

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



530

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 Northwestern Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District

other names/site number National Soldiers Home Historic District

2. Location

street & number 5000 West National Avenue  not for publication

city or town Milwaukee (roughly bounded by National Avenue, Blue Mound Road, Miller Park Stadium, 43<sup>rd</sup> Street, and the 56<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood of West Allis, WI)  vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Milwaukee code 079 zip code 53295

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.)

Karen Roma Dupak  
Signature of certifying official/Title

Federal (Historic) Preservation Officer 1/27/2005  
Date

Department of Veterans Affairs  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

William J. Stevens, SHPO  
Signature of commenting official/Title

4/18/05  
Date

State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other. (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

6/3/05  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
41	5	buildings
4	1	sites
		structures
3	0	objects
48	6	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

2

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Institutional Housing

Health Care/Hospital

Health Care/Rest Home

Funerary/Cemetery

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Health Care/Rest Home

Funerary/Cemetery

Domestic/Institutional Housing

Recreation

Work in Progress

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Gothic

Late Victorian/Shingle Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Wood/Weatherboard

roof Slate

other

**Narrative Description**

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

See Continuation Sheets

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

See Continuation Sheets

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Health/Medicine

Architecture

Politics/Government

**Period of Significance**

1867-1955

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Mix, Edward Townsend

Koch, Henry C.

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Medical Library, VAMC, Milwaukee, WI

See Continuation Sheets

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Name of Property

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 150

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
---	---

4	1	9	9	6	2
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	6	4	7	6	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

1	6
---	---

4	2	0	2	3	2
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	6	5	3	2	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

2 

1	6
---	---

4	2	0	1	7	3
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	6	4	7	9	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4 

1	6
---	---

4	2	0	2	3	2
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	6	5	3	3	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kristin Gilpatrick Halverson & See Continuation Sheets

organization Soldiers Home Foundation, Inc. date 1/25/2005

street & number 5000 W. National Avenue telephone 414-389-4135

city or town Milwaukee state WI zip code 53295

### 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 Department of Veterans Affairs (Contact historic preservation officer Karen Tupek)

street & number 810 Vermont Ave. (182C) telephone 202-565-5680

city or town Washington state DC zip code 20420

**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.*). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**DESCRIPTION**

The National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was established by Congressional legislation and approved by President Lincoln on March 3, 1865. Milwaukee was designated as the site of the Northwestern Branch, one of the three original branches in December, 1866.<sup>1</sup> The name of the institution was changed to the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in 1873. In 1930, the National Home was one of the agencies providing veteran's benefits that was consolidated into the Veterans Administration.

Planning for the Northwestern Branch began in May 1867, when the Board of Managers of the National Asylum sent Chaplain Thomas Van Home to Milwaukee to arrange the grounds.<sup>2</sup> Construction of the original four buildings began in the fall of 1867. Two of the first four structures remain and are in the historic district: the Main Building (Building 2, 1867-1869 and 1875-1876) and the Governor's House (Building 39, 1867-1868). Van Home's plan for a recuperative village setting on the grounds remains virtually intact with the existing roadway system and the prominence of the Main Building as the focus of the entire site. A federal military cemetery, Wood National Cemetery, was built along the western edges of the Northwestern Branch grounds and opened to burials in 1871<sup>3</sup>. The majority of buildings within the historic district that were used by the members of the Northwestern Branch were built between 1879 and 1895; numerous quarters for staff were built between 1887 and 1921. In 1933, a hospital annex (Building 43) was erected in the district.

The National Soldiers Home Historic District contains 48 resources and the historic landscape of the site. The district is divided in two sections, a small area north of Interstate Highway 94 containing the north entrance road and a portion of Wood National Cemetery, and a large area in the northern two-thirds of the present Veterans Affairs Medical Center grounds, which contains the majority of Wood National Cemetery.

The district is located on the far west side of Milwaukee at the west end of the Menomonee River valley, west-southwest of the downtown area of the city and four miles directly west of the Lake Michigan harbor entrance. The district straddles the former Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) rail line, which parallels the river and crosses out of the valley through the historic district. The northern entrance to the district is located on Blue Mound Road, immediately adjacent to the original north entrance. Blue Mound Road is an extension of Wisconsin Avenue, the principal street running on the north side of the Menomonee River valley. The south side of the district is the creek watercourse and roadway running east-west to the north of the present main hospital (Building 111), which parallels National Avenue, the principal street running on the south side of the river valley.

**Site**

The National Soldiers Home Historic District consists of approximately 150 acres of rolling terrain characterized by a series of high bluffs facing the river valley with deep ravines between the bluffs. The elevation of the north portion of the district (north entrance and cemetery) is highest at the Blue Mound entrance and is lowest at the Cemetery, which was originally on the north side of a ravine that is now marked by the right-of-way of I-94. The interstate highway covers the site of one of the four ponds, which originally were found on the National Home grounds. The north portion of the district is connected to the main area of the district by a bridge crossing over I-94. The roadway, which enters the National Soldiers Home Historic District at Blue Mound Road, continues across the interstate highway, through the district directly in front of the Main Building (Building 2), and on to National Avenue, as it originally was laid out in 1867.

The main portion of the district is bounded on the north by I-94, and by the Milwaukee Brewer's Miller Park baseball stadium and its associated parking lots on the north half of the eastern boundary. A unique portion of the district's eastern boundary is comprised of a 120-meter long, 20-meter wide, 400 million year old Silurian Fossil Reef. Discovered in 1834 by Increase Lapham, the National Historic Landmark is located along the cliff face that forms the boundary with the western Miller Park access road and by Highway 41 on the south half of the eastern boundary. The south boundary is the creek watercourse running

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

roughly west to east through the wide, valley-like area between the high ground north of the railroad and the high ground along National Avenue. The west boundary is the west property line of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

The main portion of the district is divided into four large green areas. A large triangular area on the north side is centered on the chapel (Building 12) and bounded by quarters on the west and northeast, and the historic core buildings on the south. The Main Building (Building 2) fronts on a wooded hillside to the east. Cannon for firing salutes were originally located on the hillside; a powder magazine, now in ruins, is located to the northeast of the Main Building, on the hillside. A wide green area on the south side of the district includes Lake Wheeler and additional quarters. Wood National Cemetery forms a broad green area along the west boundary of the district. The roadway system closely follows the carriageways of the original plan with a principal north-south roadway (General Mitchell Boulevard), off of which curving secondary streets follow the contours of the site. Roads that originally entered the district from the former farmlands on the present site of the Miller Park parking lot have been closed to traffic with barricades.

**Buildings**

The buildings are grouped in six clusters: the historic core of main buildings, administration-recreation facilities, maintenance buildings, utility buildings, and residential areas to the south and to the north of the historic core. Building 43, the 1933 hospital annex, is located on the south side of the district with the utility buildings to the west and the south residential area to the east. Numerous garages were built in the district in the late 1930s to serve quarters built at earlier dates, and Quonset huts were built in the district in the mid- to late-1940s to serve as storage buildings.

The historic core of the district is made up of the 1869 Main Building (Building 2), the 1879 hospital with a 1880 convalescent ward addition (Building 6), two barracks (Building 5, 1884; Building 7, 1888), and the 1883 fire engine house (Building 11). The dominant building in the entire district is the Main Building (Building 2), a large Victorian Gothic structure designed by the prominent Milwaukee architect Edward Townsend Mix in 1867, and constructed between 1867 and 1869 with four corner towers added in 1875-1876<sup>4</sup>. This building housed all facilities for Home members from 1869 until 1884, when the first barrack (Building 5) was built. In 1879, a three-pavilion hospital (Building 6) was constructed west of the Main Building<sup>5</sup>. This building faces south, overlooking the wide valley space and National Avenue. The siting of the hospital appears to have been an attempt to readjust the orientation of the historic core buildings from the east to the south. A convalescent ward building was added to the hospital in 1880. The long axis of this building runs north-south, and may have been intended as the west side of an enclosed area with the rear of the Main Building on the east and the three pavilions of the hospital on the south. The fire engine house (Building 11), built in 1883, formed the north side of the enclosure.<sup>6</sup>

The east-west line established by the hospital was extended with the construction of a barrack (Building 5) in 1884, located between the hospital and the Main Building<sup>7</sup>. An additional barrack (Building 7) was constructed in 1888,<sup>8</sup> directly west of the rear of the Main Building, and oriented north-south to parallel the 1880 convalescent ward building. The hospital and the two barracks were designed by Henry C. Koch, another prominent Milwaukee architect, in a straightforward Italianate style.<sup>9</sup> The identification of the same architect for buildings that formed sides of the enclosure suggests that Koch may have been attempting to create a new or a secondary focus for the Northwestern Branch.

The administration-recreation facilities cluster is located directly to the south side of the historic core of the district, across General Wolcott Avenue from the southeast corner of the Main Building. This cluster is made up of the 1881 Ward Memorial Hall (Building 41),<sup>10</sup> the Wadsworth Library (Building 3, 1892),<sup>11</sup> the Social Hall (Building 4, 1894),<sup>12</sup> and the Headquarters Building (Building 1, 1895).<sup>13</sup> Although these buildings were built over a 14-year period, they are grouped in such a way as to indicate a long-term shift away from the eastern orientation of the Main Building, and to create a second enclosed space to the south side of the Main Building. This oddly configured area between Buildings 1, 3, and 4 with the walkway to Building 41 was identified as the "Parade Ground" in a 1917 photo souvenir of the Home. Situated along the west side of the walkway, north of the railroad tracks, is a marker set in stone with the words of the Gettysburg Address, erected in 1923. The Ward Memorial

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Hall was designed by Henry C. Koch in the Victorian Gothic style. The three later buildings exhibit very restrained handling of revival styles. The Headquarters Building has Renaissance Revival features, such as brick belt coursing, small second floor windows, and first floor window cornice treatment. The library was done in a Classical Revival style, and the Social Hall in a Colonial Revival style.

Maintenance buildings are clustered at the bottom of the hill in front of the Main Building along the railroad siding. The largest and oldest of the structures is the Quartermaster's Storehouse (Building 20), which was built in 1895, and may have been designed by Henry C. Koch, according to a news article that mentioned a "building" he did at the National Home in 1895.<sup>14</sup> The storehouse is built of cream city brick with little stylistic elaboration. A large addition was built on the east of the structure in 1938; it has minimal stylistic treatment. Another contributing building in the maintenance group is the Paint Shop (Building 97, 1938), which is contributing because of its demonstration of the self-sufficient nature of the Home community. Other contributing buildings in the maintenance group include a garage (Building 99, 1941), and three Quonset huts erected in 1947 for storage (Buildings T-105, T-106, T-107 and T-114). The engineering warehouse (Building 107, 1957) and engineering shops (Building 108, 1957)<sup>15</sup> located in this area are non contributing because they were built with the 50-year limitation of the National Register.

Utility buildings are located to the west of the Ward Memorial Hall, down the south slope from the hospital. The most prominent and oldest of these structures is the Power House (Building 45), built in 1895, with its tall smokestack (Building 106, 1921). The Power Plant has some decorative brickwork at its eave line, but is a very straightforward utilitarian building. The smokestack was targeted to encapsulate the brickwork. Other contributing buildings in the group are two simple duplex employee quarters (Buildings 49 and 50, 1909),<sup>16</sup> garages (Building 81, 1935; Building 84, 1938), and the Laundry (Building 102, 1955). Recently-constructed, noncontributing utility facilities include: Power Plant (Building 112, 1964) and Incinerator (Building 119, 1973).<sup>17</sup>

The south residential area is located in the southeast corner of the district between the railroad tracks and the creek watercourse. Three quarters were built in this park-like area characterized by broad undulating lawns, tree clusters, and winding narrow roadways. The oldest quarters is the Governor's House, built in 1867-1868, which can be attributed to Edward Townsend Mix through a comparison with Mix's own house on Waverly Place in Milwaukee (demolished). The Governor's House was originally built in a Victorian Italianate Villa style characterized by tall round-headed windows, shallow bays, and a tower element pushed in the junction of the two cross gables of the building mass. The tower roof was covered in polychromatic bands similar to the roof treatment on the Main Building. Between 1889 and 1916, the main roof of the house was raised, the bays were increased to two stories, and the tower roof was replaced with a conical element.<sup>18</sup>

The remaining quarters in the area are the former Quartermaster's Quarters (Building 37), a simple vernacular side-gabled structure built in 1902, and located in the far southeastern corner of the district. The third quarters was a duplex quarters built for the Secretary and the Surgeon in 1867-1868; it was demolished in 1985, but its 1938 garage (Building 60) remains as a contributing structure.

Also in this area west of the Governor's House, bordered by Hines Avenue, North Washington Drive and General Mitchell Boulevard, is Lake Wheeler, the last remaining of four original lakes on the site. In 1966, Lake Wheeler was moved to its present location 50-100 feet north of its original location (on the site of Building 111).<sup>19</sup> It is 2 square acres and approximately four feet deep. The lake features a small island and rests in a park like setting, surrounded by approximately three acres of grass. Seven wooden park benches are located either in the lakeshore area or on the island. A modern picnic pavilion is located to the west of Lake Wheeler. On a rise north of the lake is a marker erected in 1972 by the State Medical Society of Wisconsin in honor of Home Governor Dr. Erastus B. Wolcott, a founder of the State Medical Society.

The north residential area is located north of the historic core of main buildings and roughly forms the boundaries of the large triangular open space on the north side of the district. The principal building is the 1889 chapel (Building 12), which has elements of the Queen Anne style in its asymmetrically-placed turreted tower, but is predominantly done in the Shingle Style

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 4

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

characterized by the broad mass of the roof, the grid-like arrangement of the windows, and the contrasting patterns of wood siding and shingles. The architect of the chapel was Henry C. Koch, the principal architect for Northwestern Branch buildings in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>20</sup> The other buildings in this area are quarters and garages. The Shingle Style duplex Surgeon and Adjutant's Quarters (Building 17) was built in 1887 on the northwest side of the area<sup>21</sup>. Later quarters were the Protestant Chaplain's Quarters (Building 16), a vernacular frame residence built in 1901 just to the northwest of the chapel<sup>22</sup>; the Catholic Chaplain's Quarters (Building 14), a frame residence with Colonial Revival features built in 1909 to the southwest of the chapel<sup>23</sup>; and three Colonial Revival quarters built on the northeast side of the open area (Building 18, 1916<sup>24</sup>; Building 19, 1921<sup>25</sup>; and Building 62, 1922<sup>26</sup>).

The district includes 41.1 acres of the 50.1 acre Wood National Cemetery, located along the western edge of the grounds of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Three-fourths of the buildings in the National Soldiers Home Historic District have a view of some of the federal military cemetery's 30,000-plus upright granite headstones. The Cemetery is one of the largest government burial grounds in the United States. Other contributing resources within the large portion of Wood National Cemetery that is within the historic district include Soldiers and Sailors Monument and the Cemetery Reception House (Building 57, 1900),<sup>27</sup> a small stone structure with a conical metal roof located adjacent to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, the Cemetery Comfort Station (Building 75, 1928),<sup>28</sup> and the cemetery Tool House Quonset Hut (T-119, 1948). The Cemetery also contains seven bronze plaques with verses from the poem "Bivouac of the Dead," given to the Northwestern Branch in the 1880s and reset in stone mounts in 1941.<sup>29</sup>

Other contributing resources include monuments, historic objects. The fountain in front of the Main Building was installed in 1870.<sup>30</sup> The Soldiers and Sailors Monument, an obelisk topped with the figure of a Civil War soldier was erected in the northwest corner of the Cemetery in 1903.<sup>31</sup> The Hiker Monument, located in front of Building 43, was dedicated to Spanish-American War veterans in 1941.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to Wood National Cemetery, there are three historic archaeological sites<sup>33</sup> along the eastern ridge line running south from the district's northeastern border with the baseball stadium to the creek watercourse near its southeastern border with National Avenue and Hwy. 41.<sup>34</sup>

Three large buildings are located on the south side of the wide valley-like area, outside of the historic district. These structures are Building 70, the former tuberculosis hospital built in 1922-23; Building 111, the General Medical and Surgical Hospital, built in 1966; and Building 123, a domiciliary built in 1979. A State Historic Marker, which commemorates the establishment and history of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home, stands on the north side of National Avenue between 47th and 48th Streets. The boundaries of the historic district were not established to include these structures because the former tuberculosis hospital and the quarters associated with it have lost the context in which they were originally built, and the other two buildings were not built within the 50-year limitation of the National Register. The former tuberculosis hospital had originally been located in the completely open southwest corner of the Home grounds to provide maximum fresh air and sunlight, and to isolate the tubercular patients from the other Home members. In 1938, a large addition was built on the west side of Building 70 when it was converted to a general medical and surgical hospital. By the mid-1960s, Building 70 was no longer adequate to meet patient needs and Building 111 was built directly east of the 1923 facility. In the mid-1970s, to provide additional domiciliary space, the 1938 addition and the west wing of Building 70 were demolished and Building 123 was built. Large parking lots have been built to the east of Building 111 and to the north of Building 123.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**DESCRIPTION OF SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES**

**Building 1 Headquarters 1895-96**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Renaissance Revival**

**Exterior Description**

Building 1 is a shallow "U" shape oriented with the open end to the west. The foundation is cut stone with mortar joints that are tooled to imitate coursed ashlar. On the north, east, and south sides of the building the foundation protrudes about 2" at the water table level to form a decorative molding. The exterior bearing walls are cream brick masonry construction. The floor joists and other interior framing are wood construction.

The main entrance to the building is located in the center of the open end of the "U" configuration and faces west. The entrance is defined by a narrow, one story portico that runs the length of the center building section between the wings. The six full and two engaged Tuscan order columns of the portico support a flat metal deck. The deck is accessed by either a centered second story wood and glass door or by a small metal "ships" ladder that extends to the ground on the right side of the portico. The deck handrails are modern 1½" steel pipe railings. There is a sign that reads "Milwaukee Wi." over the steps to the portico. The exterior brick walls and trim within the colonnade are now painted a cream color. The entry portico is reached by two concrete steps as well as a concrete ramp. Modern pipe railings are used at both the ramp and steps. A white wrought iron railing spans the columns on either side of the steps. There are also modern handrails composed of vertical ½" square steel bars spaced 6" on center with heavier horizontal members that span between three of the column openings. The west entrance is protected by an added white wooden wind-screen enclosure. The wind screen is made up of V grooved vertical panels with metal trim edges. The window and door trim of the screen is of simple flat pieces about 2½" wide with rounded edges. The front entrance door at the brick face inside the wind screen is made up of a wide horizontal panel at the bottom, then two square panels, a wide horizontal panel above the knob rail and topped by a large rectangular glass panel. The hardware is ornate. The hinges, which measure approximately 6" x 6", are cast with raised curvilinear motifs. There are two basement exits on the south side at grade and one exit on the east side that is approximately three feet below grade. The east basement exit has modern 1" to 1½" steel pipe railings and handrails.

There are three windows on each floor of the west end of the wings. The windows continue around the entire building in the same pattern spacing. The first floor windows are four-over-four light sash windows. The second floor are also four-over-four light sash windows that are smaller vertically than the first floor windows. All the windows are topped with radiating voussoirs that have flat brick cornices above them. The brick cornices continue between the windows on each floor to form a decorative banding above the windows. All the windows have stone sills and aluminum storms. The storm windows on the second floor match the sash meeting rails but the ones on the first floor do not. The lower storms are divided into thirds instead of halves. The windows are framed with a concave brick molding measuring about 3" wide and deep. Some hardware for awnings still exists on the wood window frames.

The building is covered with a hip roof. The cornice line at the roof is made up of a flat vertical board about 10" in depth and an ogee molding. The cornice bed molding is about 8" in depth and comprised of a short vertical board and then a curved convex molding. There are built in gutters at the roof eaves. The roofing materials are presently green composition shingles except for the portico roof, which appears to be soldered metal. There are two small hip roofed dormers on either side of the west entrance. They have small wood frame, single-pane, fixed windows. At the center of the ridge between the two dormers is a cupola with a flared, pyramidal roof, the top part of which forms a finial. Three sides of the cupola have louvers and the fourth side facing the west has a clock.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 6

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Interior Description**

The interior of Building 1 contains a stairway running through the first floor lobby. This stair leading to the other levels had been originally framed by two arches, one for the run to the basement and one for the run to the second floor. One arch was eliminated to enclose the stair leading to the second floor but the arch leading to the basement stair is intact. The stairwells have rubber treads covering the stairs and modern steel pipe handrails. Wall to wall carpeting covers the lobby at the first floor. The remainder of the flooring at all levels is primarily resilient tile with the exception of the toilet rooms, which are covered with ceramic tile. The walls in the southeast room that was once used by the post office are covered with embossed metal. The post office contains its original brass, glass and wood mail slots; however, an undetected steam pipe leak damaged this area in 2002-03. The walls of the toilet rooms of Building 1 are covered with the same ceramic tile as is used on the floors. The bulk of the remaining walls are made of plaster. Some modern partitions have been added to the original plan. The ceilings on the lower level have 12"x12" acoustical tile applied to the original ceilings and the electrical conduit has been left exposed. The southeast room ceiling is covered with the same embossed metal as the walls in that room. On the second floor level the ceilings are plaster. The interior panel doors on the lower level seem to be original. Most of them have large rectangular glass lights at their upper sections and have transoms above them. The door hardware includes ornate hinges. The door leading to the second floor level is a flush door. The doors at the second level are mostly paneled and also have transoms over them. Here the status of the hardware varies. Some of the hinges seem to be original steeple hinges. Most doorknobs however, have been replaced with modern hardware. The windows on the first and second floor levels are four-over-four light sash windows. Interior window hardware seems to be original in many locations.

The door trim is about 6" wide with vertical ribbings. Square wood pieces with bull's eye carving in the center occur at the top edges. The trim surrounding the door to the stair to the second floor level is not original. There is no trim on the doorframes at the second level. The plaster meets the doors' wood casing at a quarter round turn of wood. There is no trim where the ceiling meets the wall. Contemporary fluorescent strip lighting is used in the main floor and upstairs lobby and in many of the offices.

**Building 2 Main Building 1867-69; 1876**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Edward Townsend Mix Style: Victorian Gothic**

**Site Description**

Building 2 occupies the most prominent place on the VA site. Located on a high point in the ground elevation, it can be seen from all points in the complex and from the expressway. It is of major visual impact in the complex.

A lawn area extends along the front of the east and part of the north facade. This area is dotted with a few shrubs, flower beds, and flowering trees. Bituminous drives abut the building at its south and northwestern sides. General Mitchell Boulevard passes by the east and north facades and Wolcott Avenue is along the south. The main facade faces east and overlooks a fountain and a rolling park-like area interspersed with trees. Immediately to the west is Building 5.

**Exterior Description**

Building 2 is a "T"-shaped building. The top of the "T" forms the main facade, which is oriented to the east. There is one tower centered on the east facade and four lower towers at the corners of the top of the "T". The base of the "T" has a wing that was added later located on the north side. The building varies in height from three stories with basement in the straighter middle sections to four stories with basement at the north and south end towers and central core section. The entrance tower on the east side is six stories high.

The building has a cut stone foundation wall of coursed ashlar pattern with flush mortar joints. The only exception to this is the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 7

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

newer north wing, which does not have a stone foundation. The exterior bearing walls are cream brick masonry construction. The floor joists and other interior framing are wood construction. The brick masonry is set in a running bond without header courses, except at tops of arches and directly above the water table. The two-story cream brick addition of unknown date at the north side of the west wing has no decorative brick work, just flat surfaces of running bond with header courses every seventh course. Wall ornamentation includes rectangular brick panels with a recess in the center that are located at the wall surfaces, decorative brick and stone bands, and corbelling at the eaves of the towers. The second story facade on the south side of the base of the "T" has paired, engaged brick pilasters without bases or capitals. The south facade of the top of the "T" of this building shows evidence of a removed porch three stories high. This porch can be seen in early photographs. The central section of the south facade has three stories plus a half story protruding for the basement. Large arched brick openings, which perhaps enclosed pairs of double doors, have been infilled with cream brick. Double hung windows are set within these openings and are much smaller than the former openings.

The first floor of the east tower is open on three sides with high, Gothic arches. Granite steps on the three sides lead to a landing within the support columns underneath the tower. There is a modern 1½" steel pipe handrail located in the center of the east steps. The steps rise again on the fourth side to the main entrance to the building. Clustered piers support the Gothic arches at the base of the tower. The piers rest on a base that is made of light buff, cut stone similar to the foundation walls. The tower above features various sized Gothic-arched windows, several cornices, and is topped with a four sided mansard roof with a plain balustrade at the top that was added later. The slate roof has light and dark tiles in varying patterns. There were balconies at the third floor windows of the tower on the east side and other locations. They have been removed but traces of them can be seen in the brickwork and in early photographs.

The main entrance to the building located on the east side is a modern, metal and glass, storefront entry. The original doors have been salvaged and mounted on the walls of the entrance hallway. At the basement level of the south facade is an enclosed entrance and waiting area for buses made of aluminum storefront material with a cream brick base. There is a similar but smaller enclosure framing the entrance on the north side. There is also an entrance off a small loading dock on the north side addition. The dock is open with a simple flat metal canopy.

