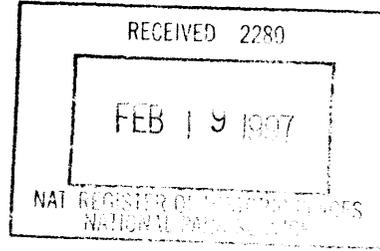


4269

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



**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 an 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 Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
other names/site number Show and Sale Barn

2. Location

street & number	Vine Avenue & East 17th Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Marshfield	N/A	vicinity
state	Wisconsin	code	WI
county	Wood	code	141
zip code	54449		

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
Date 2/11/97

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 official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National
Register.

other, (explain:)

Edson A. Beall

3/21/97

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- X building(s)
district
structure
site
object

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

Table with columns: contributing, noncontributing, sites, structures, objects, total. Values: 1, 3, 1, 3

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources
is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Fair

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Fair

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century

American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

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

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

The huge centric barn, known in Marshfield as the "World's Largest Round Barn," is located at 17th Street and Vine Avenue on Marshfield's northwest side. The barn covers over one-third of an acre and is situated in the southwestern corner of the Wood County fairgrounds. Built in 1915-1916, the large round structure is the focal point of the fairgrounds, not only because of its size, but more importantly, because of its centric shape.

The round barn was completed in time for the first fair held from August 29 through September 1, 1916. The structure has been used for all subsequent fairs, which are still held every Labor Day weekend. To the citizens of Wood County and Marshfield, this centric barn is a symbol of the success of their dairy industry and it also signifies the importance of agriculture to the area.

The August 30, 1916 issue of the Marshfield Times summed it up when it wrote: "Fair visitors will no doubt be surprised with the immensity of the barn, but this building only shows the rapid progress which is being made in the State of Wisconsin as regards the proper housing of cattle under ideal conditions. Central Wisconsin, whose chief industry at the present time is dairying, is showing the rest of the states adjoining, how investments properly made show big returns."

An oval one-half mile-long race track and grandstand is located to the east of the barn. To the south, on the other side of 17th Street, is the horse building and also the swine building; to the west is the poultry building and the cattle barn; to the north is the exposition building and the 4-H building. The main office is to the east, next to the race track. (Please see attached diagram.)

EXTERIOR:

The first story of this two-tier 70-foot-tall circular plan barn measures 150-feet in diameter; its circumference measures 471-feet; and it is clad in horizontal tongue and groove siding that is painted bright red with white trim. The first tier has 51 double hung windows, evenly spaced, that

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

measure 30-inches x 60-inches each. The less wide circular second tier is also sided in horizontal tongue and groove siding that is painted bright red with white trim and it has 28 evenly spaced windows that are identical to the ones on the ground level.

The massive two-stage roof is the dominant feature of the structure. According to contractor/designer, Frank A. Felhofer, he predicted that the roof would take 190,000 shingles to complete; they needed 188,000 in actuality.(1) Today the roof, replaced in 1989, is of reddish brown asphalt shingles. The width of the roof over the first tier measures approximately 43-feet from the roof's edge (with a one-foot overhang) to the six-foot-tall vertical wall of the second tier. The width of the roof over the second tier measures 38-feet to the bottom of a small six-sided louvered cupola that crowns the building.(2)

There are four identical entrances to the building; the main entrance faces north, the other entrances face south, east and west. Each entrance consists of a double door measuring eight-foot-wide x seven-foot-high that is hung from a steel track. There is also a single door on the west side of the first tier which is located just north of the west entrance and which does not appear on the original blueprints. Perhaps this was originally the 52nd window and was converted to an entrance or perhaps it was a last minute change while the building was under construction.

On either side of each entrance are small areas outlined with railroad ties and filled with soil for the minimal landscaping. Within these areas are a few shrubs and one immature tree in each boxed section. A concrete area for hosing and washing livestock is located near the east entrance.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

INTERIOR:

The building's construction is a combination of timber and plank framing, using hemlock, red and white oak, and pine. The first (outer) ring of beams and columns consist of solid timbers. Further in, laminated columns made of four two x eight planks were used to support the second tier. Rafters are two x six planks and the outside wall studding consists of two x fours.(3)

The original blueprints from 1915 called for the outer ring of the main/ground floor to have room for 250 head of cattle with concrete mangers and pipe-mounted stanchions. Wooden box stalls for calves and smaller animals formed an inner ring around the perimeter of the center ring.

