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
Ward Earth Lodge Village 32BL3
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Eastern Edge Pioneer Park
CITY, TOWN
Bismarck
STATE
North Dakota
Vicinity of

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
PARK
EDUCATIONAL
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
ARMED FORCES
OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
City of Bismarck
STREET & NUMBER
Bismarck City Hall, 609 East Thayer Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Bismarck
STATE
North Dakota

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Register of Deeds, Burleigh County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
514 East Thayer Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Bismarck
STATE
North Dakota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
State Historical Society of North Dakota Site Survey
DATE
1905
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
State Historical Society of North Dakota
LIBERTY MEMORIAL BUILDING
CITY, TOWN
Bismarck
STATE
North Dakota
The Ward Earth Lodge Village, 32BL3, is located on a flat-topped promontory linked to the main body of the high Missouri River terrace by a narrow neck of land above the left, or east, bank of the Missouri River at the northwest edge of Bismarck, North Dakota. The former village site is plainly marked by about 43 earth lodge depressions and a number of storage pit mouth depressions. The site is enclosed on three sides by the remnants of a moat, and by the precipitous slope on the riverward side of the prominence. Approximately six acres are thus fortified. The moat is modified by two bastion-like protuberances at the point it crosses the narrow neck connecting the site to the terrace. These might mark the location of defensive salients, or of a gate.

The Ward Earth Lodge Village is one of a number of putative Mandan towns on Missouri River in the vicinity of the mouth of the Heart River, North Dakota. These sites are classified as the Heart River Phase and are felt to have been occupied during the period 1675-1780 (Lehmer 1971: 203-204). Ethnohistorical and archeological evidence marshalled by Donald Lehmer suggests that no more than six or seven towns were occupied simultaneously. The Ward Earth Lodge Village appears to have been occupied early in the period and abandoned (Stewart 1974: 290).

The Ward Earth Lodge Village was acquired by the City of Bismarck in 1930. The site has never been cultivated. In 1934 archeological investigations were conducted resulting in the excavation of three earth lodge floors and one extramural storage pit. The work was conducted by the Civilian Conservation Corps and the United States Department of the Interior, Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, State Park Emergency Conservation Work. The CCC constructed circular, dome-shaped reproductions of the three lodges excavated, thereby modifying the appearance of the site. All three have subsequently been destroyed by fire. Road-grading activity was another aspect of the 1934 work. The main access road to the village site, and a parking lot, have been paved (October, 1976), but a road girdling the hill upon which the site is situated has been closed, although it is still quite evident. Recently, a portion of the park boundary, well below the village, was enclosed by a six-foot high chain-link fence in an attempt to limit access to the site. Roads running across the site, which had become deeply rutted, were filled and shaped to authentic contours in December, 1976.
The Ward Earth Lodge Village has never been cultivated, nor has it been severely damaged by vandalism or archeological excavations. The site would prove to be a useful archeological laboratory for those interested in Plains Indian lifeways. The Heart River Phase, 1675-1780, was the apex of Mandan cultural development. With the increasingly rapid expansion of the cities of Bismarck and Mandan, the Ward Earth Lodge Village will increase in significance as other examples of the Heart River Phase villages are destroyed.

An hypothesis can be offered which identifies the Ward Earth Lodge Village as a town of the Nuptadi subtribe of the southern Mandan. The argument is based upon (1) that group's traditional area of residence being on the left, or east, bank of Missouri River and (2) upon the location of the Ward Earth Lodge Village also on the left bank. Will states that the Ward Earth Lodge Village had been identified as the town of a chief known as "Looking" (Will 1924: 315), but the reliability of this observation is open to question.

Archeological excavation of three earth lodge floors at the site revealed what appeared to be subrectangular (not circular) lodge floors. These excavations suggest Ward Earth Lodge Village may be transitional architecturally, and perhaps temporally between the preceding Huff Phase (long, rectangular floors) and the fully developed Heart River Phase with circular floors (Will and Hecker 1944: 66). Reexcavation of these floors with modern techniques would help resolve the question. Furthermore, the scientific potential of excavating a burned lodge, the standing structure of which is known in detail, has been recognized (Wood 1957).

The lodges built in 1934 have all been destroyed. However, the Ward Village lodges were an early example of attempts to conserve and interpret the legacy of prehistoric inhabitants of the Plains in recognition of their contribution to our national heritage.
See attached Continuation Sheet.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY** 24 acres

**UTM REFERENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONE</th>
<th>EASTING</th>
<th>NORTHING</th>
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</thead>
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<td>5,719,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>36,042,7</td>
<td>5,787,926</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**FORM PREPARED BY**

**NAME / TITLE**

John Ludwickson, Survey Archeologist

**ORGANIZATION**

State Historical Society of North Dakota

**DATE**

February 3, 1977

**STREET & NUMBER**

Liberty Memorial Building

**TELEPHONE**

(701)224-2666

**CITY OR TOWN**

Bismarck

**STATE**

North Dakota

**58505**

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL X

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**

[Signature]

**DATE**

May 3, 1977

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

**DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

[Signature] 

**DATE**

11/21/78

**KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

[Signature]

**DATE**

11/20/78
Lehmer, Donald J.