There are round windows, with keystones at the top and sides, located within the stone foundation base at the northeast tower. At the northwest tower base, there are round head windows within the stone foundation walls. The windows above the foundation vary from floor to floor and section to section. However, they all have either a brick arch or a Gothic arch incorporated in or around the transom or tracery. They also all have sashes painted a tomato red color and engaged brick pilasters without bases or capitals flanking each of the windows. There are horizontal stone bands at the bases of the windows of the towers that vary in depth and horizontal stone sills that connect pairs of windows and on single windows over the rest of the building. The windows in the end towers are simple, tall, double hung, dual windows with low brick arches. The two-story west wing or base of the "T" has paired windows topped with low brick arches. The windows are four-over-four light sash windows. The newer north wing has modern aluminum windows set in pairs. They are divided horizontally into thirds and the upper sections have green panels. Most of the windows have aluminum storm windows that match the sash divisions.

The varying roofline is primarily of the mansard style. The north and south towers at each end of the east facade, as well as the central tower and its central block, seem to retain the original tri-colored slate roofing tiles, which vary from a zig-zag fish scale pattern to a simple rectangular lap pattern, and then repeat again several times. The most noticeable pattern is on the fourth story roof around the core portion of the building. Other mansard roofing material is modern composition shingles, green, in a rectangular lap pattern. The north wing has a flat roof. Some of the top-most cornice trim has been covered with metal fascia material, but the cornice trim at the corner towers seem to be intact, including its iron cresting. The iron cresting is missing from the top of the main six-story tower. The gutters, downspouts, and wood trim of the building are painted green. There is aluminum colored fascia at the mansards.

The roof has slightly projecting, gabled dormers. Each dormer has Gothic tracery surrounding two tall, narrow double-hung

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 8

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

windows topped with a shorter double-hung window. The slightly more angled mansard roofs over the north and south towers are crowned with decorative wrought iron balustrades or "roof cresting." The small, steep, hipped dormers, one on each side of the towers, have only one small, double-hung window. The roof over the straight sections that form the connecting wings from the core to the towers is also mansard. The six dormers per side are gabled and have double-hung windows with Gothic arch transoms.

At the roof level are located roof access enclosures. One has a sloped roof that has a stair and exit door that leads out onto the roof. The roof access enclosure is of light cream brick that doesn't exactly match the brick of the rest of the building. Access to the roof can also be gained by a network of roof "ship's" ladders. Toward the central section of the east wing is an elevator penthouse of concrete block. There are skylights located on the roof of the east wing above the stairwells and the fifth floor elevator lobby.

Transformers located at ground level on the west side of the east wing are enclosed with cyclone fencing. There is additional equipment located on the flat roof of the one story portion of the west wing.

**Interior Description**

The floor plan for Building 2 is in the shape of a "T". The main entrance is located on the east end of one wing of the cross. Rooms are located off the main corridor leading from the entrance wing and along the two wings perpendicular to it. The west wing at the opposite end of the main corridor contains the dining hall on the first floor level. The hall has three rows of plain slender columns about 16' on center and a large kitchen facility at the north end. This serving kitchen and dishwashing area has quarry tile floors, tile walls, and some skylights. Laundry facilities, storage, and mechanical areas were once located in the basement along with a large canteen in the basement with a seating area. The fifth floor level is in the base of the mansard and has dormer windows set in deep wells at the floor level. This level has a small floor area and a partial height partition system.

The flooring in Building 2 is terrazzo in the corridors. The dining hall floor is now covered with now crumbling resilient tile as are the floors on the fifth floor and in the canteen in the basement. The basement floor level has quarry tile floors.

Walls are generally covered in wall covering of various patterns, but some walls are just painted along with the wainscoting that appears to be original or at least, old. The wainscot has vertical, grooved boards about 4" wide and 2' 1½" high, and is topped with a chair rail. A 3½" high wainscot with baseboard and chair rail is found in many of the side rooms and at the tower of the fourth floor. There is no indication of molding at the juncture of the plaster walls and plaster ceilings in the rooms. Wood baseboards are about 8" high and seem to be original in most areas. Window trim also seems to be intact in most areas.

There are shallow arches at the ceiling level in the main entrance corridor on both the east and west ends. Large molded pendants are at the base of these arches about 8' above the floor level. A series of five shallow pointed arches are at the corridor intersection in the center of the building. This first floor central area has a floor level that is recessed about 3' below the corridor level. The basement has painted plaster ceilings with exposed piping. Low arches separate the various sections of the lower level at the corridors. Acoustical tile has been glued to the plaster ceilings in most areas. The dining hall ceiling has suspended acoustical tile. Acoustical tile is set on wood sleepers over the plaster ceilings on the fourth floor. The fifth floor elevator lobby has skylights at the ceiling. Other ceilings on the fifth floor are plaster.

The second and third floor levels have raised seating areas in the central tower that are accessed by a short flight of stairs and are surrounded by small pointed arch windows. There are three windows on each of the three exterior walls. The fourth wall has a low arch over an opening spanning the width of the corridor. Low arched openings are also found at junctures in the corridor.

The east main entrance door at the first floor is now a modern, aluminum double storefront type entrance. A pair of doors with wood Gothic tracery at the transom have been removed from the interior of this entrance corridor. Wood trim molding French doors with 12 panes of obscure glass are found in the entrance corridor. The doors have glass transoms that are still intact, but

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 9

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

painted over. The walls are about 1' 6" wood Gothic tracery at the transom thick at the entrance corridor. Doorknobs and related trim are not original, but keyhole escutcheons in several places seem to be original. The hinges vary from original to modern replacements. Many of the doors are original panel doors with two vertical small panels at the bottom and long vertical upper panels. Heavy moldings trim the edges of all the panels. Stair enclosures have flush doors and modern trim. On the fourth floor the doors and hardware are missing in most places. Most of the doorknobs are replacements, but some original white knobbed hardware and key escutcheons can be found in some of the sleeping rooms.

Some of the old heating grillwork remains. A sprinkler system runs along the face of the acoustical tile and various other pipe work is pendant hung or directly applied to the ceiling. Pipes and conduit-work extend over many of the wall and ceiling surfaces and in front of some of the windows in the tower second level.

**Building 3 Wadsworth Library 1891**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Classical Revival**

**Exterior Description**

Building 3 is a rectangular shaped one story building that is oriented with the main entrance facing north. The foundation is rough cut Wisconsin limestone of large rectangular blocks in even coursing that have been tuckpointed. The original mortar joints were tooled in a raised pattern at the horizontal and vertical joints. The exterior bearing walls are cream brick. Engaged brick columns with carved ogee capitals and rough stone bases divide the facades into bays on all four sides. There are five bays across the front and back, and nine bays along each side. The exterior brick work is running bond without headers. Above the windows on top of the smooth stone lintels are brick sized stone laid stack bond in three sections, 6 bricks high.

The northwest corner bays are cut out to form an entrance stoop. The corner is completed by a single freestanding column. Six concrete entry steps lead up to the main entrance stoop. The three lowest ones wrap around the outside of the freestanding column. There is now indoor/outdoor carpeting covering the concrete steps. The handrails are modern pipe railing. These railings extend out and around the freestanding column and the engaged columns at the sides of the steps. There are holes that indicate where earlier handrails were set into the stone work. A small globe light hangs in the recessed portico. The entrance to the Library has a modern aluminum door and storefront system with side light and transom. There are two other exits, both are on the south side of the building. One exit is on the first floor level and leads to an exterior metal stairway. The other leads from the basement and is on grade. This exit is framed in a newer wood and metal wind-screen enclosure.

Each bay has a three-over-three light sash, double-hung window in it with a recessed brick panel above. The window head and sill are smooth stone. Each bay has a corresponding basement window below it. These windows are very short across the front at the base due to the grade, but are taller along the sides with sloped grade. The only bay without windows is at the northwest corner. All the windows have aluminum storms in two sections.

A truncated hip roof of composition shingles covers the rectangular library. Across the top of the roof in the center is a large skylight. The roof cornice is highlighted by large dentils. There is a wide gabled dormer at the center of the north end. It has three small, single paned, sash windows. At the south end of the roof is a dormer that flanks a corbelled chimney. The dormer gable is broken by the chimney. There is one double-hung window on either side of the chimney at this dormer. Both the north and south side dormers have decorative wood molding at the gable end.

A dark oblong sign hangs below the eaves at the center of the north facade. In gold letters, it says "Wadsworth Library."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 10

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Interior Description**

The interior of Building 3 is essentially a large rectangular two-story room at the first floor level. There is a narrow staircase in the northeast corner that leads to a balcony that runs along the outside walls overlooking the main reading room below. The balcony is supported by slender cast iron columns with Corinthian type capitals. The balcony has a wood balustrade of square, fluted balusters set about 5" on center. They are topped with a heavy handrail and supported at 20' centers with chamfer edged posts.

The main level floor is covered with carpet. In the basement the floors are resilient tile. The walls are plaster with wall coverings on the main floor. There is a continuous apron running under all the windows at the east and west walls with the same longitudinal fluting as on the door and window trim. The basement walls were covered with vinyl fabric, but drywall has recently been applied. The floor and walls at the far north end of the building in the men's room are terrazzo. Terrazzo at the walls extends up about 7' in this room. There is a plaster ceiling over the main area but the underside of the balcony and the basement ceilings are covered with acoustic tile. The ceiling of the reading room is supported with trusses that have wood upper cords with steel bottom cords and steel diagonal members. There is a large gabled skylight in the center of the reading room ceiling. The skylight sub windows of amber glass are intact, but the skylight at the roof surface has been covered.

The interior has original doors, hinges, trim, and key escutcheons and baseboards. The door trim has fluting and square decorative pieces at the upper corners with bull's eye insets. Several of the basement doors are modern, flush, wood doors. At the south end of the large room on the main floor is a fireplace with a mantle of applied scrollwork and various other carved elements. An ogee molding surrounds glazed tiles of ocher color with a raised floral leaf pattern. Around the hearth opening is brass trim with corners of diagonal leaf patterns set in square mounts. The brass trim is about 1½" wide. A chain operated wood dumbwaiter for books extends from the main level to the balcony level.

Strip fluorescent lighting fixtures are suspended from the ceiling trusses.

There are small dormer windows at the balcony level that are double hung windows with a single light below and above. The basement level has its original windows with rounded edge jamb trim but without face trim.

The basement is entered only at the south end of the building where there is a wood, flat roofed, wind enclosure with dentil molding along the shallow, simple cornice. There is also a modern steel fire escape leading from the upper level at the south end to grade.

**Building 4 Social Hall 1894**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Colonial Revival**

**Exterior Description**

Building 4 is a two-story building with basement. It is rectangular in shape, except for a one and a half story, semi-circular bay at the northwest corner. The bay contains the interior staircase that has semi-circular landings. The building is oriented to the north where the wood entry portico is located. The basement level is brick, painted white, combined with rough cut stone of regular coursing with raised, tooled mortar joints.

The building is finished mostly in white, narrow clapboard, which is interrupted by white, wood, engaged columns that divide the facades into bays. The north end has three bays and each side has six. The engaged columns on the outside of the building are composed of 1" x 8" center matched, tongue and groove boards running vertically, three boards wide. The capitals are composed of ogee molding and vertical flat pieces with a bead and cove astragal molding about 8" below the capital. The second floor level

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 11

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

of the bay has engaged pilasters of simple rectangular shape with moldings at the capital and the bases. The semi-circular bay at the left side is finished with wide siding on the lower half and wood framed windows on the top half. On the east side the bay has composition board siding 8" deep attached to it that probably covers other material underneath. The entire building is painted white. Old photographs, however, indicate the color scheme was formerly multi-hued.

The main entrance is through a one-story portico in the left bay of the north facade. The portico has a low, sloped roof with a projecting entablature that is supported by narrow, squared columns. The stoop, partially bound by a white post railing, is reached by seven wooden steps. The stoop was later expanded across the right part of the front and extended out slightly to the sidewalk. Unlike the wood entry stoop, the newer extension that forms a raised platform is constructed of red brick and concrete, and is encircled by a metal railing. There is a wood sign with black letters on a white background saying "Recreation Building" attached to the entablature of the portico.

The main entrance doors located within the portico are modern, aluminum storefront system with large, glass panes and a single pane glass transom. The door is set in from the facade about 2" and has a 1" high molded base board and grooved vertical 1" x 4" board at the side and ceiling of the recess. A modern flush door with a single light is located at the end of the semi-circular bay. It leads to the stairway inside. An emergency exit, located on the east side of the building, has an attached metal fire escape extending from the third-floor level down to grade.

Each bay normally has a pair of double-hung windows on each floor. These are single-light double-hung sash windows, which originally had transoms at the first-floor level, but these are now covered with metal panels painted white. Two of the bays at the north facade have similar, but taller windows with large panels above them. The windows of the semi-circular bay are very narrow, single-paned, double-hung windows. The windows at the basement level have low arches of radial soldier coursed brick at the tops. All the windows have aluminum storms.

The building is covered with a gabled roof of green composition shingle. The semi-circular bay has a flat roof with a slight wood parapet. A TV antenna is located at the ridge near the north end.

**Interior Description**

The first floor of Building 4 is basically one large room. Located in the large room at the first floor level is a central row of four 8" diameter columns with simple capitals of ogee trim. A plaster enclosed beam runs along the top of the columns. Floors inside are resilient tile and are edged with 10" high baseboard. The walls and the ceilings are painted plaster.

The interior stairway is simply detailed with a solid wood panel set between the handrail and the stringer and a modern pipe railing at the sides. The treads are rubber faced. The newel post at the bottom of the stairs has inset panels with beaded, inset molding.

An exit door leads from the first floor level to grade at the southwest corner via a metal fire escape. This door has sidelights with narrow wood panels about 2' high on either side at the bottom and a double light transom, with glass in it, above. The door has a wire glass light divided into two parts. There are some original four-panel wood doors with original hardware, knobs and escutcheons but most are modern, wood flush panel doors with panic hardware. Window trim is fluted lengthwise with square elements at the top corners.

The upper level has one large room. A central beam is located midway in the room and is encased with plaster and supports a folding partition. Resilient die covers floors and acoustical tile covers the ceiling. One door is an original four-panel door with original trim. The others are modern.

The lower level has carpeted floors, a suspended acoustical tile ceiling, and houses a bowling alley. In the center is a row of columns matching those on the first floor. The grade exit at the south end of the lower level has a contemporary, flush panel

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 12

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

hollow metal door with a sidelight and panic hardware.

The V.A. is making extensive renovations to the interior of this building to create office space in late 2004 and 2005. The Wisconsin State Historical Society Preservation Office is reviewing these changes. The impact that the renovations will have on the historic integrity of the interior of Building 4 is unknown at the time of this writing.

**Building 5 Barracks 1884**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Utilitarian with Italianate features**

**Exterior Description**

Building 5 is a three story barracks that is rectangular in shape with the exception of small protruding sections at the center in both the front and rear. The foundation is random coursed ashlar stone with a 1' deep water table course with a sloped, carved top. The exterior bearing walls are cream, common bond brick without header courses. The interior is wood frame construction.

The main entrance faces south and is in a centered projecting pavilion that is topped with a third floor-hipped gable. The first floor entry is reached by 13 concrete steps that rise up to the center of the long porch. Entry doors are a double, aluminum storefront style that are set into a brick arch, which is supported by engaged brick columns.

The structure's most outstanding architectural feature is its two-tiered, open porch. It extends the entire length of the west side of the building, with only an interruption on the second floor above the entry. It has a large double wood and glass door and four over four double-hung windows on either side. The doors open onto a deck with iron railings that top the only enclosed area of the porch. The second floor enclosed area has three columns. Between them are modern iron railings. The three porch/deck levels are connected by two sets of exterior metal stairs that are nestled against the projecting pavilion's modern corner additions for exiting. The porch is set on 18" square brick piers that are spanned by wood latticework. The porch deck sits about 6' above grade and has 2" x 6" decking painted gray. The columns supporting the porch have chamfering at the edges. The porch railings are modern pipe railings that replace earlier wood railings and balustrade.

There are small, three-pane, horizontal windows located on the west side at the stone base. The dormer windows are nine-over-nine light, double-hung sash windows. The rest of the windows are all double-hung sash windows with varying pane patterns. A wide, decorative wood band runs horizontally underneath the sills of the windows at these ends. All windows have mill finish aluminum storms.

The building is topped with a two-sided mansard roof with shed dormers. The mansard roofing material is green composition shingles. There are simple, fluted brackets located at the dormer above the west entrance at the roof level and also at the eave ends just under the cornice at the north and south ends of the building. The north and south ends of the building rise vertically to meet the roof edge, and are faced with wood shingles. The building has two joined chimneys with high corbelling, located at the center of each side wing.

**Building 6 Hospital 1879**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Victorian Italianate**

**Exterior Description**

The original portion of Building 6 is laid out roughly in an "E" shape. The front entrance is located at the end of the middle wing



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 13

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

and faces south. These wings are three stories in height and the connecting sections are two stories over basements. There is a large wing addition to the north and one below the "E" to the west. The foundation is of random coursed, cut stone. The newer addition on the north has a stone foundation that matches closely that of the original building. The exterior bearing walls are multi-toned, common bond brick without headers except for the north addition, which is finished in cream brick.

The focal point of the building's mixed architectural style is at the three-story pavilion or entrance wing. The first floor entry portico has a massive cornice and entablature that is supported by one white round column in each corner and is topped with a flat deck and an ornate wrought iron railing. Twelve modern concrete steps with modern iron railings lead up to the base of the portico. Above this projecting wood pavilion is a pediment with a small boarded up Palladian window. A cornerstone at the base near the entrance reads "1879." The west wing of the original "E" has an enclosed porch with single-pane, double hung windows. On the east wing, where photographs show there was once a porch, the brick is painted white. Concrete steps with a modern, wrought iron handrail extend down to grade from the door that was once at the first floor porch level. The far western end of Building 6 is a partially white painted, brick wing with a porch rapped around it on the north, west and south ends. The porch has a 2" x 6" wood decking and is raised about 4' above grade on brick piers. The handrails are modern pipe handrails that replace the wood ones shown in early photographs. The wood porch columns have chamfered edges. Wood stairways connecting the two porch levels flank the central projection of the west facade. At the second floor are a pair of French doors with fifteen lights in each door. The porch at the north end of this wing is enclosed with vertical, ribbed siding and has a band of aluminum, double-hung windows.

The main entrance is a double leaf, aluminum and glass storefront door that is set in a recessed Tudor arch panel. The west entrance has a pair of modern aluminum double doors at the first floor.

On either side of the projecting entrance pavilion on each floor is one stilted, segmental window crowned with a brick, Tudor arch window head. The bases of the Tudor arches connect to bands of brick soldier coursing set at a diagonal to the facade. These continue around to the wings of the original section of the building. The windows on each floor within the pavilion are the same style. They are paired and underscored with a bracketed stone sill. The first floor windows of the connecting sections are plain, four-over-four light, double-hung windows with slightly elliptical brick arches. The second floor of these sections has double-hung windows with semi-circular eyebrow brick arches. The north wing has paired windows. Simple eyebrow trim tops the lower windows, and soldier course brick is located over the large pairs of first floor windows. Aluminum storms cover all the windows of the building. Some storms are in three sections and do not match the meeting rails of the windows. The top sections of the circle head windows, at the second floor, are covered with metal. Windows in the attic are boarded.

The original "E" shaped section of the building is covered with a low, truncated hip roof. The two-story connecting sections have a simple gable roof. The roof is covered with green composition shingles except for the north wing, which has a flat roof. At the top of the entry pavilion are eight ornate chimneys with extensive corbelling, insets and decorative stone trim. At the northwest and northeast corners of the west wing are large chimneys with extensive corbelling and inset brick ribbing. The chimneys are attached to elongated hexagonal brick bays. At the center of the west wing roof ridge is a tall, chimney type structure with an open section and a hip metal roof with cresting at the top. The roof of this structure is supported with posts with fan shaped, decorative brackets at the four corners. At the other end of this wing is an elaborate large chimney with the same type of corbelling as the chimneys on the entry wing. The entrance pediment shares a cornice that has decorative brackets at the eaves. The pavilion is crowned with "roof cresting." The small gables facing east and west on the wings have large cove brackets at the lower end of the eaves. The trim on the building is painted white.

**Interior Description**

In general, the wings of this building are one large room with the exception of the far west wing and the entrance wing, which have office space. Most floors are carpet and walls are plaster. The basement, however, has resilient tile and masonry walls. Most original doors have been replaced with flush doors and the transoms above them have been boarded. Ornamentation is limited to the entrance lobby.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 14

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 7 Barracks 1888**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Utilitarian with Italianate features**

**Exterior Description**

Building 7 is very similar to Building 5. It is a three story barracks that is rectangular in shape with the exception of small protruding sections at the center in both the front and rear. The foundation is random coursed ashlar stone with a 1' deep water table course with a sloped, carved top. The exterior bearing walls are cream, common bond brick without header courses. The interior is wood frame construction.

The main entrance faces west and is in a centered projecting pavilion that is topped with a third floor, hipped gable. The first floor entry is reached by two sets of 4 riser stairs on either side of the pavilion. Entry doors are a double, aluminum storefront style with panic hardware.

The structure's most outstanding architectural feature is its two-tiered, open porch. It extends the entire length of the west side of the building, with only an interruption on the second floor above the entry. The brickwork at the porch is painted white. It has a large double wood and glass door and four over four double-hung windows on either side. The doors open onto a deck with iron railings that top the only enclosed area of the porch. The second floor enclosed area has three columns. Between them are modern iron railings. The three porch/deck levels are connected by two sets of exterior metal stairs that are nestled against the projecting pavilion's modern corner additions for exiting. The porch is set on 18" square brick piers that are spanned by wood latticework. The porch deck sits about 4' above grade and has 2" x 6" decking painted gray. The columns supporting the porch have chamfering at the edges. The porch railings are modern pipe railings that replace earlier wood railings and balustrade.

There are small, three-pane, horizontal windows located on the west side at the stone base. The dormer windows are nine-over-nine light, double-hung sash windows. The rest of the windows are all double-hung sash windows with varying pane patterns. A wide, decorative wood band runs horizontally underneath the sills of the windows at these ends. All windows have mill finish aluminum storms. The meeting rails do not match those of the double-hung windows.

The building is topped with a two-sided mansard roof with shed dormers. The mansard roofing material is green composition shingles. There are simple, fluted brackets located at the dormer above the west entrance at the roof level and also at the eave ends just under the cornice at the north and south ends of the building. The north and south ends of the building rise vertically to meet the roof edge, and are faced with wood shingles. The buildings have two joined chimneys with high corbelling, located at the center of each side wing.

**Building 11 Fire Engine House and Quarters 1883**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 11 is a rectangular duplex two-story building with a partial basement and full attic. The asymmetrical front face of the building is oriented to the north. The foundation is cut stone and brick. The exterior material is primarily cream brick in common bond with headers every 7<sup>th</sup> course. The west end of the building is a combination of brick and white, painted, clapboard siding. There is a three-sided brick bay on the north facade that has a white clapboard gable with brackets at the corners.

A frame and screen porch extends from the bay across the north facade to the northwest corner of the unit. Inside the screening is a wooden turned balustrade. On the east end of the north facade is a small frame and screen entry porch. The porch encloses a window and a door with a glass pane.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 15

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The windows vary on each facade. On the north wall to the west of the entry porch is a double-hung sash window with an elliptical brick arch. There are four sash windows with lintels on the second story of this end, and elliptical soldier courses at their heads. The semi-hexagonal bay on the north facade has one double-hung, single light sash window on each side at both the first and second stories. The east facade of the building has a gable end with two sets of triple, double-hung windows at the first floor level. They have stone sills and the head consists of elliptical arches of soldier course brick with a double course of corbelled brick above the arch. The three windows are separated by 8" wide mullions. At the second floor level are four double-hung windows with stone sills and low elliptical arches with a soldier course at the lintel. At the gable is a small, square, 25-light, sash window to the attic.

A high-pitched gabled roof of dark grey composition shingles runs the length of the duplex. There is an internal brick chimney that marks the common wall between the two units in this duplex. The lower ends of the gables have large brackets bridging the cornice at the eave to the brickwork below.

**Interior Description**

The ceilings of Building 11 are plaster, and the floors are carpeted, except in the kitchens where there are resilient tiles. Walls are plastered with fabric covering. There is a white marble fireplace, with grey marble hearth, in the west end of the building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 16

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 12 Chapel 1889**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Shingle Style with Queen Anne features**

**Exterior Description**

Building 12 is essentially in the shape of a cross with a few appendages. A small one-story sacristy wing with a Swedish gambrel roof forms the west facade. The most prominent feature is the attached steeple and bell tower at the southeast corner. The foundation is brick that has been painted grey. The building is sided with a combination of clapboards and shingles. At the base of the building below the windowsill are shingles cut in saw-toothed and scallop-edged patterns. Above this is a section of narrow width clapboards (4½" exposure) that continue to the window heads. Above this band are more shingles. At the gable ends of the transepts the stained-glass windows are flanked by flared, shed extensions of the wall shingling with a simple molding beneath. The bearing walls are wood frame construction.

A narrow veranda stretches from the entry porch on the southeast corner to the southwest transept ending with a door. The Chapel's large gabled roof flares slightly to cover the veranda, which is enclosed by a balustrade with 1½" square balusters. Two stained glass triple windows overlook the veranda from the Chapel. On the northeast side of the chapel is the main door with a similar veranda that runs from the steeple end to the west transept.