The center of the barn was designed as a show ring that was originally surrounded by wooden bleachers with a seating capacity for 1000 people. In 1917, when a second story floor was constructed above the inner and outer rings, four identical sets of wooden stairs were built to reach that level so that it could be used to show poultry and rabbits. It was sometimes even used for square dancing.

INTEGRITY:

This beautiful round barn is almost 80-years-old, but it is still in excellent shape. In 1989, the barn was re-roofed, repainted, and a new concrete foundation was poured. On the interior, all of the bleachers except for one section have been removed and, because the second floor over the outer and inner rings is no longer used, three of the stairways leading up to it have been removed as well.

Despite these changes, though, the exterior of the barn is still in excellent, highly original condition today and the changes that have been made to the interior have not seriously affected either its overall integrity or significance.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4 Central Wisconsin State Fairground Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, WI

Included within the boundaries are three inconsequential frame construction fairground buildings. These buildings do not contribute to either the historic or architectural significance of the fairground barn.

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Name of Property

Wood
County and State

WI

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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 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

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1915-1916

1915-1946

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Felhofer, Frank A.

Felhofer Brothers

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

Significance

The Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn in Marshfield is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. The period of significance for criterion A is 1915 to 1946, the date of construction to the National Register cutoff date; the period of significance for criterion C is 1915 to 1916, the date of construction.

This barn is being nominated under criterion C because it is an excellent and unusually large example of a rare barn form known as a centric barn, which the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan has identified as both a survey and registration priority. The barn is being nominated under criterion A because it is an excellent example of the kinds of resources that were constructed in Wisconsin in the early twentieth century to house activities associated with county fairs. These annual events have historically been among the most important public events associated with the practice of agriculture in Wisconsin.

The citizens of Wood County and Marshfield are extremely proud of their round barn. The Marshfield barn is both a unique architectural structure and the symbol of the surrounding area's rich agricultural heritage. It is historically important to the history of the Wood County fairgrounds, it continues to be important to the people in this area as a showcase for their agricultural products, and it also represents the influence of "scientific" experimental agriculture on agricultural structures in Wisconsin.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Marshfield, located in the northwestern part of Wood County in Central Wisconsin, has a rich agricultural heritage. It was named for John J. Marshfield of Havenhill, Massachusetts, one of the early pioneers of the area.(4) (Some in Marshfield feel it was named after John Marsh from New York. This controversy has never been resolved.)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

In the 1840s the federal government gave a land grant to the territory of Wisconsin for the purpose of improving the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. The government hoped to encourage steamboat navigation between Green Bay and the Mississippi River. A company was formed known as the Fox and Wisconsin Improvement Company by Horatio Seymour, Erastus Corning, John Magee, Samuel Marsh, William Butter, and B. J. Stevens. These men entered into a contract with the state to complete the waterways as a part of the grant. If successful they were to receive 700,000 acres if improvement was completed within ten years or by 1866. When the ten years were up the contract ceased and a new company was formed known as the Green Bay and Mississippi Improvement Company. The land was divided among the incorporators; John Magee and Samuel Marsh received the land that was to become Marshfield. This land was heavily timbered with mostly hardwoods.(5)

Two brothers, Louis and Frank Rivers, settled here in 1868 after buying a tract of land from Marsh. The first log dwelling was built in 1871. A store, a tavern, and then a post office was established in 1872 with Louis Rivers as postmaster. That same year the Wisconsin Central Railroad arrived in Marshfield. The town was platted in 1874/75 and officially became known as Marshfield. Before that the settlement was just called "Section 32." In 1883 the Wisconsin Legislature created the City of Marshfield.(6)

As with most areas in the north half of Wisconsin, new settlers came to work the land after the timber had been harvested. The railroad helped to bring these settlers. Between 1892 and 1902, Marshfield became a major railroad center and was even nicknamed "Hub City." There were four different railroads serving this community. It was second only to Milwaukee, with 30 trains arriving and departing every day.(7) Because of the extraordinary railroad service and the availability of excellent hardwood stands, new factories sprang up in the area. William Roddis started the Roddis Lumber and Veneer Company; the Felker Brothers Manufacturing Co. started here in 1908; William Upham built a sawmill in 1879 and then opened a large successful furniture and veneer factory.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

In 1892, St. Joseph's Hospital opened a water therapy sanitorium and offered the KNEIP water cure. In 1895, it was changed into a general hospital that eventually became today's renowned Marshfield Clinic.

