

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 2 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 13 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

T.L. Beiseker Mansion

AND/OR COMMON

Order of the Eastern Star (O.E.S.) Home

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Second Street at Roberts Avenue (unnumbered), Post Office Box 602

CITY, TOWN

Fessenden

VICINITY OF

1

STATE

North Dakota

CODE

38

COUNTY

Wells

CODE

103

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY		OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT		<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
		<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
		<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
		<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Douglas Deitz

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 602

CITY, TOWN

Fessenden

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Dakota 58438

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wells County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Post Office Box 125

CITY, TOWN

Fessenden

STATE

North Dakota 58438

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

North Dakota Historic Site Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of North Dakota  
Liberty Memorial Building

CITY, TOWN

Bismarck

STATE

North Dakota 58505

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD             RUINS  
 FAIR              UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former T.L. Beiseker Mansion, a balloon-frame 2½-story yellow-painted residence with full basement, has a fieldstone and mortar foundation, first and second floors sheathed in clapboard siding, and shingled attic story. The hipped primary roof volume, punctured on the north slope by a large brick chimney with corbeled head, is also interrupted by large gables on the facade (south) and east elevations and by lesser gables on the rear and west elevations. A pair of 2-story semicircular turrets with conical roofs and curved windows span the juncture of the facade and each side elevation, and the plane of the west wall is altered by a 2-story semihexagonal window. Other fenestration forms include a triple window with arched heading and skirting of carved circles in the facade gable; narrow arched windows in the secondary gables; and a rectangular stained glass window on the east elevation, illuminating the stairway landing between the principal floors. Extending across the facade and curving halfway around the side elevations is a 1-story porch measuring 9 by 115 feet and sheltered by a roof supported on rectangular posts. The posts are mounted on a low stone wall pierced at intervals by floor-level arches for drainage. Stones for the wall and for the piers which flank the main entrance and terminate the porch on the east side were reputedly brought from the East and cut to specification on the site at a cost of \$5000.

The interior of the house has 10-foot ceilings, 12-inch thick plastered walls, and hardwood floors, but its chief distinction is the quantity and quality of standing wood trim on the main floor, which appears to be oak and which exhibits its original finish. Entry to the hall is through a front door with cross panels beneath a single beveled light and sidelights with lead muntins in geometric patterns. The hall features wainscoting, a dentiled cornice, and paneled sliding doors leading to the library on the right (east) and the parlor on the left. The latter room is highlighted by a mantelpiece with mottled green ceramic tile surround, and facing embellishment which includes carved urns and swags, Ionic columns, and a mirror, all set within a paneled alcove and flanked by wall benches and shelving. Sliding paneled doors separate the parlor from the room on the north which originally served as T.L. Beiseker's office but which was later converted to a bedroom. The kitchen has been modernized with acoustical tile ceiling, wall cabinets, and linoleum floor covering, but the dining room (which with the kitchen, butler's pantry, and service stair completes the rear half of the main floor) retains its original appearance. Exposed ceiling beams, a heavy cornice, paneled wainscoting, and brass wall standards all contribute to the effect, but attention centers on the north wall and a built-in china cupboard with dentiled molding, Corinthian brackets, abbreviated Romanesque-type columns, and mirrors and shelves edged with beading.

Located in the hall between dining room and library is the principal stairway, a half-turn type with landing, gooseneck handrail, and turned balusters placed four to a tread. The square, grooved newel post on the curtail step features a brass lamp in the form of a cupid carrying a light globe aloft, while the landing newel bears a tapered brass shaft also topped by a globe. Opening off the wainscoted second-floor hall are six bedrooms, two bathrooms, a cedar-lined closet, and a secondary hall with stairs to the attic story. The latter is divided into servants' quarters (bedroom and bath), a ballroom, and storage areas. The ballroom finish includes plastered walls and ceilings, molded baseboard and cornice, striated door casings with circular end blocks, and a U-shaped wooden bench recessed below the arched triple window of the facade gable. The basement of the house contains a bedroom, bath, laundry and furnace rooms, fruit cellar, and three cisterns beneath the floor, one of which has a capacity of approximately 400 barrels.

