

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0698032

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
FEB 26 1979	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	APR 9 1979

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

Beatrice Chautauqua Pavilion and Gatehouse (GA03-87)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Chautauqua Park, Sixth and Grable Streets

CITY, TOWN

Beatrice

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

COUNTY

031

CODE

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENC
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: Storage

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Beatrice, c/o Gary Eggert, Director, Parks and Recreation ✓

STREET & NUMBER

205 North Fourth Street

CITY, TOWN

Beatrice

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Gage County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Grant Street

CITY, TOWN

Beatrice

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Preservation in Nebraska

DATE

1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

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 (Pavilion)	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE ca. 1916
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR (Gatehouse)	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		(Gatehouse)

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Beatrice Chautauqua Pavilion and Gatehouse are located on the grounds of the 32-acre Chautauqua Park in Beatrice, Nebraska (1970 pop., 12,389). The town's business district is one mile north of the park and the vicinity to the park's west is primarily composed of modest residences. U.S. Highway 77 is 1,500 feet west of the Gatehouse and the Blue River is approximately 800 feet north of the Pavilion.

The Pavilion, (see photos 1 and 2) erected in 1889, is an impressive rectangular structure measuring 100 x 140 feet. Two louvred cupolas straddle the ridge of the Pavilion's gable-on-hip roof, an expansive and handsome element that attracts the viewer's immediate attention. The structure was originally open on all sides but around 1915 the gabled section of the roof was extended on the east and frame walls were built to serve as the extension's support.

Excepting the gabled extension, the roof is supported by a skillful wooden brace system whose construction is illustrated by accompanying diagrams (see diagrams 2 and 3 and photos 3, 4, and 5). Six rows of posts are arranged on an east-west axis with the inner two rows functioning as queen posts for the roof's gabled portion. The Pavilion's system of posts, beams, and braces is successful in providing ample support for the massive roof while causing minimal visual obstruction of the elevated stage at the east end (photo 3). In order for a variety of activities to take place inside the Pavilion, permanent seating was never installed.

One hundred feet northwest of the Pavilion is a square bandstand (see photos 1, 6, and 8) built in the 1950's to replace an earlier structure of the same use. The low-pitched pyramidal roof is supported by three Tuscan columns in each corner and the floor rests on brick walls that enclose an underground space used for storage. Wooden railing--several cross section pieces missing--is on all sides. Immediately west of the bandstand is a one-story concrete block building that contains restroom facilities.

The former Gatehouse of the Chautauqua grounds (see photos 6 and 7) was originally located approximately 600 feet north of its present situation. After the Beatrice Chautauqua assemblies were discontinued in 1916, the building was relocated 400 feet directly west of the Pavilion and was converted into a dwelling for the park supervisor--the city having had acquired the grounds as a municipal recreation area. When constructed in the 1890's, the former Gatehouse was an L-shaped building consisting of a 1½-story, 3-bay lateral section with a 1-story ell on the rear. Added ca. 1920 were a porch across the front and a shed-roofed appendage built flush with both the south wall and the ell's rear. The entire exterior was stuccoed and iron cresting along the roof ridge was removed. Wooden peak ornaments on the gabled ends and in a gabled projection centered on the front have been retained, and the dimensions of fenestral openings are unchanged. The building is presently used for storage, and the Beatrice City Parks Department is considering removal of the stucco covering--the exterior to be finished with weatherboarding.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The nominated property is a three-acre rectangular lot designed to incorporate the Pavilion and former Gatehouse and the vista between the two structures. Within this lot is the bandstand. Although a replacement of an earlier one, the bandstand is nevertheless significant in conveying the type of activities that occurred when Chautauqua assemblies were in session.

The relocation of the Gatehouse occurred ca. 1916 and was a matter of necessity in the conversion of the grounds into a city park. Since this action, additional land has continuously been purchased to expand the park. For this reason the nomination is limited to the two structures and a structural replacement which are the only remaining segments of a large complex that served the Beatrice Chautauqua Assembly.