AGRICULTURE

Marshfield's north central location also placed it at the heart of the dairy industry that was developing in central Wisconsin at the end of the nineteenth century. Farming in this area had begun well before

the lumber era ended and even as early as the 1880s, most farmers in the area raised potatoes and other crops to feed their families and kept a dairy cow to produce milk and butter. Between 1880 and 1890, however, the number of dairy cows in Wisconsin increased from 1,800 to 18,000.(8) By 1899, 90% of the farms in Wisconsin had at least a few dairy cows and dairying was emerging as Wisconsin's most valuable alternative to wheat farming, which had been king in Wisconsin for about twenty years.

Dairying emerged as an industry in part because of the new equipment and the new processes that were being developed. Butter was the first dairy product made on the farm that was sold commercially, thanks to the invention of the cream separator, which allowed farmers to sell cream to local and area creameries for the manufacturing of butter. Gradually, dairying became a year-round operation in Wisconsin.(9) The University of Wisconsin School of Agriculture also played an active role in the promotion of dairying in the state. A major advance for the industry was the development of the Babcock test developed at the University, which for the first time provided an accurate method for determining the butterfat content of milk and gave creameries a reliable means by which to set a fair and consistent price.(10)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 4

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

Another important factor in the rise of Wisconsin's dairy industry was the commercial production of cheese. A cheese factory had opened in Fond du Lac County as early as 1861, and by 1870 there were 50 cheese factories in the state. In the 1870s, the leaders of the state's infant cheese industry organized several professional organizations to promote their products. Probably the most famous of these was the Wisconsin Dairyman's Association, which was founded in Watertown, Wisconsin. It was primarily a marketing association that provided education in new dairying methods through its publications and meetings. One member of the Association was a man named William Dempster Hoard who promoted dairying in the state with an almost religious zeal for nearly a half century. Hoard initiated a long and successful campaign in his publication Hoard's Dairyman to encourage the development of purebred milking cows. In 1873, Seper Wintermuth of Whitewater introduced the first registered Holstein - Friesian bull; these Holsteins soon became the state's most popular cow. By World War I Holsteins were favored in all dairies of Wisconsin.(11)

By 1890 dairying was one of the leading industries in the state and by 1915, Wisconsin was the leading dairying state in the nation and was known as "America's Dairyland" throughout the world.(12)

Dairying became the dominant agricultural pursuit in Wisconsin in the 20th century and as it became more important economically, more attention was paid to the breeding of cows, and also to their feed and shelter.(13) Improvements in dairy cattle breeds also improved the quality of dairy products and hence raised the value of a farmer's herd. By the 1890s, state-wide breeding associations, including the Wisconsin Jersey Breeders Association (1889) and the Holstein-Friesian Association of Wisconsin (1897), adopted "advanced register programs" to certify purebred stock.(14)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

One result of the growth of agriculture and the dairy industry in Wood County was the formation of an association in Marshfield to organize a Central Wisconsin State Fair. A large meeting was held in the city hall on January 22, 1903, to organize a fair association. The object of this association was: the improvement of agriculture; horticulture; and the mechanical and household arts. Provision was made at this meeting for cattle shows and general fairs. C. I. Morrison was elected president.(15)

The new fair was to be held in Marshfield at the City Driving Park. This park had been established in 1892 by the Driving Park Association, a group of people interested in horse racing who constructed an oval race track just outside Marshfield. After the fair association was formed, 500 life memberships were sold at \$10.00 each to help finance the conversion of the driving park to the site of the Central Wisconsin State Fair.(16)

Fairs such as this one have been an important part of Wisconsin's agricultural scene since 1851, when the newly formed Wisconsin Agricultural Society sponsored Wisconsin's first state fair at Janesville. This event, which was held on a six-acre meadow, drew an estimated 10,000 persons, attracted 461 entries, and was such a success that it was made an annual event. For the next thirty-five years the state fair had a series of temporary homes in Janesville, Madison, Fond du Lac, and Watertown. In 1886, however, the fair moved to a permanent fairground on the outskirts of the city of Milwaukee and its continued success led to its being placed under the administration and control of the newly formed State Board of Agriculture in 1898. Since that time, both the fair and the fairgrounds have steadily increased in size and today the Wisconsin State Fair is one of the largest events of its type in the Midwest.