The main entrance at the northeast corner has a small gable roof. The gable end has fish-scale and saw-tooth shingle facing. The roof is supported by large 8" square chamfer-edged columns. Large scroll carved brackets with holes pierced in them support the lower ends of the eaves. The porch decking is tongue and groove wood, painted grey. The simple porch balustrade is of 1½" square balusters spaced about 1' on center. In addition to the main entrance there is a second entrance at the east corner of the south facade. This door is also covered with a gable roof that is supported with large brackets. There are also doors leading from the chancel area at the west end. They have small shed extensions of the gable roof with large supporting brackets. Below is a small porch deck with four risers, wood steps, and a simple wood handrail of 2" x 4"s painted white. The doors of the Chapel are typically double doors with 4 horizontal inset panels with raised central sections and square multicolored stained-glass lights at the top.

Each end of the cross has a similar rectangular, stained glass window that is mullioned into tall, narrow sections with smaller sections at the top. On the east facade the larger stained glass window is flanked by compatible but smaller stained glass windows. The stained glass windows are in an alternating narrow and long rectangle pattern with rectangular perimeter bands in a mottled green glass. Some round elements occur at the small, square shaped windows above the tall lower windows.

One main gable roof runs down the nave/sanctuary. Over the transepts are lower gabled roofs. The roof is covered with grey composition shingles.

The steeple has a tall, pyramidal, composition shingle roof with small dormer like protrusions on each side that have decorative vents. The vents allow the sound of ringing bells to be emitted. Complementing the steeple, a small turret rises up from the location of the "crossing" of the Chapel. The turret has a steep pyramidal roof with decorative iron work at its peak.

The main bell tower has shingled base running up to about 4'. Above that are two clapboard sections topped by a small gable-like extension with an ogee cornice and dentil bed-molding underneath its horizontal projection, Higher up on the tower are several alternating bands of saw-toothed, scallop-edged, concave, convex, and standard coursed shingling running all the way up to the eave at the base of the tower roof. The peak of the tower roof has an iron cross with fan shape infilled at its corners and decorative spirals within those. At the southeast corner of the bell tower is a five-sided engaged turret containing tall narrow louvers about 6" wide and 8' tall near the top. The turret has a six-sided tent roof at its peak. There are indications that there were once gable posts at the peaks of the transept gable roof; only the lower portions are on the building now.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 17

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Interior Description**

The nave in the interior of Building 12 has two rows of columns, four in each row, supporting the gable roof. An elliptical arched, wood truss system spans crosswise and longitudinally between columns. The clustered columns have trim at the top of the base and at the capitals. The capitals are about 6" deep and have acanthus leaf carving and molded elements. The interior of the building has resilient tile flooring. The central section of the ceiling is covered with white perforated acoustical tile. The rest of the ceiling is a painted textured plaster. The walls are painted plaster with faint score marks imitating tile or brick.

At the chancel end of the chapel are three stained glass windows. The center one is Christ holding a lamb and carrying a shepherd's staff. To the left is Mary and to the right is St. John writing with a quill and holding a book with an eagle at his feet. At the lower section of the window with Christ is a crown with a cross through it. Below Mary is a heart with a band of flowers around it and a knife piercing it. Below the figure of St. John is a heart with thorns. Most of the stained glass windows have dedicatory insets near the bottom in memory of the various families and individuals who donated to the chapel.

The altar is composed of Gothic inset panel elements lined at the edges in gold. Small green, marble, columns front the altar. It is reached by first two steps to a platform and then three steps to the altar dais. A large Tudor shaped arch of concave molding inset with a floral, decorative pattern frames the altar. The chancel rail is wrought iron with repetitive Gothic tracery and a wood handrail at the top. Interspersed is a wheat sheaf and grapevine motif painted a contrasting silver to the black of the rest of the wrought iron work. A large pipe organ is at the left side of the chancel area. It has a paneled wood base and pipes surrounding the swell chamber.

All interior woodwork and door trim seem to be original. There is a wood 3½" high dado around the perimeter of the interior made of mahogany- stained birch wood with rectangular panels. The oak pews are finished in a honey tone. The trim around doors and windows is simple 1" x 5" molding with rounded edges. Most of the doors, other than the entrance doors, have horizontal panels, 6 per door. Hardware, knobs, and steeple hinges seem original. The doorknobs with their large escutcheons (about 6" high) with round ends are brass. Lighting fixtures of inverted urn shape are located at the engaged columns at the walls. They extend from the wall pendant style and are frosted glass with Gothic motifs. Along the walls are plaster casts of the stations of the cross.

**Building 14 Catholic Chaplain's Quarters 1909**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Vernacular frame with Colonial Revival features**

**Exterior Description**

Building 14 is an irregularly shaped building that faces east towards a small drive. On the north side of the building is a small narrow one-story addition. The finished floor level of the addition is a few feet below the first floor. On the south facade is a rectangular projection at the southwest corner that has its first floor corners set at a diagonal. The two-story house has a full basement, with rough face cast, concrete block walls.

The bearing walls are wood frame construction, which are covered with painted white clapboard. The main entrance door is on the left of the front wing. Enclosing the front wing is a small, screened porch. Surrounding the porch foundation are white lattice panels. A low, hip roof to the right is supported by white wood columns. A small gabled overhang at the left is above the screen door. It is reached by six wooden steps flanked by modern wood railings. Behind the screen porch is the wood entrance door, which has one pane of glass at its upper section and a single pane glass transom above the door. The rear entrance is a white wood door with one small pane of glass covered by a dark framed, wood screen door. This is the same dark color that appears on the frames of the screen porch.

There is a two-light window on the right side of the main entrance. Centered above the porch in the middle of the front wing is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 18

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

a double-hung window. On either side is an oval window covered with fancy iron grille bars. At the attic level of the gable is a small double-hung window and exposed vertical framing filled in with clapboard. The rectangular projection on the southwest corner has double hung windows at the diagonal sections. At the flat section, facing south, are three small vertical windows about 6' above the floor level inside. Simple scroll brackets with lightbulb shaped pendants are at the corners where the second floor overhangs at the first floor level to fill out the corner. The irregularly-spaced fenestration around the remainder of the house is comprised of double hung windows with single panes in each moveable section.

Building 14 has a steep hipped roof with a large gable over the asymmetrical front wing. It is covered in green composition shingles. On the west side, towards the north, is a tall narrow rectangular red brick chimney with corbelling at the top. The addition on the north has a sloped seamed metal shed roof.

**Interior Description**

The second floor bedrooms in Building 14 are served by two separate staircases. Thus, the bedrooms remain divided as originally designed to limit interaction between the chaplain and housekeeper. A door linking the two bedroom areas has since been installed. Interior trim is plain, and interior doors are four panel.

**Building 16 Protestant Chaplain's Quarters 1901**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Vernacular frame residence**

**Exterior Description**

Building 16 is an irregularly-shaped vernacular house that faces east. The two-story house has a full basement. The partially exposed basement of the main section of the house has a brick foundation. The foundation for the extension on the west side is concrete block. Both are painted gray. The bearing walls are wood frame construction and are covered in white clapboard. Examination of the substrate indicated that the original paint color may have been a dark cream. There is a small gable centered on the front, east side with a matching gable on the rear, west side. Both have small rectangular attic louvers.

At the first-floor level on the front facade, east of the gable, is a large porch. It is divided into thirds by square white support columns. The door is reached by six straight wood steps flanked by simple pipe railings. The porch has latticework spanning between the support piers, which are brick covered with wood. The gable extensions have very simple brackets where the ends of the eave meet the vertical 1" x 4" boards at the corners. Porch columns are roughly 8" x 8" square with simple capitals at the top. The porch balustrade has vertical 1½" x 1½" balusters spaced about 5" on center. The front entry was recessed at the corner at one time, but is now enclosed by vertical, beveled siding painted white. The main entrance door is made of wood and glass. A low gable, shingle roof covers a small one story white wood addition, which serves as a back door entry on the rear west facade at the northwest corner. The rear door itself is flush wood, and has a wood and glass storm door. It is accessible by six wooden steps with pipe railings on either side. The west side also has a sloped, wood plank, hatch door opening into the basement.

On the east facade is a large double-hung window centered below the gable. Above that is a similar window with the upper third blocked up for a vent. The south facade has double-hung windows on both floors that are equidistant from the chimney. The remaining windows are similar, but vary in size. Window heads have simple caps with a small crown molding at the top.

The gabled, green, composition shingle roof has a separate gable over the front wing. The side gable roof continues down to meet a flat roof over the front porch. The south facade has a slightly off center brick chimney extending up the side of the house through the eaves of the gabled roof. The brick of the chimney is painted a deep red. A second chimney extends through the roof near the center of the north end.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 19

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Interior Description**

The stairway of Building 16 has turned balusters and square newel posts with finials. A fireplace in the living room is faced with tile and has a wood mantle. The woodwork is plain boards with a slight edge. The floors are carpeted, and ceilings and walls are plastered.

**Building 17 Surgeon and Adjutant's Quarters 1887**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Shingle Style**

**Exterior Description**

Building 17 is a duplex building three stories in height. The two units have virtually identical interiors that face away from each other. The foundation is partially exposed random coursed, rough stone. The bearing walls are wood construction covered with white clapboard and shingles. At the first level the building is covered in white drop siding. At the top of the first floor level there is a slight flare, and a decorative horizontal band in two parts. The upper part is covered with a smaller crown-type molding running horizontally that dies into a 1" x 8" horizontal board. At the second floor level the large gable ends facing east are made up of 4½" exposure clapboards. Over the window heads the upper part of the gable flares slightly again, and the material changes to shingles with a 4½" exposure.

The unit facing north has a one story, flat-roofed porch on the northeast corner that serves as an entryway. The entrance is on the east side of the porch and is accessible by four wood steps with a black pipe-railings. The porch decks are 1" x 4" tongue and groove gray painted boards. Lattice works spans between the porch supports, which are covered by wood. The porch handrails has a heavy banister with a balustrade of 1½" x 1½" vertical, square, undecorated supports spaced about 4 or 5 inches on center. The porch columns are 8" x 8" square with chamfered edges and capitals made of half-round elements and reverse-cove elements. Decorative brackets extend from the column faces to support the overhang of the porch roof. The entrance to the unit facing south is through a slightly larger, one-story, flat-roofed, open veranda stretching across the entire south facade. Five wooden steps flanked with simple, black pipe-railings rise to the veranda. The porch and veranda are surrounded by a simple white railing with small, square, wood balusters.

Small open porches with simple handrails of 2" x 4" posts and 1" x 4" vertical boards for balusters serve the back exits. The wood decking is 1" x 4" wood boards. Low shed roofs cover each of the rear entrance doors. The doors are horizontally paneled with two vertical glass lights at the upper section. On the west facade at the north and east corners are enclosed entrances to the basement with small shed roofs covered in composition shingles. Simple cove molding is at the eaves. Doors are two-panel with four-glass lights at the upper section. The ends of the eaves at the west end have large, reverse curve brackets, unpierced. The eave extends about 1½' and the rafter's supports are exposed.

The first and second floors have tall, large-paned, double-hung windows of various widths. At the second floor the windows are set at a 45-degree angle into the corners of the wings. Above the diagonal windows are scroll brackets with a pendant at the corner. The windows on the third floor are similar in style, but considerable smaller. They are grouped together in pairs and triples, and topped by a small, common entablature. At the north facade, second-floor level, is a projecting three-sided bay with a single-pane, double-hung window in each side. The remaining fenestration is varied.

The most striking feature visible from the south roadway is the huge extended gable roof, reminiscent of the Shingle Style. It rises more than two stories from the roofs of the exterior porches to a ridge above the attic. The entire multi-gabled roof is finished in green composition shingles, laid butt-edged. On both front sides, there are large gables that project from the larger main gable and crown three story wings. The west side has a large gable that occurs only at the third level. Both the porch and the veranda have flat roofs with gutters, and downspouts located at the white support posts. The main gable section is divided

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 20

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

in half by a tall brick chimney accented with two, decorative vertical brick ridges set at a diagonal to the face of the chimney. In addition, there is a chimney at the north and south end of each of the two wings. A fourth one is in the middle of the building. A steel-gray painted fire escape leads from the third floor exits doors, one per each duplex suite, down to grade.

**Interior Description**

There are entrance halls to two duplicate units within Building 17. The main stairs, and rear stairs off the kitchen, are set side by side in the units. Most doors have transoms and original hardware. The north unit has a fireplace with decorative tile facing and hearth. The V.A. is making renovations to the interior of this building to create living space for homeless veterans in late 2004 and 2005. The Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Officer believes renovations will be in keeping with the historic integrity of the interior of this building.

**Building 18 Quarters 1916**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Colonial Revival**

**Exterior Description**

Building 18 is a three level duplex structure oriented with the main facade to the southwest. Each duplex unit is a mirror image of the other, and there is no visible division on the exterior. The basement foundation wall is cement block. The rest of the structure is wood-frame construction and finished in white 2½" exposure clapboards.

Each unit is entered near the outside front edge through a low, screened porch with a hipped roof. The porches stretch halfway across each unit and for 2 bays around the sides. The porch columns are 8" x 8" square posts without any decoration. The bottom third of the screening is white clapboard. A lattice covers the porch foundations. Five wood steps with a metal railing lead up to the screen door. Beyond are the wood and glass, single-entry doors. Two open porch decks with simple 4" x 4" and 2" x 4" handrails and supports lead to the rear doors.

Toward the center of the front facade, each unit has a large one-over-one light double-hung window. Above these windows and above the front doors are smaller double-hung windows with one-over-one lights. There are two casement windows for each unit located in the shed dormer. The building's gable ends have randomly spaced windows of various sizes.

The building has a gabled dark gray shingle roof. The gable is broken by a shed dormer on the southwest side that is shared by both units. The roof eaves overhang about 2' and are closed at the bottom with 1" x 3" matched siding. Each unit has a small brick chimney near the center of the building.

**Interior Description**

The interiors of the duplex units inside Building 18 are similar with natural, medium oak color woodwork and two-panel doors with a square panel on the bottom and larger panel on the top. Most rooms contain a picture rail located one foot below the ceiling. Walls and ceiling are painted or plastered. Each unit has a fireplace set within a niche on the side of the main stairway.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 21

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 19 Quarters 1921**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Colonial Revival**

**Exterior Description**

Building 19 is a two-story duplex building that is oriented to the southwest. The foundation is of poured concrete painted gray. A wide 1" x 12" horizontal board is at the base of clapboards, just above the foundation and has a simple 1" x 2" shed board atop it. The duplex is a wood frame with white horizontal clapboards of 4½" exposure with 1" x 4" vertical corner boards.

A single screened porch, which is partitioned down the center, runs across the front. The center portion of the porch that is in front of both front doors is covered with a flat roof. It is supported with large square white columns. The porch has at its front a trio of 10" square columns with applied 1" x 2" molding at the faces with a simple capitol composed of a flat horizontal board at the top and crown molding beneath. The porch handrails have 1½" x 1½" square plain balusters about 4" on center. The screened porch doors are reached by four wood steps that span between the two white columns. The remainder of the porch has a low hip roof with exposed rafters. It is supported at the corners by triple wood columns connected with a trellis.

The front doors are wood with glass panes. The windows are six-over-six light, double-hung, wood sash windows that are painted black. Above the doors at the second floor is a double, narrow, four-over-four light sash windows. Large windows are located to the side of each entry door at the first floor. They consist of a wide, multi-lighted, double-hung window with narrower double-hung windows on either side. Above these two major windows at the second floor are two, six-over-six light, double-hung windows. Plain, wide, wood frames surround every window. The window trim is simple 1" x 6" flat boards with wood drips at the top. The window spacing and size vary but most windows are in pairs.

The building is topped with a medium hip roof with a flat top. The roof is covered with dark gray composition butt-edged shingles. The front and back roofs each have two half-round dormers with windows within the hip. The roof eaves overhang about 2' and the rafter extension have a simple diagonal cut at the ends. Rafter extensions are a full 2" wide and are spaced 16" on center. The exposed rafters are painted white.

**Interior Description**

The interiors of the duplex units inside Building 19 are similar with carpeted floors and plastered walls covered with wallpaper. The main stairway in each unit is open and each unit has a fireplace with brick surround, a reddish brown tile hearth and columns on each side of the fireplace. Columns are also on each side of the dining room entry. The dining rooms also have a built-in cabinet.

**Building 20 Quartermaster's Storehouse 1895; 1938 addition**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 20 was constructed in 1895-96. A second section to the east was added in 1938. It is a multipurpose warehouse, garage and maintenance-shop building. The building is actually two rectangular buildings connected by a narrow passage.

**West Section:**

The western section is four stories in height including a basement level and a ½-story attic. The ground level on the south side is at the second story level. It is constructed of multi-toned, cream, common-bond brick with no headers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 22

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On the western facade, at the lowest level, are three garage doors to the left. They have wood-paneled overhead doors that have one or two rows of windowpanes. On the right half is a metal and glass personnel door covered with a fixed metal awning. Farther to the right are three windows and a window opening with a louver.

The south facade has bays separated by attached brick pilasters, which enclose a series of double-hung windows with elliptical heads, stone sills and brick piers between. At the third floor level are single, elliptical-head, double-hung windows boarded up with a composition of materials. Centered on this facade, a pilaster extends up the center of the former to the roof peak, with windows on either side of it. Some of the pairs of windows have been infilled with more recent windows of glass block with ventilating units in them. The windows are located in a partially broken pattern around the building at the second and third floors. The fourth-floor gambrel end has only two windows. All the windows are four-over-four light sash windows with elliptical brick arches and stone sills.

The roof is of a gambrel shape. The eave has a very simple cornice with an ogee molding at the edge. Centered on the south facade is a large dormer with a gable roof. A multi-toned brick chimney rises above the roof slightly off center to the south.

**West Interior Description:** The flooring in the west wing is narrow maple that has been mostly covered with resilient tile. The walls are brick and ceiling is exposed wood.

**East Section Exterior:**

The east section is also of cream brick that is a slightly different color than the west section. Above the second level is a cut-stone, horizontal band that steps out from the facade of the building about 1". The east section has three levels on the south facade. This facade has a concrete loading dock, and a railroad spur along the side of the building. The railroad tracks run about 50' to the south of the south facade.

The north facade is similar in treatment to the south facade except for the overhead panel doors at the basement level. On the north facade is a low concrete loading dock with a pair of doors. The south facade has square windows. Each window has an awning-sash section and fixed-sash section. The rest of the windows vary in size and shape but all are double-hung.

There is a flat roof on this building and a stone coping about 6" deep at the top of the parapet.

**East Section Interior Description:** The east section and connecting link have concrete floors and ceilings and painted brick walls.

**Building 37 Quarters 1902**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Vernacular**

**Exterior Description**

Building 37 is a rectangular three story single-family house. The foundation is of concrete block with a textured face. Some areas appear to be either poured concrete or plaster over the concrete block. The foundation is painted green. Above the foundation is a water table board with a sloped top to shed water. The house is wood frame construction and is finished in white narrow clapboards of about 2½" exposure. The corners have 1" x 6" vertical boards.

The building has a protruding one-story screened entry porch that is covered with a shed roof. The porch is wider than the entry door and is not centered on it. The porch door is to the left and reached by five wood steps. The remainder of the porch has an interior, white, wood railing. The foundation of the porch is covered by vertical 1" x 2" wood slats. The front entrance door is wood and glass. The back of the house has a two-level enclosure that is covered with a shed roof. The part on the left is open

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 23

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

with a square column in the corner and cove brackets supporting the cornice beam. To the right is a clapboard-enclosed section with a single, double-hung window off center on the east facade.

There are several types of windows on the house. Each pediment has a four-sash window. A cove molding extends over these windows. The two windows on each side of the front door are larger, single-paned, double-hung windows with rectangular, mullioned transoms. The second floor windows are double-hung with three vertical lights in the upper part and a single light in the lower part. On the main floor, the windows are double hung with a large light in the lower sash and six vertical lights in the upper section. These windows occur on the south facade and the west facade. The remaining windows are two-over-one light sash windows. All the window sashes are painted black. Windows have aluminum combination storms. Window trim is 1" x 6" flat trim with no ornamentation.

The building is topped with a gable roof. A cross gable extends to the center of the front facade. All the gables form pediments, as the cornice encircles the entire structure. The roof is covered with light green composition shingles. There are two tall rectangular chimneys with concrete caps that have been plastered over and are painted brown. There is also a brick chimney that rises above the roof at the right rear.

**Building 39 Governor's House 1867-68**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Edward Townsend Mix Style: Victorian Italianate with Queen Anne modifications**

**Exterior Description**

Building 39 is the Medical Center Director's Quarters. It is an irregular shaped three-story house that has been finished in a variety of materials. It exhibits many of the characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style. The first two floors are constructed of cream brick in a running bond pattern with no header course. Above the second floor level is a wide overhang cornice, extending about a foot at the west, and above this is the gable covered in fish-scale and convex-edged shingles with alternating bands of horizontal butt shingles. All the wood siding and shingles are painted white and the trim is painted a cream color. The third floor is hidden beneath the steep, gabled roof, the major portion of which extends front to rear. There are wings on either side near the rear. They both have cross-gable roofs. A paneled garage door is at the basement level in the rear of the building. This is reached by a blacktop parking area with concrete retaining walls. A turret is located on the northwest corner. It is hexagonal in shape and is topped with a hexagonal tent roof. The turret rises above a large corner bay. To the right of the corner bay is a smaller, three-sided window bay that extends two stories and ends with a flat entablature. On the east facade is a five-sided brick bay.

The main entry is through an enclosed winterized porch. The porch is a large rectangular porch that extends from the front facade back to the rear wing at the right. It is one story in height. Square, wood columns with spanning arches create bays in addition to supporting the flat roof deck topped with white railings. The front side of the porch has two bays, and it extends back three bays. The bays have been filled in with a foot high concrete wall and windows. Each bay has three hinged windows topped by fixed transoms. Originally, the windows were only screens. The entrance door, which is a wood and glass door protected by a screen door, is at the center of the left bay at the front. Only two concrete steps rise from grade, but the steps are flanked by large flower planters. The columns on either side of the door have carriage-lantern lights. The rear entrance is enclosed by a one story, brick enclosure with a hipped roof. The enclosure has a small, almost square, double-hung window. Three concrete steps lead up to the rear door on the north.

The center windows on the west bay are fixed single-pane windows with large half-elliptical transoms. The west end gable has two tall four-over-four light double-hung windows that have semi-circular arched window heads. There is horizontal stone coursing that continues under groups of windows, particularly on the west bay. The first floor level of the north facade has a large single pane window. At the second floor level are two elliptical double-hung four-over-four light sash windows that are topped with transoms. The north-facing gable has a salt box shape. Near the peak of the gable on the north facade is a round window that

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 24

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

is circled with a projecting brick course which extends out from the face of the brick about 1/2". On the portion of the east bay parallel to the west wall are elliptical arches with soldier course brick that top a pair of windows. Flanking them are tall double-hung windows with elliptical arches. Centered at the second floor level of the bay is a large single pane window about as wide as the two windows below. The window has a leaded glass transom light with abstract floral motifs set within a half round center. Some sections of the glass are cranberry and amber colored. The remaining windows throughout the residence are basically varying sizes of one-over-one double-hung windows. The windows are covered with combination aluminum storms.

The gable roof is covered with dark, charcoal grey, composition shingles. At the eave line is a cove shaped bracketed cornice extending out about a 1 1/2'. There are two centrally located tall brick chimneys. On the east facade at the roof edge is a tall, cross-shaped brick chimney that is painted green and it has a concrete cap.

**Interior Description**

The main stairway of Building 39 is walnut newel post and handrail with white painted balusters. There are fireplaces, all with marble surrounds and hearths, in the living room, dining room and study. Most of the hardware in Building 39 is original, including some porcelain knobs. Most floors are carpeted and walls plastered with wallpaper coverings.

**Building 41 Ward Memorial Hall 1881; 1895-97 NRHP**

**Architect: Henry C. Koch Style: Victorian Gothic**

**Exterior Description**

Building 41 is Ward Memorial Hall. The two-story theater has a partial basement but no accessible attic. The building is basically a rectangular shape with the main entrance facing south. On the east side there is a small wing projection used for backstage passage. On both the east and west sides near the front is a small bay used for stairs. There is an entry pavilion in the front between the bays. There is also an irregular one-story wing on the west toward the rear of the building used for backstage dressing facilities. The facade is multi-toned brick and tile. The brick work is two-toned cream brick. There are also several inset red tile diamond motifs in the brick work. Horizontal bands of single, double or triple brick also occur in red tile. Dentil-type corbelling in brick is located under the eaves of the two southern bay extensions.

A one-story veranda wraps around the front, east and north sides of the theater. It conforms to the many planes of the facade. It is constructed entirely of wood, and has a hipped roof. The roof is supported by square, decorative columns with chamfered and flared capitals containing simplified leaf patterns. They are spanned by fancy open-lattice railing. The veranda apron is a fine lattice paneling. The wide main entrance opening is crowned with a clipped gable roof in the veranda. The main steps are very wide and have sixteen wood risers. The two side openings with steps have a small open gable with ornate bracing. The veranda is supported on square brick piers that are covered entirely with vertical 1" x 6" matched boards on the outside. Spanning the piers is a latticework screen trimmed in 1" x 4" boards at the sides and top, and 1" x 8" boards at the bottom. The porch decking is tongue and groove 1" x 6" boards. Porch trim work is now painted brown.