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 type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" 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 1889; 1890's BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Beatrice Chautauqua, which operated annual summer sessions between 1889-1916, is socially and culturally significant for having enlightened the lives of countless rural and small town dwellers on the plains of Nebraska and several neighboring states. Featuring performances, discussions, lectures, and oratory, as well as offering lessons in the fine arts and domestic sciences, these sessions afforded a segment of heartland America a window to the world-- accomplishing a threefold mission of informing attendants on as many topics as possible, furnishing beneficial entertainment, and promoting community spirit. The 1889 Assembly Hall, a large and impressive pavilion where major Chautauqua events were held, is a structure of engineering and architectural note that survives in good condition. Another building retained is the former gatehouse, a Gothic cottage that was moved from its original location ca. 1916 and altered externally. Still, the architectural fabric of the former gatehouse is intact and its relocation is vindicated by the demise of the Beatrice Chautauqua Assembly; in a logical action, the small building was moved to serve as a manager's residence when the Chautauqua grounds and adjacent land were transformed into a city park.

The Chautauqua movement took its name from Lake Chautauqua, New York, where a training session in the summer of 1874 attracted 142 Methodist Sunday School teachers from 25 states and five countries. The founders and promoters of the New York state project were Dr. John H. Vincent, a Methodist minister (later Bishop), and Lewis Miller, an industrialist from Akron, Ohio. The summer sessions at Lake Chautauqua became established as an annual event whose immense success and popularity inspired communities through America to organize local Chautauqua assemblies, the greatest acceptance taking place in the Middle West (The Encyclopedia Americana, 1957 Ed., Vol. 6, p. 368). The Chautauqua was not meant to rival churches or schools, but to serve as an adjunct to both.

The first serious proposal to locate a Chautauqua assembly in Beatrice, Nebraska, was made in the summer of 1888 by a syndicate of five citizens who jointly owned a tract of fine land adjacent to the Blue River, immediately south of town. This syndicate proposed that if the Beatrice Board of Trade would donate \$1,500 toward advertising the enterprise, it would form a corporation with a subscribed capital stock of \$50,000. The Board of Trade accepted the proposal and a corporation was formed. The enterprise was named the Interstate Chautauqua Assembly with the intention that it would serve people from the surrounding states of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado. Improvement of the grounds south of the river took place the following Spring and the street railway company in Beatrice extended its tracks to the Chautauqua grounds' entrance (The Beatrice Daily Sun, Aug. 14, 1932, p. 8).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Beatrice East, Nebr.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 114 6921510 44581000
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

February, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

1500 "R" Street

TELEPHONE

402/471-3270

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Marian W. Kuntz

2/15/79

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4-9-79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Braubach Jr 3-30-79

DATE

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The corporation had an impressive assembly hall with a seating capacity of 2,000 and several appurtenances erected in time for the first Chautauqua session which lasted from June 8-11, 1889. The first evening drew 1,500 persons and The Beatrice Daily Express announced: "The entire Chautauqua interest of the state is centered on the Beatrice assembly. It is surely destined to be the most popular assembly in the state" (June 8, 1889, p. 1). Although not particularly numerous, the first assembly's participants covered a wide variety of fields and interests, ranging from an elocutionist, Mrs. E. D. Martin, who recited "The Creed of the Bells" to a Professor Finklestein who lectured on "The Bedouins of Arabia." The largest crowd the first year, though, was 2,500 persons who gathered in the assembly hall to hear an oratory delivered by Dr. Creighton, President of Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln (Beatrice Daily Express, June 29, 1889, p. 1).

During the next years the Beatrice Chautauqua Assembly attracted larger crowds and more renowned participants. The crowds involved entire families who either brought their own temporary shelter, or who rented tents on the grounds or occupied picturesque cottages that were erected several years after the program's commencement. During the 1893 assembly The Beatrice Daily Express informed its readers: "The grounds are at their prettiest and today they are a scene of lively animation. Cottagers are moving in and a constant stream of vehicles is passing between the city and Riverside Park conveying baggage, household effects and passengers. The tents are about all pitched and are being taken rapidly" (June 13, 1893, p.1).