The success of the Wisconsin Agricultural Society's first state fair was soon emulated by the county fairs that the state's numerous county agricultural societies began to organize in the years that followed. The oldest of these organizations, such as the ones in Milwaukee County, Rock County, and Dane County, were formed in the early 1850s by farmers and other members of the agricultural community who sought to promote agricultural education and provide farmers with

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 6

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

much needed county-wide social occasions. The annual fairs that these organizations sponsored were in some ways continuations of the tradition of the fairs that had been a feature of European rural life since the Middle Ages. Similar small regional fairs had been officially promoted elsewhere in the United States as early as 1807, when Elkanah Watson persuaded the state of Massachusetts to appropriate \$20,000 for the promotion and establishment of county fairs. Limitations governing communication and travel in Wisconsin in the decades immediately following the granting of statehood in 1848 made an annual fair one of the few feasible ways in which members of the state's rural community could be brought together to display the best examples of their produce and learn about new techniques and equipment.

Gradually, a network of county fairgrounds emerged in Wisconsin's older counties and, as the practice of agriculture in the state spread in the latter part of the 1800s, more and more fairgrounds such as the one in Wood County were established. These fairgrounds were usually but not invariably located in the county seat and a statewide listing published in 1995 showed that by this date nearly every county (72) in the state could boast of some kind of a fairground. While no systematic statewide study of these sites or their associated structures has yet been undertaken, the fairgrounds that have been studied suggest that the types of resources located at the Wood County fairground are typical of those found elsewhere in the state. The round barn on the Central Wisconsin State Fair grounds, however, is an exceptionally large and important example of the resource type that is sometimes called a show barn. These special purpose barns were used to display and sell farm animals and they are perhaps the most important resource type associated with the commercial role that county fairs play in the agricultural life of the state.

The Central Wisconsin State Fair's round barn is thus being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places because of its historically significant role as a show barn, a resource type that has historically been associated with state and county fairs. The barn is historically significant both as an important location for fair-related social events and as an important vehicle for disseminating agricultural information to members of the agricultural community. This special purpose barn was utilized by educators and industry representatives who sought to disseminate information to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

farmers about new agricultural practices and they were also used by the farmers themselves to show and sell the finest examples of the livestock they had raised. As a result, this barn contributed to the local evolution of farming from a folk practice to a scientific endeavor. The Central Wisconsin State Fair has always been a major event on Wood County's agricultural calendar and the fairground's round show barn has been the centerpiece of this event since it was completed in 1916. The barn's significance is further enhanced by its high degree of integrity and by the fact that it is still used for its original purpose.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Central Wisconsin State Fair's round show barn is also being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an exceptional example of a centric barn, a rare resource type in Wisconsin, and also an exceptional example of the show barn resource type, a building type that is typically associated with Wisconsin's county and state fairgrounds. Show barns have historically played an important role in the life of Wisconsin's county fairs and this example is among Wisconsin's most impressive identified examples.

One of the most important groups involved with the Central Wisconsin State Fair was the Central Wisconsin Holstein Breeders Association. Their interest in purebred cattle led them to the idea of constructing a barn on the Wood County fairgrounds for showing their cattle, with the goal of selling them. If the theory that form follows function is correct, then it made sense that the Association would choose a round barn design for judging and displaying its cattle. A centric barn was well suited for the needs of the fair association; it was right economically and it also offered the best viewing arena. Centric barns include not only round barns but also ones with octagonal and polygonal plans. Most octagonal barns were built from 1888-1900, while most round barns were built from 1898-1920. The unique design of the round barn was representative of an exciting period in farm experimentation. They were especially popular in Wisconsin with the emergence of the dairy industry. Almost all centric barns in Wisconsin were built as dairy barns. At one time there were 185 centric dairy barns in Wisconsin.(17)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

The centric barn was promoted in the early 1900s as the most efficient type of barn to build. They were efficient structures because they enclosed the most space with the least amount of building materials, there is less framing lumber, stronger walls, more wind resistance and a more effective use of space. As the Cultural Resource Management Plan states: "One reason the centric barns became popular is because they enclosed more space with fewer materials than conventional rectangular barns. Foundations are usually masonry, with the remainder of the structure of frame."

