

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sokol Pavilion

other names/site number Sokol Auditorium, NeHBS #SA09-065

2. Location

street & number 315 South Wilson Street not for publication

city or town Wilber vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Saline code 151 zip code 68465

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

6/10/98
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Sokol Pavilion
Name of Property

Saline County, Nebraska
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
_____		sites
_____		structures
_____		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instruction)

SOCIAL: meeting hall
RECREATION AND CULTURE: auditorium/sports facility

SOCIAL: meeting hall
RECREATION AND CULTURE: auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patters of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1930-1948

Significant Dates

1930
1947

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location for Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	672790	4482885	3.			
2.				4.			

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christine E. Janda
organization T.J. Sokol Wilber date April 1998
street & number 420 W. 1st Street, Box 634 telephone (402) 821-2380
city or town Wilber state NE zip code 68465

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name/title T.J. Sokol telephone _____
street & number 315 South Wilson
city or town Wilber state NE zip code 68465

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 Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sokol Pavilion

Name of Property

Saline County, Nebraska

County and State

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Description

The Sokol Pavilion located in Wilber, Saline County, Nebraska is a large, one-story brick building. Original construction dates to 1930 with an addition constructed in 1947. Interior and exterior integrity is very good. The nomination consists of one contributing building.

The Sokol Pavilion, located on the fringe of the commercial district, is a one-story brick building, rectangular in shape, measuring 132 feet by 78 feet 8 inches. The main facade, which faces east is a parapet wall that forms a giant lunette. A concrete coping tops the wall. Five large block glass windows run the length of the front facade; including one that surrounds the front doors and one above a set of three single pane windows on the north end of the building.

The south side of the pavilion shares a common wall with another building. As viewed from the north facade, the roof line slopes downward from east to west. Along the face of the north wall is a door and two windows. The rear or west end of the building has a door near the south corner and a raised double door in the center. Running along the bottom are three basement windows. The roof has a stepped gable design.

The outside double doors on the east facade lead into a vestibule. From there another set of double doors opens to the main floor. On the south side of the vestibule is a coat check room. North of the vestibule is a ticket office and a storage room. Running along the entire north side is a kitchen area that also contains seating space. Two long counters separate it from the rest of the main floor.

At the west end of the main floor is the stage. It rises 3 feet 9 inches above the main floor. Restrooms are on the north and south side of the stage near the rear. The stage measures approximately 38 feet wide by 48 feet long. A curtain separates the main stage area from storage space in the rear. It is flanked on either side by stairs leading up to the stage floor.

The remainder of the main floor is a large, open maple floored area measuring approximately 77 by 59 feet. The coffered ceiling features walnut beams and buff colored pressed wallboard tiles.

In the southwest corner of the kitchen is a stairway that leads to a partial, ell-shaped basement. Part of the basement is under the stage and houses the furnace and a large storage room. The long, rectangular portion runs along the north side and contains additional kitchen facilities to supplement those on the first floor.

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Sokol Pavilion

Name of Property

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Statement of Significance

The Sokol Pavilion in Wilber, Saline County, Nebraska is significant at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the Czech-American ethnic culture. The Sokol movement, founded in Prague, the capital of Bohemia, in 1862, is a Czech gymnastic order which advocates "A sound mind in a sound body," while also promoting patriotic and cultural learning. The period of significance for the Sokol Pavilion is 1930 when the extant structure was completed to 1948, fifty years prior to this nomination. The nomination consists of one contributing building.

The foundation of the Sokol movement, while devoted to the development of the individual, was aimed at Czech national solidarity in defiance of Austro-Hungarian rule. Organized at Prague in 1862, the Telocvicna Jednota Sokol soon became a major international movement. The Sokol was based upon the idea that the intellectual, moral, and physical development of the nation was dependent upon the same in the individual.

Though based on physical education, the program was aimed at the whole person as well as the whole nation. Choosing as its symbol the falcon, "sokol" in Czech, whose endurance, courage, and speed made it an apt emblem. The Sokol motto is "A sound mind in a sound body."