Popularity steadily increasing from year to year, a local paper described the 1905 event as such: "The Chautauqua grounds last night seemed a veritable city of itself. It was estimated that the attendance on the grounds was about 8,000, a moving, shifting population, over half the size of Beatrice on ordinary, work-a-day occasions. The tabernacle [as the assembly hall had come to be known] was packed in the afternoon and evening from center to circumference and all about the outside for several feet" (Beatrice Daily Express, July 10, 1905, p.1). One daily attendance during the 1905 session reached 10,000, and the Beatrice Assembly had become one of high enough repute to attract such speakers as: Thomas DeWitt Talmadge, a noted clergyman; ex-President Hayes; Bishop Vincent, the Chautauqua founder; William Jennings Bryan; Frances Willard, the famous temperance advocate; Robert LaFollette; and others (Dobbs, History of Gage County, p. 210).

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In 1906 the trains offered special excursion rates to Beatrice for the summer event and about 7,000 attendants were able to reach the Chautauqua that year from various points in Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas (Beatrice Daily Express, June 23, 1906). By that year the grounds were electrically illuminated in the evenings and iron gates were installed near the grounds' entrance to prevent reckless driving. Lessons in elocution, languages, art, home sciences, and other subjects were conducted during the Chautauqua session throughout the park-like setting. Permanent buildings in addition to the assembly hall and a gatehouse included: nineteen frame cottages; the Frances Willard Hall, mainly used for temperance activities; a large refreshment hall and several meat and produce stands; a secretary's office; an octagonal band stand; and a "rustic stand."

The railroads found the offering of excursion rates during Chautauqua to not be a worthwhile venture and ceased this special service after the trial year of 1906. Also, the street railway company halted regular service between Beatrice's business district and the Chautauqua grounds in 1907, causing attendance that year to drop drastically. From then on, most attendants came from Beatrice or the vicinity. In 1916, operation of the Beatrice Chautauqua Assembly was suspended in debt and an action was brought by the county court to foreclose a mortgage on the property. Through an arrangement with the Chautauqua board, however, the city intervened, paid all debts, took claim to the property, and converted it into a municipal recreational facility called Chautauqua Park. By that time almost all components of the Chautauqua Assembly complex had been dismantled. Structures retained in addition to the impressive pavilion (or "tabernacle") were the former gatehouse, which was moved to serve as a residence for the park manager, and the octagonal bandstand immediately northwest of the pavilion--a small wooden structure that was replaced later by a square version.

During its 27-year period of operation, the Beatrice Chautauqua was immensely successful in stirring the minds and thoughts of its attendants. Its offerings were often a stimulus for young people to continue their education; older people, some long out of school and denied many literary advantages, were afforded with rare lectures and delightful concerts (Schuerman, "The Beatrice Chautauqua," p. 3). The most distinctive contribution of Chautauqua to American education was the idea of utilizing the summer vacation for educational purposes.

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The capacious Pavilion that survives is both an engineering and architectural achievement of merit. When built, this construction was open on all sides, allowing for a maximum ventilation of air. The roof covering the space is upheld by a post and brace system that provides ample support while causing minimal visual obstruction. Alterations since ca. 1915 have been limited to the replacement of the roofing material.

