

MAYWOOD PARK RACETRACK

Maywood Park Racetrack
8600 W. North Avenue
Melrose Park
Cook County
Illinois

HABS IL-1244

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED & INTERPRETIVE DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

National Park Service
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HABS No. IL-1244

- Location: Maywood Park Racetrack is located at 8600 W. North Avenue in Melrose Park, Illinois. The property is part of the North Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 2, Township 39 North, Range 12 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Cook County (Proviso Township). The property, which is approximately 55-acres in size, is bounded by North Avenue on the north; residential subdivisions on the south; First Avenue on the east; commercial development on the west, and is bisected by Fifth Avenue.
- USGS Quadrangle: Proviso.
- Present Owner: Maywood Realty Company LLC.
- Present Use: All buildings documented in this report are vacant.
- Significance: Maywood Park Racetrack, which operated from 1946 to 2015, served as one of the premier half-mile Standardbred racetracks in the United States for much of its history. Harness racing—a once hugely popular spectator sport—was initiated on this site in the early 1930s when it served as the Cook County Fairgrounds. The Maywood Park Trotting Association was established in 1946 to redevelop the property as a permanent harness racing venue. The syndicate received the first license in Illinois to allow night racing with pari-mutuel betting under the state's new Harness Act passed in June 1945. In 1947, the first full harness race program to be televised anywhere in the country took place at Maywood Park. A massive new Grandstand/Clubhouse Building was completed in 1965 and designed by New York architect Lionel K. Levy, who was nationally known for his design of sports venues, especially those for boxing and horse racing. During the early 1970s, the facility's original wood stables were replaced with modern steel and concrete versions that were interspersed with a series of motel-type dormitories used mainly by groomsmen. The site has been vacant and unused since its closure in 2015.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of construction:

Grandstand and Clubhouse Building: 1963-65.
Equipment Storage Building: ca. 1973.
Materials Storage Building: 1996.
Paddock Building: ca. 1978.
Stable Buildings east of Fifth Avenue: 1969-73.
Dormitory Buildings east of Fifth Avenue: 1969-73.
Stable Buildings west of Fifth Avenue: 1977.
Dormitory Buildings east of Fifth Avenue: 1977.
Racetrack Kitchen: ca. 1946.
Office Building: ca. 1946.

2. Architect: The architect of the Grandstand and Clubhouse Building was Lionel K. Levy of New York City.

C.G. Clarke Associates, which had offices in Akron, Ohio and Lexington, Kentucky, designed the Stables and Dormitories that were built in the 1970s.

Architect Milton J. Bejcek of Hinsdale designed the Materials Storage Building.

Architects of the Racetrack Kitchen and the Office Building are unknown.

3. Consulting Engineers: Miller Engineering Company of Chicago served as consulting engineers for the Grandstand and Clubhouse Building. Gamze, Korobkin & Associates were the consulting mechanical engineers for this building.

4. Contractor/Builders: Sollitt Construction Company of Chicago was the general contractor for the grandstand. The contractors/builders for the outbuildings are unknown.

5. Original and subsequent owners:

The original purchasers of the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 2 were George Davis and James H. Rees who purchased it from the government on January 9, 1836. The portion of the project area in the West Half of the Northwest Quarter was originally purchased by Elijah K. Hubbard on June 25,

1835.¹ The property was later subdivided into a varying number of parcels with different owners, ranging from three (1862) to four (1870, 1875) to five (1886, 1890). In 1898 and 1904, the project area encompassed three separate parcels. Chicago attorney and real estate developer Arthur T. Galt purchased the project site from Mrs. Eva R. Wegg in 1922.² The Galt family retained ownership of the property until 2019 when it was sold to Maywood Realty Company LLC, the present owners.

6. Original plans and construction: The Grandstand/Clubhouse Building was built as a steel-framed edifice overlooking the homestretch of the racetrack with rooftop neon lettering identifying the facility as “Maywood Park.” Exterior walls were sheathed in brick and precast concrete panels, while the south elevation was entirely glazed. The ground floor, grandstand, and clubhouse levels all featured large open spaces spanned by continuous mutuel counters for betting. The grandstand and clubhouse levels were connected to the two grandstand levels that featured tiered bleacher seating. Interior finishes included concrete flooring, walls of gypsum board and concrete block, and suspended acoustical tile ceilings.

See individual HABS Outline Reports for original description of the primary outbuildings.

7. Alterations and additions:
The Grandstand/Clubhouse Building has been continually updated through the years. The most obvious exterior change is the installation of a large entrance canopy aside the north elevation, which features a metal gable roof supported by a series of paired concrete block columns. The ground floor level was completely renovated in the late 1980s, which included the installation of new bars, lounges, mutuel betting counters, and updated floor and ceiling finishes. Ceiling hung television sets were installed throughout the building at this time. Upper floors appear to have generally retained their original plans although floor and ceiling finishes have been updated. The mutuel counters spanning the north sides of the betting rooms on the grandstand and clubhouse levels appear to be non-original, as do the snack bars that span the south side of the clubhouse level betting room. The grandstand appears to have retained its original bleacher seats. The original appearance of the ground floor is unknown, as historic photos of the building’s interior were not found during research for this report. The racetrack’s archive of historic publicity photos was recently donated to Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois, and has not yet been archived and so was unavailable for review.

¹ Illinois Public Domain and Tract Sales Database for Section 2 T39N, R12E. Illinois Secretary of State Website. Accessed February 4, 2019.

² *Chicago Tribune*, April 20, 1922.

See individual HABS Outline Reports for alterations to primary outbuildings.

B. Historical Context:

1. Overview of Harness Racing in the U.S. and the Chicago Region

Harness racing is one of two major types of horse racing, the other being thoroughbred racing. Whereas the latter involves riders mounted on fast race horses, harness racing involves the more durable Standardbred horse pulling a driver sitting on a two wheeled vehicle, called a sulky. Harness racing horses are of two kinds, differentiated by gait: pacers run with the right front leg and right rear leg moving forward at the same time. Trotters run by moving legs diagonally, with the right front and left rear legs forward at the same time. The ability to maintain that gait at high speeds over long distances is the result of training.³

Harness racing became an organized sport in New England by 1840 and thrived at county fairs. The Grand Circuit, originally known as the Quadrilateral Trotting Combination, was established in 1871 and grew from four to twenty three tracks. As harness racing became more popular, a standard breed of horse was developed. Known as the Standardbred horse, named after the nineteenth-century competing requirement for a horse to trot or pace a mile in a standard time of 2 ½ minutes or less, the Standardbred horse is more durable, has a longer body and shorter legs than the Thoroughbred. Harness racing flourished over the years, with pictures of trotters and pacers made popular in the engravings of Currier and Ives.⁴ Commercial harness tracks were established nationwide by the turn of the twentieth century.

The Chicago area's earliest racetrack to host harness racing was Washington Park in the Woodlawn community, established in 1883. The year 1891 saw the establishment of Hawthorne Race Course, located in west suburban Stickney, and Aurora Downs, located 37.5 miles west of Chicago. When Hemstead Washburne was elected mayor of Chicago in 1892, he began a campaign to shut down the racetracks and was successful in 1905. His ban on gambling in Illinois remained in effect until 1922, after which time previously established horse racing venues reopened.⁵ In 1926, a one-mile track was established at Lincoln Fields (later called Balmoral) near south suburban Crete, Illinois. Washington Park reopened in a new location in 1926 in south suburban Homewood, 28 miles south of Chicago's Loop.

³ Philip A. Pines, *The Complete Book of Harness Racing, Fourth Edition* (New York: Arco Publishing Company, 1982) 112.

⁴ Harold Faber, "Goshen Hails 150 Years of U.S. Harness Racing," *New York Times*, July 6 1988.

⁵ Kimberly A. Rinker, *Chicago's Horse Racing Venues* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2009) 7.

After World War II ended and the postwar economy was booming, nighttime sports attractions were in short supply and harness racing filled the void. The Maywood Park Trotting Association was established in 1946 to redevelop the former Cook County Fairgrounds near west suburban Melrose Park as a permanent harness racing venue. The syndicate received the first license in Illinois to allow night racing with pari-mutuel betting under the state's new Harness Act passed in June 1945.⁶ Pari-mutuel wagering means, literally, a mutuel wager or "betting among ourselves." It is similar to a stock transaction. When a visitor buys a \$2.00 ticket on a horse he is, in effect, buying one share in the horse's performance in the race. The race track merely acts as the broker for the transaction and deducts a commission fixed by the state and shared by the state, track, and horsemen. The racetrack's takeout remains the same, regardless of whether a favorite or a longshot wins.

Sportsman's Park in west suburban Cicero, which had been the exclusive domain of the thoroughbreds, made its harness racing debut July 18, 1949, and the sport was an instant success. The attendance of 11,789 and the betting handle of \$127,812 were the highest first-night totals for an inaugural meeting in North American harness history.⁷ Aurora Downs closed in 1952 and its harness races shifted to Maywood Park. Sportsman's Park rivaled Maywood Park as the premier Chicago area harness racing venue from the 1970s through the 1990s. After moving its thoroughbred meeting to Arlington Park, Washington Park in Homewood became a harness track in 1962 and within a few years drew a crowd of more than 30,000, setting the state's all-time Standardbred attendance record.⁸ However, this venue's grandstand was destroyed by fire in 1977 and was never rebuilt. Hawthorne Racetrack, which originated as a thoroughbred track, introduced harness racing in the spring of 1970.

Harness racing began a rapid decline as a spectator sport in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s, due in large part to competition from off-track betting parlors, state lotteries, and casinos. Owners of commercial harness tracks faced heavy losses, spurred by declining attendance and betting. Attendance in the various Chicago area harness racing venues began to plummet, especially in relation to thoroughbred racing. Balmoral went from a high average attendance of 5,773 in 1978 to a low of 2,950 in 1984.⁹ When off-track betting parlors were legalized in Illinois in the mid-1990s, the fan base shifted from the racetracks to the parlors, and attendance and on-track handles began to drop at the Chicago tracks. As a result, purses dwindled while

⁶ James Segreti, "DuQuoin Hitches Sulkies to Star Harness Horses," *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 1946.

⁷ Neil Milbert, "Harness racing nears finish line," *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 8, 2017.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Neil Milbert, "Lottery, economy help weigh down harness racing," *Chicago Tribune*, May 31, 1986.

cost-of-living expenses increased, causing both breeds to experience financial hardships over the ensuing years that continue today.

Sportsman's Park had its last night of harness racing on October 10, 1997, preceding the ill-fated attempt to remake the track into a combination thoroughbred/auto racing facility, and the prestigious American-National races and Super Night were moved to Balmoral.¹⁰ By 2012, video gaming machines at bars, restaurants and truck stops were legalized in Illinois, cutting deeper into harness racing's popularity. The ultimate undoing of harness racing in the Chicago area is tied to an alleged "pay-to-play" scheme involving now-imprisoned Gov. Rod Blagojevich for legislation benefitting the racetracks. The U.S. Court of Appeals in 2015 ordered the ownership of Maywood and Balmoral Racetracks to pay several local casinos \$77.8 million in restitution. A court later sharply reduced the judgment, but the racetracks sought bankruptcy protection and both were closed that year. Today, Hawthorne in Cicero is the only racetrack in Cook County that offers harness racing.

2. Establishment of Cook County Fairgrounds on the site in 1930s

The history of the Maywood Park Racetrack can be traced to 1922 when Chicago attorney and real estate developer Arthur T. Galt purchased eighty acres of unincorporated land between west suburban Melrose Park and Franklin Park from Mrs. Eva R. Wegg for \$55,000, "supposedly for subdivision purposes."¹¹ The sprawling tract was located between First and Ninth avenues to the east and west, respectively, and by North Avenue to the north. Existing tracks of the Wisconsin, St. Paul and S. Ste Marie Railroad crossed the northeast corner of the property on a diagonal line. Galt's parcel was surrounded by farmland on three sides and by the Cook County Forest Preserves to the east.

In June 1932, Galt leased the rural tract of land to the Cook County Fair Association for eleven years on a percentage basis with an option of renewal. A *Chicago Tribune* item about the lease noted that, "A half mile track, grand stand, exhibition buildings, stables, etc. are announced for construction."¹² Work on the new site of the Cook County Fair—formerly held near suburban Palatine—was rushed for an opening of August 5, 1932. The ten-day event was notable for its plans to re-introduce the sport of harness racing in the Chicago area following the 1905 statewide ban on horse racing:

While the county fair is an old institution in Cook County, the entire management and type of exhibitions have been changed. The new half mile race track, stables, grandstand and exhibition quarters are being completed to house this annual

¹⁰ _____, "Two Racetracks mean Two Identities," *Chicago Tribune*, August 8, 1998.

¹¹ *Chicago Tribune*, April 20, 1922.

¹² "Real Estate News," *Chicago Tribune*, June 15, 1932.

show. And city folk will share with county folk in the competitive classes for which \$100,000 in prize money has been offered.

From well-known horse stables in the county will come some of the best trotting horses in the middle west to defend honors against those being shipped from considerable distances. This program, in charge of M.E. Bacon, will offer 26 harness classes for purses totaling \$8,600.

Of course, there will be the usual showing of well groomed cattle, the pens of pigs and sheep, and the large tables filled with farm wives' cakes, pies, knitting, and jellies. The school children will compete for prizes on their vegetables and classroom work. As in all good country fairs of former years, also, a "midway" with its amusements will be there.¹³

The *Chicago Tribune* published a photo of a harness race held at the Cook County Fairgrounds on opening day titled, "Trotters and Pacers Return to Chicago," which showed open bleachers in the background of the half-mile dirt track. The accompanying caption stated, in part, "...a good many folks are getting acquainted with the races where the jockeys ride behind the horse in a sulky."¹⁴ The 1933 Cook County Fair was a seventeen-day event in August that was "long in the carnival aspects and short in the agricultural exhibits."¹⁵ Harness racing continued to be a major attraction at the event, but after the last of its 225 participating horses were shipped to various state fairs, the site's half-mile oval was used for automobile races with cash prizes awarded for the fastest times.

January 1934 saw the establishment of the Chicago Trotting and Riding Club by Tom Hogan, the owner of Yellow Cab, and a group of other wealthy harness racing enthusiasts. Their intention was to revive interest in the sport by hosting non-betting races at the Cook County Fairgrounds. The Club's inaugural program on Memorial Day of that year featured harness races as well as a polo game and horse show.¹⁶ The fifth trotting meeting of the club, held June 9, 1934 at the fairgrounds, drew 8,500 fans.¹⁷

Harness racing at the Cook County Fairground's busy half-mile track was interspersed with automobile racing, as noted by one writer in August 1934:

King Gasoline will reign at the new Cook County Fairgrounds speedway Sunday, when 30 or more of the nation's leading auto racers will gather for the opening events of the year in this area. The opening of the local

¹³ Paul Potter, "Work Rushed on County Fair; Opens Friday," *Chicago Tribune*, August 2, 1932.