The main entry is centered in the pavilion on the south side of the building. The entrance doors are double doors paneled in six vertical panels. The doors are recessed about 3" within three brick arches and have transoms above them. Two similar brick arches with windows flank the doorway. Over the entrance and above the veranda roof is an oblong stone with carved letters spelling "WARD MEMORIAL HALL" in raised block lettering. Metal fire escapes extend from the balcony level at the east and west sides of the building. One leads directly to the grade where there is no porch, and the other, on the east, extends through the roof of the porch onto the porch level.

On the south facade centered over the door are four, two-over-two light sash windows with stone lintels. Above them is a large Palladian window. At the top section of the center section of the Palladian window are stained-glass sections. On the south-facing wall of each side bay at the second floor level is a bull's eye window with decorative, red brick banding around it. The window

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 25

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

on the east bay is composed of four glass sections. The one on the west side is covered with plywood. The main set of windows on the side are at the second story level. They are tall, evenly spaced six-over-six light sash windows topped with elliptical, leaded-glass windows mullioned in a diamond pattern. An elliptical brick arch tops each one. The openings at the first level are similarly spaced but are occupied by wood panel doors and six-over-six light sash windows. The windows have red tile inset in decorative motifs at window heads and radiating voussoirs. A large stained-glass window is located on the east facade above the porch roof. It depicts General Grant on horseback.

The building is topped with a steep gabled roof that extends front to rear. Smaller gables extend over the left and right wings. Shorter polygonal hipped roofs project over the front side bays. The roofs are covered with green composition shingles. The front gable has a tri-tone checkered brick pattern in the peak. All of the gables have decorative, carved stone parapets with finials at the tip. The west wing of the building has a hipped roof leading to a large, corbelled chimney about 8' high with inset and protruding brick patterns. At the peak of the main roof are two circular metal ventilating units. Early photographs show very tall chimneys on the building but they have since been removed.

**Interior Description.**

The interior of the Ward Theater is frescoed in New Renaissance style, characterized by round arches and symmetrically placed windows. The ceiling, divided into panels, was originally decorated with peacock plumage that was covered with blue sheet metal elliptical shell during an 1898 renovation. The theater has a stepped floor to the orchestra level and steeply stepped balcony at the rear. Box seats, framed with ornamental plaster columns and cornices, line both sides, and both stories, of the auditorium. There is an enclosed projection booth in the balcony. Chairs are plywood on cast iron. Most hardware appears original. A Soldiers Home emblem was painted at the top of the proscenium by WPA workers during The Great Depression. These workers also painted Wisconsin scenes on asbestos sound tiles in the back of the theater's main floor.

**Building 43 Hospital Annex 1923-33**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown**

**Style: Colonial Revival (Veterans Administration "Architectural Set")**

**Exterior Description**

Building 43 is a three-story building with half of the basement above grade. The foundation level is random coursed split-face stone. At the water table is a 1' wide carved stone course running horizontally with a large ogee molding at its base. The building is of red, terracotta colored, non-textured brick, laid running-bond pattern with a header course every sixth course. There is a decorative stone horizontal band similar to the water table stone work located at the centers of the recesses surrounding the windows. The top of the parapet has a stone trim. There is a one-story wing extending to the northwest of the building that has a concrete foundation and a flat roof.

The main entrance of the building is up a half level and is reached by ten granite steps. A projecting flat roofed pavilion surrounds the main entrance. Between the massive square columns supporting the roof are solid stone balustrade with cut stone topping. Each balustrade is about two feet wide. The pavilion floor is poured concrete. The ceiling is textured plaster. A pendant light fixture in a lantern shape hangs above the entrance door. The door is surrounded by simple stone trim flush with the face of the brick work at the sides and alternating brick and stone coursing at the head. The door frame is encircled by a decorative stone band about 6" wide with stylized floral work at the base. Above the entrance door is a low arch with a keystone. The entrance doors are frameless glass. A sign above the pavilion at the parapet says "Hospital Annex" in metal letters, block lettering. Above the pavilion at the east facade of the building is a projecting section that has a gabled parapet with carved stone coping at the top. A second entrance to the building faces northeast. It has trim probably dating to the original construction of the building. There is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 26

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

a pressed metal ceiling at the entrance and decorative metal cornice work at the sides of the ceiling. The ceiling is comprised of rectangular panels of various motifs. The edges of this roof have metal, floral cresting and are bent out of shape.

The first and second story windows are set in recesses in the brick that encase six pairs of double-hung, aluminum windows with transoms spanning each pair of windows. The transoms have grey panels inside them. On each side of the main doors are a pair of double-hung windows with a transom spanning each set of two windows. The wing also has double-hung windows some of which are in pairs. Some windows have transoms with solid panels above them. On the east facade above the entrance at the fourth floor level is a single double-hung window with a stone, eyebrow lintel with a keystone flush with the face of the brick. On either side are two deep-set, circular windows with keystone at the four corners, and radiating brick set on end. All the windows have natural finish aluminum sashes. All the windows are later replacements to the 1932 originals. At the roof level of the central section of the building is a fourth floor topped by a hipped roof of dark grey composition shingles.

**Interior Description**

A main corridor runs the length of Building 43, with open stairs in the center and on both ends of the corridor. Interior doors and frames are metal, walls are plaster and floors are covered with resilient tile.

**Building 45 Power Plant 1895**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 45 is in the shape of a "T" with the base slightly off center. The west "L"-shaped portion is three stories high. The foundation is poured concrete with a rough-cut stone band where the foundation meets the wall. The bearing walls are constructed of cream brick in common-bond coursing with headers every seventh course. The walls have engaged brick columns that form bays. Two bays have double, barn wood doors in place of the pair of windows.

There are two window openings per bay along the sides of the building. These are tall four-over-four light, double-hung windows with elliptical brick arches and stone sills. At the second level on the ends of the building are shorter but similar windows that are one per bay. Above the windows at the sides are recessed brick panels. On the north facade all the window openings are boarded up. The three-story section at the west has smaller pairs of windows at three levels between engaged brick pilasters that form three large panels on the south facade. Many of the windows are boarded up. The smaller windows located around the top are fitted with six panes, and paired.

The easterly section has a gabled roof with a few gabled cupolas that have side louvers. The west wing has a small, fourth-floor, penthouse machine room. The roofing is green composition shingles. One chimney stack is concrete and the other chimney to the west is brick.

**Interior Description**

The southern section of Building 45 has a brick floor; the rest of the floors are concrete. Walls are painted brick. A steel roof truss system supports a wood roof deck. The upper floor of the building contains a 20-foot diameter turbine used to generate power as well as the accompanying switchboard. The west wing contains some coal hoppers. The V.A. utilizes some space in the lower west wing for salt storage. The Power Plant's 1922 smokestack, listed in the 1992 National Register application, was demolished by the V.A. in the mid-1990s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 27

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 49 and 50 Quarters 1908-09**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Vernacular**

**Exterior Description**

Buildings 49 and 50 are virtually identical. They are rectangular two-story duplexes with attics. The foundations are brick that have been painted grey. The bearing walls are wood frame construction that are covered in 4½" exposure white clapboard.

A single screened porch runs across the entire front of each building. The porch is divided in half by a partition having beveled-edge, vertical boards with latticework on top. Inside the screen is a white balustrade. The balustrade is comprised of grooved 1½" square balusters spaced about 9" apart. The porch decking is 6" wide tongue and groove boards. The porch posts are turned wood columns. There is latticework underneath the porch decking. The screened entry doors are located at the outside edges of the front as are the main front doors beyond. The entry doors are wood with multi-paned window. At the center of the rear of the building is a shed roof extension containing two paneled doors with screen doors. These extensions are covered with matched 1" x 4" vertical boards.

All the windows are tall, double-hung, one-over-one light sash. Double windows are located on both units on the first level between the front doors. A single window is centered over each duplex at the front on the second floor. Near the center at the attic level are two small square windows that have been filled with wood panels. Window treatments on the sides and rear are similar but the placement is asymmetrical. All the windows are covered with aluminum storms.

The gambrel roofs extend the length of the buildings from front to rear. The roofing on the gambrel roofs and shed roof extensions is light grey composition shingles. The eave trim is crown molding on a vertical board about 10" deep. The square chimneys are red brick with a concrete cap.

**Interior Description**

Both Buildings 49 & 50 have semi-open staircases off the dining room that have turned balusters and double newel post. The front doors have a single lower panel and twelve light windows on top. The windows have flat wood trim, and ceiling and walls are painted plaster.

**Building 57 Cemetery Reception House 1900**

**Contributing / DOE**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 57 is situated at a turn in a road on the northwest edge of Wood National Cemetery. It is a small one room, one story, octagonal-shaped building. The base of the structure is poured concrete. The exterior walls are composed of cast concrete block laid in regular courses. Each rough faced block has an incised line dividing the block into a larger rectangle and a long narrow rectangle. These are laid with narrow rectangle on the bottom and then, alternately, at the top of the block.

The north side has a white, flush wood door with a large, modern aluminum kickplate. Three sides each have one screened double-hung window. The windows have a black painted sash with a single light above and below and flat white painted trim. They are covered on the inside with plywood. The windowsills and the lintels are poured concrete.

The structure is covered with a tent roof. The roof is seamed metal, which is painted green and has a ball finial at the top. The cornice at the edge of the roof extends out about 8" and has a molding underneath where it hits the concrete block. A small brick chimney that has been painted green protrudes above the roof on the windowless southeast side.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 28

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 60 Garage 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 60 is a two-bay garage located directly east of Building 39. The bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. The interior has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

**Building 62 Quarters 1922**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Colonial Revival features**

**Exterior Description**

Building 62 is very similar to Building 19. A porch stretches across the southwesterly facing facade. The porch has "X"-shaped latticework between the corner columns, which are arranged in sets of threes. The porch has a low gable roof at its center. On the gable end of the porch are 4½" exposure horizontal clapboards. The porch decking is 1" x 4" tongue and groove boards. Five risers lead to the porch deck from grade. At the rear left side is a series of three casement windows with six-pane sash. The back doors have open deck wood porches. Leading to each porch are four wood steps. The porch decks are painted green.

The entrance doors on the front of the building have two horizontal panels at the bottom and a nine light glass section at the top. On either side of the door is a grouping of three windows. There is a large eight-over-eight light double-hung window that has two tall four-over-four light narrow windows flanking it on either side. The front also has a six-over-six double-hung window on a very shallow bay. The rear of this building has various sized windows either single or in groups of two or three.

The main roof is a hipped with a flat section at the top. Diagonal cut rafters support the eaves. The roof has round dormers with windows. On the front facade is a chimney with corbelling at the top and a concrete cap. The chimney is made of a dark buff multi-colored brick.

**Interior Description**

There are two stairways in Building 62, a main staircase off the living room and a narrow, winding staircase leading from the kitchen. There is a fireplace set into a niche next to the main staircase. Most rooms have picture rail located about one foot below the ceiling. Ceilings and walls are plastered.

**Building 64 Garage 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 64 is a six-bay garage located behind Buildings 18, 19 and 62. The six bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. The interior has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls, with wooden wall stall dividers



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 29

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 73 Garage 1935**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 73 is a two-bay garage located behind Building 16. The two bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

**Building 74 Garage 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 74 is a six-bay garage located directly west of Building 17. The bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

**Building 75 Cemetery Comfort Station 1928**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 75 is a public restroom, located southwest of Building 57, in Wood National Cemetery. It is a wood frame building covered with white horizontal cement asbestos siding and plain white trim. The doors are flush wood that has been painted white. The building is topped with a hipped roof, which is covered with green roll roofing.

**Building 81 Garage 1935**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 81 is a two-bay garage located northeast of Building 40 and west of Lake Wheeler. The bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 30

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 84 Garage 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 84 is a seven-bay garage located behind Buildings 49 and 50. The seven bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

**Building 95 Garage 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 95 is a eight-bay garage located northwest of Building 14 and south of Building 96. The eight bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls.

**Building 96 Garage 1939**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 96 is a 16-bay garage located directly north of Building 95. The 16 bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls with wooden wall stall dividers.

**Building 97 Paint Shop 1938**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 97 has cream brick exterior bearing walls and is covered with a flat roof. It is located north of Paint Shop Road directly east of Building No. 20. A parking area off of Workshop Road is to the north and Building No. T-107 is to the east.

**Building 99 Garage 1941**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

**Exterior Description**

Building 99 is a five-bay garage located behind Building 20. The five bay doors each have three vertical panels with four light windows at the top. The doors and trim are painted white. The garage has a shed roof covered with composition roll roofing. It has a concrete foundation and structural clay tile walls with wooden wall stall dividers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 31

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Building 102, Laundry 1955**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

A flat-roofed red brick building on a concrete slab located south of the railroad tracks on Lake Wheeler Drive. The approximately 4, 551 square foot building has 2 loading docks and bays as well as two-story front office section (encompassing approximately 735 square feet).

**Buildings T-105, T-106, & T-107 Quonset Huts 1947**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

These Maintenance Group storage sheds are 20' by 50' half moon-shaped structures built from corrugated steel in World War II military style. The floors are concrete.

**Buildings T-114 & T-119, Quonset Huts 1948**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: Utilitarian**

The Maintenance Group storage shed (T-114) and the Cemetery Tool House (T-119) are each 20' by 50' half moon-shaped structures built from corrugated steel in World War II military style. The floors are concrete.

**OBJECTS**

**1) Hiker Monument, 1941**

**Contributing**

The bronze Hiker Monument is a memorial to U.S. Spanish-American War veterans, Department of Wisconsin Camps and its Auxiliaries in 1941.<sup>35</sup> The bronze statue depicts a soldier holding a rifle facing Building 43. It is set on a square stone base about 3' high and 4' per side. The stone base is set upon a concrete slab about 12' square with four low walls at each corner. Inset in the base is a metal plaque stating "the Volunteer, 98" The inscription reads: "He stood at the curb reflecting as the boys were marching by, he heard the drums and saw the flag and a gleam was in his eye ... Twas the universal spirit with the boys of 98."<sup>36</sup>

**2) Fountain, 1870; 1934,**

**Contributing**

The fountain is located directly across General Mitchell Boulevard from the entrance to the Main Building. It is made up of a circular basin from the center of which rises a pedestal, which supports a female figure lifting an urn over her head. The fountain is the oldest landscape furnishing which remains on the grounds. It is similar in style to the 19th-century fountain created by Caspar Hennecke Company of Milwaukee for the original Milwaukee County Courthouse.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 32

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**3) Soldiers and Sailors Monument/Cemetery Monument 1903**

**Contributing**

**Architect: Unknown Style: [commerative sculpture]**

The Soldiers and Sailors Monument is an obelisk form topped with a bronze figure of a Civil War soldier at rest. The monument stands 65 feet tall upon a 12' by 12' New England granite base and weighs 85 tons. Fourteen cannonballs are stacked in pyramids at the cut out corners of the base.

**SITES**

**1) Wood National Cemetery, 1871**

**Contributing**

Wood National Cemetery is a 50.1-acre federal military cemetery, dedicated May 22, 1871, located on the grounds of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, running between the eastern edge of the district's main cluster of historic buildings and the western boundary of the medical center grounds. The majority of the Cemetery, 41.1 acres, rests within the boundaries of the National Soldiers Home Historic District. The largest section of the in-district portion, 36.1 acres, lies along the western border of the historic district, west of the main cluster of buildings. Approximately 5 additional acres of Wood National Cemetery rests within the district but across I-94, north of the main cluster of buildings, along General Mitchell Boulevard. Combined, the two in-district sections of Wood National Cemetery house more than 30,000 upright, white granite headstone grave markers. An additional 9 acres of cemetery, featuring some 6,000 newer, flat granite headstone grave markers, rests outside of the National Soldiers Home Historic District, south of Buildings 102 and 40 and north of N. Washington Drive, along the medical centers southwest boundary.<sup>37</sup>

All of the contributing historic cemetery buildings lie within the National Soldiers Home Historic District, including the 1900 Cemetery Reception House (Building 57) and 1928 Cemetery Comfort Station (Building 75). The 41.1 acres of cemetery within the district is home to more than 30,000 graves, which are visible from nearly every building in the district. Each grave is numbered and bears the name of the veteran buried there, date of death and dates of military service. Graves in the district mark the final resting places of veterans from the War of 1812 up to the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, the Cemetery features eight bronze plaques with verses of the poem "The Bivouac of the Dead," displayed on stone mounts and scattered throughout the Cemetery. Other cemetery plaques include two bronze tablets presented to the National Home in 1881.<sup>39</sup> One displays the Gettysburg Address; the other, the Declaration of Independence.

**2) Historic Archeological Sites, 1989**

**3 Contributing Sites**

Three historic archeological sites have been excavated within the district grounds.<sup>40</sup> In addition to yielding artifacts pertaining to prehistoric life in the Menomonee Valley in which the National Soldiers Home Historic District is located, two of the sites have yielded many veteran and hospital related historic items from the historic district's period of significance.

One of the historic sites is located along the historic district's northeastern edge of the bluff boundary with Miller Park. Site B is a 40-meter by 15-meter site, located east of the Powder Magazine and north of Building 2, on a ridge just east of a parking lot area. Excavations uncovered 17 historic items including a late 1800s kaolin pipe stem and pre-20th century lead bullet. Site C is a 50-meter by 20-meter site, located on a small rise across the railroad tracks to the south of Building 97 on the west side of Red Arrow Road. Excavations uncovered 8 historic items, including late 1800s glass, earthenware and a small bullet casing.

**3) The Silurian Rock Reef, 1834 (NHL)**

**Contributing**

Contributing This 400 million year old, intact ocean fossil reef is a National Historic Landmark. Discovered in 1834, the 20 meter wide reef spans 120 meters along the district's eastern boundary with the baseball stadium parking lots.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 33

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Inventory**

(DOE: resources marked as such were included in the National Register of Historic Places Determination of Eligibility January 9, 1980)

VA Building	Historic Name	Date	Eligibility Status
Building 1	Headquarters Building (DOE)	1895-96	C
Building 2	Main Building (DOE)	1867-69; 1876	C
Building 3	Wadsworth Library (DOE)	1891	C
Building 4	Social Hall (DOE)	1894 , 2004-05	C
Building 5	Barracks (DOE)	1884	C
Building 6	Hospital (DOE)	1879	C
Building 7	Barracks (DOE)	1888	C
Building 11	Fire Engine House & Quarters (DOE)	1883	C
Building 12	Chapel (DOE)	1889	C
Building 14	Catholic Chaplain's Quarters (DOE)	1909	C
Building 16	Protestant Chaplain's Quarters(DOE)	1901	C
Building 17	Surgeons' Quarters (DOE)	1887, 2004-05	C
Building 18	Quarters (DOE)	1916	C
Building 19	Quarters (DOE)	1921	C
Building 20	Quartermaster Storehouse (DOE)	1895; 1938	C
Building 37	Quarters (DOE)	1902	C
Building 39	Governor's House (DOE)	1868	C
Building 41	Ward Memorial Hall (NRHP)	1881; 1897	C
Building 43	Hospital Annex	1932-33	C
Building 45	Power Plant (DOE)	1895	C
Building 49	Quarters (DOE)	1908	C
Building 50	Quarters (DOE)	1908	C
Building 53	Powder Magazine (DOE)	1881	NC (1)
Building 57	Cemetery Reception House (DOE)	1900	C
Building 60	Garage	1938	C
Building 62	Quarters	1922	C
Building 64	Garage (Buildings 18,19,62)	1938	C
Building 73	Garage (Building 16)	1935	C (2)
Building 74	Garage (Building 17)	1938	C
Building 75	Cemetery Comfort Station	1928	C
Building 81	Garage	1935	C
Building 84	Garage (Buildings 49,50)	1938	C
Building 93	Garage (Building 37)	1989	C
Building 95	Garage	1938	C

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 34

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Building 96	Garage	1939	C
Building 97	Paint Shop	1938	C
Building 99	Garage (Building 20)	1941	C
Building 102	Laundry	1955	C
Building 107	Engineering Warehouse	1957	NC (3)
Building 108	Engineering Shops	1957	NC (3)
Building 112	Power Plant	1964	NC (3)
Building 119	Incinerator	1973	NC (3)
Building T-1 05	Quonset Hut (Engineering Storage)	1947	C
Building T-1 06	Quonset Hut (Supply Storage)	1947	C
Building T-1 07	Quonset Hut (Supply Storage)	1947	C
Building T-114	Quonset Hut (Storage)	1948	C
Building T-119	Quonset Hut (Cemetery Tool House)	1948	C
<b>OBJECTS</b>			
Hiker Statue		1941	C
Fountain		1870; 1934	C (4)
Soldiers and Sailors Monument	Soldiers and Sailors Monument	1903	C
<b>SITES</b>			
Wood National Cemetery	Federal Military Cemetery	1871	C
Lake Wheeler	Recreation Site	1876, 1966	NC (6)
Silurian Reef	Geological Formation (NHL)	N/A	C
Historic Archeological Sites			
Site A		1989 (5)	C
Site B		1989 (5)	C
Site C		1989 (5)	C

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 35

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- (1) The former Powder Magazine is in ruins and is non-contributing due to the loss of architectural integrity.
- (2) Building 73, the garage for Building 16, is dated to 1953 in Engineering Files; however, its appearance is identical to the other 1930s garages.
- (3) Buildings constructed after 1955 do not qualify as contributing resources under National Register of Historic Places guidelines, and they do not fall within the period of significance for the National Soldiers Home Historic District, 1867 – 1955.
- (4) Repaired and remodeled in 1934; *Milwaukee Journal*, November 6, 1934; the fountain is contributing as it has been a landscape feature from the earliest period of significance of the historic district.
- (5) Though the excavation dates of the archaeological sites do not fit within the 50-year parameters of the National Register of Historic Places guidelines, the sites are contributing resources because the artifacts contained within them are of historic significance in that many of the historic artifacts so-far unearthed are from the period of significance of the National Soldiers Home Historic District.
- (6) This artificial lake first appears on site maps in 1876, though an exact time of its construction is not reported. It is the only remaining of four artificial lakes constructed for recreation and tranquility on the grounds in the late 1800s. In 1966, it was moved 50 to 100 feet north from its original site in order to build Building 111.

**Endnotes**

1. Board of Managers of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Proceedings*, December 7, 1866, p. 7.
2. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 18, 1867, p. 1 col. 4.
3. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, July 16, 1995, p. 8A.
4. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1875*, pp. 27-28.
5. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 23, 1879, p. 8 col. 1.
6. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 30, 1883, p. 794.
7. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1910*, p. 137.
8. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, November 17, 1888, p. 208.
9. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, April 28, 1889, p. 12 col. 2.
10. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1881*, p. 26.
11. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 9, 1891, p. 430.
12. Ibid.
13. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 17, 1895, p. 611.
14. *Inland Architect*, 26/1, August, 1895, p. 10.
15. Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
16. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, 1908, p. 287.
17. Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
18. Comparison of 1889 and 1819 photographs in Photo Souvenirs of Northwestern Branch in the files of the director of the Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 36

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

19. Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
20. Contract for construction in the files of the director of the Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Library, Milwaukee; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, April 28, 1889, p. 12 col. 2.
21. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 20, 1887, p. -131.
22. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, 1902, p. 16; Annual Report for 1902, p. 76.
23. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, 1908, p. 287.
24. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 4, 1916, p. 18.
25. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 22, 1921, p. 178.
26. Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
30. *Milwaukee Journal*, November 6, 1934 (Scrapbook, Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee).
31. Inscription on the monument's base.
32. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 26, 1941 (Scrapbook, Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee).
33. Clement J. Zablocki Veteran's Administration Medical Center Historic Preservation Plan, January 1, 1992. (Archeology Report on Site Evaluation Studies at Three Prehistoric Sites by Elizabeth D. Benchley, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archaeological Research Laboratory.)
34. Archaeological Codification Files, State Historic Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
35. *Milwaukee Journal*, September 21, 1941 (Scrapbook, Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee).
36. Dedication Program, *VA Scrapbook*, 1937-1941, p. 81.
37. Historical Files, Wood National Cemetery, Milwaukee, Wis.
38. Manning, Bob. Maintenance Department. Wood National Cemetery, Milwaukee, Wis., January 2005.
39. Article, *VA Scrapbook*, 1941-1946, p. 17.
40. *Clement J. Zablocki Veteran's Administration Medical Center Historic Preservation Plan*, January 1, 1992. (Archeology Report on Site Evaluation Studies at Three Prehistoric Sites by Elizabeth d. Benchley, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archaeological Research Laboratory.)
41. Article, *VA Scrapbook*, 1937-1941, p. 38.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 37

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Inventory of Demolished Buildings**

(DOE: resources demolished since the National Register of Historic Places Determination of Eligibility January 9, 1980)

VA Building	Historic Name	Date Erected	Eligibility Status
Building 34	Water Meter House	1888	(1)
Building 40	Greenhouse (DOE) (Demolished c. 1994)	1924; 1928; 1936	(2)
Building 104	Flagpole (DOE) (removed)	1945	(2)
Building 106	Smokestack (DOE) (Demolished, c. 1994)	1922	(2)

- (1) Resource is not visible and could not be located; date given in Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
- (2) The smokestack and greenhouse were demolished by the V.A. between 1993 and 1996. Engineering records did not note the dates of the flagpole removal or garage (Buildings 81, 95 and 96) demolitions, though the flagpole was last used in the late 1980s. However, all the aforementioned structures are non-contributing due to the loss of their architectural integrity.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 38

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under National Register criteria A and C as a district of potential national significance. Research designed to assess the district's potential for nomination was undertaken using the National Register categories of areas of significance of Social History, Health/Medicine, Politics/Government, and Architecture. The Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District is nationally significant under Criterion A as an intact collection of resources which documents the origin and evolution of the care of disabled veterans as a national program of the Federal government from the immediate post-Civil War era through the creation and establishment of the Veterans Administration in 1930. The historic district is nationally significant under Criterion C in demonstrating the evolution of institutional buildings for the care of the disabled and aged in the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

The historic district is truly unique in the United States because, of the original three federal soldiers homes/hospitals, it is the only V.A. site that retains its original village setting. The nineteenth century recuperative village setting — believed necessary in the 1800s to enable veterans to be integrated back into society — still stands with the post office (in Building 1), library (Building 3), recreation hall (Building 4), theater (Building 41), chapel (Building 12) and recreation areas like Lake Wheeler, all surrounding Old Main (Building 2), the hospital building (Building 6) and housing barracks (Buildings 5, 7). Most visibly, the historic district is the only V.A. site in the United States that still has its original home, Old Main, standing intact.