The small Gothic cottage that served as the gatehouse is a fine product of the picturesque movement. Despite alterations that occurred ca. 1920, its fabric remains much evident and its relocation and transformation from a gatehouse into a park supervisor's dwelling serves as an interesting early example of adaptive re-use.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

The Beatrice Daily Express. Beatrice, Nebraska, June 8, 1899.
_____. July 29, 1889.
_____. June 13, 1893.
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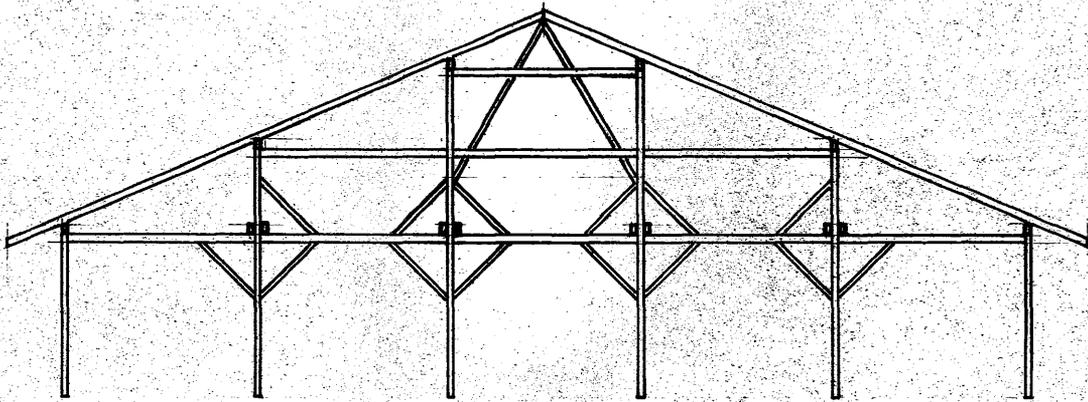
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Verbal Boundary Description

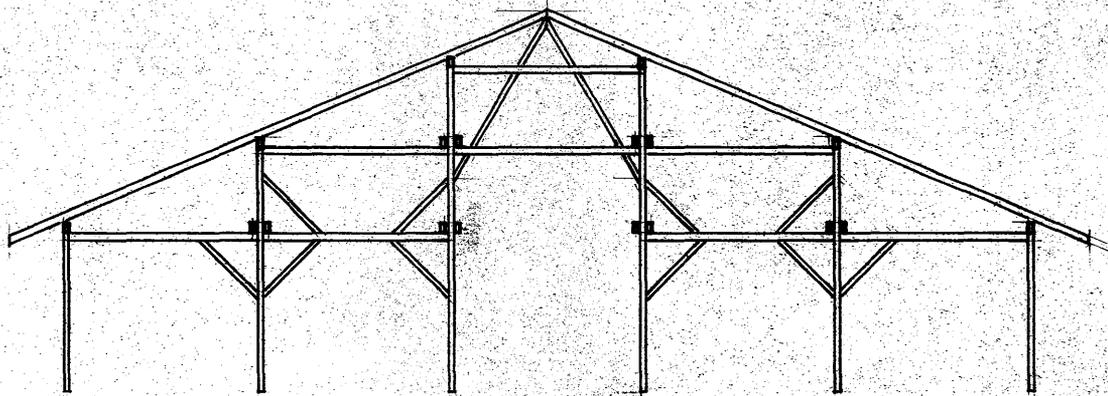
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

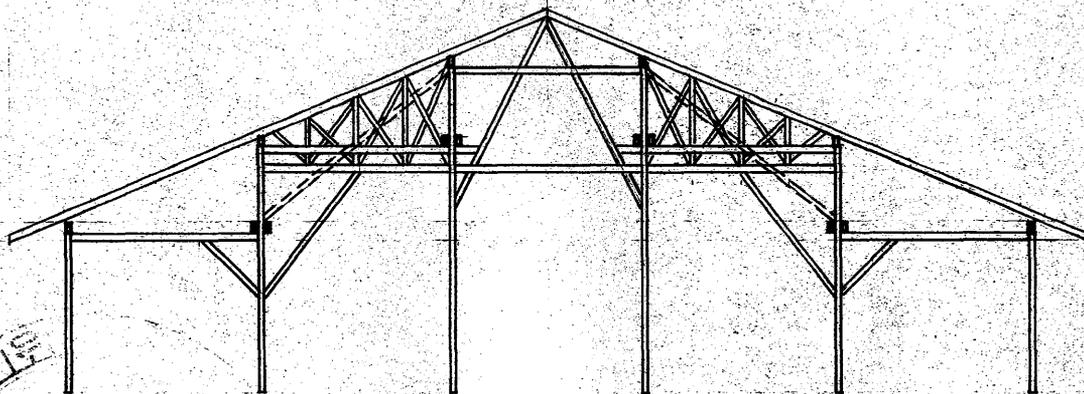
A rectangular lot; the southeast corner being defined by the southeast corner of the Beatrice Chautauqua Pavilion. The boundary proceeds northward for 60 meters, then angles to the west and proceeds in that direction for 220 meters, then angles to the south and proceeds in that direction for 60 meters to the southwest corner of the former Gatehouse, then angles to the east and proceeds for 220 meters in that direction, returning to the point of origin.