Stewart, Frank H.

Will, George F.
1924 Archaeology of the Missouri Valley. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History Vol. XXII, Part VI.

Will, George F. and Thad C. Hecker
1944 The Upper Missouri River Valley Aboriginal Culture in North Dakota. North Dakota Historical Quarterly Vol. XI, Nrs. 1 and 2.

Will, G.F. and H.J. Spinden

Wood, W. Raymond
1957 Notes on a Burned Earth Lodge at the Ward Site, North Dakota. Plains Anthropologist Nr. 8: 41-42.

Wood, W. Raymond
The area to be listed is formed by an elongated, 4-sided figure enclosing about 24 acres. The village area is roughly in the center of the area and is buffered by ground on all sides. The northern and eastern boundary (A-B-C) is 480 meters long (in 2 segments) and approximates the northern boundary of Pioneers Park; the southeastern boundary (C-D) is 400 meters long which connects the easternmost point of the northern boundary to the southernmost part of the western boundary, and bisects a natural ravine to the south of the village; the western boundary (D-A) is 600 meters long and approximates the eastern right-of-way of the "River Road".
Chief Looking’s Village
Burleigh County, North Dakota

1. Name of Property

historic name  Chief Looking’s Village

other names/site number  Ward Earth Lodge Village, 32BL3

2. Location

street & number  Eastern Edge Pioneer Park

city or town  Bismarck

state  North Dakota
code  ND

county  Burleigh
code  015

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant __ nationally X statewide X locally. ( ___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title
Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr., State Historic Preservation Officer for North Dakota

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 of Keeper  ____________________________ Date of Action  ______________
Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance:

1. We believe that because the name of the historic site is changed from Ward Site to Chief Looking’s Village, we are justified in asking that the change be carried over to the National Register of Historic Places. We request that the historic site be designated by the new name, Chief Looking’s Village, as it is more meaningful and more truly reflects the Native American history of the site.

   “Ward” is the name of the pioneer family originally owning this property. Subsequently, since 1930, the Bismarck, North Dakota Park and Recreation District has held the deed to the property.

   The site is named for Chief Looking of the Mandan Tribe. The name change reflects the village site’s historical significance. The project will result in sharing the Mandan Indian story of this village with visitors. Overall, the project will offer enhanced insight into Indian culture as well as knowledge of geographic sites along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

   Tangible results of the name change will be new signing at the village site and updating of historical brochures. Through education we will heighten public understanding of Mandan Indian cultural resources.

   The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners, as owners of the property, at their May 16, 2002, meeting, approved the request of the Sakakawea Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation that the name be changed to Chief Looking’s Village.

   The Sakakawea Chapter therefore requests that the National Register of Historic Places amend its records to reflect that the village is presently designated “Chief Looking’s Village”.

2. The following information relating to Chief Looking and the Indian Village is from the Bismarck Capital And North Dakota State Record newspaper, September 2, 1930. The newspaper article supports and justifies the name change.

   “The long cherished desire of the members of the Burleigh County Pioneer’s Association to create a park on the heights above the Missouri river where the village of Chief Looking once stood is in the process of fulfillment.

   “The park site has long been in the minds of the Burleigh county pioneers and their plans have for some time been shaping themselves for the purchase of as much land about the site of Looking’s village as was possible. This was at last done and the historic site, one of the most unusual and valuable in the state is now preserved.

   “The view from the high point of Looking’s village is unsurpassed in the state.

   “Most of this was seen hundreds of years ago when Chief Looking sat looking out over the hills for his son who never returned.

   “...the road finally comes to the site of the village of Chief Looking. It is well named, for it is situated on a high, broad level promontory which is lined on three sides with almost perpendicular slopes. The flat hill top, on which the village stood, contains about 10 acres. At one time it was believed to be inhabited by at least 1,000 to ...people. It was easily the largest settlement made by the Mandan Indians.

   “Indian history places the abandonment of the village of Chief Looking at about 1780, 150 years ago.
"Chief Looking, for whom the village was named, lived, according to the Indians, about 250 years ago. He was a powerful chief and a smart one. He lead his tribe of Mandans for many years. In the Dakota tongue there is recorded the history of the man and how he was named Looking. The story says that it was because he was always looking for his son, a bold, handsome brave, the idol of his father’s heart.

"Chief Looking would sit by the hour so the legend goes, looking at his son. From early childhood he watched him at his play, seldom letting him out of his sight. When the boy grew up to manhood, the old chief would not let him go to war with the others for fear that he would be killed and never return.

"One day, the legend says, while the old chief slept, the son stole away and went in war with the others. When the old man awoke the boy was gone. Stricken with worry, the chief set out on the war path to follow his son. He finally came to the spot where a great battle had been fought and found that his son has been killed.