The care, domiciliary and service buildings in the historic district also uniquely mirror the changing federal and medical thoughts on care and rehabilitation. For example, the site was originally established for soldier recuperation and to house soldiers who could not return to society. By the 1880s, growing concerns in the general medical community about caring for the nation's elderly coincided with an increasing aged and infirm veteran soldier population. In 1884, the U.S. Congress, reacting in part to the nation's concerns for the elderly, enacted a National Home board-driven recommendation to allow veterans who were disabled by old age or disease to enter the home. Historic district buildings soon reflected the thoughts behind that mandate and increased societal desires for improved and expanded elderly care. In 1883, building modifications included installing an elevator for the Home building (Building 2). Then, after 1884 and beginning with barracks (Building 5), no barracks or domiciliaries on the grounds were built taller than two stories high. As the aging veteran group continued to grow, and the concepts of geriatric medicine expanded, barrack styles were eventually modified to include a kitchen-dining facility so residents would not have to travel far for meals. Additionally, as medical needs increased in the late 1800s and early 1900s, so did on-grounds housing for staff. Quarters for staff were built surrounding the village setting. Many still stand along roads leading into the main village, including houses for surgeons (Building 17), chaplains (Buildings 14, 16) and Home staff (Buildings 18, 19, 37, 49, 50).

Outbuildings also reflected evolving and expanding health care by addressing the changing service and support needs of hospital and home. For example, a need to modernize the district with heating and lighting was met by the completion of the power house (Building 45) in 1895. The stone quartermaster house was built that same year to accommodate a growing demand for supply storage. Additionally, the National Home constructed garages in the 1930s to house the service trucks and automobiles that had replaced horse-drawn carriages and wagons. Growing storage and maintenance needs were again addressed in the 1940s when Quonset Huts were built to accommodate post-World War II service increases.

Furthermore, many buildings in the historic district embody a range of architectural styles and were designed by prominent architects, including Edward Townsend Mix and Henry C. Koch. The historic district includes one of the few examples of Ruskinian Victorian Gothic architecture in the Midwest.

The national significance of the historic district is not confined to the walls of its recuperative village and buildings, however. A significant part of the historic value of the National Home site lies beneath the granite headstones in Wood National Cemetery, designed by famed landscaper Thomas Budd Van Home who based upon his design of the National Cemetery at the Gettysburg battlefield. Established in 1871, Wood National Cemetery is second in size of federal military cemeteries only to Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. The cemetery is the final resting place for veterans who served in every American war from the War of 1812 through today. Most notable are the graves of thousands of Civil War soldiers, including members of the famed 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry (the first federal African American unit recruited in the North), as well as

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 39

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

graves of U.S. Colored Troops from Wisconsin and four Medal of Honor recipients. Additionally, cemetery-related buildings within the historic district reflect the changing burial needs of the Home and burial trends in the country. Construction of cemetery reception/comfort buildings in the early 1900s reflected the trend to offer shelter and comfort to the grieving. The 1903 construction of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, as well as the placement of cemetery plaques, followed veterans' desires to recognize and honor those who had served before and with them. And, construction of a cemetery office building 1955 (demolished in the early 1990s) reflected the need for space to discuss burials with families and the growing trend to offer pre-planning of arrangements with veterans themselves. The building also addressed the historical desire to make cemetery records accessible for research.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 40

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**History**

The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was established by act of Congress and with the signature of President Abraham Lincoln on March 3, 1865, to provide care for volunteer soldiers who had been disabled through loss of limb, wounds, disease, or injury during service in the Union forces in the Civil War. The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was called the National Asylum from the original legislation in 1865 until Congress changed the name in 1873. The term "asylum" was used in the nineteenth century for institutions caring for dependent members of society, such as the insane and the poor, who suffered from temporary conditions that hopefully could be cured or corrected<sup>1</sup>. The use of the term indicates that the original planners had anticipated a temporary use of the institution by the veterans. The original intention of the Asylum was to care for veterans until they were restored to health, or retrained for new occupations if unable physically to return to their pre-war jobs. The goal of the Asylum was the return of the disabled veteran to civilian life; once all the veterans had been served, the Asylum would cease to exist.

From the Revolutionary War through the Civil War, the small number of veterans of American wars had three sources of assistance from the Federal government. The vast amounts of land under the control of the government were offered to veterans as land grants for their support after service. The land grant system also benefited the government in encouraging veterans and their families to settle in undeveloped territories of the new nation. In 1833, the Federal government established the Bureau of Pensions, which made small cash payments to veterans; the low numbers of the veteran population and the more attractive offer of free land kept the pension system relatively small until after the Civil War.

The Federal government had established military homes in the first half of the nineteenth century that served as models for the creation of the National Asylum. When these military homes, the United States Sailors' Home and the National Soldiers' Home, had been planned, European military asylums such as the Hotel des Invalides in Paris, built in 1760 by Louis XIV; the Royal Hospital at Chelsea, designed by Christopher Wren in 1682; and the Royal Naval Hospital at Greenwich, a 1694 reworking of an unfinished royal palace, were considered as models.

The United States Navy had been authorized by Congress to establish a permanent shelter for its veterans in 1811, with construction eventually being undertaken in 1827. The United States Sailors' Home, located in Philadelphia as a part of the navy yard, was occupied in 1833. Admission was limited to sailors who had injuries or infirmities resulting from naval service, which prevented them from contributing to their support<sup>2</sup>. The idea of a similar institution for the army was raised by the secretary of war, James Barbour, in 1827, based on the initiative previously taken by the navy<sup>3</sup>. In his annual message to the President, Barbour argued that such an institution was good policy in making career service more attractive through the provision of an asylum for disabled and aged soldiers; in addition, the nation owed a debt of gratitude to its defenders. In 1851, legislation introduced by Jefferson Davis, senator from Mississippi and former secretary of war as well as a graduate of West Point, was enacted by Congress and funds were appropriated for the creation of the United States Soldiers' Home. The Soldiers' Home was open to all men who were regular or volunteer members of the army with twenty years service and had contributed to its support through pay contributions.

When the Soldiers' Home was being organized in 1851 and 1852, it was intended to have at least four branches with its organization and administration based on the army's command structure and staffed with regular army officers. The Soldiers' Home was managed by a board of commissioners, drawn from active-duty officers; each branch had a governor, deputy governor, and secretary-treasurer; the members were organized into companies and the daily routine followed the military schedule; all members wore uniforms; and workshops were provided for members wanting or required to work<sup>4</sup>. When the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was being organized in 1866, the National Soldiers' Home assisted the Asylum's board by explaining its regulations and offering suggestions<sup>5</sup>.

The Civil War was the first experience in the history of the United States that was truly national in the involvement of its citizens and in the impact on daily life in communities in both the north and the south. The Civil War was a war of volunteers, both military and civilian. Very early in the war, it became clear to social leaders in the North that new programs were required to deliver medical care to the wounded beyond what was available through the official military structure. The leading civilian organization was the United States Sanitary Commission, which had secured permission from President Lincoln in the summer of 1861 to deliver medical

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 41

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

supplies to the battlefield, to build adequate field hospitals staffed with volunteer nurses (mostly women), and to raise funds to support the commission's programs<sup>6</sup>. As the war continued, civilian leaders began to address the issue of caring for the large number of veterans who would require assistance once the war ended. The Sanitary Commission favored the pension system rather than permanent institutional care for the disabled veteran, fearing that a permanent institution would be nothing more than a poorhouse for veterans<sup>7</sup>. Other groups were as strongly in favor of the establishment of a soldiers' asylum as the Sanitary Commission was opposed to the concept. Both groups gathered information on European military asylums, particularly the Hotel des Invalides in Paris, to use in either opposing or supporting the creation of a disabled volunteer soldiers' asylum<sup>8</sup>.

The victory of the Union was seen as the triumph of the nation, and the creation of a national institution to serve the defenders of the Union was an affirmation of that national victory. At the time of its creation, the supporters of the National Asylum probably had only limited awareness of the number of veterans who could potentially become members of the National Asylum. The number of troops, which fought for the Union would have indicated the potential membership: over 2,000,000 men, a third of the white men of military age (13 to 43 years old in 1860), served in the Union army<sup>9</sup>. If the number of men who were disabled in service through loss of limb, wounds, or disease equaled the sixth that died in the war, the number eligible for admission to the National Asylum would have been over 300,000<sup>10</sup>.

Even with the establishment of the National Asylum by law in 1865, the institution experienced difficulties in being realized. The original corporation charged with its organization could not secure a quorum after a year in existence. In March 1866, new legislation replaced the 100-member corporation with a twelve-member board of managers.<sup>11</sup> This group had to select sites, commission construction projects, and designate local officials while serving as unpaid volunteers of an independent Federal agency. The managers of the Asylum looked to past models and local efforts to guide the creation of the new institution.

The origins of the Northwestern Branch of the National Home can be found in relief activities in Milwaukee, which resulted in the creation of a local soldiers' home in 1865. The Milwaukee Ladies Association had been formed in October, 1861, as an auxiliary of the Chicago Branch of the United States Sanitary Commission. By December 1862, membership in the Milwaukee organization was so large that it split into two groups based on the location of members' residences, becoming the East Side and the West Side Societies. In October 1863, the East Side Society reorganized itself as the Wisconsin Soldiers' Aid Society, and took over the former association's relationship with the Sanitary Commission. In March, 1864, the West Side Society reorganized as the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home Society, concentrating primarily on providing services at the local level to returning soldiers by providing meals and lodging in rented quarters in downtown Milwaukee.

The Soldiers' Home Society received its charter from the Wisconsin legislature in February 1865, as well as a grant of \$5,000 for the purpose of erecting a permanent facility for the relief of soldiers. In the spring of 1865, the Lady Managers of the Home Society organized a fair to raise funds for the purchase of a site and the construction of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home. The Soldiers' Home Fair was held between June 28 and July 6, 1865, and succeeded in raising over \$100,000 for the Soldiers' Home<sup>12</sup>. By October 1865, the Home Society had purchased a 27-acre site on the far west side of Milwaukee for \$12,000, and had begun developing plans for the construction of a building.

The Board of Managers of the National Asylum met for the first time in Washington, D.C., on May 16, 1866. The principal concern of the board was the selection of sites for the three branches of the national institution, based on geographic distribution. They established criteria for site evaluation: a healthy site with fresh air and ample water supply, located 3 to 5 miles from a city on a tract of at least 200 acres, connected to the city by a railroad<sup>13</sup>. The Board issued a bulletin to newspapers and to governors of the northern states requesting proposals for sites to be donated or sold for the purpose of erecting branches. Proposals were due by June 20, 1866, with all sites to have been inspected by a member of the board before July 12. In addition, the Board advertised for plans, specifications, and estimates for the construction of asylum buildings.

In the second meeting of the Board in July 1866, George Walker of Milwaukee presented a letter from the Lady Managers of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home offering \$100,000 to the Board as a donation for locating a branch of the National Asylum in Milwaukee<sup>14</sup>. Colonel Walker had made the offer of the Lady Managers' donation of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home funds and property to the Board of Managers of the National Asylum in July 1866. This action had been preceded by difficult negotiations

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 42

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

in Milwaukee in June 1866, between the Lady Managers and the all-male Executive Committee of the Soldiers' Home Society. The women rejected Walker's proposal, arguing that they had worked to raise funds specifically for a Wisconsin home for soldiers, and that they already had a site and had purchased building material. The men of the Executive Committee argued that more soldiers would be helped through a national asylum; subsequently, the Lady Managers accepted the decision of the Executive Committee and Colonel Walker was authorized to make his offer to the Board of Managers<sup>15</sup>.

At the September 6, 1866, meeting of the Board, the managers accepted propositions for the purchase of a bankrupt resort at Togus, Maine, as the site for the Eastern Branch; the investigation of sites for the Central Branch in Ohio; and the inspection of sites in Milwaukee for the Northwestern Branch<sup>16</sup>.

Colonel Walker died before the December 1866, meeting of the Board, and was replaced by Dr. Erastus B. Wolcott of Milwaukee. At the December 7, 1866, meeting of the Board, the Executive Committee announced its approval of locating a branch in Milwaukee. The committee was directed by the Board to return to Milwaukee to purchase a site and to make arrangements for the construction of asylum buildings and the transfer of veterans currently housed in the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home in Milwaukee, operated by the Lady Managers of the Home Society<sup>17</sup>. By the April 4, 1867, Board meeting, a 400 acre tract west of Milwaukee had been purchased from "Messrs. Tweedy, Mitchell & Co." for \$77,000<sup>18</sup>. The Tweedy and Mitchell site had existing farm buildings to which the first members were relocated from the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home on May 1, 1867<sup>19</sup>.

The selection of the sites for the three branches was based on three motivations: practical, political, and economic. First, the Board needed a site that could be used immediately before the second winter after the war arrived, and before the time of the November 1866 elections. The Togus site, having been a resort, had enough and the appropriate type of buildings for housing the disabled veterans. The Central Branch site at Dayton satisfied the powerful Ohio faction in Congress, as well as the numerous Union generals from Ohio, particularly William Tecumseh Sherman. The Northwestern Branch at Milwaukee had been an economic success for the board, which had received a large cash donation from the Ladies Managers, enabling the Board to purchase a site and have funds left to begin construction.

The establishment of the Northwestern Branch covers the period from the site design through the construction of the first major buildings: the first Hospital (Building 52, 1867-68/demolished in 1960s), the Governor's House (Building 39, 1867), the Main Building (Building 2, 1867-69, 1875-67), and the Secretary and Surgeon's quarters (Building 38, 1867/demolished in 1985). All other buildings from this period were ancillary structures (gate houses, tool sheds, small frame quarters, stables) and have been demolished. The two oldest buildings on the site are the Governor's House (Building 39) and the Main Building (Building 2); the buildings are the oldest remaining structures built for the National Home on any of the former National Home sites<sup>20</sup>.

The site for the Northwestern Branch is on the western edge of Milwaukee's "Menomonee River Valley," named for the Menomonee Indian Tribe that once lived there, along the creek that winds into and through the Northwestern Branch grounds. The site had been assembled from a number of farms that belonged to several prominent Milwaukee families. Of the 375 acres, a third belonged to John L. Mitchell, a twenty-five year old former lieutenant in the Union army who was the son of Alexander Mitchell, one of the most powerful businessmen in Milwaukee. Alexander Mitchell had been the president of the Executive Committee of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home Society, which had convinced the Lady Managers to offer their funds and property to the Board of Managers of the National Home as an incentive to locate a branch in Milwaukee. Mitchell had been a director of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad, which had been constructed in the early 1850s through the future home site; he had purchased large tracts of land along the right-of-way, which then had been mortgaged to raise funds for investment in the railroad. The Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad was going through bankruptcy in 1867, and Alexander Mitchell, as principal stockholder in the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, was in the process of absorbing the failing rail line. The second largest parcel in the tract belonged to John H. Tweedy, another of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad directors and a long-time business associate of Alexander Mitchell. Dr. Erastus B. Wolcott, the local manager of the National Home's Board of Managers, who had been responsible for selecting the future site of the Northwestern Branch, had been a director of the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad with Mitchell and Tweedy.<sup>21</sup>

The Milwaukee site was served by the railroad and by two major roads leading west from the city. Grand Avenue on the north,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 43

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

which ran along the north side of the Menomonee River valley, and Elizabeth Avenue (later National Avenue) on the south which ran on the south side of the river valley.

The site was situated on the bluffs at the west end of the river where the river turns from the northwest to flow east into Lake Michigan. The bluffs on which the Home was to be constructed had been the site of geological investigation by Increase A. Lapham, one of the first scientists in the Wisconsin Territory. The elevation of the site made it a prominent location and offered extensive views of the surrounding countryside. The site had ample water supply in four small spring-fed lakes, and the soil was suitable for farming, particularly on the flat terrain at the base of the bluffs on the east side of the site. Existing farmhouses on the site allowed immediate occupancy by new Home members transferred from the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home in May 1867.

Work on the grounds began in May 1867, when the Board-appointed landscape gardener, Thomas Budd Van Home arrived in Milwaukee to determine the plan for the Home site<sup>22</sup>. The architect for the original buildings at the Northwestern Branch was Edward Townsend Mix, a locally prominent architect who had worked for several of the families represented in the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home Society<sup>23</sup>.

As the first buildings at the Northwestern Branch were being completed, the Board of Managers acknowledged the rapid increase in membership by concentrating building efforts at the Central Branch, and in rebuilding facilities at the Eastern Branch, which had been destroyed by fire in 1868. Even though membership had increased in the first few years the Asylum was open, the Board felt membership would soon begin to decline. The Board based this opinion on the belief that any veteran who needed the Asylum had already entered it and that, as members regained their health or learned new work skills, they would leave the Asylum. In 1868, the Board adopted a resolution that limited the number of branches to the three existing ones<sup>24</sup>. However, problems with construction of the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch and concern over the harsh winters at both the Northwestern and Eastern Branches led the Board to open a fourth branch in 1870, at a site in a warmer climate, with existing buildings available for immediate use.

The Southern Branch of the National Home was established in October 1870, with the Board's purchase of the Chesapeake Female College at Hampton, Virginia<sup>25</sup>. The reuse of existing facilities for a National Home branch followed the precedent established four years earlier with the purchase of the Beals resort at Togus for the Eastern Branch. The Southern Branch was created to provide a facility for older members in a milder climate, to house black members who the board felt would be more accustomed to a southern location, and to be associated with Fort Monroe, adjacent to the new branch site.

Even though the Board had realized that the member population was aging, requiring changes in the original mission of the Home, and that membership was increasing, it was reluctant to expand the physical plants of the Home branches. Increase in membership was felt to be short term, and eventually the numbers would decrease with an increase in death rate due to the effect of age on disease and disability<sup>26</sup>. The managers felt that the immediate increase in members could be accommodated with temporary conversion of existing buildings to barrack use<sup>27</sup>. On January 23, 1873, Congress passed a resolution changing the name of the institution to the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, reflecting the increasing permanence of the institution and its membership.

Major building construction projects began at the National Home branches in 1875, in part to provide more housing, but also to provide hospital facilities to meet the changing medical needs of the members. For the most part, expansion was concentrated on the Central Branch with little activity at the other three branches. In 1875-1876, the addition of corner towers on the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch were completed as a part of the overall reworking of the building which had been undertaken under General Edward Hincks between 1873 and 1876, to correct problems in the original design and construction<sup>28</sup>.

Early construction included the establishment of a federal military cemetery, the Soldiers Home Cemetery, on the Northwestern Branch grounds in 1871, to the west of the main buildings. In addition, park and recreation areas were set up on the grounds in the 1870s-1890s. By 1876, there were four artificial ponds or lakes on the grounds,<sup>29</sup> all but one of which has since been filled in. Most significant to recreational history at the National Home was Lake Wheeler, named in 1938 after Colonel Cornelius Wheeler<sup>30</sup>, governor of the National Home from 1891-1914. As early as 1876, the lake contained an island lighthouse, a "man-high" windmill and rented rowboats for paddling excursions. Eventually, the lake featured two stone pedestrian bridges and a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 44

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

fountain. In 1966, when Building 111 was constructed, the four-foot deep lake was relocated from the building site to its current location, approximately 100 feet north of the original lake. In addition, construction of a 52.290-acre Soldiers Home Play Field, began in the 1870s. The site eventually housed a soccer field, three hardball diamonds, 13 softball diamonds, five tennis courts and a field house in the area that has since become Miller Park baseball stadium and parking lots. When membership waned in the 1950s, the National Home donated the Play Field acreage to the City of Milwaukee. Miller Park baseball stadium and Helfaer Park now stand on the former Soldiers Home play field. After Ward Memorial Hall was built in 1881, adjacent railroad tracks helped to bring more than 60,000 Milwaukee residents a year to the grounds to join veterans for recreation and entertainment at the theater, at the Play Field and throughout the grounds, well into the early 20th Century.<sup>31</sup>

In July 1877, Dr. Wolcott presented the "need" for more accommodations and an addition to the Main Building dining hall and kitchen at the Northwestern Branch, as well as the "want" for a memorial hall to provide a library, reading room, and store.<sup>32</sup> The removal of the library and reading room, and recreation facilities to a separate structure would have allowed for more barrack space in the Main Building. Both motions were denied by the Board. Very little construction took place at any of the branches during 1877, although the bulk of what work was done was at the Central Branch.<sup>33</sup>

After almost ten years in existence, membership at the Northwestern Branch had increased from 212 (absent and present) in 1867 to 1,307 (absent and present) in 1877, with a very small decline to 1,299 in 1878<sup>34</sup>. The member population had increased six fold, but the facilities at the branch had been expanded only twice with the conversion of the dance hall in 1875 and the addition of four towers to the Main Building in 1876. The 1867-68 hospital remained the only medical facility at the branch even with the increased medical needs of the aging member population.

In the late 1870s and through the 1880s, the National Home had to meet challenges at all the existing branches. As the demands on the Home continued to grow, the Board of Managers chose to establish new branches: the Western Branch at Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1884, and the Pacific Branch in Santa Monica, California in 1888. The period is significant in the history of geriatric medicine because increasing awareness of the medical personnel of the physical needs of the elderly and of the opportunities for the study of chronic diseases and the aging process. At the Northwestern Branch, the period from 1879 to 1889 was one of growth in membership and in the types and number of buildings required to care for the members. As the members aged and required more medical treatment, a new hospital was erected (Building 6, 1879). More members required more barracks (Buildings 5, 1884; 7, 1888; and 9, 1888/demolished 1972). The recreational and chapel space in the Main Building was not adequate for the increased population, so an amusement hall (Ward Memorial Hall, Building 41, 1881) and a chapel (Building 12, 1889) were built. The increased need for medical services made it necessary for physicians to live on the grounds; duplex quarters were built for the surgeons (Building 17, 1887).

In 1879, the Northwestern Branch was authorized to build a bakery/quartermaster and commissary storehouse (Building 10, demolished 1940) and a new hospital (Building 6)<sup>35</sup>. The contract for the design of the hospital went to Henry C. Koch, a Milwaukee architect who designed more than 300 buildings during his 40-year career from 1870 to 1910. Koch's practice overlapped that of E. Townsend Mix. Most of the work done at the Northwestern Branch in the 1880s was designed by Koch. At the December 1880 meeting, the Board heard a request from the Northwestern Branch to fund the construction of a memorial hall, using a mix of funding sources from the Ward, the Store, and the PostHumous Funds<sup>36</sup>. Henry C. Koch, having completed the hospital at the Northwestern Branch only a year before, was awarded the contract for the design of the Ward Memorial Hall (Building 41) in early 1881.

The Ward Fund was significant for the projects it supported at most of the branches, particularly for the construction of theaters and cultural activity buildings. The fund came from the estate of Horatio Ward, a Virginia banker who had invested in an assortment of state bonds before the Civil War, and had moved to London at the outbreak of the war. He died in London in 1865, with a provision in his will, dated December 9, 1865, leaving approximately \$100,000 in state bonds to the "National Soldiers and Sailors Home about to erected in Washington, D.C."<sup>37</sup> After the will was probated in London in 1867, Henry B. Hammond, a lawyer in New York engaged by the Ward family to determine what charity Ward had intended to receive the funds, identified the National Asylum. The funds were transferred to the control of the Board of Managers in 1871, to fund activities that benefited the members of the Home; the board identified those as cultural activities, such as concerts, theatrical performances, and lectures. To



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 45

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

support these activities, the board allocated funding from the Ward Fund for memorial halls.