2-3-7E



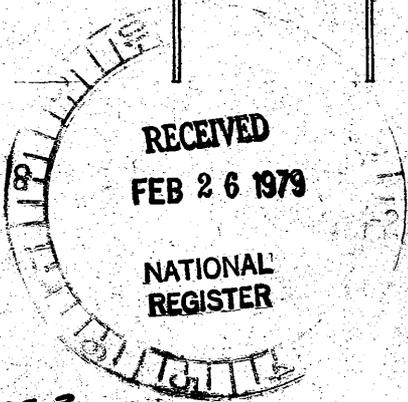
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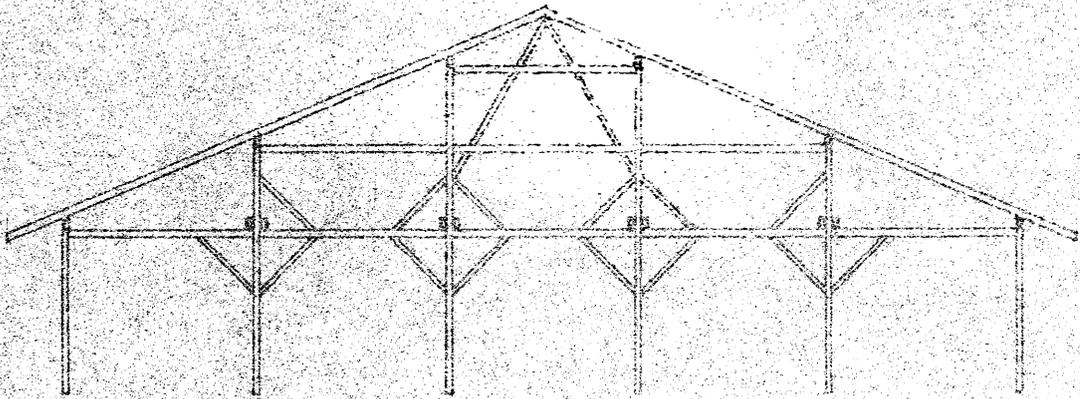


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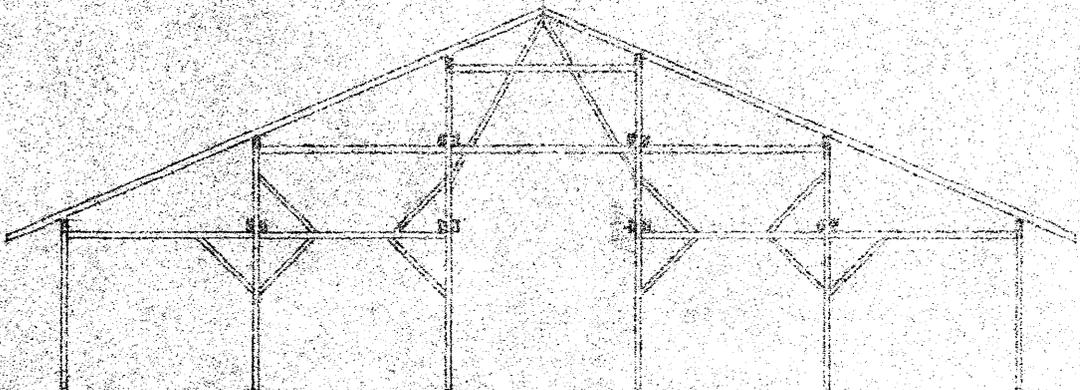
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THE TRUSS ON THIS DRAWING