¹⁴ "Trotters and Pacers Return to Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, August 9, 1932.

¹⁵ "Auto Races On Card Today at County Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, August 13, 1933.

¹⁶ "Horsemen Meet to Plan Trot Revival," *Chicago Tribune*, January 25, 1934; Eleanor Page, "Trotting Club Seeks Revival of Sport Here," *Chicago Tribune*, March 32, 1934.

¹⁷ "Una Signal is Victor in 2:12 Trot by Neck," *Chicago Tribune*, June 10, 1934.

oval for auto races marks the return of AAA racing after a year's absence.¹⁸

In April 1937, automobile racing promoter Carl Stockholm announced plans to relocate his enterprises to the Cook County Fairgrounds, which he leased that month for a series of five race meetings as described in the *Chicago Tribune*:

Enthusiastic over his new racing plant, which will provide covered seats for 8,000 and accommodate more than 10,000 spectators, Stockholm said the American Automobile Association had assured him that he will have available many of the stars who will compete in the annual 500 mile race at Indianapolis on Memorial Day.

The Fair Grounds track is a half mile oval with wide banked turns that will permit the drivers to speed around the bends. The racing surface will be treated with calcium to overcome dust hazards.¹⁹

In 1940, the fairgrounds was also the site of midget auto racing, a then-popular sport, as described by one writer:

The most expensive midget racing car made—Harry McQuinn's especially constructed \$6,000 Marchese special—will be watched closely by rival drivers in the 50 mile race at the Cook County Fairgrounds, River Road and North Avenue, Sunday afternoon, when midget auto racing on a half mile track is presented for the first time in the Chicago section.²⁰

3. History of Maywood Park Racetrack: 1946 to 1965

Recreational sports, such as harness and automobile racing, came to a stop nationwide during World War II and the Cook County Fair Association's lease on Arthur Galt's parcel expired in 1943. In February 1946—just six months after the war ended—a syndicate known as the Maywood Park Trotting Association was established to develop the former fairgrounds site as a permanent harness racing venue. Its president, Robert B. Johnson, filed an application with the Illinois State Harness Racing Commission for permission to hold 60 nights of harness racing with pari-mutuel betting at the west side track that year, from June 6 through July 13 and from September 15 through October 19. The application was approved on April 6 and Arthur Galt provided the Association with a twenty-year lease at an undisclosed sum.²¹

¹⁸ "Seven Automobile Races On Fair Grounds Track Scheduled for Sunday," *Arlington Heights Herald*, August 17, 1934.

¹⁹ "County Fair Grounds Get Auto Racing," *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1937.

²⁰ "M'Quinn Enters \$6,000 Midget in 50 Mile Race," *Chicago Tribune*, June 20, 1940.

²¹ James Segreti, "Aurora Track Asks Dates for Harness Meet: Schedule Conflicts with Maywood Plans," *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 10, 1947.

One writer noted that, "Plans call for a complete rebuilding of the plant and the erection of ample stabling facilities, parking areas, clubhouse and the many other details which are required in the establishment of a modern racing plant." The same writer predicted that night racing at the racetrack was expected to draw a large audience since it was "adjacent to a large population area with the very best transportation facilities, and the immediate metropolitan area is distinctly race conscious. Maywood Park is but a short driving distance northwest of the Loop."²²

On April 16, Eugene J. Hayes, chairman of the newly created Illinois Harness Racing Commission, formally presented officials of the Maywood Park Trotting Association with the first license under the state's new Harness Act that was passed in June 1945 and allowed night harness racing with pari-mutuel betting. The revival of the sulky sport at Maywood Park brought to ten the number of harness racing centers which operated with pari-mutuel wagering nationwide.²³ Hayes predicted a rosy future for Maywood Park, the opening of which signaled the revival of the harness sport on big league standards in the Chicago area after a lapse of twenty years:

The meeting at Maywood Park will be a great step toward returning harness racing to popularity throughout the state of Illinois. The large purses will increase the earning power of harness horses and also serve as an added impetus to breeding in Illinois, which now ranks third in standardbred horses in the United States.²⁴

Robert Johnson, president of the Maywood Park Trotting Association, was a New York broker and member of the Chicago Board of Trade who served three years as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Johnson was also president of the Roosevelt Raceway in Westbury, Long Island, New York, which pioneered pari-mutuel harness racing in the United States in 1938. His fellow investors in the Maywood Park venture included Robert Owen Traynor, a Chicago real estate operator associated with Florida's Pompano Park Racetrack, and Martin Littleton, former district attorney in New York's Nassau County and ranch owner in Ishawooa, Wyoming. Associated with this group of officers were a number of prominent New York and Chicago business men including Michael G. Jacobs of New York, an internationally known polo player.²⁵

By March 1946 more than seventy horses were training at the Maywood Park Racetrack, while a \$300,000 renovation of the facilities was underway. Work

²² "Chicago Ready for the Trotters," *The Horseman and Fair World*, February 27, 1946: 107.

²³ James Segreti, "Waiting for Maywood Park's Go Signal," *Chicago Tribune*, June 2, 1946.

²⁴ _____, "DuQuoin Hitches Sulkies to Star Harness Horses," *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 1946.

²⁵ _____, "Harness Notes," *Chicago Tribune*, June 6, 1946; "Chicago Racing Starts June 6," *The Horseman and Fair World*, March 6, 1946.

included the construction of a new racetrack, clubhouse and stables. The facility—which was notable for offering night racing—also featured the latest in light equipment. The Fredericks Light and Manufacturing Company of Akron, Ohio, received a \$50,000 contract to install a 330,000-watt system that included 110 poles around the half-mile track, or one pole every 24'. The poles were located on both the outer rail and in the infield in a way to ensure that the horses would never be moving into a direct glare, nor would the jockeys ever be racing directly into the light.²⁶

The racing staff at the newly established Maywood Park Racetrack was dominated by Midwesterners and headed by General Manager Sam Wiedrick, who previously directed Northville Downs Racetrack near Detroit for two years. The group included June Van Gundy of DuQuoin, Illinois, racing secretary; John Dalley from Columbus, Ohio, track handicapper; Arthur Putnam from Davison, Michigan, starter; and Milton S. Van Gulsen from Flint, Michigan, presiding judge. Al Ahrens of Lincoln, Illinois, and Bill Connors of Chicago were also staff members.²⁷

Wiedrick stated in March 1946 that most of the 550 horses expected to fill Maywood Park's new stables were expected to come from Kentucky, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Illinois. "Drivers also will be largely midwesterners," he added.²⁸ However, champion trotters and pacers from the east coast and far west were also sought to compete for the purses, which were expected to total \$7,000 nightly.

About 200 head were quartered on the Maywood Park grounds by May 29, with the rest of its 493-stable capacity expected to be filled prior to the June 6 opening. Trainers traveling long distances typically shipped their horses by railroad at that time, some of which made an arduous eight-day journey from Santa Anita, California. Among the group was Kaola, winner of the \$50,000 Santa Anita Grand Trot on May 11. The unusual length of the trip, from a time standpoint, was due to a railroad strike, which slowed the arrival of these and other horses from various parts of the country.²⁹

On June 2nd, one writer noted that, "Highly valued harness champions continued brisk workouts yesterday, but they were matched in speed by President Robert Johnson and General Manager Sam Wiedrick, who trotted and paced over the park's 38 acres, watching workmen add finishing touches to the compact grandstand and clubhouse."³⁰

²⁶ Chicago Racing Starts June 6," *The Horseman and Fair World*, March 6, 1946.

²⁷ James Segreti, "Waiting for Maywood Park's Go Signal," *Chicago Tribune*, June 2, 1946.

²⁸ _____, "Maywood Park Harness Racing Plan Outlined," *Chicago Tribune*, March 14, 1946.

²⁹ "Maywood Draws Horses," *The Horseman and Fair World* (May 29, 1946); "Ready at Maywood," *The Horseman and Fair World*, June 5, 1946: 433.

³⁰ James Segreti, "Waiting for Maywood Park's Go Signal," *Chicago Tribune*, June 2, 1946.

The official opening of Maywood Park Racetrack on June 6, 1946 was attended by a crowd of 11,320. Its inaugural 33-day summer season of nighttime races included two \$10,000 feature events: the Chicago Trotting Derby on June 22 and the Illinois Pacing Classic on July 6. The opening night's mutual handle exceeded the expectations of its promoters, who needed a nightly average of \$100,000 to make a financial success from their investment of \$350,000.³¹ One writer provided some statistics on the first several days of betting at the racetrack:

The attendance and wagering figures for the opening three nights indicate the trotters and pacers have stepped into a prominent place in the city's calendar of night sports entertainment. The total attendance for the first three nights of operation reached 25,301, who sent \$382,025 through the machines.

The betting figures aren't as impressive as thoroughbred racing million dollar reports, but they represent a handsome profit for the promoters. Johnson, New York and Chicago broker who serves as president of the track, revealed last week that \$100,000 was needed nightly to break even. The wagering on the inaugural program Thursday night was \$154,977, followed by \$102,052 on Friday and \$124,996 Saturday night."³²

Maywood Park differed slightly from thoroughbred racing in the "take" from the mutual pools, as explained by sports writer James Segreti: "The trotting track will receive 9 percent plus breakage to the dime and the state will get 2 percent under the new Illinois harness horse pari-mutuel law. The running horse plants in the Chicago area collect 8 percent plus breakage to the dime and also contribute 2 percent to the state."³³

A writer for *The Horseman and Fair World* journal described the Maywood Park facility as it appeared upon opening day:

Only the track and the original grandstand remain of the Cook County plant. The stand has been remodeled and repainted until it is as modern as any. Under it was the offices and the mutual windows, and the concession stands. Next to it is the clubhouse, entirely new and with a wide terrace in front for the ox seat patrons. It also includes mutual windows, and a bar, and has every other convenience for patrons on the ground floor. Connecting the two structures is the bridge which carries the elaborate press box, the judges stand, announcers booth and photo finish camera room.

³¹ James Segreti, "11,320 Greet Harness Races at Maywood," *Chicago Tribune*, June 7, 1946.

³² _____, "Harness Racing Officials See a Boom in Wagers," *Chicago Tribune*, June 10, 1946.

³³ _____, "Maywood Park Harness Racing Plan Outlined," *Chicago Tribune*, March 14, 1946.

The park consists of 72 acres, and at present there are stable accommodations for about 500 horses. Other stables are still in process of building and will be ready in a short time. Quite a large amount of acreage is devoted to parking space for cars, and there is much more room outside of the plant for additional cars.³⁴

The Maywood Park Trotting Association printed a brochure for its inaugural season that contained a range of historical and current information on the sport of harness racing. It noted that a racing sulky weighed from 27 to 30 pounds and a jog cart, used for training, weighed 45 to 50 pounds at that time. The many owners, trainers and drivers on-site represented more than fifteen states and Canada. The top drivers were in their thirties or older and many received their start in the sport as grooms. Drivers participating in the inaugural season included two women and ranged in age from 20 to over 70 years. Some weighed as much as 200 pounds.³⁵ This brochure also described a sample day's work for the horses at Maywood Park as they were readied to race:

Three warm-up miles the wrong way of the track, with a groom in the sulky. Then two miles slowly the right way of the track, with the trainer doing the driving. This is known as the double header. Next a fifteen or twenty-minute rest in the barn. Then comes a faster mile, followed by a short rest. Finally, the horse is driven four or five miles right up to his best speed, with a short rest between miles. Then they let him call it a day's work. All the driving, except during the three-mile warm-up by the groom, is done by the trainer. So you can see that a trainer with a good sized stable does a lot of driving in a day, sometimes as much as seventy-five miles. Training is started just after dawn and usually is completed by noon.³⁶

One writer noted on June 19 that, "The first women drivers to go into action at Maywood both raced during this week. Mrs. W. J. McLaughlin drove Moses to a close second place finish, while Mrs. Forrest Burright got Puzette home fifth."³⁷ Mrs. Burright's first name was Neva and she was 63 years old at the time of this race, which gained her national attention. Known as "grandma" Burright, she competed in Maywood's inaugural season in the twilight of her 57-year-career in the sulky. Burright (1883-1958) was featured in the July 12, 1948 issue of *Life* magazine article titled, "Queen of Racing," which stated that the mother of seven children and grandmother of two spent eighteen hours a day training and driving trotters at Chicago's Maywood Park. Her husband

³⁴ "The Trotters Return to Chicago," *The Horseman and Fair World*, June 12, 1946.

³⁵ Maywood Park Trotting Association, *Night Racing, Maywood Park 1946: June 6 to July 13, Sept. 17 to Oct. 17*. (Brochure printed by the Association for Maywood Park Racetrack's inaugural season).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "Second Week at Maywood," *The Horseman and Fair World*, June 19, 1946.

A.L., known as Forrest Burright in harness racing circles, was a well-known trainer and driver.³⁸

Maywood's inaugural summer harness racing meet came to an end on July 13, 1946. The park realized a handsome profit from its meeting during June and July, which was shortened to twenty six nights due to seven rain-outs. The total mutual handle was \$3,487,512 and there were 117,956 paid admissions. The facility's fall program began on September 17 and the half-mile track attracted a crowd of 9,347 four days later, the biggest since its opener on June 6.³⁹

After the gates closed for the fall season, Maywood Park officials worked to improve their facility prior to hosting its second sixty-night meeting, which began May 12, 1947. One writer noted a week before that season's opening day that, "The racing strip has been brought to peak condition by Track Superintendent Joe Harbutt and additional improvements have been carried out in the stands where 1,000 steel bleacher seats have been added to the grandstand. The infield has been beautified with the planting of flower beds and parking facilities have been enlarged."⁴⁰ A new cafeteria was installed that "provides excellent food, well cooked," delivered from kitchens that were "spotless from the ice box to the counters."⁴¹ The facility also featured numerous sandwich stands, both in the club house and beneath the bleachers, in addition to bars and other food stands. Roadways in the stable areas were heavily graveled and every available stall was filled.

One especially noteworthy aspect of the 1947 season was that its Saturday night races were televised, as discussed by one writer:

President Robert G. Johnson and general manager Sam Wiedrick were pleased by a deluge of reports applauding the broadcasts from all corners of the Chicago metropolitan area. Capt. Bill Eddy, television director of station WBKB in Chicago, watched the races on a set in Michigan City, Indiana, 60 miles from the track, and reported that the clear, sharp presentation marked another milestone in both television and night harness racing history.⁴²

By the spring of 1948, Maywood's stables had been expanded to accommodate 550 horses and the venue introduced several innovations, such as an electrical

³⁸ "Queen of Racing," *Life* magazine, July 12, 1948, p. 63. Harness Museum website accessed February 22, 2019: <https://harnessmuseum.com/content/neva-grandma-burright>

³⁹ James Segreti, "Maywood Ready, If Weather Permits, To Open Gate," *Chicago Tribune*, May 9, 1948.

