950s.

The finely disciplined Neo-Classical Revival style design Stepnoski produced for the Moose Temple was an obvious choice in 1924 for a building of this importance. The Neo-Classical Revival style subsection of the architectural styles study unit of the CRMP states that "The style was particularly popular for public and institutional buildings, as well as commercial structures, especially banks."¹⁹ This was certainly true in Fond du Lac. A windshield survey of the city undertaken by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Historic Preservation Division in 1975 identified four buildings in Fond du Lac designed in this style. The oldest of these was the Masonic Temple (1906) at 51 Sheboygan Street (extant). Others included the Division Street Methodist Episcopal Church (ca. 1913) at the intersection of Division Street and Marr Street (non-extant), the Commercial National Bank Building (1922-3) at 102-106 South Main Street (extant) whose construction Stepnoski supervised, and the Moose Temple (1923-4) at 17-23 Forest Avenue. Each of the surviving examples of this group is an excellent example of the way in which differing usages could be accommodated by using the same stylistic vocabulary. These usages--bank, church, and fraternal organization headquarters--also support the contention made in the CRMP that this style was a particular favorite of institutional clients.

In summary, the Moose Lodge is believed to be of architectural significance because it is a fine example of the Neo-Classical Revival style as applied to a building designed for an important Fond du Lac fraternal lodge organization. In addition, the design was drawn by a noted Fond du Lac architect, Frank J. Stepnoski, and was an important building in his career. The significance of the Moose Temple is enhanced by the largely original condition of the building's recently restored exterior. The alternations to the first floor retail store fronts, to the building's parapet and to the east and north elevation do not prevent the building from being a fine representative of the Neo-Classical Revival style and a significant architectural resource to the downtown area of the city as well. The Moose Temple is also the grandest and the latest of the three large fraternal lodge buildings (including also the Masonic Temple and the Elk Lodge) that was built in Fond du Lac prior to World War II. The continued survival of these three buildings in their original setting is itself of importance since, as the CRMP notes, fraternal lodges located in such downtown settings are a threatened resource type. "Those resources located in historic central business districts are particularly threatened with abandonment or demolition due to shifting population patterns."²⁰

¹⁹ Wyatt. Op. Cit. Volume 2, 2-18 (Architecture).

²⁰ Ibid. Volume 3, 1-4 (Social and Political).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth. December 15, 1922.

Fond du Lac Daily Reporter. May 19, 1919.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X See continuation sheet

- 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
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than 1.00 acre

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/8/3/5/0/0</u>	<u>4/8/4/7/9/5/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the property coincide approximately with the outside walls of the building, being the west 80.85 feet of lots 13, 14 and 15, Block 4, Van Renselaer's Addition to the Original Plat of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the Moose Temple building property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy F. Hegglund/Consultant for City Center Limited Partnership
organization P.O. Box 1423, Fond du Lac, WI date February 7, 1992
street & number 1311 Morrison Street telephone (608) 251-9450
city or town Madison state WI zip code 53703

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Major Bibliographical References Continued

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Schmidt, Alvin J. "Fraternal Organizations." In Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Institutions, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut. No. 3.

Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986. Vols. 1 & 2.