**BEATRICE CHAUTAUQUA
TABERNACLE**
BEATRICE, GAGE CO., NEBRASKA

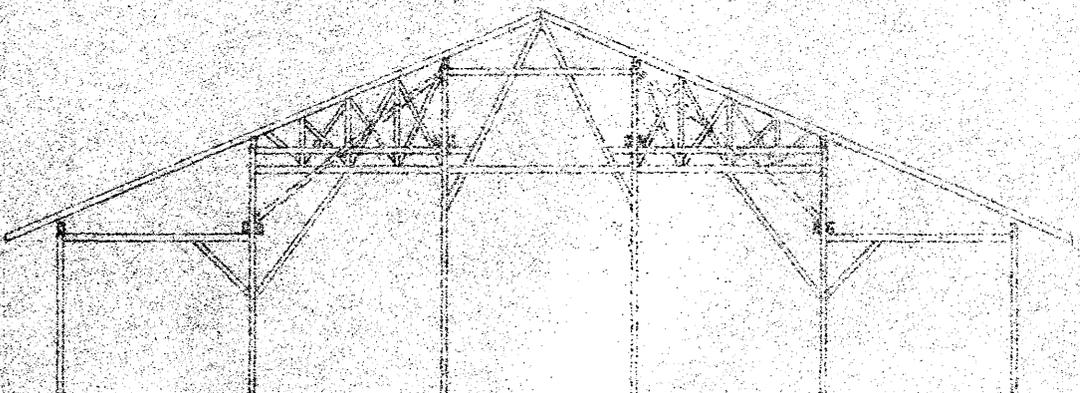




1-2-18



1-4-18



1-5-18

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BEATRICE CHANTARONA
 TABERNACLE
 BEATRICE, OREGON

APR 8 1979
 BEATRICE, OREGON

APR 9 1979

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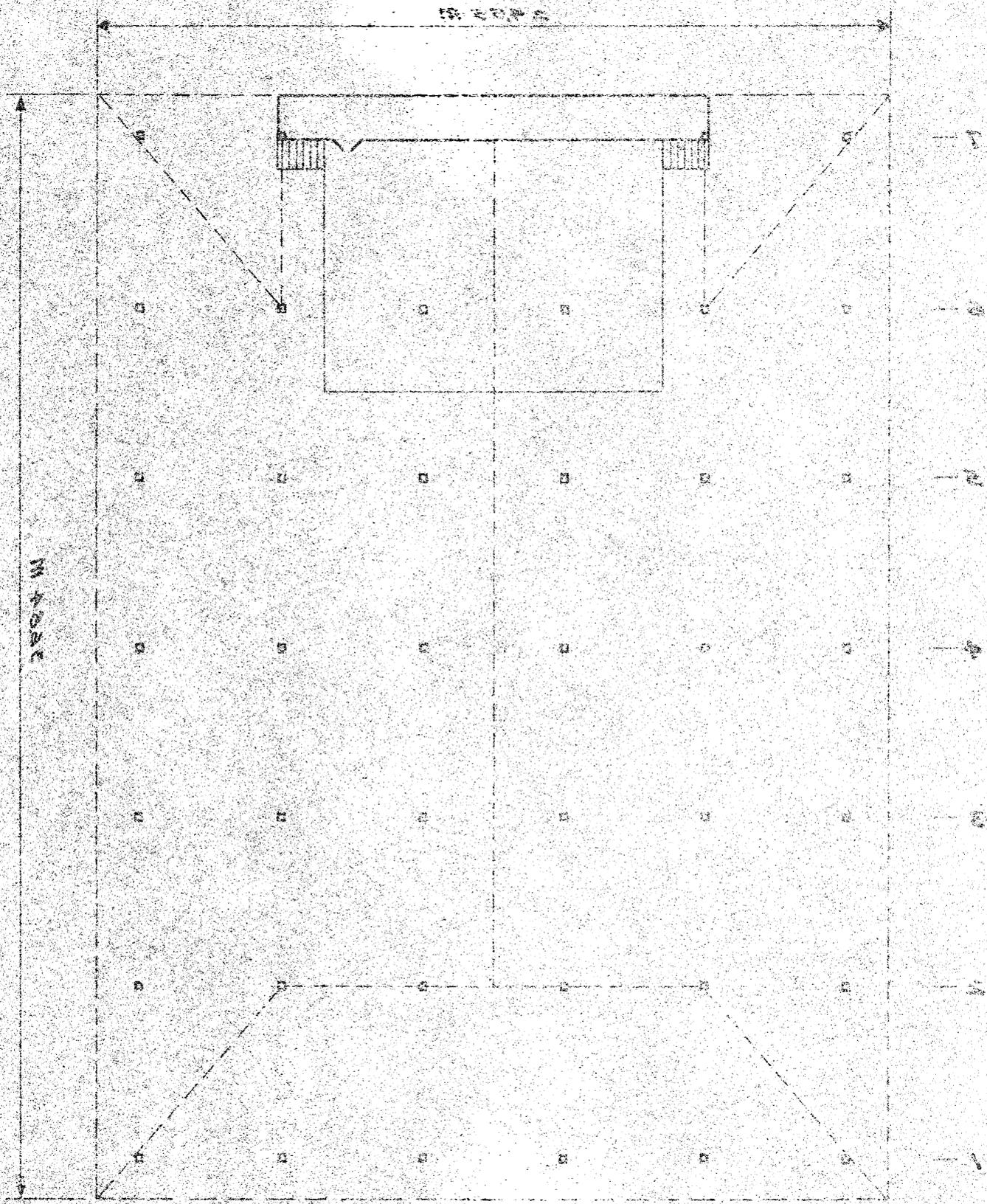
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 FEB 26 1979
 NATIONAL
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 CENTER
 BEATRICE CHAUTAUQUA
 TABERNACLE
 BEATRICE, GAGE CO., NEBRASKA