⁴⁰ "The Maywood Opening," *The Horseman and Fair World*, May 7, 1947.

⁴¹ "Maywood Extended Another Week," *The Horseman and Fair World*, July 16, 1947: 730.

⁴² "The Second Week at Maywood," *The Horseman and Fair World*, May 28, 1947: 510.

tote board placed in the infield of the track. The tote board posted the odds, amounts of money bets, results of a race, and the wagering payoffs. The track also used the 1948 model of the patented E.M. Smith starting gate, and added the Tel-Autograf, which flashed prices by electrical impulse from the calculating room to small screens above cashier windows, to speed up payoffs.⁴³ Nightly wagering continued to increase in the racetrack's first three years. Maywood Park averaged \$115,000 in its first year of operation and \$135,000 in 1947. On July 23, 1948, the park ended its 60-night schedule with an average nightly handle of \$220,000. The total mutual handle was in the neighborhood of \$13 million, far above the total of \$7.7 million achieved in 1947.⁴⁴

Increased attendance spurred the construction of extensions to the clubhouse and the grandstand in time for the 1949 spring-summer meeting to accommodate a seating capacity of 10,000. Additional light poles were installed to produce 345,000 watts of power. The venue also upgraded its E.M. Smith gate to a 1949 model, which consisted of a "14,000 pound car carrying a 60 foot steel wing," operating inside the infield rail that was capable of speeds over 50 miles per hour."⁴⁵ The horses and sulkies ran behind the moving wing.

Tragedy struck the Maywood Park Racetrack in the predawn hours of April 17, 1961, when a blaze roared through two of its 25' long stables killing three men and forty two horses. Thirty trotters and pacers were saved from the burning barns and forty others were moved when embers threatened adjacent stalls. A twenty mile-per-hour wind drove flames through tinder-dry hay, straw and feed in the wooden buildings. Authorities speculated that a space heater was the cause of the blaze. Nathan Allen, who replaced Robert Johnson as president of the Maywood Park Trotting Association in 1955, said \$100,000 worth of equipment and buildings was lost. Horsemen said each of the forty two horses could be worth as much as \$2,000.⁴⁶

In December 1962, Nathan Allen announced plans of the Trotting Association to erect a massive, enclosed grandstand incorporating a clubhouse and mutual betting counters as part of a larger project to eventually overhaul the racetrack with modern, fireproof facilities.⁴⁷ New York architect Lionel Levy was hired as architect of the new grandstand, which was intended to be constructed in two phases. Phase one was to entail construction of its lower, north half

⁴⁵ _____, "Maywood Park Starts Harness Meet Tonight," *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 15, 1949.

⁴⁶ "Three Killed in Blaze at Chicago Racetrack," *The Daily Telegram* (Eau Claire, Wisconsin), April 17, 1961.

⁴⁷ James Segreti, "\$3,000,000 Job at Maywood," *Chicago Tribune*, December 4, 1962.

featuring the clubhouse, to be sited directly behind the existing open wooden grandstand. The taller, glass-enclosed south half of the new structure, featuring tiered seating on two upper levels, was to replace the existing grandstand at a future date.

Miller Engineering Company, 176 W. Adams Street, Chicago, executed a full set of working drawings for the Grandstand and Clubhouse Building on September 13, 1963. The firm also developed a site plan for the facility as it appeared at the time, which showed a series of barns lining its south periphery, which were adjacent to a new residential subdivision. The property's Fifth Avenue border was also lined with continuous series of barns and a one-story office building, situated to the west of the grandstand. Its First Avenue border was lined with standalone small office buildings and one stable. The paddock building was adjacent to the east side of the grandstand. Six standalone barns and an additional small office building were located near the site's northwest corner. Parking was presumably provided on the facility's acreage across 5th Avenue.

Work on the north, or clubhouse, portion of the grandstand was well underway by October 1963 when its steel frame rose to a height of 41'. Trotting Association president Nathan Allen stated at the time that, "When completed, Maywood Park will be the absolute latest in racing plants and done in the compact style with clubhouse, restaurant and grandstand, all glass enclosed, in one building."⁴⁸

In November 1963, the Maywood Park Trotting Association asked the Cook County Zoning Board for a special use permit to expand their facilities westward across Fifth Avenue with the installation of an additional parking lot and the construction of a receiving barn. In making this appeal, Allan noted that increased parking facilities would accommodate an expected increase in attendance in the coming years. The racetrack had an average daily attendance of 7,029 during its 1963 season and its existing parking facilities accommodated about 6,000 cars.⁴⁹ The request for expansion was approved by the County Board in February 1964. At some point thereafter, five existing wood horse barns located near the southwest corner of North and Fifth avenues were razed to provide additional parking near the grandstand. Horses stabled in those barns were moved to a forty three acre, 273-stable farm that the Association had recently acquired near west suburban Elgin. Officials planned to eventually stable all horses at this site and haul them to receiving barns to be constructed near the track.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ "Maywood Park Rebuilding Moves Along," *Chicago Tribune*, October 22, 1963.

⁴⁹ "Seek 63 Acre Expansion of Maywood Pk.," *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 3, 1963.

⁵⁰ "Maywood Park Track Given Expansion O.K.," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 27, 1964.

In May 1964 the Galt family—which already owned the racetrack site—acquired working control of its facilities when 52-year-old Arthur T. Galt Jr. became the third president of the Maywood Park Trotting Association, replacing Nathan Allen. Galt, who shared his father's love of horses, owned a 250-acre farm and a small airport near Woodstock, Illinois, at that time. His two brothers, William C. Galt, 47, and Raymond M. Galt, 50, were also voted into key positions at the Association, which was reorganized in that year. William, who was associated with his father in business and investments, was elected vice president and treasurer. Raymond, a practicing physician, was a vice president. Clarence F. Martin, an attorney, was named secretary.⁵¹ The Association named Charles Stuart as the facility's new General Manager, charged with directing the \$4 million construction program underway at the track. Asked about progress on this work, Stuart said:

Our first phase of the building program working toward an all new Maywood Park will be completed by August 15. This is the grandstand costing upwards of \$1,000,000. Following our fall meeting we will enter into phase two which will be the new clubhouse. Finally will come phase three, our new fireproof barns. The new plant will accommodate more than 20,000 people and will be the finest half mile facility in the Midwest.⁵²

On June 28, 1964, the *Chicago Tribune* published a photo showing architect Lionel Levy and the three Galt brothers posed in front of the rising north section of the grandstand.⁵³ The clubhouse portion of the grandstand, which cost of \$1.5 million, was finished in time for the opening of a forty two night meeting that began September 6, 1964, and was described in the *Chicago Tribune*:

A huge, two-level structure is already completed for this year's meeting with an additional two stories to be added starting immediately after the conclusion of this season's racing which runs through Oct 24. No longer will racegoers be confronted with the shortage of space at Maywood. There's 68,000 square feet of floor space under roof right now, housing a cafeteria, mutuel windows and a completely new pari-mutuel set up. In all 110 new mutuel windows have been installed with island betting the keynote. It's all part of a four million dollar program which will see the complete rebuilding of the west suburban track. More than one and one-half million dollars have been invested thus far.

⁵¹ James Segreti, "Trot Group Names Galt President," *Chicago Tribune*, May 13, 1964.

⁵² "Charles Stuart Named Maywood Park General Manager for 1964 Meet; Will Direct Expansion," *The Horseman and Fair World*, May 27, 1964.

⁵³ "Stretch Drive in Maywood Park Plans," *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 1964.

New entrances to both the grandstand and clubhouse along with increased parking space point to the heavy emphasis the track has placed on spectator convenience. For the time being the old grandstand and clubhouse remain. Both will be razed to make way for the completion of building for future race meetings in Maywood.⁵⁴

General Manager Charles Stuart announced on October 18, 1964 that steel orders were made and contracts let for phase two of the \$4 million grandstand, built by the George K. Sollitt Construction Company of Chicago. Sports writer James Segreti noted at the time that, "Lionel Levy, New York architect, is expected to return soon to supervise construction of the new viewing stands, dining room, etc. in the plans of the Galt brothers."⁵⁵ Demolition of the 1946 grandstand and clubhouse commenced shortly after the racetrack's fall 1964 meeting. Workmen poured concrete for the south half of the grandstand in March 1965 despite high winds and snow.⁵⁶

Maywood Park's new grandstand was completed in advance of the opening of its fall 1965 meeting held on October 18, which was attended by a crowd of 8,617.⁵⁷ The structure featured a dramatic, 400-foot-long south window wall. Its massive glass panes were manufactured by the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company and suspended by huge clamps interspersed by glass stabilizers at regular intervals along the length of the façade. Arthur Galt Jr. stated that, "In studying the newest methods of providing fan comfort we were tremendously impressed by the idea of unobstructed vision that suspending glass makes possible."⁵⁸ The grandstand was written about upon its completion:

The new building, which is 10 stories high, will replace a structure which had in part been at Maywood since the pioneer track introduced pari-mutuel harness racing to Illinois in 1946. The focus of attention now at the track is on the interior, where work has been continuing while the glass installation was being completed. The 48 lights [panes] of heavy-duty polished glass in the grandstand weigh more than a ton each and are the heaviest in use in the United States. They are 25 feet, 9 inches high, 8 feet 3 inches in width, and are ½-inch thick.

Maywood is the largest building in the United States using the suspension method of glass rather than the traditional system of setting

⁵⁴ "Maywood Will Open Tomorrow," *Chicago Tribune*, September 6, 1964.

⁵⁵ James Segreti, "Harness Notes," *Chicago Tribune*, October 18, 1964.

⁵⁶ _____, "Harness Notes," *Chicago Tribune*, March 21, 1965.

⁵⁷ _____, "8,617 Attend Inaugural at Maywood Park," *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 1965.

⁵⁸ _____, "Harness Notes," *Chicago Tribune*, September 12, 1965.

the glass in frames. Glass stabilizers are located at the vertical edges of the large lights of glass to resist wind pressures. The stabilizers extend 14 inches inward and outward at right angles to the glass.⁵⁹

Unfortunately, shortly after the grandstand was completed, the suspended glazing installed by the F.H. Sparks Company of New York proved unsatisfactory, with much of the glass cracking and breaking. Another company was employed by racetrack officials to remove the suspended glazing and install conventional glazing. Arthur T. Galt Jr. and the Maywood Park Trotting Association filed a complaint against Libbey-Owens-Ford and the Sparks Company on September 29, 1966.⁶⁰

Maywood Park's mid-1960s modernization program included the installation of a 125' Horton Watersphere water tower built in 1965 by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company of Oak Brook on the east side of the grandstand.⁶¹

4. Post-1965 History of Maywood Park Racetrack

By the time landowner Arthur Galt Sr. died in 1968 at the age of 92, Maywood Park had become one of the premier half-mile standardbred racetracks in North America. Over the course of the next decade, the facility was modernized through the replacement of virtually all original wood buildings with new concrete barns and motel-like dormitory buildings, as well as the construction of a new office building for the Racing Secretary, concrete block storage buildings, and a new paddock building. Two existing outbuildings remained—the original clubhouse and the stable used by the Galt family for their horses—both of which were extensively remodeled over the years.

The first phase of outbuilding modernization occurred in 1969-72 and involved the construction of steel and concrete barns arranged in three groups, originally identified as A, B, and C barns, located at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the track, respectively. Their tiered arrangement allowed for an economical use of space within a restricted site bounded by First and Fifth avenues. Their standardized plans featured long rows of stalls, each of which measured 10' x 10' in size. Four concrete block dormitories were also built around the track during this period. The construction of one set of these dormitory buildings and the addition of twenty eight stalls to complete Barn C

⁵⁹ _____, "Harness Notes," *Chicago Tribune*, September 12, 1965.

⁶⁰ Arthur T. Galt and Maywood Park Trotting Association, Inc., an Illinois Corporation, Plaintiffs, v. Libbey Owens-Ford Glass Company, an Ohio Corporation, and F. H. Sparks Co., Inc., a New York Corporation, Defendants, the George Sollitt Construction Company, an Illinois Corporation, Intervening Plaintiff-appellee, v. F. H. Sparks Co., Inc., a New York Corporation, Defendant-appellant, 376 F.2d 711 (7th Cir. 1967). <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/376/711/29298/> (Accessed January 30, 2019).

⁶¹ Information on the water tower taken from a plaque on the structure.

was announced in June 1972 by Sid Anton, Maywood Park's general manager, as reported in *The Horseman and Fair World* journal:

The new 48-room building will have individual heating units with separate temperature controls in each room. There will also be complete washroom facilities for both men and women. The building is of precast concrete and fireproof block construction. When finished the new unit's rooms will bring to a total of 128 the number of newly completed motel type living quarters which include washroom and shower facilities. Since the backstretch improvement program was begun in 1969 and counting the 28 new stalls being built, Maywood has in its barn construction program added 592 stalls within buildings of fireproof concrete and steel.⁶²

In 1973, a long concrete stable building, known as the D barn, was built along Maywood's southern periphery, in-between the B and C barn groups, replacing its last stretch of original wood barns. Another facility expansion occurred in 1977, when the group of side-by-side concrete barns were built across Fifth Avenue, as were two additional dormitory buildings and an adjacent two-story brick office building that housed the Racetrack Secretary and his staff.

All of the new stables and dormitories built at Maywood during the 1970s were designed by C.G. Clarke Associates, with offices in Akron, Ohio and Lexington, Kentucky. Also in 1977-78, a new concrete block equipment storage building and a paddock building were erected near the northeast corner of the racetrack. The paddock building was the site where horses were gathered prior to a race. After races, horses were brought to a small detention barn where their urine and blood was tested for drugs by an official from the Illinois Racing Board.⁶³

A wide variety of people worked at Maywood Park, some of whom were staff, such as the track officials, announcers, administrative officials, judges, concessions/restaurant workers, and maintenance crew. The drivers and trainers were independent contractors who were hired by the horse owners. Groomers worked for the trainers, who also brought their own veterinarians.

Space in the stables and dormitories was allocated by the Racetrack Secretary at the request of horse owners/trainers and was provided free of charge. Dormitories were mainly used by groomsmen, who were at the low end of the pay scale and transient workers. When the season ended at Maywood, they would pack up and move to the next racetrack. Groomsmen benefited from a dentist and a doctor's office established on the second floor of the racetrack

⁶² "Motel-Type Living Quarters Latest Addition to Maywood Park Construction Program," *The Horseman and Fair World*, June 14, 1972.

⁶³ Interview with Paul Tarleton, former Facility Superintendent at Maywood Park Racetrack, February 21, 2019.

kitchen building, which originally served as a stable for the Galt family's horses.⁶⁴

Starting in 1976, the Galt brothers began a concerted effort to sell the Maywood Park Racetrack facility while retaining ownership of the land. A *Chicago Tribune* article from 1978 claimed that they had assumed ownership of the racetrack reluctantly, due to the wishes of their father. The writer stated that if William [Bill] Galt had his way, "Maywood Park would now be a shopping center instead of a better center..." Bill Galt, whose profession was real estate management, stated at the time: "It's no secret that I was never interested in horses. I've done the best I can with something I don't enjoy. Once I get involved, I don't give up. Neither Art nor I have ever taken a salary since this started, and we've never returned a dividend to stockholders, either. All the money goes back into building one thing or another around the track."⁶⁵ Raymond Galt, an internist, found track ownership a hindrance to his busy medical practice.