Professor F. H. King, who taught agricultural physics at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, was a great proponent of the

centric barn. He and others worked diligently to promote the new designs and to make them available to all who were interested.(18)

Farm experimentation is not new to 19th and 20th century agriculture. Traditional farms have always been constantly changing. Centric barns were one area of experimentation where farmers and inventors felt they had especially improved older ways of farming. They wanted to make farming practices more efficient and economical by utilizing modern engineering and new scientific knowledge.(19)

Round barns called for a different way of thinking. The Soil Conservation Service promoted contour plowing trying to help change the resistance to round barns. The farmers perhaps knew that the round barn was more efficient, easier to build, and resisted wind better, but they could not change their basic attitudes between roundness and straight lines.(20) Farmers thought in terms of squares and rectangles, the land survey system is based on the square, therefore farmers laid out fields in squares and rectangles. Pride was taken in plowing straight rows.(21)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 9

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

The Central Wisconsin State Fair Association felt that a round barn would be unique and the best structure for the judging of farm animals. The designer and builder was Frank A. Felhofer. Frank was in business with his brothers Henry, John, Fred, William, Charles and Edward. The Wood County Board appropriated \$2,000 and a note with 100 endorsers to finance the building.(22)

According to Henry Felhofer, "The main reason we got the contract was the fact that our bid of \$6,000 did not include an additional cost of \$2,000 for scaffolding, proposed by other bidders."

Construction began on Thanksgiving Day, 1915. The framing was completed during the winter. Floors and stanchions were finished in the spring. The building was constructed from the ground up, without benefit of scaffolding. Felhofer says: "We just started from the bottom and worked up and in." He went on to explain that they constructed the cupola at the apex of the barn suspended only by the already-built portions of the roof.(23)

Frank A. Felhofer, the designer of the barn, was born in 1886 in Medford, WI. He began work as a carpenter for William Friedrichs in his teens. Beginning in 1905, during the period of rapid farm expansion in central Wisconsin, he began erecting timber frame and eventually balloon- framed barns. He helped to construct approximately 435 farm buildings in the area. Many of the original buildings on the Central Wisconsin Fair Grounds were built by the Felhofers. The only two that are still extant are the round barn and the exhibition building. Felhofer was responsible for many other buildings in Marshfield besides farm buildings. He built the local A & P Store, Deichtman Clinic, Nolt Barber Shop, Northern Auto Supply, Leath Furniture Warehouse and the Schmelter Sheet Metal building. Felhofer died at the age of 77 on October 3, 1963.(24)

The county fairgrounds of neighboring Lincoln and Marathon counties also have centric stock pavilions. The Marathon County fairgrounds in Wausau has two stock-judging pavilions both of which are also centric barns but are octagonal in shape. Designed by Alexander Chadbourne Eschweiler, a well-known Milwaukee architect, they were both built in 1921. Both of these

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 10

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

pavilions are built of painted concrete and they are two-tier octagons that have windowed octagonal clerestories and small, octagonal lanterns. Each of the two main stories of the larger of the two pavilions has a band of multi-paned windows. Closed one-story ranges extend to the south, east, and northwest from the larger pavilion and they are covered by gabled roofs.

The Marathon County Park Director, William Duncanson, says the smaller pavilion was constructed on a smaller scale than Eschweiler's blueprints. He questions whether Eschweiler was the architect for this building. He did say in a telephone conversation on October 10, 1995 that perhaps the county board wanted to reduce expenses and scaled down the building's size and simply reused the original blueprints.

The Lincoln County Fairgrounds at 2001 N. Sale Street in Merrill has a centric two-tier stock pavilion, built in 1927-1928. This is a modest building compared to the two centric barns in nearby Marathon County. The first tier of this wooden structure has no windows; the second tier has shuttered windows. The roofs are covered in asphalt shingles and the building has no crowning cupola. Five closed one-story wooden ranges extend to the north, south, west, northwest, and southwest from the octagonal center pavilion and they all have arched roofs.

CONCLUSION:

It is important that the historic Central Wisconsin State Fair round barn be preserved. Many of Wisconsin's centric barns and even its more conventional barns are disappearing from our rural landscape. The Marshfield centric barn is especially important to the citizens of Marshfield and Wood County because it is a symbol of their success in the area of dairying as well as a reminder of the area's rich agricultural heritage.