114.00'

114.00'

BEATRICE CHANTANOMA
 TABERVILLE
 BEATRICE, MISSOURI

APR 9 1979

1003

SITE PLAN
BEATRICE CHAUTAUQUA
TABERNACLE
BEATRICE, GAGE COUNTY,
NEBRASKA

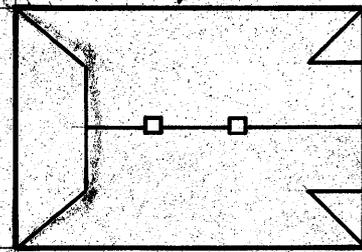
SKETCHES BY D. MURPHY, JULY 1978,
REDRAWN BY S. RYAN, OCTOBER, 1978.



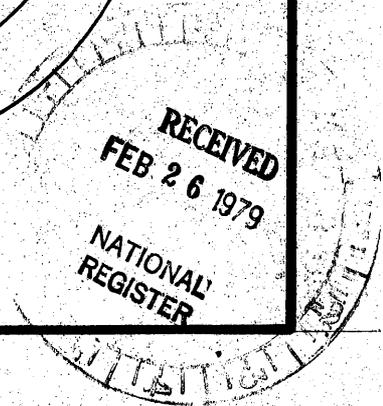
BAND STAND



TABERNACLE



GATE
HOUSE



STAIRS
ARCH



BAND STAND



2001
MAIN PLAIN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL INDUSTRIES
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
STATION
MELBOURNE
VIC 306
AUSTRALIA



LABORATORY