In 1979, World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Muhammad Ali won a seven-furlong exhibition race, a fundraising event to benefit Provident Hospital of Chicago, at that time the oldest and largest African-American managed hospital in Illinois.⁶⁶ Maywood Park also assumed a new ownership team in 1979, headed by Pete Flavin and William "Billy" Johnston, both of whom purchased a third of Maywood's stock. Flavin was chairman of the board of the American Data Corporation in Palatine and Johnston was the long-time president of Sportman's Park in west suburban Cicero, which also hosted harness racing at that time. Sid Anton, who operated the racetrack as general manager since 1967, bought 22 percent, and Lester McKeever, head of a certified public accounting firm, took the other twelve.⁶⁷ The group assumed a long-term lease of the land from the Galt family.

The Johnston family moved their administrative offices into Maywood Park's original clubhouse building, situated just west of the grandstand, which had been vacant for years. Its second floor spaces, which originally housed a dining room and mutuel counters, were remodeled as offices. In later years, a locker room and showers for the drivers were installed at the west end of the second floor. The Racing Industry Charitable Foundation moved into the first floor of this building's one-story east wing at an unknown date.

⁶⁴ Interview with Tony Somone, former Public Relations Director at Maywood Park Racetrack, February 12, 2019.

⁶⁵ Mike Kiley, "Galts rule Maywood Reluctantly," *Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 26, 1978.

⁶⁶ Duane Ranger, "Maywood Park Boasts a Very Proud History," in: <http://www.harnesslink.com/News/Maywood-Park-boasts-a-very-proud-history-105249> (accessed March 1, 2019).

⁶⁷ Mike Kiley, "Maywood's new chairman learned from Bill Veeck," *Chicago Tribune*, May 27, 1979.

In 1984 Maywood Park became the first Chicago area track - and only the second ever - to host a prestigious Breeders Crown, an annual series of harness races promoting the Standardbred industry and harness racing. The October 19, 1984 Two-Year-Old Filly Pace Final carried a \$550,000 prize -still the largest purse ever offered at a Chicagoland standardbred track - and was won in a thrilling three-horse photo finish by Amneris in 1:57.1, just a tick off the world record, with Hall of Fame driver John Campbell in the sulky.⁶⁸

The Johnston family joined with the family of the New York Yankees' principal owner George Steinbrenner to buy Balmoral Racetrack for \$8 million in 1987 and added a mile track at a cost of \$750,000. Billy's sons, Duke and John, eventually succeeded him in heading the racetracks at Maywood and Balmoral, respectively. Both went on to become nationally-respected track operators. The grandstand at Maywood Park underwent a major renovation in the late 1980s, which included the creation of new lounges and bars on the first floor. The grandstand housed two casual dining rooms (Saddle and Sulky Room and Half Mile Bar and Grill) and a more formal dining room (Winner's Circle). Television sets were installed throughout the grandstand, which was opened year-round starting at about this time, in response to the introduction of off-track betting (OTB) in Illinois. Maywood, Sportsman's, Hawthorne, and Balmoral banded to form Inter-Track Partners to own and operate their on-site betting parlors jointly.

In 1990, the Maywood Trotting Association sold a 19-acre parcel of its property that bordered Ninth Avenue, reducing the property's size to about 55 acres.

The combination of off-track betting in the late 1980s and the arrival of casino gambling in Illinois in the 1990s spurred the decline of visitors and betting at Chicago-area racetracks, especially those catering to the sulky sport as opposed to thoroughbred racing. Billy Johnston, who headed Maywood and Balmoral Parks, noted in 1998: "Because harness racing is at night and because we've traditionally had a working-class audience we've been harder hit by competition from other gambling, other sports and other forms of entertainment."⁶⁹ Plummeting attendance at Maywood Park's live races led to

⁶⁸ Duane Ranger, "Maywood Park Boasts a Very Proud History," in: <http://www.harnesslink.com/News/Maywood-Park-boasts-a-very-proud-history-105249> (accessed March 1, 2019).

⁶⁹ Neil Milbert, "Two Racetracks mean Two Identities," *Chicago Tribune*, August 8, 1998.

the closure of the third floor of the grandstand in the late 1990s. Lower revenues at the racetrack also spurred the closure of the cafeteria in the racetrack kitchen, which catered to the grooms, and the space was subsequently used as a lounge with vending machines.⁷⁰

By 2012, video gaming machines at bars, restaurants and truck stops was legalized in Illinois, cutting deeper into harness racing's popularity. The ultimate undoing of harness racing at Maywood Park, however, was tied to a ruling by the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2014 that ordered Balmoral Racing Club and Maywood Park Trotting Association to pay a total of \$77.8 million to four of the state's riverboat casinos. The ruling stemmed from a federal racketeering suit claiming that John Johnston acquiesced to then-Governor Rod Blagojevich's request for a \$100,000 campaign contribution in return for signing 2008 legislation to benefit Balmoral and Maywood as well as the state's two thoroughbred tracks, Arlington International Racecourse and Hawthorne Race Course. But the contribution was never made. The bill that Blagojevich signed extended a 3 percent adjusted gross revenue impact fee that was assessed against four casinos, to compensate the state's racetracks for the financial losses they incurred when the casinos were allowed dockside gaming in 1999. The impact fee was levied in 2006 but expired in 2008.⁷¹

The Maywood Park Trotting Association and the Balmoral Racing Club filed for bankruptcy in December 2015 and both racetracks were closed that year. Their assets were sold through an online personal property auction put on by Loeb Winternitz Industrial Auctioneers and Yellen Partners and held in May 2016. Everything was up for sale: starter cars, starting gates, restaurant equipment, racetrack publicity photos, televisions, and even the escalators.⁷² The property remained vacant and unused since 2015.

5. Original Owner Arthur T. Galt Sr.

Arthur T. Galt (1876-1968), a multimillionaire real estate investor and the original owner of the Maywood Park Racetrack, was born in Chicago, the son of Isabelle (Mason) and Azariah T. Galt. His father was a pioneer Chicago lawyer who arrived in the city in 1857 and was admitted to the Illinois bar two years later. Arthur attended Yale University and then went to law school at Northwestern University, graduating in 1901.⁷³ He married Ida Cook of Evanston in 1907 and the couple had three children: Arthur T. Jr. (1912-2002), Raymond (1914-2000), and William (1917-2005). The family also had

⁷⁰ Interview with William Johnston, Feb. 20, 2019.

⁷¹ Neil Milbert, "Suit has horse tracks facing bankruptcy," *Chicago Tribune*, December 17, 2014.

⁷² Michael Romain, "Maywood Park could be torn down this summer, auction completed," *Village Free Press* (May 13, 2016).

⁷³ "Mrs. A.T. Galt Dies Suddenly," *Chicago Tribune*, September 22, 1909; "Azariah T. Galt, Pioneer Lawyer of Chicago, Dies," *Chicago Tribune*, August 1, 1922; "Services Set in Evanston for A.T. Galt," *Chicago Tribune*, September 14, 1968.

a farm in Holland Michigan, where the young Arthur Jr. reportedly learned how to ride a horse at the age of two.

Galt established his own law firm shortly after graduating from Northwestern and began acquiring land holdings in the Chicago area and in Florida, becoming a multimillionaire in the process. However, as one Fort Lauderdale reporter noted in 1954: "Speak the name Arthur T. Galt to the average well-informed Chicagoan, and he will not recognize it....Galt simply has chosen to live and work quietly, away from the throng."⁷⁴ Galt's unpretentious manner of business is evident by the dearth of contemporary writings about his business dealings. However, sporadic newspaper articles on Chicago real estate provide a sense of the extensive tracts of land that he acquired in the early twentieth-century, which he often later sold to developers for residential or commercial improvements.

In 1925, Arthur Galt sold his home at 1432 North Dearborn Street to a developer who immediately wrecked it to make way for a six-story apartment building.⁷⁵ Arthur and Ida then relocated to a nearby mansion at 1205 Astor Street in Chicago's Gold Coast neighborhood. In the same year, Galt added to his holdings on Astor Street by buying a 54' x 100' parcel at its northeast corner with Division Street for \$180,000 that featured a six-flat building. He also acquired in that year a 28' x 100' foot adjoining parcel to the north with an existing residence, providing him a total of 82' of frontage on Astor and 100' on Division.⁷⁶

In July 1937 the Galt family announced their intention to construct a \$3 million retail storefront building in the Edgewater community on Chicago's Far North Side. A drawing of the modernistic, low-rise building by the architectural firm of Leichenko & Esser was published in the July 25, 1937 issue of the *Chicago Tribune*, which was intended to be built in sections. More than half of the 426' long Sheridan Road frontage of the first unit—to be located at its southwest intersection with Arthur Avenue—was already leased by a variety of chain stores at that time. Its building site was at the eastern edge of a larger tract previously acquired by Arthur Sr. and platted as A.T. Galt's Edgewater Golf subdivision. Part of the property to the west was occupied for several years by the Edgewater Golf Club.⁷⁷

During the 1910s, Galt purchased about 4,000 acres in Broward County, Florida, situated between Federal Highway and the ocean from Fort Lauderdale to Pompano Beach. His acquisitions were made at a time when

⁷⁴ "Economy of City Aided By Foresight of Arthur Galt," *Fort Lauderdale News*, January 22, 1954.

⁷⁵ Al Chase, "Plan \$450,000 Flats Next To St. Chrysostom," *Chicago Tribune*, March 31, 1925.

⁷⁶ _____, "May Build Tall Flats at Astor and Division," *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1925.

⁷⁷ "Uptown Project Many Amount to Six Millions," *Chicago Tribune*, July 25, 1937.

many wealthy families were starting to winter in Florida, which experienced a great housing boom between 1915 and 1925 that “contained all of the elements of a classic speculative bubble,” according to historian John Galbraith. A thriving tourism industry and rapid population growth spurred a phenomenal rise in Florida land prices, while easy access to cheap credit helped drive rampant land speculation during this period. A string of hotels and resorts were built, a coastal railroad installed from Palm Beach to Miami, wetlands were drained, and new roadways were planned as huge amounts of capital were pumped into the local economy and the real estate market.⁷⁸

In January 1925, Galt sold about 3,200 acres of his holdings to a syndicate known as the British-American Improvement Company, which planned to develop the massive tract as an upscale winter resort called Floranada for leaders of American and British society. The company failed during the Florida real estate bust of the mid-1920s and declared bankruptcy in June 1926, after which time Galt recovered his land holdings. When interviewed at the time about the demise of the Floranada resort project, Galt noted he couldn’t finance the development of the property himself but predicted that “someday it may be done.”⁷⁹ Galt held onto his massive Florida land holdings through the Great Depression and World War II, after which time he decided the time was finally ripe for development. In 1951, he sold 500 acres of his oceanfront land to Florida real estate developers James S. Hunt and Stephen A. Calder who formed the Coral Ridge Development Corporation and began to erect luxury apartment buildings and hotels.

By October 1953 Galt was so pleased with the luxury apartment and hotel development underway at Coral Ridge that he sold 2,466 acres to Hunt and Calder for \$19,389,000. The transaction was reportedly one of the largest private sales of undeveloped land in American history at that time. The massive tract included a full mile of oceanfront, as well as five miles of frontage on U.S. 1, lying three miles north from Fort Lauderdale, and along both sides of the Intracoastal Waterway. The land was subsequently annexed to Fort Lauderdale and the acreage subsequently developed with luxury hotels, apartments and residential parcels.⁸⁰ One local reporter noted shortly thereafter that, “Few men have done more for the economic well-being of the city of Fort Lauderdale than Arthur T. Galt—yet few men have so shunned the limelight.”⁸¹

⁷⁸ John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Great Crash, 1929* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1955) 8. A good source on Florida’s real estate boom of the 1920s is: Raymond B. Vickers, *Panic in Paradise: Florida’s Banking Crash of 1926* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1994).

⁷⁹ “Investors Here Escape Losses in Floranada,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 1, 1926.

⁸⁰ “2,466 Florida Acres Sold By Chicagoan,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 25, 1953; “19 Millions Paid for Broward Land: Fort Lauderdale Developers Buy Tracts from Chicago Millionaire,” *The Miami News*, October 25, 1953.

⁸¹ “Economy of City Aided By Foresight of Arthur Galt,” *Fort Lauderdale News*, January 22, 1954.

The stretch of beach formerly owned by Galt was officially named “The Galt Ocean Mile” at a ceremony held on January 22, 1954, during which time Galt was awarded a key to the state by Florida Governor Charley E. Johns. He was also presented with a sterling silver plaque by C. Malcolm Carlisle, mayor of Ft. Lauderdale. It was a replica of a bronze historical marker with Galt’s image that was erected at the south intersection of Galt Ocean Boulevard and State Route A1A.

Arthur Galt, with his wife Ida, lived at 1205 Astor Street in Chicago’s Gold Coast neighborhood and were active in many philanthropic endeavors.⁸² Ida Galt died in 1965 at the age of 89. Arthur T. Galt died in 1968 at the age of 93. Galt’s three sons became actively involved in Maywood Park Racetrack in 1964 when all three were appointed to executive positions. (See “History of the Maywood Park Racetrack to 1965” essay above.)

6. Architect Lionel K. Levy

Architect Lionel K. Levy (1902-1984), the designer of Maywood Park Racetrack’s 1964 grandstand, was a native of Augusta, Georgia, where his family had long-time roots. A nationally prominent architect and developer, Lionel graduated in 1924 from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, where he studied architecture and engineering. There he met another architecture student, Leon R. Levy, with whom he formed the firm of Leon & Lionel Levy, Architects, with offices in Norwalk, Connecticut. The two men were not related.

Lionel Levy’s most prominent early project was the design of the arena at the “old” Madison Square Garden (the third venue to bear this name), located on Eighth Avenue, between 49th and 50th Streets, in Manhattan. He presumably worked under the direction of Thomas Lamb, who was the architect of record. The 1925 venue was mainly built for boxing, but was also used for many other events like the circus, hockey and bicycle races. The Garden project was the start of Lionel’s lifelong association with the design of sports venues, especially those for boxing, horse racing, and even midget car racing.⁸³

Lionel became well-known early in his career as the architect associated with Mike Jacobs, who was the nation’s leading promoter of boxing during the 1930s and 1940s. In that capacity, he designed temporary outdoor arenas for championship boxing matches for heavyweights such as Joe Louis, with whom Jacobs signed to an exclusive contract in 1935. In that year, Lionel transformed Yankee Stadium into one such arena with a flexible and easily

⁸² “Services Set in Evanston for A.T. Galt,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 14, 1968.