It is summed up very well in the Marshfield Times on May 24, 1916: "This distinction (round barn) is only one of many possessed by the clover-belt - the heart of the dairying district of central and northern Wisconsin, and the pioneer and leader in all things looking toward the progress of the dairy business and the improvement of dairy products."

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 11

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

FOOTNOTES

1. Wilcott, Jean Felhofer. "Around the Barn in 80 Years" August 8, 1995. President of Central Wisconsin State Fair Association. Daughter of William Felhofer.
2. Blueprint by Frank Felhofer, 1915.
3. Marshfield Times. May 24, 1916.
4. Jones, George and McVean, Norman and others. History of Wood County Wisconsin. Minneapolis, H.C. Cooper, Jr. and Co., 1923, p. 178.
5. Ibid, p. 179.
6. Ibid. p. 187.
7. Ibid.
8. McKay, Tom and Kmetz, Deborah E., Agricultural Diversity in Wisconsin, Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin. 1987. p. 38.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Wyatt, Barbara, Ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. June 1986. Volume II. p. 8-4.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 12

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

12. Ibid, p. 11-1.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid, p. 8-5
15. Berg, Benita. "History of Marshfield." A thesis submitted for Degree of Bachelor of Arts. University of Wisconsin, 1920. p. 32.
16. Ibid.
17. Hilbert, Rosemary, Centric Barns in Wisconsin. Madison, Wisconsin. Unpublished, 1987. p. 20.
18. Ibid, p. 17.
19. Ibid, p. 13.
20. Ibid, p. 10.
21. Ibid, p. 14
22. Marshfield Times. May 17, 1974.
23. Biography on Frank A. Felhofer. June 17, 1989.
24. Ibid.
25. The City of Marshfield now owns the land and buildings. A commission of six adminstrates the fairgrounds - three city aldermen and three Wood County board supervisors. The only time the Central Wisconsin State Fair Association is in control is two weeks before and two weeks after the annual fair.

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Name of Property

Wood
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less Than One Acre

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

1 1/5 7/2/4/0/6/0 4/9/4/8/0/0/0
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

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	Mary Jane Hettinga	date	11/11/95
organization	Marathon County Historical Museum	telephone	715/848-6143
street & number	403 McIndoe Street	zip code	54403
city or town	Marshfield	state	Wisconsin

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Name of Property

Wood
County and State

Wisconsin

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	City of Marshfield		
organization			
street&number	630 South Central Avenue	telephone	
city or town	Marshfield	state	Wisconsin
		zip code	54449

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 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 Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Books:

Hilbert, Rosemary, Centric Barns in Wisconsin, Madison, WI:
Privately printed, 1987.

Jones, George O.; McVean, Norman S. and others, History of Wood County Wisconsin,
Minneapolis: H.C. Cooper, Jr. & Co., 1923.

McKay, Tom and Kmetz, Deborah E., Agricultural Diversity in Wisconsin, Madison: The
State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1987.

Perrin, Richard, Historic Wisconsin Buildings, Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum, 1962.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin,
Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Volume II, June, 1986.

Newspapers:

Marshfield News Herald.

Marshfield Times.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

Other:

Berg, Benita, "History of Marshfield," A thesis submitted for the
degree of Bachelor of Arts, University of Wisconsin, 1920.

Lincoln County 4-H. Free Fair Centennial booklet, 1888-1988.

National Register of Historic Places nomination entitled,
"Eschweiler Thematic Resources of Marathon County," Nov. 1979.

Wilcott, Jean Felhofer, "Around the Barn in 80 Years," August 8, 1995. President of Central
Wisconsin State Fair Association.
Daughter of William Felhofer.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

West 2/3 of NE Quarter of NW Quarter, Section 17, Town 25 North, Range 3 East. The boundary is defined by the inside edge of pavement of the fairgrounds drives that encircle the barn on all sides. See USGS map.

Boundary Justification

Encompasses an area of land sufficient to include the Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn and its immediate surroundings.