*The Board continued to be reluctant to expand the facilities of the four branches, even as membership increased and the needs of the members changed. The Board initially had felt that the general business depression which had affected the nation after 1873 and through the 1870s was responsible for the increases, and that once the economy revived, the rate of increase would decline<sup>38</sup>. In 1881, the Board did find the rate of membership declining, but in 1882, found that membership had actually increased<sup>39</sup>. In addition, the Board began to realize that the increasing disabilities of the members were having a definite effect on the amount of labor, which could be performed by the members themselves<sup>40</sup>.*

Statistics from the branches for the Annual Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1882, show that the 50- to 70-year age group made up over 50% of Home membership. At the Northwestern Branch, the 60- to 80-year group made up 30% of the population; at the Central Branch, 24%; at the Southern, 20%; and at the Eastern, 5%. The statistics also demonstrate that over 60% of the members at the Central and Northwestern branches had been admitted to the Home because of sickness, not from disabilities caused by loss of limbs or by wounds<sup>41</sup>. Civil War veterans made up 97% of the membership. Considering that the age range for Civil War participants ranged from 13 to 43 years in 1860, the Home could have expected continuing admissions well into the 20th century. The Board indicated a new understanding of the population makeup when it recommended that Congress change the eligibility requirements for admission to the Home by allowing benefits to all destitute soldiers unable to earn a living, without having to trace their disabilities to their military service<sup>42</sup>. The Board realized that denying benefits to this large group of veterans meant their only recourse was the poorhouse. Congress rejected the board's recommendation.

As a result of the Board's understanding of the situation facing the Home, it recognized that fact that new buildings would be required to accommodate the increased membership and that old buildings would have to be remodeled or replaced<sup>43</sup>. In 1883, the Board, recognizing the changes the Home would face with increased membership and increased medical needs of the members, conceded that an "institution like the National Home must in time become an enormous hospital," and that all new buildings for the Home must be planned with that need in mind<sup>44</sup>. The new emphasis on hospital facilities was responsible for a more coordinated program on the part of the Home branches for dealing with medical practices. In September 1883, the Board requested that chief surgeons from the four branches meet in Dayton for a "professional conference" to discuss practices at the hospitals and to prepare a written report for the Board. The surgeons met in Dayton in November 1883, and issued a report calling for standardized forms for hospital records, uniform statistical reporting, basic medical libraries at all hospitals, and treatment of certain diseases at each of the branches<sup>45</sup>.

*The Board's concern for the aged and infirm members resulted in a number of small-scale, but very significant actions to improve the conditions for their care. Fire protection became a major concern; fire escapes, pumping stations, and fire fighting equipment were topics of discussion for the Board<sup>46</sup>. At the Northwestern Branch, this concern resulted in the construction of a two-bay fire engine house and engineer quarters in 1883 (Building 11)<sup>47</sup>. One of the most significant signs of the board's recognition of the needs of the aged and infirm members was the first installation of an elevator in a Home building, in the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch in the fall of 1883. This new means of circulation in the four-story building, the home of the majority of members, was a "great satisfaction to the members, who heretofore had been obliged to walk up the stairs, which in the disabled condition of many of them, was painful and slow."<sup>48</sup>*

On July 5, 1884, Congress approved the Board's recommendation to change the eligibility requirements for admission, allowing veterans disabled by old age or disease to apply without having to prove any service-related disability. In effect, the Federal government assumed the responsibility of providing care for the aged; what had been established as a temporary asylum for the disabled in 1866, had become a permanent home for the elderly in 1884<sup>49</sup>. This legislation contained other provisions applicable to Home's new position as caretaker of the elderly: no new barracks should be over two stories in height, so the aged would not have to climb many stairs; facilities should maximize outdoor exercise and employment opportunities for the aged; and new branches should be established west of the Mississippi and on the Pacific coast<sup>50</sup>.

As a result of the Congressional act, the Home experienced a 12% membership increase almost immediately, without receiving any additional funding from Congress. The Board returned to Congress with a request for deficiency funding, arguing that the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 46

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Home could either go into debt, which was illegal under its organic law, or it could discharge a large number of members to save on expenses.<sup>51</sup> Congress appropriated additional funds, a portion of which went to the Northwestern Branch to construct barracks (Building 5) located between the Main Building (Building 2) and the hospital (Building 6). Expansion at the four original branches proceeded more slowly after 1884. The 1884 board of surgeons report recommended that the Central Branch was already too large and should not be expanded; the severe climate at the Eastern and Northwestern branches should limit their growth; and the Southern branch should not grow over 1500 to 2000 members. The surgeons suggested that new branches were a better solution than enlarging the older ones. They also recommended that certain diseases would benefit from treatment at the various branches: malaria, chronic diarrhea, hay fever, and rheumatism at the Eastern Branch; chronic bronchitis, chronic rheumatism, and general debilitation due to age at the Southern Branch; all diseases at the Central Branch; and nervous diseases, heart disease, and malaria at the Northwestern Branch, which was found to be "very fatal to all diseases of the lungs."<sup>52</sup>

The establishment of new branches in the west and on the Pacific coast also limited the expansion of the older branches. In July 1884, the Board reviewed several sites in Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas for the new Western Branch. In September, 1884, the Board selected Leavenworth, Kansas, contingent on the city donating a tract of 640 acres and \$ 50,000 to provide for "ornamentation;" the city accepted in April, 1885.<sup>53</sup> At the same meeting, the Board took under consideration the establishment of a Pacific Branch in California. However, a major step toward modernizing existing facilities rather than enlarging them was taken at the Northwestern Branch when the Board approved a contract with the Western Edison Light Company of Chicago to install an Edison incandescent electric light plant at the branch.<sup>54</sup> The other branches continued to be lighted with manufactured gas through the 1890s.

In November 1887, the Board of Managers was in the process of considering sites for the new Pacific Branch. Seventy-eight sites were offered for the new branch; the board, inclined to favor donated sites, selected a 600-acre tract in Santa Monica, California.<sup>55</sup> The new facility opened on January 1, 1888.

In 1887, new quarters for the Secretary and Assistant Surgeon (Building 17) were built at the Northwestern Branch on a site to the northwest of the Main Building, in the open area between the Main Building and the cemetery.<sup>56</sup> The construction of quarters in this area established the general residential character of the area north and northwest of the Main Building, which continues to exist today.

Even with the creation of the two new branches, the Board realized that increasing membership would continue and proposed four solutions to the problem.<sup>57</sup> Additional branches could be established; existing branches could be enlarged; states could be encouraged to erect state soldiers' homes through partial funding from the Federal government; and outside relief to veterans could be increased. Congress responded by establishing a new branch near Marion, Indiana, on March 23, 1888.<sup>58</sup> In 1888, funds were authorized for the fourth barrack (Building 7) built at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>59</sup> According to an article in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on April 28, 1889, Henry C. Koch was the architect for the 1888-89 barrack.

In response to the Board's support of the creation of state soldiers' homes. Congress passed legislation to provide \$100 annually for every veteran eligible for the National Home that was housed in a state home. The Board of Managers was granted the right to inspect and report to Congress on the conditions of the various state homes.<sup>60</sup>

In 1889, Henry C. Koch was awarded the contract for the construction of a frame chapel (Building 12) at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>61</sup> The Chapel was funded from the Post Fund, an amount accumulated from sales of products made or grown at the branch and from sales at the Home Store and to be used for the benefit of the members. The Board was not allowed to support religious activities or structures with Congressionally appropriated funds.

At the Northwestern Branch, the period between 1890 and 1916 was one of increasing refinement in the provision of services to the members. Several important projects were undertaken in the first half of the 1890s to provide separate buildings for branch functions, such as administration (Building 1, 1895) and social activities (Library, Buildings 3, 1891; and Social Hall, Building 4, 1894), and to modernize operations, such as the new power house (Building 45, 1895) and the quartermaster storehouse (Building 20, 1896). Several quarters (Building 47, 1891/demolished 1987; Building 16, 1901; Building 15, 1902/demolished 1972; Buildings 49 and 50, 1908; Building 14, 1909; Building 18, 1916) were built to provide housing for the enlarged staff

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 47

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

required to manage the Home. The recognition of the different needs of the older members lead to the creation of a new barrack type, the "old men's" barrack or the combination barrack (Building 13, 1893/demolished 1972) in which dormitories and a kitchen-dining facility were built together to serve a unique member group. The combination barrack marks the medical recognition of the differing needs of the elderly and the beginnings of geriatric medicine.<sup>62</sup>

During this period, three more facilities of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers were established: the Danville (Illinois) Branch in 1898, the Mountain Branch near Johnson City, Tennessee, in 1903, and the Battle Mountain Sanitarium at Hot Springs, South Dakota, in 1907. These branches were more carefully planned before construction actually began, and were more stylistically uniform in their architectural form than the earlier branches. Most of the efforts of the Board during this period was directed towards these three new branches.

The period opens with the request to the Board by the local manager of the Northwestern Branch for permission to hire female nurses to care for the infirm and ailing members. This action is historically significant in that the Northwestern Branch was the first of the branches to employ female nurses. Although women had served as nurses during the Civil War, the practice at the Home and, in society in general, was that men cared for strangers and women cared for the ill in the home. At the National Home, members performed nursing duties themselves. However, as the members aged and were less capable of fulfilling nursing responsibilities, the local manager contracted with the newly organized Wisconsin Training School for Female Nurses in May 1890, for the services of ten nurses.<sup>63</sup> The Northwestern Branch program influenced the other branches, which began to employ female nurses as well.

In the early 1890s at the Northwestern Branch, separate buildings were constructed for the various functions housed in the Main Building since 1869. The library and reading room moved to the new Library (Building 3) in 1891; recreational activities (bowling, billiards, cards) moved to the new Social Hall (Building 4) in 1894; and administrative offices relocated to a new headquarters building (Building 1) in 1895. The completion of the physical plant of the Northwestern Branch was marked by the construction of the power house (Building 45) in 1895, modernizing the heating and lighting systems of the branch; and the construction of the Quartermaster's storehouse (Building 20) in 1895-96.

The most significant building by function that was erected at the Northwestern Branch in the early 1890s was the "old men's barrack" or combination barrack (Building 13, demolished in 1972) which was built to the west of the western addition to the hospital in 1893.

A contract for construction, dated May 23, 1893, identifies the architect as Henry C. Koch and the building as a brick veneered building designed for barracks.<sup>64</sup> In 1890, the Inspector General had noted that the oldest of the Civil War members at the Northwestern Branch had complained about being housed with younger members and about having the same diet as younger members. His report suggested that a special ward be created for those older members, located in a one-story building with its own kitchen for preparing bland, soft foods.<sup>65</sup>

The 1893 combination barrack at the Northwestern Branch was a two-story structure with a long, one-room wide main building with three wings, one at each end and one in the middle, extending off its north side. The center wing was the dining hall and kitchen, which served only the elderly Civil War members living in the barrack. The Northwestern example was the first of the type to be built, and served as the model for the other branches where it became a standard barrack type by 1902.<sup>66</sup>

The last major project of the 1890s at the Northwestern Branch involved the reworking of the 1881 Ward Memorial Hall in 1895-97, to increase the size of the theater space within the existing building.<sup>67</sup> Several quarters buildings were erected between 1891 and 1916: the Protestant Chaplain's quarters (Building 16, 1901); nurses quarters (Building 15, 1902; demolished); two duplex quarters (Buildings 49 and 50, 1908) for civilian personnel; and the Catholic Chaplain's quarters (Building 14, 1909). By the end of the period, the north half of the grounds, on the north side of the Main Building, had become the residential section of the Northwestern Branch with five quarters buildings.

In 1898, Congress extended eligibility for admission to the Home to veterans of the Spanish-American War, effective in 1900. Spanish-American War veterans began applying immediately, and the Board took the position that they could enter the Home, but once their condition improved, they were to be discharged from the Home.<sup>68</sup> In effect, the Board had come to see the Home

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 48

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

as the old age home for Civil War veterans. As the members' age and infirmities increased, the installation of elevators and the upgrading of medical facilities were major concerns at the Northwestern Branch, as at all the branches.<sup>69</sup>

However, during the 1890s, most of the development occurred at the newer Western, Pacific, and Marion branches. This activity was intended to get those branches in full operation as quickly as possible, and to build them as large as feasible during the first phases of construction. By 1896, the board realized that all the branches were overcrowded.<sup>70</sup> In 1898, Congress approved the establishment of a eighth branch of the National Home at Danville, Illinois. The Mountain Branch, which was established in 1903, near Johnson City, Tennessee, and the Battle Mountain Sanitarium at Hot Springs, South Dakota, established in 1907, were the last branches developed by the National Home.

The period, which had seen the continued overcrowding of existing branches and the creation of new branches to meet anticipated increases due to the Spanish-American War and broadened eligibility requirements, ended in 1916, when the Board realized that membership had begun to decline. Considering Civil War participants to have been between 13 and 43 years old in 1860, the youngest of the remaining Civil War veterans would have been 69 years old and the oldest 99, in 1916. As the death rate for the older members increased and fewer younger veterans entered the Home, membership declined. At the December 8, 1916, meeting of the Board, the managers voted unanimously to close the Northwestern Branch.<sup>71</sup>

On April 6, 1917, the United States entered World War I; by the time of the armistice on November 11, 1918, almost 5 million Americans had entered the armed forces. The National Home felt the impact of the war in two ways. On July 21, 1917, the Board agreed to turn the Southern Branch over to the War Department for use as a general military hospital. Members were transferred to other branches, most to the Mountain and Central branches; none were sent to the Northwestern branch because its climate was too severe.<sup>72</sup> On October 6, 1917, an amendment to the War Risk Insurance Act, originally enacted in 1914 to insure American ships and cargo against risks of war, extended eligibility for National Home membership to all troops serving in the "German War" and, most importantly, made the provision that all veterans were entitled to medical, surgical, and hospital care. In effect, this amendment completely changed the facilities required for veterans' care.<sup>73</sup>

Prior to the 1917 amendment, the only veterans entitled to such medical care were the members of the National Home who had access to the Home hospitals. All other veterans were dependent on civilian medical services. The 1917 amendment meant that all veterans were eligible for the same medical care as the members of the National Home. Clearly, there were not sufficient hospital facilities at the ten Home branches to care for the potentially high number of World War I veterans. Membership in the Home actually had declined between 1916 and 1918, as more able-bodied men left to take jobs left vacant by enlistees, and as the Home restored stricter admission procedures to lower the membership further.<sup>74</sup> During 1918, barracks were closed and members consolidated to conserve fuel; age limitations (62 years) were suspended for Home members to allow the more able-bodied to perform work at the branches.<sup>75</sup>

After the Armistice, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance did not have the resources, particularly medical facilities, to meet the needs of World War I veterans. In 1919, the responsibility for veterans' services was distributed among several agencies: the United States Public Health Service took over the provision of medical and hospital services; the Federal Board for Vocational Rehabilitation assumed the task of organizing vocational rehabilitation programs; and the War Risk Insurance Bureau managed compensation and insurance payouts.<sup>76</sup> The burden on government hospitals, administered by the Public Health Service, was so great that it began to contract with private hospitals to provide health care for veterans.

On March 4, 1921, in response to the need for more hospitals serving veterans. Congress appropriated funds to the Secretary of the Treasury to construct additional hospitals for veterans covered by the War Risk Insurance Act amendment. In addition, Congress required the Bureau of War Risk Insurance to make allotments to the National Home to fund alterations or improvement to existing Home facilities for the purpose of caring for W.R.I. beneficiaries.<sup>77</sup> Two barracks (Buildings 5 and 7) at the Northwestern Branch were converted to hospital use and additional surgeons' quarters were constructed at the Northwestern Branch with W.R.I. funds.<sup>78</sup>

Immediately after the war, the National Home made several changes in its organization to accommodate the large number of returning veterans by 1) transforming the facilities of two branches into hospitals and categorizing them for specialized

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 49

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

care (Marion for neuro-psychiatric cases and Mountain for tuberculosis); 2) modernizing existing facilities and establishing tuberculosis wards (Central and Pacific); and 3) building entirely new hospitals (Northwestern), using funding from the Treasury Department.<sup>79</sup>

In August 1921, Congress acted to consolidate all veterans' benefits into a single independent agency, the Veterans Bureau. On April 29, 1922, this agency assumed responsibility for fifty-seven veterans hospitals operated by the Public Health Service as well as nine under construction by the Treasury Department.<sup>80</sup> One of the nine Treasury Department hospitals was the new 500-bed tuberculosis hospital (Building 70) at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>81</sup>

Building 70 was built on the far southwest side of the Northwestern Branch grounds, at a distance from the other buildings, for several reasons. The isolated site on the grounds kept the tubercular patients away from other members of the Home. The treatment of tuberculosis required fresh air, sunshine, and general rest which was provided in the large, multi-winged facility set apart by itself in the midst of a park-like green area. At the time it was built, the facility was considered a model tuberculosis hospital. In the mid-1930s, the facility was converted to a general medical and surgical hospital, and a new wing was added on the west side. In 1966, a new high-rise hospital was built close to the east side of the 1922-1923 structure; in the mid-1970s, the western two wings of Building 70 were demolished to construct a new domiciliary (Building 123).

Historically, the extension of eligibility for admission to the National Home, which had been included in the October 6, 1917, amendment to the War Risk Insurance Act, was applicable to the more than 50,000 women who had served as nurses during World War I and had received honorable discharges. The Board recognized the right of these women to be admitted to the Home, and set aside a separate building at the Danville Branch for general medical treatment or domiciliary use and a ward in the Northwestern Branch tuberculosis hospital. In 1924, ten to twelve women were treated at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>82</sup>

With the emphasis on hospital facilities in the 1920s, few other projects were undertaken at the Home branches. For the most part, other projects tended to be small in scope and intended to improve the lives of the members: new flagpoles were installed, theaters were rewired, fire engines were purchased, fire escapes were installed, and grandstands were built for improved baseball fields.<sup>83</sup> In the historic area of the Northwestern Branch, most of the work from the 1920s was minor with the exception of a new smoke stack (Building 106) for the power plant and a new greenhouse (Building 40, demolished c. 1994), built in 1924 with additions in 1928 and 1936.

By 1926, the Board began to see a dramatic increase in the number of patient admissions to the National Home though, for the most part, the World War I veterans were receiving medical treatment and returning to civilian life rather than entering the domiciliary program of the Home.<sup>84</sup> However, the Board noted that hospital care costs were almost three times the cost of domiciliary care and required large capital investments in hospitals, medical equipment, and professional staff. By 1928, the Board realized that the facilities at all the branches would be full, and that the organization of the Board was not sufficient to manage the future requirements that National Home would have to meet.<sup>85</sup> In June 1929, the president of the Board of Managers was named to the Federal Commission for Consideration of Government Activities Dealing with Veterans' Matters; the work of this commission resulted in the creation of the Veterans Administration.

On July 21, 1930, the Veterans Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions, and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers were consolidated into the Veterans Administration. For the most part, the architectural projects of this organization involved the construction of veterans hospitals designed by the Technical Service Division of the V.A., with construction supervision given to local personnel using local contractors.<sup>86</sup>

The single major building at the Northwestern Branch constructed by the Veterans Administration in the 1930s is the hospital annex (Building 43), which is located on the south side of the Historic District. The hospital annex was completed in August 1933 and is one of the earliest buildings constructed by the Veterans Administration.<sup>87</sup> In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt's relief programs put a temporary hold on funding for Veterans Administration projects; however, two years later, in August 1935, plans were announced for a \$20,000,000 building program for the Veterans Administration. Several of the former National Home branches received funds; in particular, the Central Branch, which received \$1.2 million to build a new 176-bed general-medical facility and a 750 new and replacement domiciliary which included a 50-women ward.<sup>88</sup> The Milwaukee facility received

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 50

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

\$350,000 for the replacement of a 300-bed general-medical building. This new structure was the west wing added to the 1923 hospital on the south side of the center grounds. When it was dedicated in 1938, Building 6, which had become Hospital Annex #1, was converted to domiciliary use. This addition to the 1923 hospital was demolished in the mid-1970s for the construction of Building 123.

On December 7, 1941, a new war brought a new period of change to the former National Home, when an even larger number of citizens were called upon for military service. To meet the demand for services after World War II, and eventually the Korean and Vietnam wars, additional facilities were built at the former Northwestern Branch, including several Quonset huts used mostly for storage and maintenance (Buildings T-105, T-106, T-107, T-114, T-119). In keeping with the overall history of the National Home, post-World War II facilities were both residential (domiciliary) and medical (hospital) in nature. Building 111, a general medical and surgical hospital, was completed in 1966, and Building 123, a domiciliary, was constructed in 1979. Most recently, in 2004, a new regional office building was construction in the southwest corner of the V.A. Medical Center grounds. These new buildings were built outside of the National Soldiers Home Historic District, along National Avenue south of the former National Home site, to the east and west of the 1923 hospital (Building 70). The present Veterans Affairs Medical Center continues to serve veterans in the same spirit as the Northwestern Branch of the National Home did in 1867.

**Architecture**

When the Board of Managers of the National Asylum met for the first time in Washington, D.C., on May 16, 1866, its principal concern was the selection of sites for the three branches of the national institution. They established criteria for site evaluation: a healthy site with fresh air and ample water supply, located 3 to 5 miles from a city on a tract of at least 200 acres, connected to the city by a railroad.<sup>89</sup> The Board issued a bulletin requesting proposals for sites to be donated or sold for the purpose of erecting branches; in addition, the Board advertised for plans, specifications, and estimates for the construction of asylum buildings.

The Soldiers' Home Society received its charter from the Wisconsin legislature in February 1865, as well as a grant of \$5,000 for the purpose of erecting a permanent facility for the relief of soldiers. In the spring of 1865, the Lady Managers of the Home Society organized a fair to raise funds for the purchase of a site and the construction of the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home, and succeeded in raising over \$ 100,000 for the Soldiers' Home. The temporary building in which the fair had been held had been designed by Edward Townsend Mix.<sup>90</sup> By October 1865, the Home Society had purchased a 27-acre site on the far west side of Milwaukee and had begun developing plans for the construction of a building. It is possible that Mix was responsible for these plans as well.

According to the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, plans for buildings at the Northwestern Branch were being discussed in early March, 1867.<sup>91</sup> At that time, the Board of Managers was considering the construction of a large dining hall and kitchen, a hospital, numerous cottages for single and married veterans, and barracks ("but of a far more comfortable nature"). This original plan appears to have been abandoned between March and May, 1867.<sup>92</sup>

In May 1867, Thomas Budd Van Home, a landscape gardener and former army chaplain, arrived in Milwaukee to determine the plan for the Home site.<sup>93</sup> In the announcement of Van Home's work in the Milwaukee newspapers, information was given about the plans for the building to be constructed for the Home. This structure was to be large and wide with a very tall tower as its central element. The change in architectural plans appears to correspond to the work Van Home was doing at the site, and suggests that Van Home and Mix were working together on the project, as this description fits the building which Mix designed.

Thomas Van Home had been a chaplain in the Ohio Volunteer Infantry, a unit in the Army of the Cumberland under the command of General George Thomas. After the second battle of Chattanooga (November 23-25, 1863), General Thomas directed Van Home to lay out a cemetery at Chattanooga for the burial of the Union dead from the battle of Missionary Ridge.<sup>94</sup> In the late summer of 1864, as Thomas' troops moved south toward Atlanta as part of General William Tecumseh Sherman's march to the sea, Van Home laid out the Union cemetery at Marietta, Georgia. In both cemeteries, Van Home used a small hill as the cemetery site, arranging circular paths and roads around the hill between which he located the burial sites, and designating the top of the hill for a tall monument.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 51

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Van Home's designs relate to the popular rural landscape cemetery design that had been established at Mount Auburn Cemetery outside Boston in the 1830s.<sup>95</sup> However, a more immediate model for Van Home would have the design for the national soldiers' cemetery at Gettysburg.

The work on the design for the Gettysburg cemetery had begun in August, 1863, when David Wills, chairman of the cemetery commission consulted with William Saunders, a landscape gardener who had worked on Laurel Cemetery in Philadelphia and Rose Hill Cemetery in Chicago before the war." By November 1863, the cemetery plan was worked out and made available to President Lincoln as he prepared his speech for the cemetery dedication. The emphasis of Lincoln's address was on the Union's resolve to preserve national unity, the cause for which the soldiers had died at Gettysburg. The design for the cemetery stressed this sense of unity in that Saunders had arranged the burial sites in a semicircular plan with no one section being more prominent than another; the principal focus of the plan was a tall monument placed in the center of the semicircle.<sup>96</sup>

Van Home incorporated some of the Gettysburg design concepts, specifically of a sectioned cemetery with no one section being more prominent than another, into plans for a federal burial grounds at the National Home site. The cemetery was laid out in straight rows of upright granite headstones and opened for use May 22, 1871, when Civil War Private John Afton became the first veteran buried there. Full military honors were accorded each veteran buried, beginning with a funeral ceremony followed by a "Salute to the Dead" and the playing of taps at graveside.<sup>97</sup> Following construction of the Chapel in 1889, funeral services were held inside the veterans' chapel followed by the "Salute to the Dead" and the playing of taps at graveside. The national soldier's cemetery was initially The Soldiers Home Cemetery. In 1937, the name was changed to Wood National Cemetery in honor of U.S. Army Colonel George Henry Wood, the Special Representative of Administration covering National Soldier's Home activities in the early 1930s.<sup>98</sup>

The Gettysburg-inspired design of a tall monument set on the high point of a site appears to have been used by Van Home in laying out the Home grounds at Milwaukee. Mix's Main Building was set on the highest point of the site with the tall tower serving as the focal point. All other buildings were located downhill from the Main Building, isolating the Main Building and concentrating attention on its monumentality. The utilization of one building to serve all the needs of the Home was in keeping with the notion of "home" as a building and with the notion of unity for which the disabled veterans housed in the building had fought. The "home" was surrounded by a village of buildings, which eventually included a Chapel (Building 12), Library (Building 3), Social Hall (Building 4), and Post Office (housed in the Headquarters, Building 1), as well as four lakes, ball diamonds and recreational sites, because common conjecture held that war veterans would recuperate more quickly if they lived in a village setting instead of a hospital. Most of the village was laid out to surround the Main Building along General Wolcott Avenue and Mitchell Boulevard.