⁸³ Lionel Levy was identified as the designer of the “old” Madison Square Garden in many articles published in 1967 in regards to the building’s pending demolition, including this one: “Old Garden Goes In 90 Days’ Time,” *The Montreal Gazette*, November 18, 1967.

constructed ringside design that allowed for the protection of the diamond and outfield, as described by one admiring writer:

To picture Levy's ringside setup, one must visualize a bowl set within a bowl, a small wooden stadium surrounding the ring set within the Yankee Stadium itself. The ring is built over second base, the ringside tiers spread back into the lower boxes of the grandstand and about mid-way into the outfield. The seats in the Stadium proper are the cheaper tickets, from \$16.50 downward, the price ranging inversely with the distance from the ring. All the ringside seats, however, bore the same price, \$27.50, and if the demand was high enough, they could be stretched farther and farther into the outfield, or could take over a few more tiers in the lower grandstand.⁸⁴

The temporary seating design created by Lionel Levy for Yankee Stadium was used in other stadiums for boxing matches promoted by Jacobs, who died in 1953. Such projects led to his recognition as "the world's foremost expert in laying out seating and lighting arrangements for outdoor spectacles," according to one writer, who also stated:

[Lionel Levy] has designed, in addition to the new Garden, the Miami Stadium, Boston Garden, and the Long Island Bowl. He drew up the seating arrangements for the Dempsey-Tunney fight in Sesqui-Centennial Stadium, and for the second Dempsey-Tunney fight in Sesqui-Centennial Stadium, and for the second Dempsey-Tunney fight in Soldier Field. He is busily engaged now in laying out seating arrangements for the Aug. 7 meeting of King Levinsky and Joe Louis in Comiskey Park, Chicago.⁸⁵

The Levy partners also received residential commissions, such as a large twelve room Colonial style suburban residence built on a large site at Hewlett Neck, New York, which included four master bedrooms, two servants' rooms, and an attached two-car garage.⁸⁶ Lionel served in the U.S. Army during World War II, initially as G-4 assistant chief of staff at Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation in Southeast Virginia, and later as deputy port commander of the Baltimore Cargo Port of Embarkation in Maryland, with rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He received the Legion of Merit for his work.⁸⁷ In 1948, the Levy partnership designed and built a portable track on a polo field for the use of midget car racing, a then-popular attraction. The quarter-mile track—built of

⁸⁴ "The Bigger the Gate, the Greater the Stretch: Ringside Seats Are Regulated in N.Y. Since 1935 Row," *Detroit Free Press*, Sept. 10, 1939.

⁸⁵ *The Akron Beacon Journal* (Ohio), July 18, 1935.

⁸⁶ "Fine Dwelling Being Built at Hewlett Neck," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 7, 1940.

⁸⁷ "Town House Design by Lionel K. Levy," *The Palm Beach Post*, October 9, 1960.

fir on an aluminum base—weighted 650,000 pounds and required 200 men a total of twelve hours to assemble.⁸⁸

After the war, the Leon and Lionel Levy firm became heavily involved in urban renewal projects. One of their largest such projects was the Bronxdale Housing Development, which was built for the New York City Housing Authority and completed in 1955.⁸⁹ The complex featured twenty eight seven-story buildings with nearly 1,500 apartments on a thirty-acre site. The Levy partners' best known work in New York City was the Coliseum at Columbus Circle, located between 58th and 60th streets. Lionel was the principal architect for the project, which consisted of a windowless, white brick exhibition building and an attached 23-story office tower built in the mid-1950s for Robert Moses' Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority.⁹⁰ A 1955 news item published in a New York paper stated that, "Architects Leon and Lionel Levy, who designed the new N.Y. Coliseum, are swelling with pride, just because Frank Lloyd Wright said of it: "I don't dislike it."⁹¹

Lionel K. Levy established his own firm after his partnership with Leon Levy dissolved in 1958 and he ventured into real estate development with extensive investments in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Florida.⁹² He and his staff of fifteen operated from a two-story red brick building at 158 E. 35th Street in New York City that formerly served as his family's town house. Lionel and his wife Elisabeth maintained an apartment in New York City and homes on Long Island Sound near Stamford Connecticut, and in West Palm Beach, Florida.⁹³ The couple had two daughters, Laurel and Janet.⁹⁴

In 1958, Lionel and a partner purchased the 73-room Hotel Salt Air in West Palm Beach, which he subsequently replaced with a 100-unit five-story L-shaped motel featuring such modern amenities as sheltered parking and a glass-bottomed swimming pool surrounded by a cocktail lounge.⁹⁵ Two years later, he designed an "ultra-modern" townhouse in West Palm Beach and also

⁸⁸ "First of 15 Midget Auto Races to Open at Polo Grounds," *The New York Age*, June 5, 1948.

⁸⁹ In 2010, this housing development was renamed the Sotomayor Houses in honor of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, a resident from 1957 to 1969.

⁹⁰ The \$35 million Coliseum served as the major exhibition hall in New York City until the construction of the Javits Center in the late 1980s. It was razed in 1998.

⁹¹ *The Post-Standard* (Syracuse, New York), Nov. 24, 1955.

⁹² "Town House Design by Lionel K. Levy," *The Palm Beach Post*, October 9, 1960.

⁹³ New York Architect Set to Redevelop Shrewsbury River Area," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), Feb. 21, 1960.

⁹⁴ Levy's first wife, Willylou (Chalfant) Levy, died in 1938 at the age of twenty-four at their New York City residence at 310 East Forty-Ninth Street after a long illness. The Los Angeles native studied acting in Paris and appeared in several French films. "Lionel K. Levy, Architect of New York Coliseum," *New York Times*, December 3, 1984.

⁹⁵ Henry J. Connor, "Hotel Salt Air, City Landmark, Sold, 100-Unit Motel Planned," *The Palm Beach Post*, October 19, 1958.

constructed a 420-unit apartment project in Houston, Texas.⁹⁶ Levy also built and owned a major portion of the DelRay Beach, Florida, shopping center.⁹⁷

Lionel continued to receive commissions for recreational sports facilities and worked on several improvements at Yonkers Raceway—a harness racing venue in New York—in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His biggest such project came in 1958 when he helped design a \$17 million overhaul of the Yonkers racetrack that produced a sleek new look and added a new six-story track-side clubhouse; a four-story parking garage that accommodated 3,000 cars; an underground bus terminal; dining areas; a half-mile track; and a two-story drivers' and trainers' building. Six years later, he designed a \$2 million renovation of the facility, which added 600 seats, a new grandstand mezzanine, and sixty eight more betting windows.⁹⁸

One of Levy's most ambitious projects in the post-World War II era was the multi-year redevelopment of the Shrewsbury River area in New Jersey, planning for which began in 1960. Ground was broken in 1963 and the vast effort eventually involved the creation of 235 garden-type apartments within a 222-acre area, 162 single family houses on about fifty acres, and a marina-commercial complex on six acres. It was constructed under Title I of the 1949 Federal Housing Act. This was reportedly Levy's second Title I project in New Jersey. His first, a \$4.5 million, 275-unit apartment development on Perth Amboy's riverfront, was completed in 1960.⁹⁹ Lionel K. Levy continued working until his retirement in 1977 at the age of 75.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION: See individual HABS outline reports for architectural information on the following eight primary outbuildings: Equipment Storage Building; Materials Storage Building; Paddock Building; Detention Barn; Dormitories; Horse Stables; Racetrack Kitchen; Office Building.

- A. General Statement: The Grandstand/Clubhouse Building is a massive steel-framed edifice that overlooks the homestretch of the racetrack. Large rooftop neon lettering identifies the facility as "Maywood Park." Exterior walls are sheathed in brick and precast concrete panels, while the south elevation is entirely glazed. The ground floor is replete with numerous bars, lounges, and mutuel

⁹⁶ "Town House Design by Lionel K. Levy," *The Palm Beach Post*, October 9, 1960; New York Architect Set to Redevelop Shrewsbury River Area," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), Feb. 21, 1960.

⁹⁷ New York Architect Set to Redevelop Shrewsbury River Area," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), Feb. 21, 1960.

⁹⁸ "Tonight's the Night—Yonkers Track Opens up for 104 Night Season," *The Journal News* (Westchester, New York), August 1, 1958; Wes Gaffer, "\$2M YR Facelift Job Just in Nick of Time," *Daily News* (New York), May 5, 1964.

⁹⁹ New York Architect Set to Redevelop Shrewsbury River Area," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), Feb. 21, 1960; "\$2.6 Million Project To Start Within Month," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), April 12, 1963; "Last Riverfront Renewal Title Transfer Approved," *Asbury Park Press* (New Jersey), January 13, 1965.

counters. The grandstand and clubhouse levels each feature large open betting rooms lined on one side by mutuel counters. Both of these clubhouse levels connect to the two grandstand levels that feature tiered bleacher seating. Very few decorative features were installed in this bare bones structure, which features concrete flooring, walls of gypsum board and concrete block, and suspended acoustical tile ceilings, and ceiling-hung television sets throughout.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The Grandstand/Clubhouse Building has a total length of approximately 428'-0" (east-west), a total width of 172'-0" (north-south), and a total height of 189'-0".
2. Foundations: Caissons.
3. Walls: The north elevation of the clubhouse has a brick base and upper walls sheathed with brick (center) and precast concrete panels (at the ends). The east and west elevations of the clubhouse have a brick base and are sheathed with precast concrete panels above. The east and west elevations of the grandstand are sheathed with a combination of brick and glass. The south elevation of the grandstand has a brick base with a glass curtain wall above. The roofline of the grandstand has a metal fascia.
4. Stairs: Six sets of concrete stairs with metal railings, each of which is topped with a landing and seating area, span the south elevation.
5. Structural system: Steel frame.
6. Canopies: The north elevation has a massive entrance canopy with six pairs of concrete block columns supporting a metal gabled roof with metal covering.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Public access to the grandstand/clubhouse from the parking lots are provided through a series of glass double doors on the north and west elevations. The west elevation also has a glass door on the second floor level of the grandstand, providing access to the bleachers. The north elevation also has two metal doors at its east end. The south elevation also has a series of glass double doors that open onto the racetrack. The east elevation has three metal service doors and two overhead metal loading dock doors.
 - b. Windows: Fixed glass transom windows are situated above the glass double doors on the north and west elevations.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The clubhouse has a flat, built-up roof. The grandstand has an inverted built-up roof. A metal roof canopy spans the entire south elevation. The roof of the clubhouse features a metal structure that supports large neon signs at either end with the words, "Maywood Park."

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

The building is comprised of the north clubhouse and the south grandstand, which are internally connected and feature a common ground floor level filled with mutuel betting counters, bars, and lounges. The clubhouse portion of the building has five levels—ground floor, mezzanine, grandstand, clubhouse, and kitchen—each of which features a series of offices and other private spaces of varying functions strung out along their north elevation walls. The grandstand and clubhouse levels provide access to the second and third levels of the grandstand, respectively. Both feature large open betting rooms with continuous mutuel counters stretched across their north sides. The clubhouse level also has snack bars along the length of its south wall. Both grandstand levels have tiered bleacher seating with metal frames and plastic seats and backs.

2. Stairways/Escalators: A set of up/down escalators is situated near the northwest side of the building which connect the ground floor to the third floor grandstand level. A pair of passenger elevators is located near the north elevation's main entrance. A freight elevator is located near the northeast side of the building. Numerous concrete stairways with metal pipe railings exist throughout the building, mainly located near its north elevation wall. The two primary stair towers are located near the northwest and northeast sides of the building. The two grandstand levels are connected by a stairway near the center of their betting floors.

3. Flooring: Concrete floor exists throughout the building and in some places is visible. In others, it is covered with a variety of finishes, such as ceramic tiles (bathrooms and near north elevation main entrance); quarry tiles (ground floor public spaces), linoleum tiles (offices, grandstand level betting room, and other ancillary spaces throughout the building, ground floor public spaces), and wall-to-wall carpeting (clubhouse level betting room, grandstand dining room, some of the ground floor lounges).

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Partition walls are gypsum board or concrete block. Ceilings throughout the building mainly feature suspended lay-in acoustical

tile systems. Electric tote boards are suspended from the ceilings of the ground floor, clubhouse and grandstand levels.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Interior doors throughout the building are metal with metal frames.
- b. Windows: Some of the first floor lounges have multi-paned double-hung wood-sash windows.

6. Decorative features and trim: This is a barebones edifice and appears to have been designed with few decorative features. Those that may have existed were likely striped from the building when everything within it was auctioned for sale in 2016. However, the ground floor level has some wood wainscoting in the lounges installed during the building's 1980s renovation.

7. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating: Gas forced air.
- b. Lighting: Fluorescent ceiling light fixtures are found throughout the building.
- c. Plumbing: Ground floor men's and women's restrooms are situated at the southeast corner of the building, both equipped with a series of toilets and sinks. Men's and women's restrooms are also located near the northeast corner of the grandstand and clubhouse levels, adjacent to the mutuel counters.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation:

The Maywood Park Racetrack occupies approximately 55 acres of land in Melrose Park, Illinois, that is divided into two parcels measuring approximately 37 and 19 acres in size. Nearly all buildings associated with the site are situated on the primary, 37-acre parcel that is bounded by North Avenue on the north, residential subdivisions on the south, First Avenue on the east, and Fifth Avenue on the west. Racetrack dormitories and stable buildings along First and Fifth Avenues can easily be seen from those streets. Wisconsin Central Railroad tracks cut a diagonal line across the northeast corner of this parcel.

The main entrance to the racetrack is on Fifth Avenue, near its intersection with North Avenue. A small ticket booth is located near the entrance. Large

paved parking lots encompass the northern end of the 37-acre parcel. The parking lot in the northeast corner of the site is accessed via a tunnel beneath the railroad tracks. The facility's grandstand and outbuildings are tightly clustered around the half-mile banked oval dirt racetrack, which occupies much of the south half of this parcel. The racetrack is about 77' wide and 594' long on the backstretch and homestretch and has an outside fence. At the center of the racetrack is the remains of its wood and concrete block electric tote board that was installed in 1978.

The Grandstand/Clubhouse dominates the north side (homestretch) of the racetrack, with its bleacher seats facing south. This massive edifice is flanked by a 125' steel Horton Watersphere water tower to the east and a one- and two-story office building to the west. Tiered concrete and steel barns are situated at the southeast, southwest, and northwest corners of the racetrack. A single stable building with a long, rectangular footprint extends across the south periphery of the racetrack. Metal feeding sheds are clustered near the various stables. Also clustered around the racetrack are several concrete block, motel-style dormitory buildings, a paddock building, two storage buildings, two small stables, and the former racetrack kitchen, housed in a converted stable.