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section PHOTOS Page 1

Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn
Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

The following applies to all photos:
Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn Marshfield, Wood County, WI
Photos by M.J. Hettinga
Neg. at WI State Historical Society

Photo 1 of 11
Main entrance
Camera facing southwest

Photo 7 of 11
Stanchions
Camera facing north

Photo 2 of 11
Main entrance
Camera facing west

Photo 8 of 11
Stalls
Camera facing south

Photo 3 of 11
Close-up
Camera facing east

Photo 9 of 11
Ceiling
Camera facing west

Photo 4 of 11
Bleachers - interior
Camera facing southwest

Photo 10 of 11
Main office
Camera facing east

Photo 5 of 11
Stairway
Camera facing west

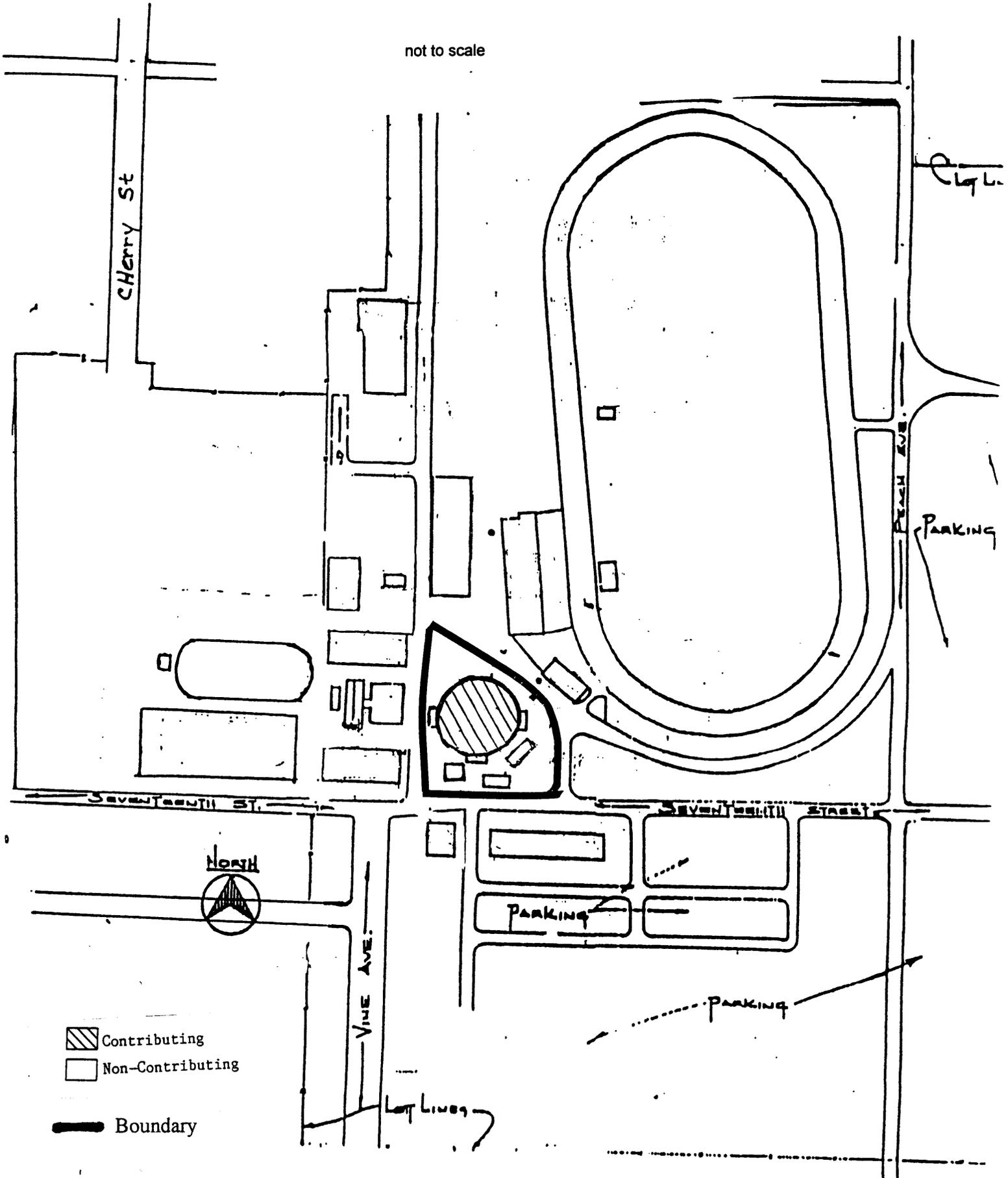
Photo 11 of 11
Back of grandstand
Camera facing east