The initial plan for making the Main Building the focus of the entire Home presented problems to later officials and architects when they were planning new buildings for the Home. The Main Building was oriented to the east at the crest of the bluff with land available for additional building located to the west or backside of the Main Building. Later buildings from the 1880s were arranged behind the Main Building, but could not be compositionally related to it. Consequently, the buildings of the Northwestern Branch never had a unified relationship to each other, and no centralized spatial unit was ever created.

Van Home was also responsible for the plan of the Central Branch at Dayton, Ohio, which was very different in arrangement from his plan at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>99</sup> His plan for the Central Branch was based on a street pattern with a major thoroughfare, dividing the residential barracks area from the administrative area, and secondary cross streets. The buildings were set along the crest of a hill overlooking the parade grounds and a landscaped park with a deer park, grottoes, greenhouses, ponds, and fountains.<sup>100</sup> At the Central Branch, Van Home created a sense of "home" as a community or village made up of buildings arranged by function into neighborhoods and a shared park area. This type of plan was much more adaptable to expansion as the Home grew; the street grid could be extended, more buildings constructed, and the sense of community maintained.

The architect for the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch was Edward Townsend Mix, the leading architect in Milwaukee from the 1860s through the 1880s.<sup>101</sup> Mix was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1831, and had been trained in the offices of Sydney Stone in New Haven and, possibly, in the offices of Richard Upjohn in New York. In early 1856, Mix began working

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 52

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

for William W. Boyington in Chicago. Mix moved to Milwaukee later in 1856, as a partner in Boyington & Mix, to oversee the firm's work on the Seventh Ward School (demolished), the Newhall House Hotel (burned in 1889), and the State Bank of Wisconsin.

In 1857, Mix left the partnership with Boyington and opened his own office in Milwaukee. He designed several residences for business leaders in the early 1860s, as well as commercial, public, and religious buildings (Milwaukee Sentinel Building; Milwaukee Academy of Music, Dodge County (Minnesota) Courthouse; St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Racine). In 1866, he won a competition for the Kansas state capitol, although his design was greatly changed in construction.

Mix's work in the 1870s and 1880s in Milwaukee was commissioned primarily by business leaders, such as Hercules Dousman (Villa Louis, Prairie du Chien, WI, 1872), Alexander Mitchell (Mitchell Building, 1876; Chamber of Commerce Building, 1879-81; Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Depot, 1886), Henry Button (Button House, Milwaukee, 1876), and John L. Mitchell (Meadowmere/Mitchell residence, 1884). Through his social and political connections with Cadwallader C. Washburn, former governor of Wisconsin, Mix received a commission from Senator William Washburn of Minnesota for Fair Oaks (demolished), the Washburn residence in Minneapolis in 1883. Mix's tie to Minneapolis resulted in several projects in the late 1880s for office buildings there and in St. Paul. Mix opened an office in Minneapolis in 1888; he died there in 1890.

The work of E. Townsend Mix has been characterized as "diverse eclecticism."<sup>102</sup> In his career of almost 35 years, Mix worked through every style of architecture current in the United States from the 1850s through 1890. His early work in Milwaukee was Italianate; by the mid-to late-1860s, he was working in the Second Empire style. His churches of the 1870s were clearly related to the High Victorian Gothic designs of William Butterfield and George Gilbert Scott in England. The polychromy of Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee (1873) is clearly derived from English examples and the writings of John Ruskin.<sup>103</sup> His design for the Chamber of Commerce Building in Milwaukee (1879-81) shows the influence of Frank Furness' work in Philadelphia in the mid-1870s. By the early 1880s, Mix was designing in a very refined Queen Anne style (Milwaukee Club, 1883), and at the same time, producing a Richardsonian Romanesque design which won the national competition for St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Milwaukee, 1883). His Minneapolis and St. Paul office buildings from 1886 to 1890 were high-rise commercial applications of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.<sup>104</sup>

Considering Mix's tendency to work in a wide range of architectural styles derived from the writings and work of other architects, the design for the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch came from a number of sources. The style of the Main Building is Victorian Gothic, which developed in England in the late 1850s and was disseminated in the writings of John Ruskin.<sup>105</sup> Ruskin advocated a mix of medieval styles based on a number of sources from Venetian palaces to English rural churches. He stressed the use of color in design, particularly color in the materials of construction, what he called "constructional" or permanent polychromy. The Ruskinian Gothic style is characterized by flat surfaces, contrasting colors in materials, Gothic (pointed) arched doors and windows, windows arranged in series to create an arcade effect, and mansard roofs (giving the impression of being a pitched roof while allowing an additional floor level) with steeply pitched dormers. Ruskin advocated large-scale buildings with a dominant visual element to convey a sense of the power of architectural form.

Mix could easily have known the writings of Ruskin and the work of English architects through publications available in this country in the 1860s, such as Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice* as well as the English periodicals *The Builder*, an architectural journal, and *Punch and Illustrated London News*.

Another source for Mix's design for the Main Building was the writings of Thomas Story Kirkbride, who was the superintendent of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane in Philadelphia, and the foremost authority on the design of hospitals for the insane in the mid-nineteenth century in the United States.<sup>106</sup> Kirkbride was a leading advocate of "moral therapy" for the insane, which involved occupational and recreational activities for patients, emphasized outdoor exercise such as walking or gardening, and included social events and church services. In effect, Kirkbride was attempting to cure the insane by treating them as rational people engaged in "rational" activities. This form of treatment required an appropriately rational setting, so Kirkbride designed a model institution with "spacious halls, large and well-furnished parlors, and comfortable chambers" in a building with indoor plumbing and forced-air ventilation.<sup>107</sup> This building was to be set in park-like grounds where the patients could benefit from



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 53

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

fresh air, sunshine, and nature in flower gardens and planting beds; he advocated the provision of greenhouses where the patients could occupy themselves as well as supplying the hospital buildings with flowers and plants.<sup>108</sup>

Although the disabled veterans who entered the National Asylum, as it was originally called, were not considered insane, there were few models for the Board of Managers and the architects to use for the design of the National Asylum buildings. Kirkbride's design for the building and grounds of the model asylum did fit the needs of the National Asylum. Kirkbride's program for the model asylum was basically the program adopted by the Board of Managers and Mix for the Northwestern Branch: a site in the country, located close to a city; easy access from the asylum to the city; a large building capable of housing a large number of patients, with provisions for dining, bathing, and socializing; and landscaped grounds for use of the patients and their visitors. Kirkbride's use of a single building arranged in a linear plan with a central administration pavilion with wings connecting to end pavilions was suitable for an insane asylum, but not necessarily for a soldiers' home. To Kirkbride, one of the benefits of his plan for the model insane asylum was control of the patients by housing them in one building in which the central pavilion housed all the common spaces used for dining, recreation, and cultural and social activities. The disabled veterans of the National Asylum were to be cared for, not controlled, which created problems with Mix's design for the Main Building.

In addition to the asylum proposed by Kirkbride, Mix may have used the Main Building (Scott Building) at the National Soldiers' Home in Washington, D.C., as an appropriate model for his design of a soldiers' home. The Washington building had been designed by Lt. Barton S. Alexander in the office of the chief engineer of the Army in 1852, and was completed in 1857.<sup>109</sup> This building was one of three structures designed for the National Soldiers' Home site when it was organized; the other two were the Governor's House and the Secretary-Treasurer's House. Alexander's design was for a two-story building on a raised basement with a mansard roof, which is identical to Mix's design. The Washington building had a projecting center pavilion with a tall, massive tower topped with a mansard roof; wings projected off the sides of the center pavilion. This building was probably well known in the architectural community in the later 1850s because of construction problems and lawsuits between the contractor and the government regarding cost overruns. The Washington Soldiers' Home received considerable attention during the Civil War because President Lincoln and his family used a cottage on the grounds of the Home as the summer White House.<sup>110</sup> The Soldiers' Home Main Building was remodeled in 1870 by the architect Edward Clark and completely altered from its original appearance.<sup>111</sup>

The construction of the Main Building at the Northwestern Branch had considerable problems with cost overruns, which resulted in the Board of Managers stopping the project before the end pavilions of Mix's design were built. The Board's refusal to complete the building as designed must have caused Dr. Wolcott, the local Manager, considerable embarrassment because he had been responsible for its construction. When the Board ordered the creation of the chapel and assembly hall on the second floor over the dining hall. Dr. Wolcott was the only dissenting vote and was ordered to fulfill the Board's decision. Bathing and laundry facilities were located in the basement, which caused Humidity problems throughout the building, and resulted in a fire when the heaters for the water tanks malfunctioned. The building was not adequately ventilated when finally constructed, and heating equipment had been provided for only the basement and the first floor.<sup>112</sup> By 1873, the problems with the Main Building caused many complaints from members to the Board, which transferred General Edward Hincks from the Southern Branch to Milwaukee to make corrections. Hincks replaced heat piping, installed new ventilation shafts, and oversaw the construction of four corner towers, which were intended to add space and finally complete the building as originally designed.<sup>113</sup> The corner towers did not correspond to Mix's design for end pavilions, and added only 96 more beds to the building at a time when the facility was very overcrowded.

Based on other residential buildings designed by Mix in the 1860s, and the lack of mention of any other architect working on the Milwaukee site in the accounts of the Board of Managers, Mix was probably the architect for the Governor's House. A 1881 view of the house indicates that it was originally built as a much smaller structure than it is today. The tower originally had a mansard roof covered with contrasting colored slate or shingles, as is seen on the Main Building. The style of the Governor's House is Victorian Italianate, characterized by a square tower, round-arch windows, simple massing with rectilinear bay projections, and broad overhanging eaves. Mix, known for adapting published designs to his own projects, could have based his plans for the Governor's House on the work of Alexander Jackson Downing's villa designs published in Downing's book *Cottage Residences*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 54

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

in 1850. A comparison of 1889 and 1916 photographs shows that the house had been rebuilt with the addition of a third floor and the replacement of the mansard with a conical tower roof. The original form of the Governor's House was virtually identical to Mix's own house on Waverly Place in Milwaukee, which had been built in 1866 (now demolished).

As Mix was responsible for two of the four buildings originally built for the Home, he may have been the architect for the other two, the hospital and the second duplex quarters building. Photographs indicate that the hospital was a simple two-story brick building, perhaps too straightforward to have been designed by Mix, who was well-known for his sensitivity in adopting the most current architectural styles. The quarters building was a duplex structure, which attempted to clearly convey the sense of being two distinct residential units, and was done in the Gothic Revival board and batten style. This design could have been executed by a contractor working from a pattern book, but the attempt to distinguish the two units may be attributed to Mix.

In 1879, the Board of Managers authorized the construction of a new hospital at the Northwestern Branch. The contract for the design of the hospital went to Henry C. Koch, a Milwaukee architect who designed more than 300 buildings during his forty-year career from 1870 to 1910.<sup>114</sup> Koch was the architect for almost all the major projects undertaken at the Northwestern Branch in the 1880s and 1890s. The highpoint of Koch's career was the winning of the design competition for the Milwaukee City Hall, built in 1893-95, one of the landmarks of the city.

Henry C. Koch was born in Germany in 1841, and came to Milwaukee as a child. From 1856 to 1862, he apprenticed with George W. Mygatt, one of the first architects in Milwaukee; his apprenticeship ended when he enlisted in the 26th Wisconsin Infantry. In 1863, he was transferred to the staff of General Philip H. Sheridan and worked as a topographic engineer. He continued to serve as a civilian on Sheridan's staff in New Orleans, but returned to Milwaukee in 1866, and became a partner with Mygatt. He had a practice with Julius Hess, a former associate of E. Townsend Mix, from 1870 to 1872; after Hess relocated to Detroit, the firm continued as H. C. Koch & Co. Koch was associated with his brother-in-law, Herman Paul Schnetzky from 1874 to 1887. Koch was well known for his public and assembly buildings, having been the designer of fifteen court-houses in Wisconsin and Illinois, and all the public schools built in Milwaukee from 1873 to 1881. He had been the architect for an addition to the Northern State Hospital for the Insane in Oshkosh, Wisconsin in 1874. His experience with hospital design won him the contract for the Milwaukee County Insane Asylum in 1878, which brought accusations from E. Townsend Mix that Koch had unfairly won the contract through political influence<sup>115</sup>. Less than a month before being awarded the contract for the hospital at the Northwestern Branch, Koch received the commission for an addition to the Milwaukee County Hospital.<sup>116</sup>

Not only was Koch qualified to design hospitals, he had an advantage in being a veteran himself. He was very active in veterans organizations, being one of the founders of the Wolcott Post of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1880, and an organizer of the state G.A.R. reunion in Milwaukee in 1880 and the national encampment in the city in 1889.<sup>117</sup>

In his design for the new hospital at the Northwestern Branch, Koch did not use the linear Kirkbride asylum plan as his model, but worked with an arrangement of three separate pavilions connected by corridors at the first floor. In this design, the administrative offices, examination, treatment, and operating rooms were located in the center pavilion with patient wards located in the side pavilions. The wards were the full width of the pavilions, allowing cross ventilation and daylight both morning and afternoon. This arrangement differed from Mix's design in the Main Building in which the use of a double-loaded corridor plan placed the sleeping rooms on the sides of the building, preventing cross ventilation and allowing daylight for only morning or afternoon. The successful functioning of Koch's hospital design, and his ability to work on projects with the branch staff and the local manager brought him more work at the Northwestern Branch through the 1880s.

At its December 1880, meeting, the Board heard a request from the Northwestern Branch to fund the construction of a memorial hall, using a mix of funding sources from the Ward, the Store, and the Post-Humorous Funds. Koch, having completed the hospital at the Northwestern Branch only a year before, was awarded the contract for the design of the Ward Memorial Hall (Building 41) in early 1881. As he had in the hospital project, Koch had previous experience in theater design, having been the architect for the Grand Opera House (demolished), built on the northwest corner of Wells and Water in downtown Milwaukee in 1871. In December 1880, the board had originally allocated a total of \$15,500 for the project.<sup>118</sup> In July, 1881, Major Fulton, the local manager for the Northwestern Branch, informed the Board that Koch had determined that the building could not be built for

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 55

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

\$15,500, and that an additional \$6,000 was necessary for a "building such as is required."<sup>119</sup> The Board authorized the additional funds, as well as additional fees to the architect.<sup>120</sup>

The Ward Memorial Hall was designed by Koch to have a restaurant, post office, waiting room for the train stop on the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad through the Home, and a theater/assembly hall. The building was built of cream city brick, which was preferred by Koch for most of his projects, and highlighted with banding and inlay patterns of red brick.<sup>121</sup>

In 1884, Congress appropriated additional funds for the National Home, a portion of which went to the Northwestern Branch to construct barracks (Building 5) located between the Main Building (Building 2) and the hospital (Building 6). The similarity between the 1884 barracks, the 1888 barracks, and the 1879 hospital-of which the 1888 barracks and the hospital are known to have been designed by Koch-suggests that Building 5 was also designed by Koch. In 1886, the only mention of construction at the Northwestern Branch was the release of funds by Congress which included funding for a new barrack at the branch (Building 9, demolished in 1972), which was located north of the Main Building adjacent to the Bakery, built in 1879.<sup>122</sup> There is no evidence that Koch was the designer of this barrack, although he had received the commission for every other barrack built at the Northwestern Branch in the 1880s.

New quarters for the Secretary and Assistant Surgeon (Building 17) were built at the Northwestern Branch on a site to the northwest of the Main Building, in the open area between the Main Building and the cemetery.<sup>123</sup> The construction of quarters in this area established the general residential character of the area north and northwest of the Main Building, which continues to exist today.

The design of the quarters may be attributed to Henry C. Koch in the similarity between the Shingle Style massing of the quarters and that of the chapel (Building 12), which was designed by Koch in 1889. In 1888, funds were authorized for the fourth barrack (Building 7) built at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>124</sup> According to an article in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on April 28, 1889, Henry C. Koch was the architect for this barrack, which is virtually identical to the 1884 barrack (Building 5) immediately adjacent to it.

In 1889, Koch was awarded the contract for the construction of a frame chapel (Building 12) at the Northwestern Branch.<sup>125</sup> The chapel was funded from the Post Fund, an amount accumulated from sales of products made or grown at the branch and from sales at the Home Store and to be used for the benefit of the members. The Board was not allowed to support religious activities or structures with Congressionally appropriated funds.

Koch's design for the Chapel was done in the Shingle Style as seen in the large mass of the roof form which comprises the entire volume of the structure, in the patterning of shingles across the wall surfaces, and in the grid-like pattern of the window openings. The turreted tower is somewhat Queen Anne in its asymmetrical placement, but the shingle patterning and the simplicity of its massing corresponds to the style of the main body of the structure. The surface treatment and large roof form relates to the design of the adjacent quarters (Building 17), built two years earlier.

Koch's work at the Northwestern Branch in the 1880s reveals a break with pre-Civil War models, such as that of Kirkbride's asylum, and a willingness to work in new contemporary styles, such as the Shingle Style of the 1889 chapel. Koch's ability to work on public projects distinguished him from Mix, who was patronized primarily by private clients. Although Koch's work departs from past models and styles, his work is very straightforward and utilitarian, without the elaborate stylistic features that can be seen in Mix's work.

Several important projects were undertaken in the first half of the 1890s to provide separate buildings for branch functions (administration, library, and social activities), and to modernize operations (power house and the quartermaster storehouse). Several quarters were built to provide housing for the enlarged staff required to manage the Home. The recognition of the different needs of the older members lead to the creation of a new barrack type, the "old men's" barrack or the combination barrack which was based on the differing needs of the elderly. Koch was the architect for the quartermaster storehouse, and most importantly, for the prototype combination barrack.<sup>126</sup>

The Library (Building 3) is a three-story building with the recreation hall on the lower level entered from the south, and the library on the main level and mezzanine with its entrance on the north facing the Main Building, the barracks (Buildings 5 and 7), and the hospital (Building 6). It was built in a restrained Classical Revival style. In materials and window treatment,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 56

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

it appears similar to other Koch buildings at the Northwestern Branch; however, there is no documentation to support such an attribution.

The Social Hall (Building 4) is a three-story frame building, similar in arrangement to the Library located to the east. It has a lower level, with bowling alleys, entered from the south, and two upper floors entered from the north. The two open floors were used for dances and meetings of the local post of the G.A.R. It was also done in a Colonial Revival style; unlike almost all non-quarters buildings, it is a frame structure.

The Headquarters Building (Building 1) is located just south of the Main Building, somewhat aligned with the east facade of the Main Building. It is east of the Library and Social Hall, and is positioned to create a sense of enclosure between the Main Building and Building 5 (barracks) of the north, the Social and Library on the south. There is a base remaining from a flagpole, which was located in the center of this enclosure; photographs identify this enclosure as the "parade grounds".

The restraint of the Renaissance Revival style, the use of cream city brick, and the window treatment again suggest an attribution to Henry C. Koch. There is no firm evidence for such an attribution. Based on a reference to a project for a "building at the National Home" in an *Inland Architect* listing of Henry C. Koch's projects for 1895, either the headquarters building, the quartermaster's storehouse (Building 20), or the power plant (Building 45) may be attributed to Koch.<sup>127</sup> It is likely that he would have identified the headquarters building or the powerhouse by its name if he had been the architect, which suggests that the 1895 Koch project was the storehouse. The storehouse is a large, utilitarian warehouse structure located along a siding of the former Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad. It is built of Milwaukee cream brick in an unadorned utilitarian style.

The most significant building by function that was erected at the Northwestern Branch in the early 1890s was the "old men's barrack" or combination barrack (Building 13, demolished/1972) which was built to the west of the western addition to the hospital in 1893.

A contract for construction, dated May 23, 1893, identifies the architect as Henry C. Koch and the building as a brick veneered building designed for barracks.<sup>128</sup> The 1893 combination barrack at the Northwestern Branch was a two-story structure with a long, one-room wide main building with three wings, one at each end and one in the middle, extending off its north side. The center wing was the dining hall and kitchen, which served only the elderly Civil War members living in the barrack. The Northwestern example was the first of the type to be built, and served as the model for the other branches where it was a standard barrack type by 1902.<sup>129</sup>

The last project of the 1890s at the Northwestern Branch involved the reworking the 1881 Ward Memorial Hall in 1895-97.<sup>130</sup> When it was originally built, the first floor housed several different functions and the second floor was a tall assembly room space, provided with a stage and fixed seating to be used for plays, lectures, and concerts. The upper room was well lighted by windows on its east and west sides. A painted glass window, depicting General Ulysses S. Grant on horseback, was donated to the Northwestern Branch by the Grand Army of the Republic at its annual encampment in 1887. This window was installed in an enlarged window opening at the east side of the second floor. In 1897, the theater was enlarged through the removal of the floor between the original first and second floors, and the wrapping of the original theater balcony around the side of the theater space. The result of this was the blocking off of the Grant window, which can only be seen on the interior in a very shallow space between the theater and the exterior walls.<sup>131</sup> In the 1930s, a projection theater system was added to Ward Memorial Hall so movies could be shown. During its 100-plus year history, entertainment on its stages featured vaudeville and opera, stage and movie stars, including Bob Hope, Liberace, Ethel Merman, and Burns & Allen among others.

In 1898, Congress approved the establishment of an eighth branch of the National Home at Danville, Illinois. The initial building program for this branch consisted of over forty buildings arranged in a formal plan within a large circular road with the mess hall as the center of the circle and barracks staggered along the edge of the circle. The Mountain Branch, which was established in 1903, near Johnson City, Tennessee, carried the concept of prior planning into the architectural form of the buildings as well as in the plan. The buildings at the Mountain Branch were designed in a French Chateau style and grouped around a central courtyard to give the grouping a heightened sense of monumentality. The facility received considerable praise when it was opened, as critics commended the Federal government for funding such a well-worked out scheme.<sup>132</sup> The last of the National

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 57

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Home branches was established at Hot Springs, South Dakota, in 1907, as the Battle Mountain Sanitarium. The facility was not a branch itself, but a facility open to members at any of nine branches suffering from rheumatism or tuberculosis. The buildings of the sanitarium were done in a Spanish Mission style and were arranged like the spokes of a wheel radiating out from a circular walkway around a interior courtyard.<sup>133</sup>

For the most part, the architectural projects of the Treasury Department, the Public Health Service, and Veterans Bureau were highly standardized in plan and in style. The model for this approach can be seen in the design program of the Mountain and Battle Mountain branches of the National Home. The architecture of the Mountain and Battle Mountain Branches of the National Home had followed a similar design approach in adopting a single style in planning all the buildings for the site. The architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler had praised the managers and the architect of the Mountain Branch for creating a building complex unified through style and building arrangement.<sup>134</sup> When a group of four three-story barracks were being planned for the Pacific Branch in 1929, the Board had required their design to conform to the style of the new hospital building at the branch. Clearly, the Board of the National Home had been trying to produce more harmonious architectural projects in its last twenty years.

The style and materials (red brick and fine stone ornamentation) seen in the 1923 tuberculosis hospital (Building 70) reflects that uniform design approach, which begin in the early 1920s for veterans facilities. The single major building at the Northwestern Branch constructed by the Veterans Administration in the 1930s is the hospital annex (Building 43), which is located on the south side of the Historic District. Although the windows and entry doors have been replaced, the building demonstrates the Veterans Administration's use of a simplified Georgian Revival style. Stylistically, the hospital annex is similar to the 1923 tuberculosis hospital (Building 70) built by the Veterans Bureau.

For the most part, the architectural projects of the Veterans Administration were designed by the Technical Service Division of the V.A., with construction supervision given to local personnel using local contractors.<sup>135</sup> Building styles and materials as well as floor plans were standardized for V.A. projects. The hospital annex was completed in August 1933.

In the historic district, the only other structures built in the 1930s were garages, storage buildings, and a new kitchen for the Main Building (Building 2). The kitchen project involved the demolition of the original 1867 kitchen on the north side of the Main Building dining hall, and the construction of a new kitchen. The new kitchen was built with bricks salvaged from the demolition, allowing the new construction to match the original 1867 building.<sup>136</sup> In war and post-war era of the 1940s, the last decade of significance in the historic district, the structures built were garages and Quonset huts, with the exception of a flagpole erected in 1945 at the end of World War II, which was removed by the V.A. in the late 1980s. In 1972, the State Medical Society of Wisconsin honored the early history and medicine of the historic district with an historical marker honoring Dr. Erastus B. Wolcott, located on the hill above Lake Wheeler.<sup>137</sup> In 1989, the history of the Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was commemorated with the dedication of a State Historical Marker, "The National Soldiers Home," located in front of the new V.A. Medical Center along National Avenue.<sup>138</sup>

The buildings within the historic district constitute a visually impressive group of institutional buildings, which are notable both for the variety of building types (barracks, hospital, library, chapel, quarters, storehouse, power plant) and of styles (Victorian Gothic, Victorian Italianate, Shingle Style, Renaissance Revival, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival) represented. The site itself maintains the strong sense of place, which is created by the tightly arranged grouping of buildings. The buildings and the landscape are integrated into a symbolic expression of national unity for which the Civil War was fought, and for which the National Home was created.