The facility's secondary, 19-acre parcel is located across Fifth Avenue, which constitutes its east boundary. It is also bordered by North Avenue on the north, residential subdivision on the south, and commercial development to the west. This parcel featured a large concrete and steel group of stables at its south end, as well as two side-by-side dormitories, one of which is connected to a two-story office building. The remainder of this parcel is comprised of a large paved parking lot.

2. Historic landscape design:

The original Maywood Park racetrack, grandstand, and stables were constructed in the early 1930s for the Cook County Fairgrounds. An aerial photo of the fairgrounds, archived at the Melrose Park Public Library, shows a row of wood stables along the backstretch of the track, the grandstand on the homestretch, and a few isolated structures in the southwest and northwest parts of the property. Additional wood stables and small wood office buildings were built around the racetrack after the Maywood Park officially opened as a permanent venue in 1946, as was a concrete block, gambrel roof barn for the Galt family horses. A two-story brick office building was built to the west of the original grandstand, which was expanded with additional bleacher seating. A large L-shaped wood paddock building was installed to the east of the grandstand. Several long wood stables were located near the northwest corner of the primary parcel, which had railroad tracks sliced across its northeast corner on a diagonal line.

The facility underwent a total renovation in the 1960s and 1970s, which included the construction of a massive grandstand and clubhouse building and the replacement of all wood stables with steel and concrete stables, much of which were built in groups at three of the racetrack's four corners. Wood stables at the northwest corner of the site were razed and paved parking on the north half of the site was expanded. Motel-like dormitories were installed around the racetrack, as were a new paddock and storage buildings, all of concrete block. A group of stables and two adjacent dormitories were also built across Fifth Avenue, and one of those dormitories had an attached two-story brick office building for the racing secretary and his/her staff.

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Rinker, Kimberly A. *Chicago's Horse Racing Venues*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.

F. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

The Maywood Park Racetrack photo archive was one of the hundreds of items sold at auction in the spring of 2015. It was purchased by Keith Yearman at the College of DuPage. Mr. Yearman deposited this archive at the library of Dominican University in Melrose Park, Illinois, in February 2019. The photo archive was not yet catalogued at the time this report was developed. However, it contains an abundance of historic images that will be beneficial for future researchers.

The journal titled, *The Horseman and Fair World*, provides a wealth of information about harness racing nationwide and includes articles and historic photos pertaining to Maywood Park. Although numerous issues of this journal were reviewed for this report, there are undoubtedly additional articles on the Maywood Park Racetrack in this journal for other years. Many of the articles and display advertisements in this journal that were reviewed for this report and cited in the bibliography are accompanied by historic images of the racetrack, its buildings, racetrack staff and drivers.

G. Sketch Plans:

Sketch plans for the Grandstand and Clubhouse Building are attached to this report. See individual HABS Outline Reports for sketch plans of other primary buildings.

H. Supplemental Material: The following materials are attached to this report:
Figure 1: Site Plan of the Maywood Park Racetrack, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 2: Grandstand/Clubhouse location on site plan, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 3: Ground floor of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 4: Mezzanine Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 5: Grandstand Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 6: Clubhouse Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 7: Kitchen Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 8: Judges Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

Figure 9: Cover of brochure for inaugural season at Maywood Park Racetrack, 1946. Private Collection of Tony Somone.

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Figure 13: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Plot Plan for Maywood Park Racetrack, September 13, 1963.

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Figure 15: United States Department of Agriculture, Aerial Photograph of Maywood Park Racetrack taken between April 12-30, 1988.

Figure 16: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Ground Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 17: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Intermediate Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 18: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Mezzanine Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 19: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Grandstand Level Floor Plan Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 20: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Clubhouse Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 21: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Kitchen Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 22: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Judges Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 23: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, North, East and West Elevations for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 24: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, South Elevation for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

Figure 25: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Mutuel Counters for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

- A. Research Strategy: The research strategy was to conduct interviews and review a variety of primary and secondary sources, including books, newspaper and journal articles, maps, and historic photos, in order to develop a thorough history of the Maywood Park Racetrack and to evaluate the significance of its contributing buildings/building types. Site visits to the project area were planned, in order to conduct photographic documentation, both black and white and color digital, and to develop field sketches for translation to CAD drawings.
- B. Actual Research Process: A variety of people who worked at Maywood Park Racetrack from the 1980s through its closure in 2015 were interviewed. The names of those individuals are listed in Part III, Section D of this report. Numerous plat maps for Proviso township were reviewed, as were aerial photographs. Research regarding the racetrack was conducted at the public libraries in Melrose Park and Maywood Park. Secondary books on the history of harness racing were obtained from the University of Illinois at Chicago's Daley Library and the library in suburban Westchester.

The following volumes of a contemporary journal titled, *The Horseman and Fair World* (Lexington, Kentucky: Horseman Publishing Co.), housed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, were reviewed for articles related to the Maywood Park Racetrack: Vol. 68 (1945-46); Vol. 69 (1946-47); Vol. 70 (1947-48); Vol. 86 (1962-63); Vol. 87 (1963-64); Vol. 88 (1964-65); Vol. 95 (1972-72); Vol. 96 (1972-73); Vol. 101, no. 40-52 (1977-78).

The *Chicago Tribune*'s historical archive, available online via proquest, was extensively searched for articles related to the Cook County Fairgrounds, the Maywood Park Racetrack, and Arthur Galt. The newspapers.com archive was searched for articles related to architect Lionel K. Levy. The Chicago History

Museum's online catalog was searched for materials related to Arthur Galt, the Maywood Park Racetrack, and harness racing in the Chicago region.

C. Archives and Repositories Used: Melrose Park Public Library; Maywood Park Public Library; Franklin Park Public Library; Chicago History Museum; University of Illinois at Chicago.

D. Project Team:

1. Supervision: All aspects of this project were supervised and assembled by Jay Martinez, President, Midwest Archaeological Research Services (MARS), Crystal Lake, Illinois.
2. Historian: Jean L. Guarino, Ph.D., Oak Park, Illinois, was the project historian and authored all written aspects of the Cover Documents and individual Outline Reports.
3. Sketch Plans and Digital Field Photography: Lucas Howser of MARS made on-site sketch plans that he used to produce sketch floor plans for all buildings using CAD. He also produced the site plan. He was assisted on-site by Gideon Katz, M.A., of MARS, who, with Jean Guarino also took digital photos of the property's primary buildings and secondary structures.
4. HABS photographer: All black and white HABS photography was undertaken by Leslie Schwartz, Leslie Schwartz Photography, 2147 N. Claremont Avenue, Chicago.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS RECORD

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

MAYWOOD PARK RACETRACK

HABS. No. IL-1244

Maywood Park Racetrack
8600 W. North Avenue
Melrose Park
Cook County
Illinois

INDEX TO BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Leslie Schwartz, photographer, January 2019

IL-1244-1

View of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building from across Fifth Avenue, looking southeast.

IL-1244-2

View of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building from across parking lot, looking southwest.

IL-1244-3

Close-up view of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building, looking southwest.

IL-1244-4

West elevation of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building with Office Building in foreground, looking southeast.

IL-1244-5

View of Office Building and Grandstand/Clubhouse Building from racetrack, looking northeast.

IL-1244-6

View of Office Building from the racetrack, with Grandstand/Clubhouse Building on right, looking northeast.

IL-1244-7

View of Grandstand's front elevation from across the racetrack, looking north.

IL-1244-8

View of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building from racetrack, looking northeast.

IL-1244-9

View of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building with 1965 Water Tower, looking northwest.

IL-1244-10

Main Entrance of Grandstand/Clubhouse Building from north parking lot.

IL-1244-11

Ground floor bar in Grandstand/Clubhouse Building.

IL-1244-12

Ground floor lounge in Grandstand/Clubhouse Building.

IL-1244-13

Second Floor ceiling tote board and mutuel counters in Grandstand/Clubhouse Building.

IL-1244-14

Second Floor mutuel counters in Grandstand/Clubhouse Building.

IL-1244-15

Second Floor dining area in Grandstand, looking west.

IL-1244-16

View of Grandstand glass curtain wall as seen from the top of the third story bleachers, looking southeast.

IL-1244-17

View of the third story bleachers within the Grandstand, view looking east.

IL-1244-18

View of the Equipment Storage Building in foreground and the east end of the racetrack taken from the third floor bleachers.

IL-1244-19

View of the Office Building in foreground and the west end of the racetrack taken from the third floor bleachers.

IL-1244-20

View showing, from left to right, the Grandstand/Clubhouse, Water Tower, Equipment Storage Building, Materials Storage Building, and Paddock, looking northwest.

IL-1244-21

Carpentry room within the Paddock Building, which originally served as a sandwich shop/locker room for workers in the backstretch.

IL-1244-22

Detention Stable, view looking southeast.

IL-1244-23

Interior of Detention Stable.

IL-1244-24

U-shaped dormitory, view looking southeast.

IL-1244-25

Racetrack Kitchen, which originally served as the Galt family's stable.

IL-1244-26

Group of tiered stables built in the early 1970s, looking east.

IL-1244-27

Typical stable interior.

IL-1244-28

View of long stable along the south side of the racetrack, looking west.

IL-1244-29

Typical dormitory building, looking northeast.

IL-1244-30

Dormitory Buildings with attached Office Building for Racetrack Secretary, located west of Fifth Avenue.

IL-1244-31

Reception room within the Racetrack Secretary Office Building located west of Fifth Avenue.

IL-1244-32

Ruins of 1978 electric tote board situated on the racetrack's infield.

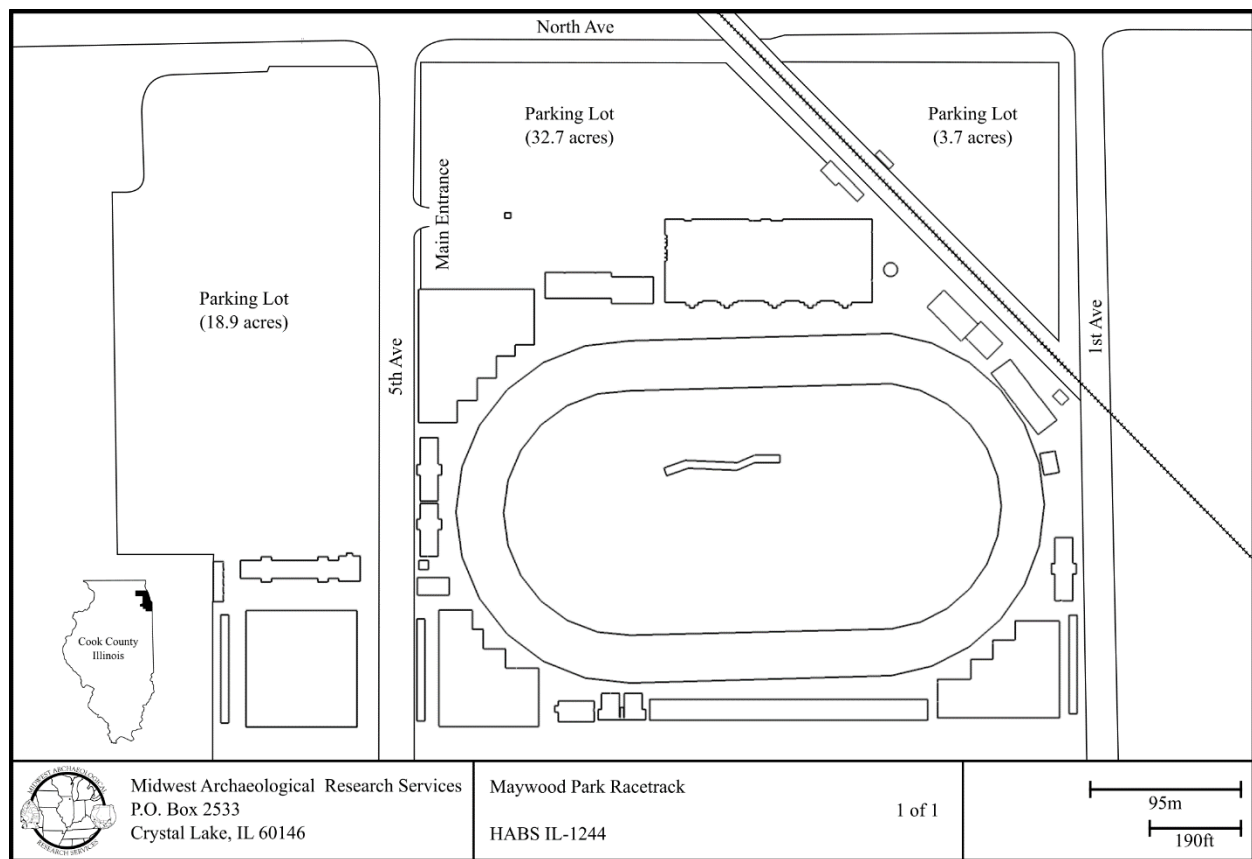


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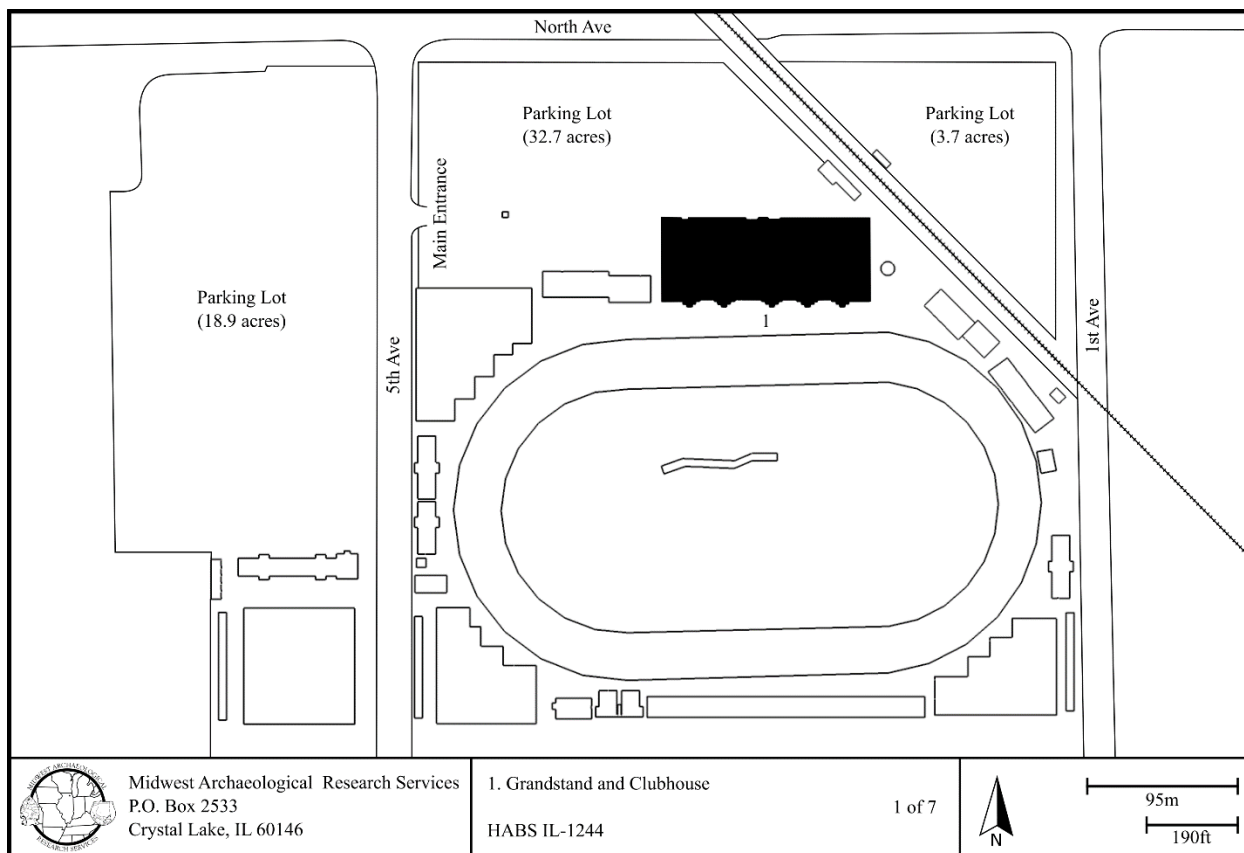