Photo 6 of 11
First stage - interior
Camera facing east

Central Wisconsin State
Fair Grounds Round Barn

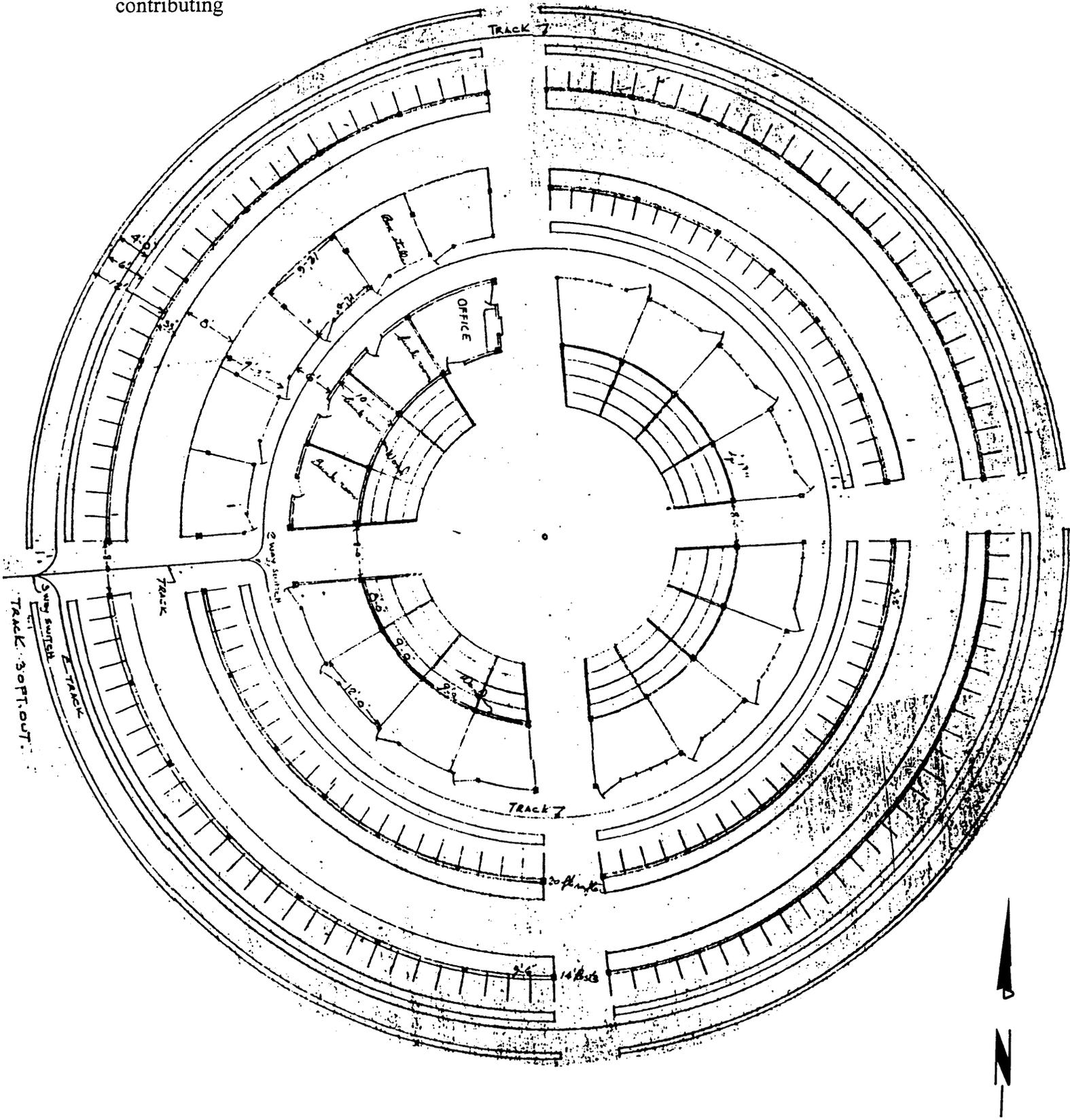
Marshfield, Wood County, WI

not to scale



Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

not to scale
contributing



Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn Marshfield, Wood County, Wisconsin

not to scale
contributing

