

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0669008

FOR NPS USE ONLY		DATA SHEET
RECEIVED	MAY 17 1978	
DATE ENTERED	NOV 2 1978	

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 Benson County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER B Avenue (Post Office Box 193)

CITY, TOWN Minnewaukan VICINITY OF 1 NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE North Dakota CODE 38 COUNTY Benson CODE 005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" 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 Benson County

STREET & NUMBER Benson County Courthouse, Post Office Box 193

CITY, TOWN Minnewaukan VICINITY OF STATE North Dakota 58351

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Benson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Post Office Box 193

CITY, TOWN Minnewaukan STATE North Dakota 58351

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE North Dakota Historic Sites 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		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Benson County Courthouse, a 2-story structure with attic and raised basement, projects a ponderous, fortress-like visual impact. Its image is chiefly derived from battered stone foundation walls; contrasting materials for upper walls (brown brick) and structural trim (stone water table, sills and lintels, and belt course); and a massive square facade (north elevation) tower with battlemented parapet, pyramidal roof, and cupola. The multi-hipped, wooden-shingled roof volumes of the main structure carry hipped and gabled dormers, secondary cupolas, and chimneys with corbeling and stone caps. The exterior was sandblasted and tuckpointed in the 1960s, and in the 1950s the original 1 over 1, double-hung windows (some with transoms) were filled with glass blocks. The large window on the north face of the tower, illuminating the stairwell and bearing on its extrados the legend Benson County, was also thus treated and the rise of its arched heading sealed with bricks.

The principal entrance to the courthouse is at the east end of the facade and is articulated by a 1-story recessed porch with corners marked by pairs of stone columns and brick piers. On the interior, west of the entrance, is a particularly handsome example of the divided form of stairway with paneled dado, closed stringer, turned balusters, and columnar newels with stop-fluting. Additional wood trim throughout the building includes paneled doors, baseboards, wainscoting, and picture moldings. An ornate wooden mantelpiece with back mirror and colored tile surround is the focal point of the county commissioners' meeting room. The fittings in the 42 by 42-foot courtroom are carved and paneled wood (judge's bench, lawyers' railing, and jury box). The ceiling of the courtroom consists of stamped metal rectangles with friezes, separated by beams sheathed in metal stamped in wreath designs. A number of offices have similar but less elaborate ceiling treatments, and walls in the building are plastered, although some have been covered with plywood paneling.

One of two changes which have occurred in the floor plan of the courthouse was the 1976 partitioning of portions of the courtroom to provide welfare offices. The other was the conversion of the basement jail to a sheriff's office several years ago when it was decided to incarcerate Benson County prisoners in the jail at Devils Lake in adjacent Ramsey County. The former sheriff's residential quarters in the basement are now lived in by the deputy sheriff.

The Benson County Courthouse occupies a 300 by 300-foot block planted in grass, trees, and border hedge. The property is located in a residential neighborhood two blocks south of the Minnewaukan business district. A curved drive approaches a paved parking lot and an entrance on the east elevation, and at the rear (south) is a stuccoed garage with wood-shingled roof, as well as a smaller outbuilding.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lysne, Vernon. Benson County Auditor, Benson County Courthouse. Personal interview, April 25, 1977.
 Maddox, Dawn. Personal inspection, April 25, 1977.
 Minnewaukan Illustrated. Henry T. McPhillips, Publisher. Larimore, N.D.: Pioneer Print, 1901.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.06 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	4,8,1	³⁹⁰ 4,1,5	5,3	2,3	7,8	0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING						ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C								D			

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 May, 1977

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of North Dakota DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Liberty Memorial Building TELEPHONE

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 May 1, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Bill Leberch*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE *11/2/78*
 DATE *10/23/78*

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

trees, and walks laid out and graveled. The contractors were Lord & Co., who also had the contract for the erection of the new school house, and the building was completed about Feb. 1, 1901, and the officers occupied it about Feb. 7. The cost of the building and furnishings was about \$40,000. A view of it appears in the first part of this book.

The change from the old court house (a view of which is given in our Decoration Day parade), to the new and commodious offices of the new court house, must have been very agreeable to the officials, who had laboured under many disadvantages during past years.

(Minnewaukan Illustrated. Henry T. McPhillips,
Publisher. Larimore, N.D.: Pioneer Print,
1901. Not paginated.)

The following county officials presently occupy the courthouse: judge, state attorney, sheriff, register of deeds, treasurer, auditor, superintendent of schools, public health nurse, welfare director, tax equalization director, and agricultural extension agent.

5329000m.N.

BM

1449

1435

1431

1464

T 151 N

R 11 W

5328

1447

5327

5326

5'

5325

5324

6180 III SE WAWUKAN WEST

MINNEWAUKAN (BM 1461)

W E S T B A Y

1454

1447

1434

Windmill 8/14.39

UTM REFERENCES
 BENSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
 ZONE 14 ALL
 NORTHING 5323780
 EASTING 481415
 390