Figure 2: Grandstand/Clubhouse location on site plan, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

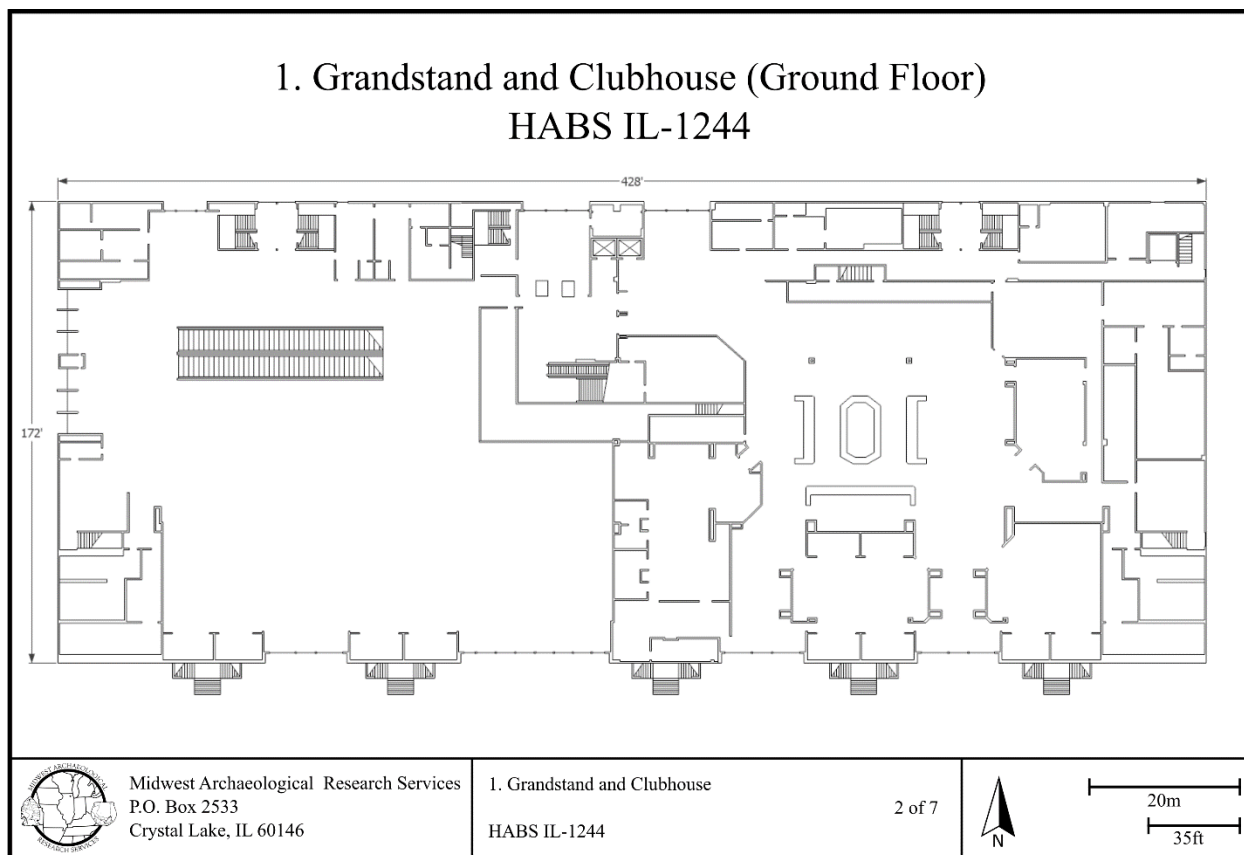


Figure 3: Ground floor of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

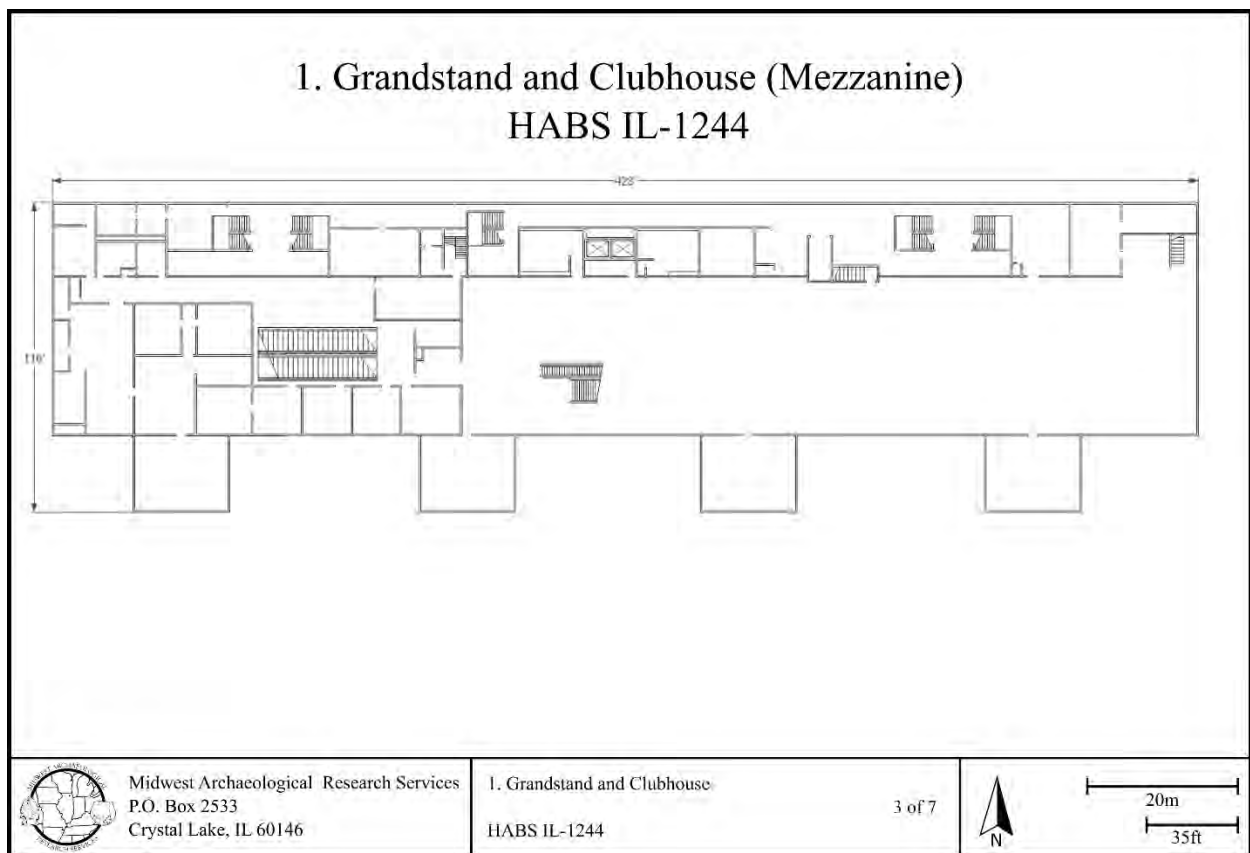


Figure 4: Mezzanine Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

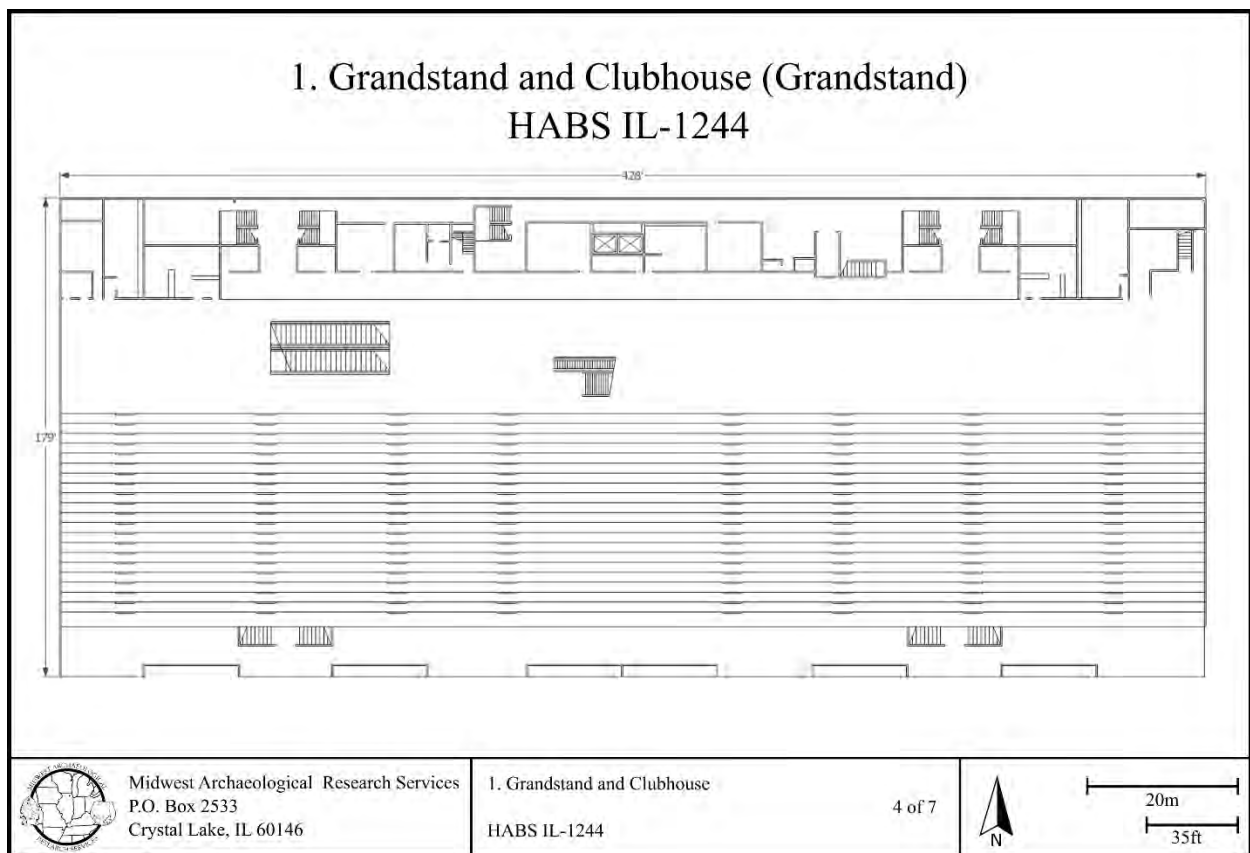


Figure 5: Grandstand Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

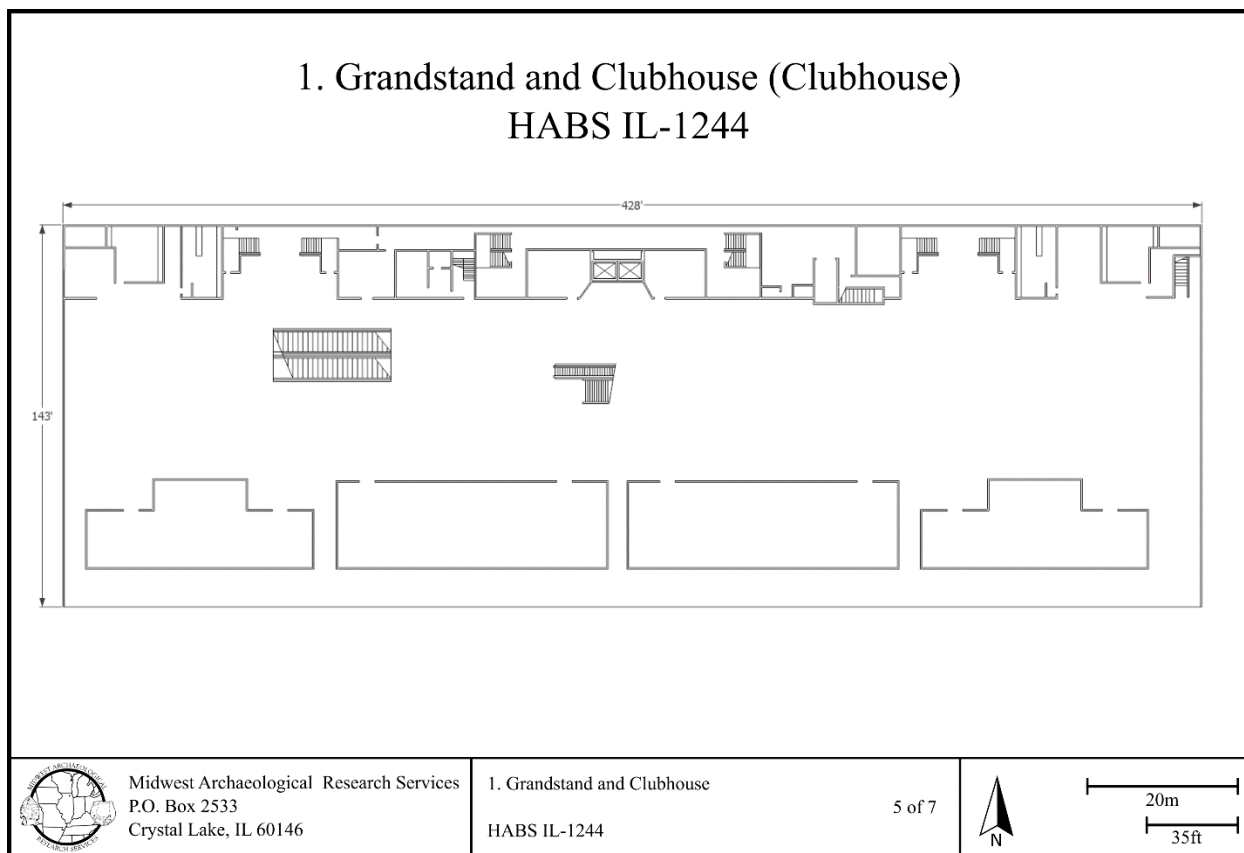