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The house occupies a tract measuring 280 by 300 feet (lots 1,2,3,4,9,10,11, and 12 of block 5, Chess and Lloyd's Addition to the City of Fessenden). The extensive grounds, enclosed on the north, south and west by hedges and an iron fence, are planted in grass, trees, and flower beds, and the service walk in the west yard is covered by an arbor. The double garage and tool shop in the northwest corner of the property is a 1-story white clapboard structure with shingled roof, brick chimney, broad fascia, and 1 over 1 windows with cornice head casings.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES      1899      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      T.L. Beiseker (Builder)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former T.L. Beiseker Mansion, described at the time of its construction as one of the finest houses in North Dakota (Wells County Free Press, July 27, 1899), has survived since then with its original architectural character remarkably intact. An imposing blend of the Queen Anne and Shingle styles, it is a legacy of T.L. Beiseker, banker, publisher, and land developer, to the physical heritage of Fessenden, his adopted home. There appears to be no record of Beiseker having commissioned an architect to draw up plans for the house, but family tradition attributes its execution, if not its design, to Henry J. Beiseker, an uncle of T.L. and a skilled carpenter by trade. Henry J. Beiseker, who lived his later life in Fessenden and built other homes in the area for family members, hired carpenters to commute by the week from Minneapolis to work on his nephew's house.

Thomas Lincoln Beiseker was born in Indiana on April 8, 1866, during his parents' journey west from Brooklyn, New York. The family eventually settled in 1869 in Austin, Minnesota, where Beiseker grew up and was employed for seven years as deputy county auditor. In his early twenties he became associated with Jay Cooke of Philadelphia, who held dominant interest in the Northern Pacific Railway, in that line's development of northern Minnesota. Later Beiseker went to Canada, where he directed the Canadian Pacific Railway's land department in Alberta and British Columbia. The town of Beiseker in Alberta was named in his honor. For a time he was also president of a large grain elevator corporation, the Alberta Pacific Company, which operated 78 elevators in the Canadian Northwest.

In 1893 Beiseker returned to the United States and established at Sykeston, North Dakota, the Wells County Bank, which he moved to Fessenden the following year when that city became the county seat. Turning his attention to real estate, Beiseker purchased over 250 quarter sections of North Dakota farmland in Wells, Emmons, McLean, and adjoining counties, as well as holdings in western Canada. He engaged in an extensive mortgage loan business and entered the field of chain banking, eventually establishing 28 financial institutions in North Dakota and Montana and acquiring interest in several located in Minnesota. His corporations with headquarters in Fessenden included Beiseker and Company, Farmers' Trust Company, and T.L. Beiseker Land Company. During the depression years when economic conditions in the Northwest suffered collapse, Beiseker experienced severe losses and was forced to sell, liquidate, or otherwise dispose of many of his assets. He was able to save the Wells County Bank by giving first mortgage for a loan of \$500,000 on 40,000 acres of his North Dakota lands - believed to be the largest personal mortgage on farm property ever filed in the state. His energies afterward were directed toward retrenchment, reconstruction, and business on a lesser though still successful scale until his death on June 3, 1941.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hallquist, Mr. and Mrs. Cliff. Caretakers, former Order of the Eastern Star Home, Fessenden, North Dakota. Personal interview, August 3, 1976.  
 Maddox, Dawn. Personal inspection, August 3, 1976.  
 Olschlager, Gordon. Student, College of Architecture, North Dakota State University, Fargo. Research files on T.L. Beisker Mansion/Order of the Eastern Star Home.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES not available because blue UTM grid tick marks not included on USGS map.

OK-

Longitude: 99° 37' 16.7" W Latitude: 47° 38' 56.1" N

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dawn Maddox, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of North Dakota

DATE

October 25, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Liberty Memorial Building

TELEPHONE

(701)224-2666

CITY OR TOWN

Bismarck

STATE

North Dakota 58505

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*James E. Sherry*

TITLE

N.D. State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

10/26/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*James E. Sherry*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4/13/79

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8/25/77

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Beiseker is remembered not only as an entrepreneur but also as a newspaper man, his journalistic interests having begun when he worked as a reporter in his boyhood home of Austin, Minnesota. In Fessenden he bought a weekly, the Wells County Farmer (later merged with the Wells County Free Press), which during his ownership was cited by the North Dakota Press Association as the state paper judged to have made the greatest improvement in a single year. Beiseker also contributed numerous articles on the development of the Northwest to newspapers and financial journals in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. In 1909 he was proposed as a potential nominee on the Republican ticket for governor of North Dakota, but the candidacy presumably never materialized. Years earlier, in the McKinley presidential campaign of 1896, he had served as chairman of the Republican party in Wells County.

The T.L. Beiseker Mansion came into the possession of the North Dakota Order of the Eastern Star in 1943, serving as the state's only O.E.S. home for the aged until June 30, 1976, when it closed because of failure to meet fire prevention standards for nursing homes. It was acquired at public auction on August 19, 1976, by the present owner, who with his family is now in residence.