"Arriving there Chief Looking advanced alone to the point where his son had been killed. As he stood mourning beside the body of his son, he heard voices and looking around he saw the spirit come and enter the body of his son. The young man got up and talked with his father, telling him about heaven and its wonders. He asked his father to fetch for him some rawhide, a cornball and some moccasins as he was going back to heaven where there was good hunting and his father was not watching him all the time. There was also a young squaw up there that he liked better than any he had seen in his father’s village. The chief did as he was told and the body was laid away with those things that the spirit had demanded. From that time on Chief Looking was wont to spend most of his time looking out over the valley where he had last seen his son.

"There are several other stories among the Indians relating to the large village on the hill. One told by the Hidatsa Indians is that the village was inhabited by a mythical race of monsters known as big heads. They also have another legend about the site which is purely a fairy story. It is the tale of the lives of various magical beings who lived in huge earth lodges and plied their trade as sorcerers. The characters are Long Tail, his sister, Spotted Body, and the villain, Big Mouth, who was all mouth and no head. Big Mouth, through duplicity ripped open the body of Long Tail’s wife and released into the world the twin sons of Long Tail. Enchanting the sons, he scurried home to avoid the wrath of Long Tail. The latter returned, discovered his dead wife, and through more magic, was able to unenchant the twin boys, known as Mahash and Atutish, who immediately set about to avenge their mother and to destroy all the bad spirits of the earth and heaven. This they successfully accomplished.

"The site of the park is therefore of legendary as well as of practical historical significance, something to be greatly valued."

3. This is additional information from North Dakota: A Guide to the Northern Prairie State justifying the proposed National Register name change. Chief Looking’s Village is the most historic name:

"At 33 m. the River Road passes through Pioneer Park. On the flood plain of the Missouri between Burnt Creek and the road, a picnic and camp ground has been built among the towering cottonwood trees.

"At 33 is a junction with a winding gravel road. Left on this road to the top of the sheer bluffs to Looking Village, 0.5 m., Mandan site named for Chief Looking. Now part of Pioneer Park, the village is known as the Ward Site, and several of the earth lodges were reconstructed under a CCC project. The natural defenses of this village were exceptional. On a level, circular summit almost completely cut off from the surrounding bench land, its eastern side was well protected by a ditch, still visible, and a wall. To the N., where the hill is less steep, a ditch and wall were also means of protection.

"Built-in log steps and a graded path lead up to a round knoll overlooking the river. On the western slope of this formation is a large granite boulder believed to be a petroglyph, or picture rock, of some religious significance. Close observation of the rock will reveal many small, round impressions that may be a form of rock-writing known as cup sculpture. From this point, and from the parking spaces near the Indian village site,
Chief Looking’s Village
Burleigh County, North Dakota

is a beautiful view up and down the Missouri.”

“On the high bluffs across the river below Rock Haven are the reconstructed earth lodges of the Looking Village (L) of the Mandans, below which is the mouth (L) of Burnt Creek (see Side Tour 3B)”

4. This is an unidentified document from the files of the Bismarck Parks and Recreation District dated 6-25-54, titled Pioneer Park.

“The land was purchased from the Oscar Ward estate in October 1930, by the Burleigh County Pioneers Association and presented to the City of Bismarck to be known as Pioneer Park.

“The Association has now decided to dedicate a marker in memory of the Burleigh County Pioneers. This marker to be of native granite stone with a bronze plaque. The donations for the land was completed in 1930 and in 1953-54 the expense of the marker has been covered. William Yegen is the chairman of the monument committee. The park is part of the Bismarck Park System and consists of 50 acres of land.

“The park which embraces some of the most beautiful of the neighboring land, is presented to the Bismarck Park Board with the understanding that it will be known as the PIONEER PARK. (May 23, 1930)

“Overlooking the wide Missouri, it includes picnic grounds; three Indian mounds at the north end of the hill marks the site of an old Mandan village known as Chief Looking’s Village, abandoned in 1784.”

Major Bibliographic References

Bismarck Capital And North Dakota State Record (Bismarck), 2 September 1930.


11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Morgan, Chair, Committee for Restoration of Historic Places

Organization Sakakawea Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation date February 6, 2003

street & number 1005 West Sweet Avenue telephone 701-223-8384

city or town Bismarck state North Dakota zip code 58504

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Bismarck Park District

street & number 420 East Front Avenue telephone 701-222-6455

city or town Bismarck state ND zip code 58504

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.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
Chief Looking's Village
Burleigh County, North Dakota

Interpretive Points

1. Bastion
2. Family Unit
3. Grinding Stone
4. Agriculture
5. Ceremonial Lodge
6. Terrace/Holy Shrine
7. Locations of other Villages
8. Looking Village Story
9. Excavated Lodges
10. Gaming
REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Chief Looking's Village Site (32BL3)

REFERENCE NUMBER: 78001990

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:


COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Accepted

REVIEWER: Edna Beall
DISCIPLINE: Historian

TELEPHONE DATE

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N