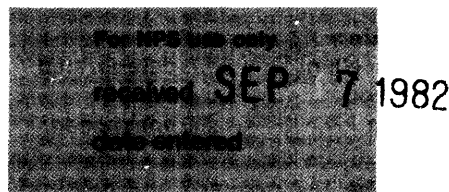


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Davenport Crematorium

and/or common Fairmount Crematorium

2. Location

street & number 3902 Rockingham Road _____ not for publication

city, town Davenport _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 1

state Iowa code 19 county Scott code 163

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition N.A. <input type="checkbox"/> in process <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	Accessible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object			<input type="checkbox"/> government
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Fairmount Cemetary Association

street & number 3902 Rockingham Road

city, town Davenport _____ vicinity of _____ state Iowa

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Scott County Recorder's Office

street & number Scott County Courthouse

city, town Davenport _____ state Iowa

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date N.A. _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records N.A.

city, town _____ state

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Davenport Crematorium is located southwest of that city's downtown and is situated adjacent to Fairmount Cemetery and a residential area. F.G. Claussen, a prominent local architect, designed this 1½ story Romanesque structure in 1889, and it was erected the following year. The edifice's red brick walls rest on rubble-squared stone blocks over a partially raised full basement. Window and door openings are set in a combination of rectangular and arched surrounds. Windows are generally of the one-over-one wood sash variety, and most feature stained glass. The building is capped with a hipped cross gable roof covered with asbestos shingles.

Exterior ornamentation is provided by the large semicircular arched entranceway, featuring stained glass sidelights and transom and leaded glass door; carved stone lintels and bands; stone trimmed gables with arched window openings; and decorative brick corbelling along the roofline. Except for a small addition to the west side in 1979 for a second crematory retort, the building has undergone little exterior alteration.

Inside, the structure contains a large chapel, waiting room, and another small room on the first floor and an incineration room and holding chamber in the basement. Originally, the chapel was finished in natural wood, but in recent years it has been redecorated in soft tones and features rose patterned carpeting on the floor and a glass chandelier. In the center of the chapel is a catafalque with a deep purple cover that utilizes an elevator to descend slowly and noiselessly into the basement. For incineration the crematorium was equipped with Davis equipment. Originally, coke or hard coal was used, and each cremation required three quarters of a ton of coal and an hour-and-a-half. In recent years, however, the crematorium has converted to natural gas, and the time involved has been greatly shortened. Except for the redecoration of the chapel and the placement of a door in the west wall to allow entry to the 1979 addition, the interior has undergone little change.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce-funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1890–present **Builder/Architect** F. G. Claussen

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Davenport Crematorium not only has the distinction of being the first crematorium in the state of Iowa but the thirteenth established in the United States. Today, it is the ninth oldest establishment of its type still in existence. The first efforts to establish a crematorium in Davenport occurred in 1880, only four years after the first crematory was founded in the United States. Little came out of these early discussions, however, and it was not until 1885 that a cremation society was established. Organized as the Northwestern Cremation Society (later changed to Davenport Cremation Society), the group began to issue stock and look for a proper site. In 1889 the society commissioned F.G. Claussen to design a proper building, and the following year they purchased land overlooking the Mississippi River from the West Davenport Cemetary Company. The building was completed in 1890, and the first cremation took place on Mary 15, 1891.

In addition to serving Davenport residents, it served the rest of the state and areas as far away as Chicago, Minneapolis, Omaha, and Denver as well. By the end of 1900, it had handled 133 cremations. Now known as Fairmount Crematorium, the facility to date has handled well over 6,000 cremations.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Davenport West

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

UMT References

A 115 697670 45979000
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification Part of SW/4 SE/4 of SE/4 Sec. 32-78-3 Beginning on south boundary line of cemetery proper at point 20' west of pt. 50' north of SE corner of Section 32, thence west 50' along cemetery, south 30', east 50', north 30' to place of beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N.A.			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historian

organization Office of Historic Preservation date August 1982

street & number East 12th and Grand Avenue telephone 515/281-5111

city or town Des Moines state Iowa

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 Adrian D. Anderson

title Director, Iowa State Historical Department date September 1, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

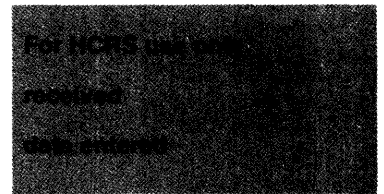
Adrian D. Anderson
Keeper of the National Register

date 11/9/83

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Bibliography Item number 9. Page 1.

The Cremationist, Oct.-Nov.-Dec., 1976, 10.
Records in files of Fairmount Crematorium, Davenport, Iowa.
Scott County Records Office Records, Davenport, Iowa.