**Archeological Potential**

Prehistoric archeology has been undertaken through funded projects for test excavations at various locations within the National Home Historic District grounds. Some of these were undertaken as a part of the development of the V.A.'s *Historic Preservation Plan* in 1992.<sup>139</sup> Historic archeology may be of considerable significance in that the sites of several demolished buildings have been identified on the grounds. Excavations at existing sites have uncovered historic artifacts related to the Home's period of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 58

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

significance in addition to prehistoric artifacts. Those sites, as well as other locations around existing buildings may yet yield valuable information on the habits and possessions of the National Home members, as well as on construction practices used over the last 125 years of building on the site. As suggested by the Archeology Report contained in the *Historic Preservation Plan*, further excavations at the three identified prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, including a potential burial mound at Site A, as well as additional excavations along the bluff line boundary on the west side of the grounds, may uncover additional prehistoric artifacts, including artifacts of potential significance for Native Americans. To date, excavations have uncovered the following prehistoric finds:

Site A, a 40-meter by 30-meter site, located just northwest of the Silurian Reef and north of Buildings 18, 19 and 62, at the intersection of Mitchell Boulevard and the Miller Park entrance to the Historic District off of I-94. Excavations uncovered 24 prehistoric materials, including several stone tools and chert flakes and shatter artifacts, the byproducts of stone tool construction. A yet-unexcavated low-rise mound is located on the north, northeastern tip of the site.

Site B, a 40-meter by 50-meter site located east of the Powder Magazine and north of Building 2, uncovered 9 prehistoric items, including chert flakes and shatter.

Site C, a 50-meter by 20-meter site, located on a small rise across the railroad tracks to the south of Building 7 on the west side of Red Arrow Road, uncovered prehistoric debris including chert flakes.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 59

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Preservation Activity**

The intense pressure that was placed on the National Home and that has continued with its successors, the Veterans Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs, to meet the needs of American veterans, could easily have caused considerable loss of site and buildings at the former Northwestern Branch. However, the Milwaukee facility clearly has major buildings from its entire history and the site, as originally laid out by Chaplain Van Home, is virtually intact, with the exception of the loss of the farmlands for the County Stadium and the intrusion of I-94 on the north side.

The engineering staff of the facility has maintained a level of historic integrity over the years, adapting buildings rather than demolishing them. Unfortunately, the increased pressure on the V.A. in the 1990s has led to accelerated change in the historic district. Most recently, the V.A. announced plans in November 2003 to open six buildings, the Headquarters, Main, Library, Hospital, Chapel and Ward Memorial Hall (Building 1, Building 2, Building 3, Building 6, Building 12 and Building 41), as well as 37 acres in the southeast corner of the medical center property — at 16 acres of which resides within the National Home Historic District — to commercial development via a 75-year lease, as early as summer of 2005.<sup>140</sup> Additionally, the V.A. began renovations in late 2004 on the exteriors and interiors of some National Register eligible buildings (Building 4 and Building 17).

The preparation of a *Historic Preservation Plan* in 1992 — in conjunction with the 1979 original submission of this application to the National Register of Historic Places (and when the historic district was deemed National Register eligible in 1980) — was intended to serve as a guide in maintaining the historic and architectural fabric of the district while accommodating carefully considered change. Private citizens have been encouraged to participate in the preservation of historic buildings on the grounds, in particular the Ward Memorial Hall, which was used by community theater groups for rehearsals and performances in the early to mid 1990s.

Subsequent efforts of the nonprofit Soldiers Home Foundation, Inc.,<sup>141</sup> and community partners have focused upon the Chapel (Building 12) and Building 1. Additional plans are being finalized by the Soldiers Home Foundation to ensure the EUL-designated buildings — and the historical, architectural significance as well as the legacy of veterans' sacrifices housed within the buildings — along with the cemetery, grounds and buildings of the entire historic district, are properly and reverently restored and preserved. Educational activities and tours, including an annual Reclaiming Our Heritage Multi-Era Encampment and Reenactment that draws 10,000 people to the grounds each June,<sup>142</sup> — as well as ongoing partnership efforts and activities with the Department of Veteran Affairs, the community, state and nation — have energized preservation efforts and called increasing attention to the need to restore and preserve the buildings and grounds of this nationally significant historic district.

For over 20 years, the Soldiers Home Foundation has specifically been dedicated to protecting, preserving and highlighting this national treasure because, among so many reasons, The National Soldiers Home Historic District is:

- Milwaukee's most direct link to President Abraham Lincoln,
- A lasting reminder of the force of American women who were determined to care for those who bore the burden of war and who foresaw the need for *permanent* care for veterans of *all* wars,
- The nation's only remaining example of its original federal soldiers homes and recuperative villages,
- The national embodiment of the history of federal veteran medical care from the Civil War to modern times,
- The final resting place of more than 37,000 American veterans from the War of 1812 through today,
- The home of nationally acclaimed works of architectural art.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 60

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Endnotes**

1. David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*, Boston, 1971, 131-133.
2. On the Sailors Home, see Judith Gladys Cetina, *A History of Veterans' Homes in the United States, 1811-1930*, Ph.D. diss. Case Western Reserve University, 1977, 30-39.
3. On the army asylum, see Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 39-53.
4. Paul Goode, *United States Soldiers' Home*, Richmond, VA, 1957, 24-26, 45-46.
5. Goode, *United States Soldiers' Home*, 99.
6. On the Sanitary Commission, see William Q. Maxwell, *Lincoln's Fifth Wheel: The Political History of the United States Sanitary Commission*, London, 1956.
7. Robert Bremner, *The Public Good, Philanthropy and Welfare in the Civil War Era*, New York, 1980, 146.
8. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 61-72.
9. Marts A. Vinovskis, "Have Social Historians Lost the Civil War? Some Preliminary Demographic Speculations," *Toward A Social History of the American Civil War*, Cambridge, 1990, 9.
10. Ibid.
11. The history of the Wisconsin organization can be found in Ethel Hurn's *Wisconsin Women in the War between the States*, Madison, 1911, 18-26, 155-176
12. Ethel Hurn, *Wisconsin Women*, 165-174; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, vol. 2, Chicago, 1881, 757-759. For a description of the fair, see *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 18, 1865, p. 1, col. 4.
13. Board of Managers of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Proceedings*, May 16, 1866, 2; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 5, 1867, p. 1, col. 4.
14. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 12-13, 1866, 4.
15. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 13, 1866, 5: Colonel Walker made the presentation of the Lady Managers' offer of donation.
16. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 6, 1866, 6.
17. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 7, 1866, 7.
18. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 4, 1867, 11.
19. Frank Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, Vol. 2, 768.
20. The oldest building at the former Eastern Branch at Togus, Maine, is the Governor's House which dates from 1869; *National Register of Historic Places*, 1973. The *Catalog of National Historic Landmarks* (National Park Service, 1987) has a date of 1866, which refers to the establishment of the Togus facility, not the construction of the house. The oldest structure at the former Central Branch at Dayton, Ohio, is the Protestant chapel, completed in 1870 (*Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette*, October 10, 1870); information from Melissa Rumbarger, archivist, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Dayton, Ohio.
21. Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, Vol. 2, 1330.
22. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 18, 1867, p. 1, col. 4. Van Horne returned to Milwaukee to review work on the site, *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 18, 1868, p. 1, col. 5.
23. For the career of E. Townsend Mix, see John R. Burrows, *The Work of E. Townsend Mix*, MA thesis, University of Virginia, 1980; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, January 5, 1866.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 61

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

24. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 12, 1868, 21.
25. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, October 28, 1870, 75.
26. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 181.
27. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1874*, 7.
28. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1876), 330, 344, 355, 367.
29. Site Map, 1876.
30. VA Scrapbook, 1937-1941, p. 38.
31. James Marten, " 'A Place of Great Beauty, Improved By Man.' The Soldiers' Home and Victorian Milwaukee." *Milwaukee County Historical Society Magazine*, Vol. 22. Spring 1999. p. 2-15.
32. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 2, 1877, 407-408.
33. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1877), 384, 395, 408, 424.
34. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 82.
35. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1879), 505, 517, 532, 555.
36. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1880), 640.
37. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1890), 293-298.
38. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 178.
39. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 2.
40. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 57.
41. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 59, 83, 106, 108.
42. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 3.
43. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1882*, 4.
44. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1883*, 3.
45. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1884), 25; Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 312-313.
46. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 326-328.
47. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 30, 1883, 794; Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 326.
48. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1883*, 111; Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 324: the elevator was one of the first physical improvements to benefit the elderly.
49. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 281-282.
50. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 183, 196-197.
51. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1884*, 5.
52. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1884*, 30.
53. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1884), 15-17, 35.
54. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* September 23, 1885, 59-60.
55. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, November 11, 1887, 159, 165-167.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 62

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

56. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 19, 1887, 131.
57. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 186, citing Board of Managers, Annual Report for 1887, 3.
58. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1888), 198.
59. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, November 17, 1888, 208.
60. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 188-189; Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 19, 1888, 196-197.
61. Contract for construction dated April 13, 1889, in the files of the director of the Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, April 28, 1889, p. 12, col. 2.
62. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 306.
63. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, November 7, 1890, 382-384.
64. Contract for construction dated May 23, 1893, in the files of the director of the Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
65. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 315, citing "Report of General William Averell to General William B. Franklin, July 1, 1890."
66. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 315.
67. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, June 10, 1897, 725.
68. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 354-355.
69. Board of Managers, *Proceedings* (1905), 128, 186.
70. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, September 8, 1896, 681.
71. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 8, 1916, 21.
72. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 4, 1917, 88.
73. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 383.
74. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 2, 1917, 28.
75. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 21, 1917, 43; September 6, 1918, 82.
76. Gustavus Weber and Laurence Schmeckebier, *The Veterans Administration*, Washington, DC, 1934, 4.
77. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 22, 1921, 177.
78. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 22, 1921, 177-180.
79. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 378-379.
80. Weber and Schmeckebier, *Veterans Administration*, 16-17.
81. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 4, 1921, 217.
82. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, June 19, 1923, 275-276; September 14, 1923, 281; December 1, 1924, 346.
83. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 20, 1923, 264-267.
84. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 6, 1926, 443.
85. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, March 20, 1928, 7.
86. Schuyler, "Fortunate Treatment," *Architectural Record*, August, 1911, 137-150.
87. "Dedicate Addition" *Wisconsin News*, August 31, 1933.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 63

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

88. "Bill Just Signed" August 24, 1935, Scrapbook 1937-1941, Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
89. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, May 16, 1866, 2; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 5, 1867, p. 1 col. 4.
90. See Burrows, *Work of E. Townsend Mix*.
91. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 2, 1867, p. 1, col. 4.
92. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 18, 1867, p. 1, col. 4.
93. Ibid.
94. Thomas B. Van Home, *History of the Army of the Cumberland, Its Organization, Campaigns, and Battles*, 1875; reprint Wilmington, NC, 1988, vol. 2, 377-379.
95. See Blanche Ward-Linden, *Silent City on A Hill; Landscape of Memory in Boston's Mt., Auburn Cemetery*, Columbus, OH, 1989.
96. Discussions with Robert Prosper, National Park Service historian, Gettysburg National Military Park, and Christopher Vemon, professor of landscape architecture. University of Illinois-Urbana, on the work of William Saunders at Gettysburg. See Carry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg, The Words that Remade America*, New York, 1992.
97. Historical Files, Wood National Cemetery, Milwaukee.
98. *Who's Who in America*, 1942-43, 1943-1950
99. *Dayton Weekly Journal*, September 10, 1867.
100. J.C. Gobrecht, *History of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers: with a Complete Guide-Book to the Central Home at Dayton, Ohio*, Dayton, 1875, 84-94.
101. The only comprehensive analysis of the work of Edward Townsend Mix is Burrows, *Work of E. Townsend Mix*.
102. Burrows, *Work of E. Townsend Mix*, 1.
103. Roger Dixon and Stefan Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*, London, 1978, 22.
104. Numerous buildings by E. Townsend Mix have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including:
  - St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Racine, 1866-1867
  - Villa Louis, Prairie du Chien, 1872
  - Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Milwaukee, 1873-1875
  - Mitchell Building, Milwaukee, 1876-187
  - Mackie Building (Chamber of Commerce), Milwaukee, 1879-1880
  - St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Milwaukee, 1882
  - Grand Avenue Congregational Church, Milwaukee, 1887
105. Dixon and Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*, 22.
106. Thomas S. Kirkbride, *On the Construction, Organization, and General Arrangements of Hospitals for the Insane*, Philadelphia, 1854.
107. Nancy Tomes, *A Generous Confidence: Thomas Story Kirkbride and the Art of Asylum-Keeping*, Cambridge, 1984, 41.
108. Kirkbride, *On the Construction...of Hospitals*, 53.
109. Goode, *United States Soldiers' Home*, 51-52.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 64

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

110. Goode, *United States Soldiers' Home*, 75.
111. Goode, *United States Soldiers' Home*, 102.
112. Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Annual Report for 1875*, 28.
113. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1875*, 27.
114. For a contemporary biography of Henry C. Koch, see Rower, *History of Milwaukee*, vol. 2, 1500-1501; the only comprehensive study of Koch is William O'Brien, *Milwaukee Architect: Henry C. Koch*, MA thesis. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1989.
115. Burrows, *Work of E. Townsend Mix*, 52-53.
116. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 19, 1879, p. 7, col. 2.
117. O'Brien, *Milwaukee Architect*, 151-152.
118. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, December 14, 1880, 640: Ward Fund, \$7,500; PostHurnous Fund, \$4,500; Store Fund, \$3,500.
119. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 6, 1881, 679; *Annual Report for 1881*, July 8, 1881, 15.
120. Board of Managers, *Annual Report for 1881*, September 9, 1881, 26. It is interesting to note that Koch not only received approval to increase the budget for the project by almost 40%, but received additional fees at 6% at a time when architects used a standard fee of 5%. This arrangement was acceptable to the Board, and did not affect Koch's professional reputation with the Board as he continued to receive commissions for several other projects at the National Home for the next fifteen years.
121. Ward Memorial Hall, Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, National Register of Historic Places, May 8, 1984.
122. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, July 20, 1886, 96.
123. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, April 19, 1887, 131.
124. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, November 17, 1888, 208.
125. Contract for construction dated April 13, 1889, in the files of the director of the Medical Library, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, April 28, 1889, p. 12, col. 2.
126. Contract for construction dated May 23, 1893.
127. *Inland Architect*, 26/1, August 1895, 10.
128. Contract for construction dated May 23, 1893.
129. Cetina, *History of Veterans' Homes*, 317.
130. Board of Managers, *Proceedings*, June 10, 1897, 725.
131. Ward Memorial Hall, National Register of Historic Places, May 8, 1884.
132. Montgomery Schuyler, "Fortunate Treatment of a Group of Institutional Buildings at Johnson City," *Architectural Record*, August 1911, 137-150; "The Soldiers' Home in Tennessee: A Noteworthy Example of Buildings Planned as a Whole," *The Craftsman*, December, 1906, 340-356.
133. *History of Battle Mountain Sanitarium*, n.p., n.d., from the files of the Library at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Hot Springs, South Dakota.
134. Schuyler, "Fortunate Treatment" *Architectural Record*, August 1911, 137-150.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 65

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

**Bibliography**

- Benchley, Elizabeth D., Ph.D., "Archeology Report on Site Evaluation Studies at Three Prehistoric Sites." *Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Administration Medical Center Historic Preservation Plan*, Jan. 1, 1992.
- Board of Managers of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Proceedings and Annual Reports*.
- Burrows, John R. *The Work of E. Townsend Mix*, MA thesis, University of Virginia, 1980.
- Cetina, Judith Gladys. *A History of Veterans' Homes in the United States, 1811-1930*, Ph.D. diss. Case Western Reserve University, 1977.
- Corbett, Elizabeth. *Out at the Soldiers' Home*. Appleton-Century, 1941.
- Dixon, Roger, and Stefan Muthesius. *Victorian Architecture*. London, 1978.
- Engineering Files, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Milwaukee.
- Flower, Frank. *History of Milwaukee*, Vol. 2, Chicago, 1881.
- Gobrecht, J.C. *History of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers: with a Complete Guide-Book to the Central Home at Dayton, Ohio*, Dayton, 1875, 84-94.
- Goode, Paul. *United States Soldiers' Home*, Richmond, VA.
- Hurn, Ethel. *Wisconsin Women in the War between the States*, Madison, 1911.
- Kirkbride, Thomas S. *On the Construction, Organization, and General Arrangements of Hospitals for the Insane*, Philadelphia, 1854.
- Marten, James. "'A Place of Great Beauty, Improved By Man.' The Soldiers' Home and Victorian Milwaukee." *Milwaukee County Historical Society Magazine*, Vol. 22. Spring 1999.
- Rothman, David J. *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*, Boston, 1971.
- Schuyler, Montgomery. "Fortunate Treatment of a Group of Institutional Buildings at Johnson City," *Architectural Record*, August 1911.
- Schuyler, Montgomery. "The Soldiers' Home in Tennessee: A Noteworthy Example of Buildings Planned as a Whole," *The Craftsman*, December, 1906.
- Tomes, Nancy. *A Generous Confidence: Thomas Story Kirkbride and the Art of Asylum-Keeping*, Cambridge, 1984.
- Vinovskis, Marts A. "Have Social Historians Lost the Civil War? Some Preliminary Demographic Speculations," *Toward A Social History of the American Civil War*. Cambridge, 1990.
- Weber, Gustavus, and Laurence Schmeckebier. *The Veterans Administration*. Washington, DC, 1934.
- White, William B. *United States Department of the Interior National Park Service's Historic American Buildings Survey*. Planning and Design Institute, Inc. Jan. 29, 1992.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 66

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**UTM REFERENCES**

Continued

	Zone	Easting	Northing
5.	1 6	4 2 0 2 9 2	4 7 6 4 7 5 2
6.	1 6	4 2 0 2 9 2	4 7 6 4 6 4 7
7.	1 6	4 2 0 3 3 1	4 7 6 4 5 8 1
8.	1 6	4 2 0 5 1 3	4 7 6 4 3 7 9
9.	1 6	4 2 0 6 6 5	4 7 6 4 4 1 4
10.	1 6	4 2 0 9 7 1	4 7 6 4 0 2 3
11.	1 6	4 2 0 9 7 1	4 7 6 3 7 4 4
12.	1 6	4 2 0 8 1 0	4 7 6 3 7 1 9
13.	1 6	4 2 0 6 5 9	4 7 6 3 8 2 4
14.	1 6	4 2 0 3 0 7	4 7 6 3 7 8 2
15.	1 6	4 1 9 9 6 2	4 7 6 3 8 8 9
16.	1 6	4 1 9 9 6 2	4 7 6 4 6 3 9
17.	1 6	4 1 9 9 6 2	4 7 6 4 6 7 9

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 67

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Northwestern Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District is located in Section 35 of T7N, R21E, and is wholly contained within the boundaries of the City of Milwaukee in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. The boundaries of the north portion begin at a point located at the intersection of the southerly curblineline of West Blue Mound Road and the right-of-way of Mitchell Boulevard, then proceeds south along the east edge of the said right-of-way to the north edge of the right-of-way of Interstate Highway 94. The line then proceeds west on the north edge of the said Interstate Highway 94 to the west property line of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, abutting the property of Beth Hamedrosh Hagodel Cemetery; the line then proceeds east along the property line of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center abutting Calvary Cemetery to the west property line of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center right-of-way along Mitchell Boulevard, proceeding north to the southerly curblineline of West Blue Mound Road, returning to the point of beginning.

The boundaries of the south portion of the historic district begin at the intersection of the westerly curblineline of Story Parkway and the southern edge of the right-of-way of Interstate Highway 94, proceeding along the base of the bluff on the property line between the Miller Park grounds and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center to the intersection with the northerly railroad right-of-way of the Chicago, Milwaukee St. Paul & Pacific Railroad and the westerly right-of-way of Highway 41. From this point, the boundary proceeds south on the across the railroad right-of-way to the watercourse of the drainage channel, where the boundary turns southwest-west and follows the channel to the west property line of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The boundary line proceeds north on the established property line to the southerly edge of the right-of-way of Interstate Highway 94, where the line turns east to follow the southerly edge right-of-way of the Interstate Highway 94 to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries include all resources associated with the period of significance of the historic district, and follow the natural contours of the site that were present when the original plan was laid out, with the exception of the intrusion of Interstate 94 and the transfer of the former lands to the County of Milwaukee. The boundaries include the view shed from the earliest and most prominent building (Building 2) and create a visual separation between the historic district and the more recent development along National Avenue. Building 70 and its related buildings have been excluded even though they fall within the period of significance because the removal of the west wing of the original building and the 1938 addition and the construction of Building 111 and Building 123 have eliminated the original form of the building and its original context.

The boundaries of the National Soldiers Home Historic District are discontinuous as the district was physically divided when the East-West Expressway portion of the Milwaukee County Expressway (now Interstate Highway 90/94) was built west from downtown to Waukesha County in 1962.<sup>1</sup> The highway construction bisected the district into a northern third, which contains 5 acres of Wood National Cemetery and part of the Zablocki Drive services road and the Home's original entrance road (General Mitchell Boulevard), and the larger southern two-thirds portion of the district. While the interstate highway physically separates the district, these resources remain historically contiguous and are considered contiguous in day-to-day operations by both the Wood National Cemetery and the Department of Veterans Affairs in the upkeep and maintenance of the cemetery markers and VA grounds.

**Endnote**

1. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Feb. 27, 2005. "For 50 years, Milwaukee's been on a freeway ride." Eric Paulsen.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 11 Page 68

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Form Prepared By**

The original application that determined National Register Eligibility was prepared by:

Name/Title: Nancy J. Hubbard

Organization: Planning and Design Institute date 7/2/1992

Street & Number: 4545 North Woodburn telephone (414) 229-6451

City or Town: Milwaukee State: WI Zip: 53211

In addition to Ms. Gilpatrick Halverson, this resubmitted application was updated by the following:

Name/Title: Attorney Todd Hunter, President

Organization: Heritage Guard Preservation Society, Inc. date 1/25/2005

Street & Number: 115 West Main Street, 2nd Floor telephone (608) 255-8678

City or Town: Madison State: WI Zip: 53703

Name/Title: Patricia Lynch, Secretary

Organization: Soldiers Home Foundation, Inc. date 1/25/2005

Street & Number: 5000 West National Avenue telephone (414) 389-4135

City or Town: Milwaukee State: WI Zip: 53295-1000



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Additional Information Page 69

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**USGS Map**

USGS Map enclosed. See additional aerial map, also enclosed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Additional Information Page 70

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Sketch Map**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Additional Information Page 71

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Photographs**

Photographer: Patricia A. Lynch

Photographs taken: December 20, 2005

Location of negatives: Soldiers Home Foundation, Inc., Office, 5000 W. National Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53295

<b>Photo #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vantage Point</b>
1	Building 1 - Administration (Headquarters)	E from Wolcott Ave. in front of Building 3
2	Building 2 - Old Main (Domiciliary)	NW from General Mitchell Blvd.
3	Building 3 - Wadsworth Library	SE from Wolcott Ave. in front of Building 4
4	Building 4 - Recreation Hall	S from Wolcott Ave. in front of Building 5
6a	Building 6 - Hospital	W from Wolcott Ave. in front of Building 5
6b	Building 6 - Hospital	NW from Parking Lot off Wolcott Ave.
7	Building 6 - Domiciliary Barracks	S from service drive between Buildings 2 & 7
11	Building 11 - Firehouse	SW from General Mitchell Blvd.
12	Building 12 - Chapel	W from General Mitchell Blvd.
17	Building 17 - Surgeon & Adjutant's Quarters	NW from Chapel
18	Building 18 - Quarters	E from General Mitchell Blvd.
37	Building 37 - Quarters	E from South loop of Barron Cr.
39	Building 39 - Governor's Residence	NW from lawn south of Barron Cr.
41	Ward Memorial Hall (Theater)	W from lawn E of General Mitchell Blvd.
43	Building 43 - Hospital Annex - Domiciliary	NW from Hines Ave.
45-106	Building 45 - Powerhouse - and Smokestack	W from W entrance of Building 43
50-49	Buildings 50 and 49 - Quarters	N from Power House Dr.
53	Powder Magazine	NE from sloping lawn across from Building 2
57	Building 57 - Cemetery Reception House	SW from Walker Dr.
84	Building 84 - Garage for Buildings 49, 50	S from Power House Dr.
120	Soldiers and Sailors Monument	W from Walker Dr. in front of Building 57
OB-1	Hiker Statue	E from Hines Ave.
OB-2	Fountain	E from General Mitchell Blvd. in front of Building 2
S-1	Wood National Cemetery	N from Walker Dr. near OB-3

Map created Tue Jan 25 15:03:18 CST 2005

### Legend



-  Railroad
-  State Highways
-  Interstate
-  All Highways
-  Waterways
-  Local Roads

Scale: 1:15,913

DO NOT USE FOR NAVIGATION

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Additional Sheet Sketch Map

National Soldiers Home Historic District  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