The Sokol is the only secular Czech-American institution to be adopted from the homeland. Introduced at St. Louis, Missouri in 1865 just three years after its founding in Prague, the first organization established in Nebraska was at Crete in the early 1870s.

Unlike the homeland organization which focused on nation building and national identity, the American Sokols cultivated ethnic solidarity, cultural tradition, American citizenship, and an attitude of public service. Like the fraternal lodges, Sokols also provided education in Czech language, literature, history, and culture. Sokol halls also provided space for gymnastic competition. Activities included drills, calisthenics, dance and tumbling in addition to the more athletic gymnastic events (Murphy, 1991).

The first Sokol in Wilber was founded in 1880. After some initial success the organization disbanded. Another attempt also ended in failure. The third and current Sokol organized in 1925. Initially the Sokol did not have the financial resources to buy or rent a building. Realizing they needed a place to practice gymnastics they built an open-air platform. The platform served a dual purpose: it provided a practice facility for the gymnastics, as well as a place to hold fund raising dances.

Using money raised from dances, loans and donations, the Sokol was able to enclose the platform in 1926. In 1930, the organization bought additional land to improve and expand the original building. A basement was added and the main floor expanded to 60 by 92 feet, and a 38 by 48 feet stage was built on the west end. The north side housed a kitchen, bar, and dining area.

Besides the regular gymnastics training, the Sokol used the auditorium to sponsor a Czech language school, Drama Club, Czech Circle Club, a Choir Club and weekly dances. All of the activities were financially successful and once again the Sokol improved and enlarged the structure.

Remodeling started in July 1947 and was completed in October of the same year. Among the improvements were the installation of gas heat, improved kitchen and bar facilities, and a new larger dance floor. A brick facade with glass block windows was also added to the building.

By encouraging the individual to retain and strengthen their Czech heritage through various programs, the Sokol's original and ultimate goal was to promote national solidarity in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which was hostile towards this idea. After moving the Sokol tradition to the United States the organization continued to promote the Czech heritage through a variety of programs and clubs. The Sokol Pavilion in Wilber is a good example of a building used by this organization. It is an especially important organization and building in Wilber because of the community's strong Czech culture and heritage. The Czech influence originally developed in this area because it was the first principle rural

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Sokol Pavilion

Name of Property

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free-thought settlement in Nebraska. This consequently drew other free-thinking farmers to the area. According to the 1980 census nearly two-thirds of Wilber's citizens possessed Czech ancestry. Their strong cultural ties are exhibited through heritage festivals and the continued traditional uses of the Sokol Pavilion. The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of ethnic culture for the role it played in the promotion and preservation of Czech language and culture in Nebraska.

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Sokol Pavilion

Name of Property

Saline County, Nebraska

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Bibliography

Kral, E.A. A Selected History of Wilber and Czech Culture in Nebraska, 1837 to 1997. 1997

Murphy, David. "The Heart of Two Continents: Czechs and Nebraska". Lincoln. Nebraska State Historical Society, 1991.
Ripa, Georgia, June Kucera. History of Sokol Wilber. 1965.

Schleis, Evelyn, Alice Maryska, Irma Novak. T.J. Sokol. 1978.

Newspapers

The Beatrice Daily Sun

The Crete News

The Wilber Republican

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 285, 286, 287, Original Town, Wilber, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification

The boundary contains that parcel of land which has historically been associated with the property.



Photo 1 of 4 – view showing main (east) façade
Photo by Greg Miller, March 1998, NSHS (9803/1:5)



Photo 2 of 4 – view showing main (east) façade
Photo by Greg Miller, March 1988, NSHS (9803/1:1)



Photo 3 of 4 – view showing south and west facades
Photo by Greg Miller, March 1998, NSHS (9803/1:11)



Photo 4 of 4 – view showing south façade
Photo by Greg Miller, March 1998, NSHS (9803/1:12)