Figure 6: Clubhouse Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

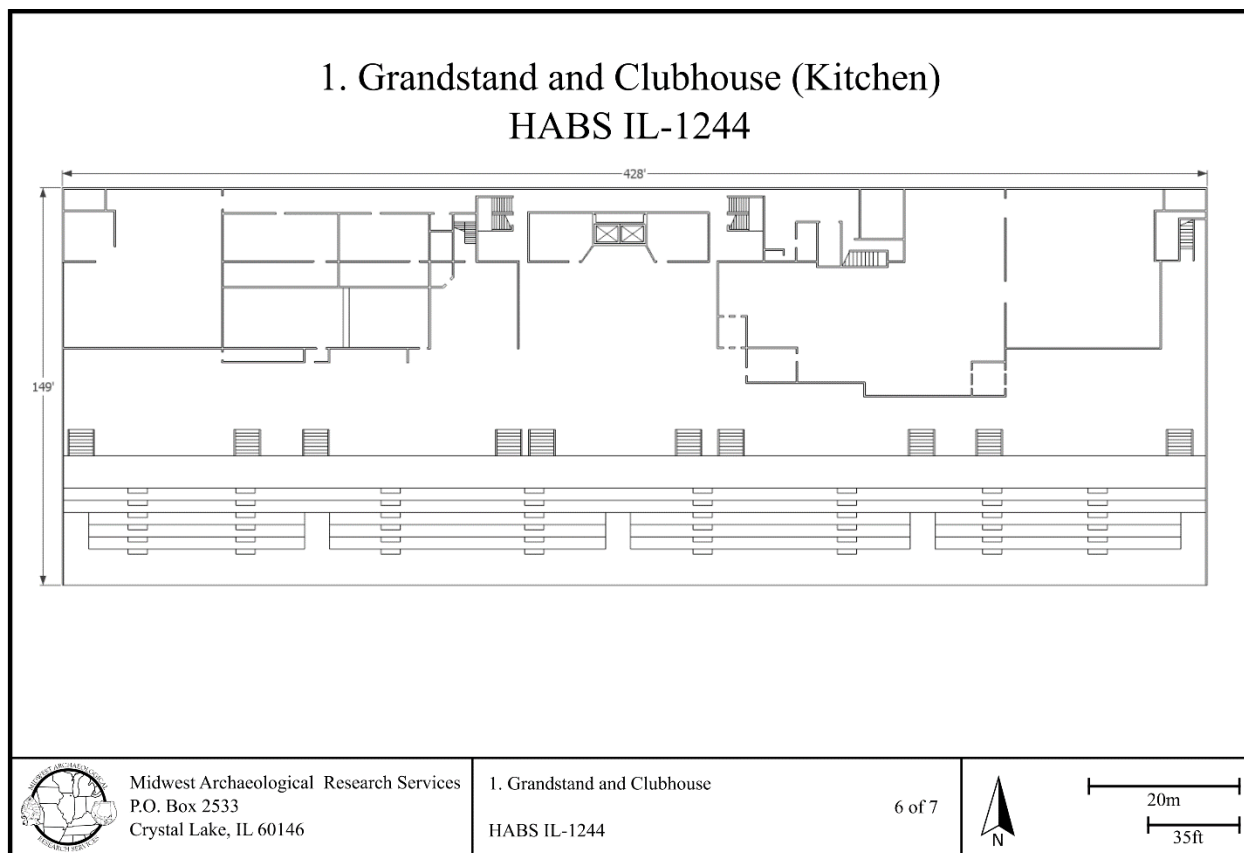


Figure 7: Kitchen Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

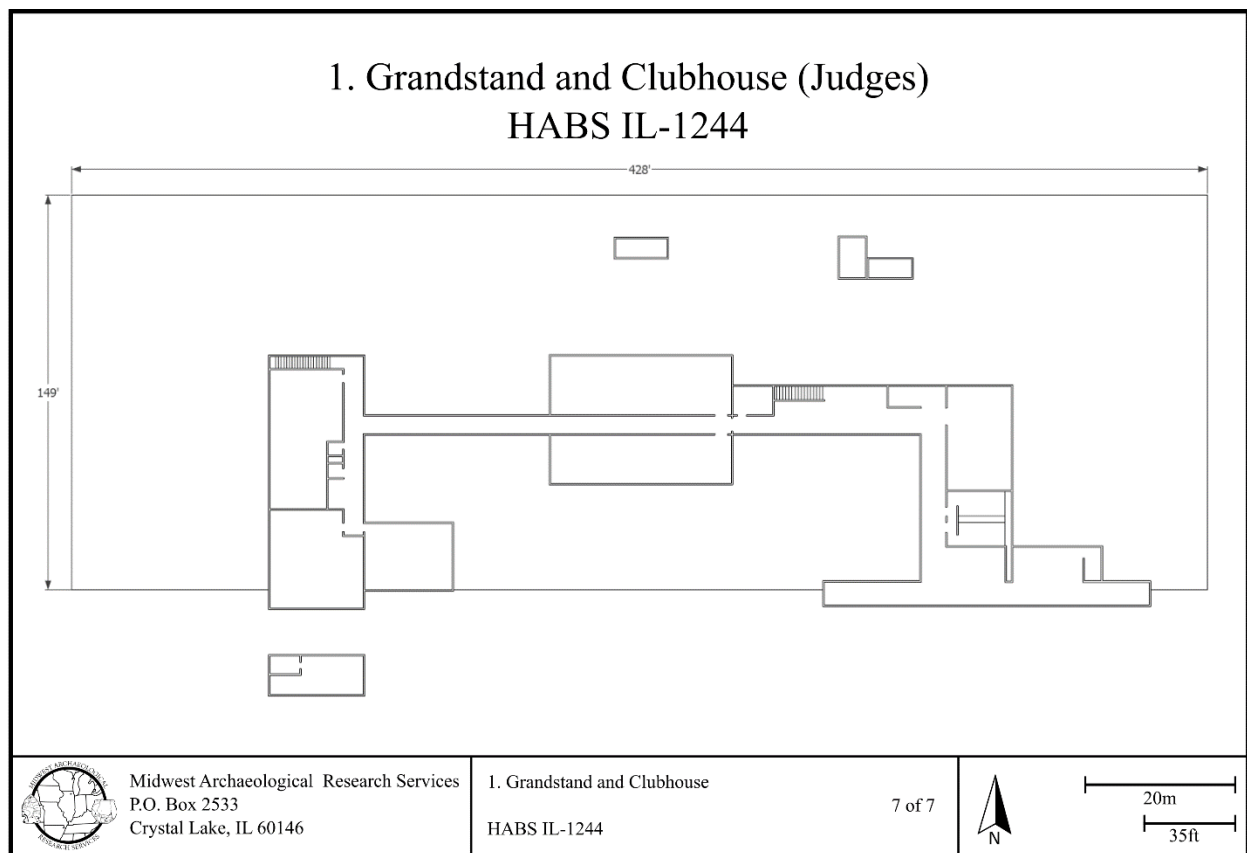


Figure 8: Judges Level of Grandstand/Clubhouse, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

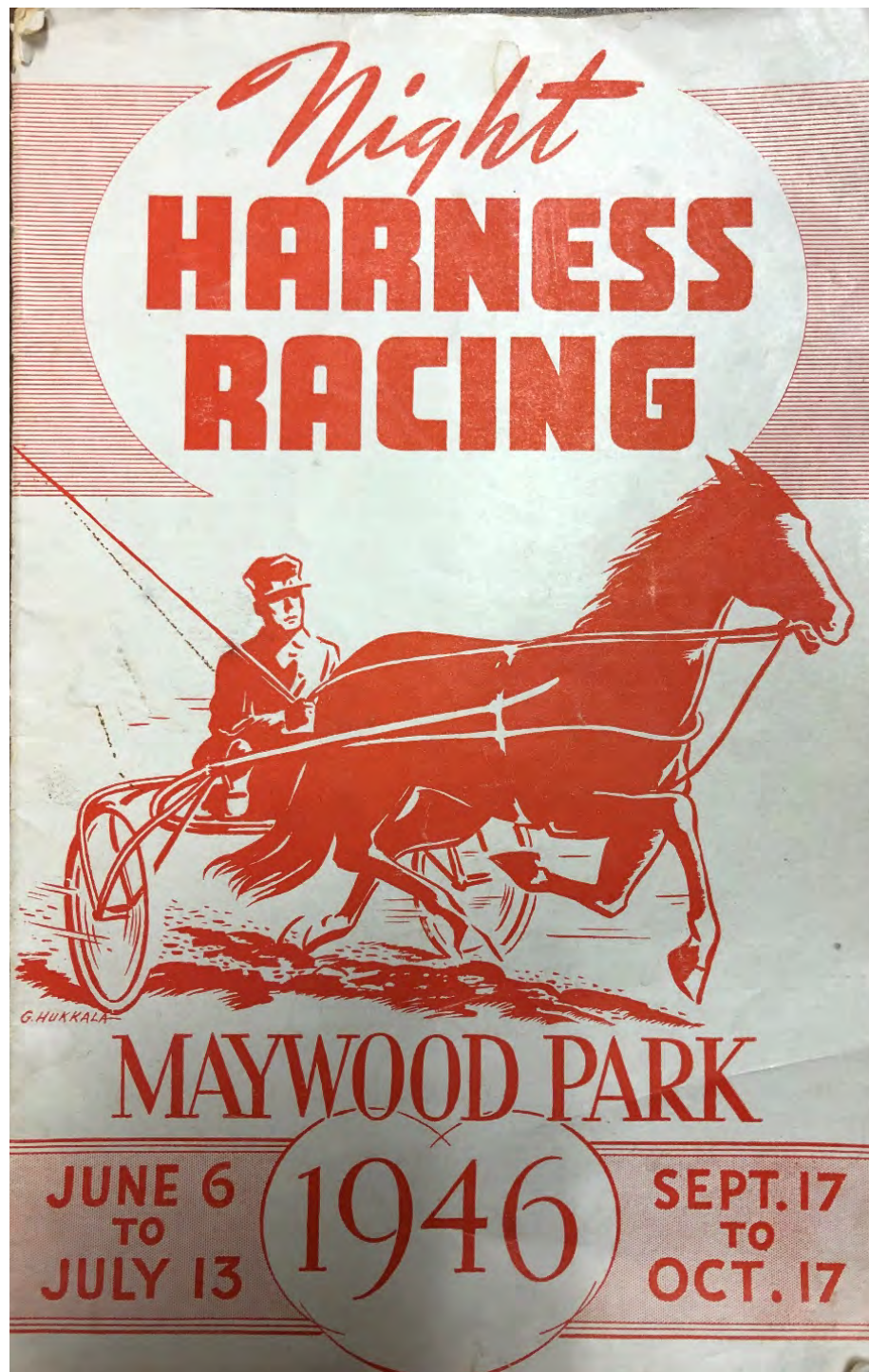


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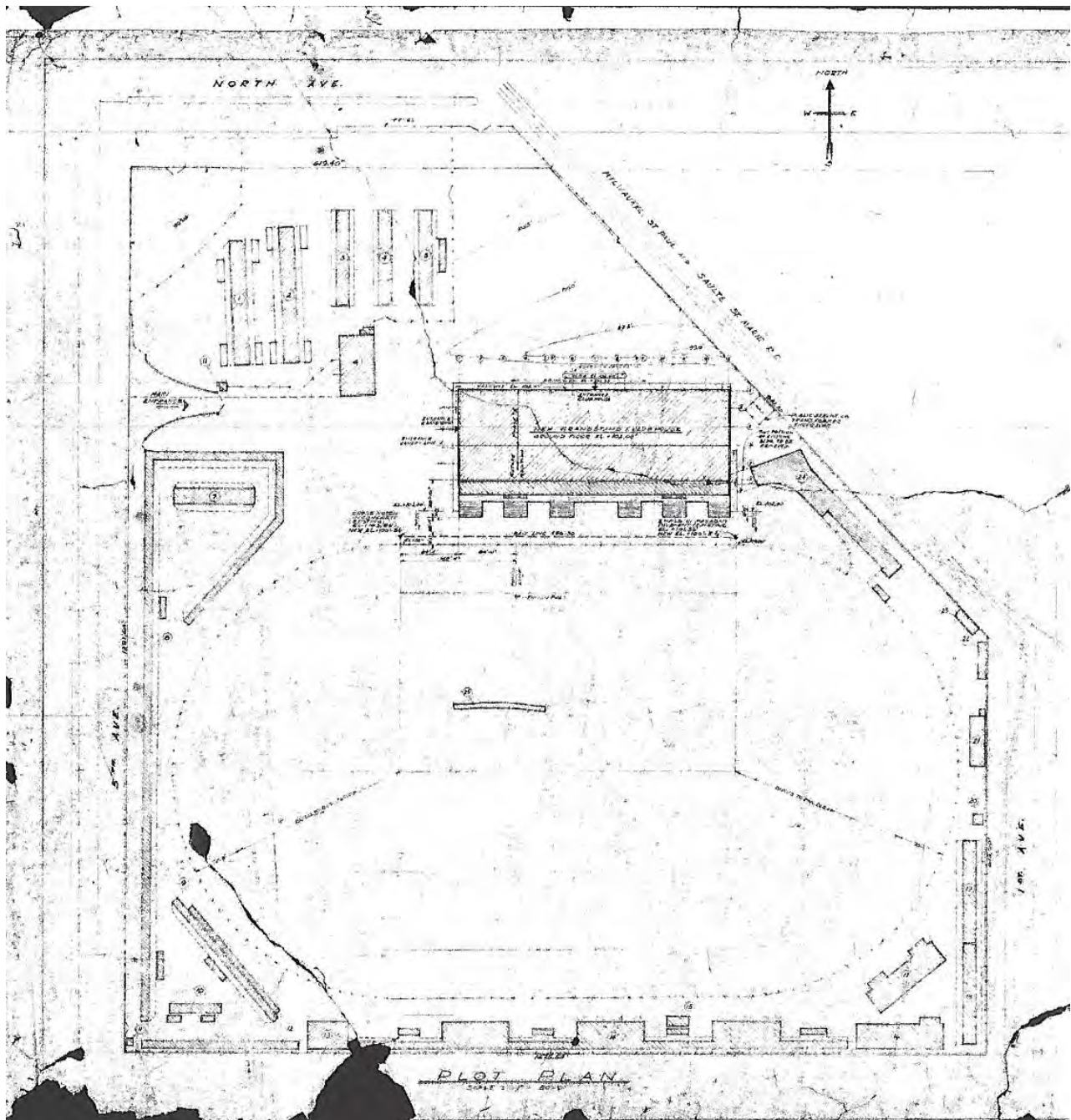


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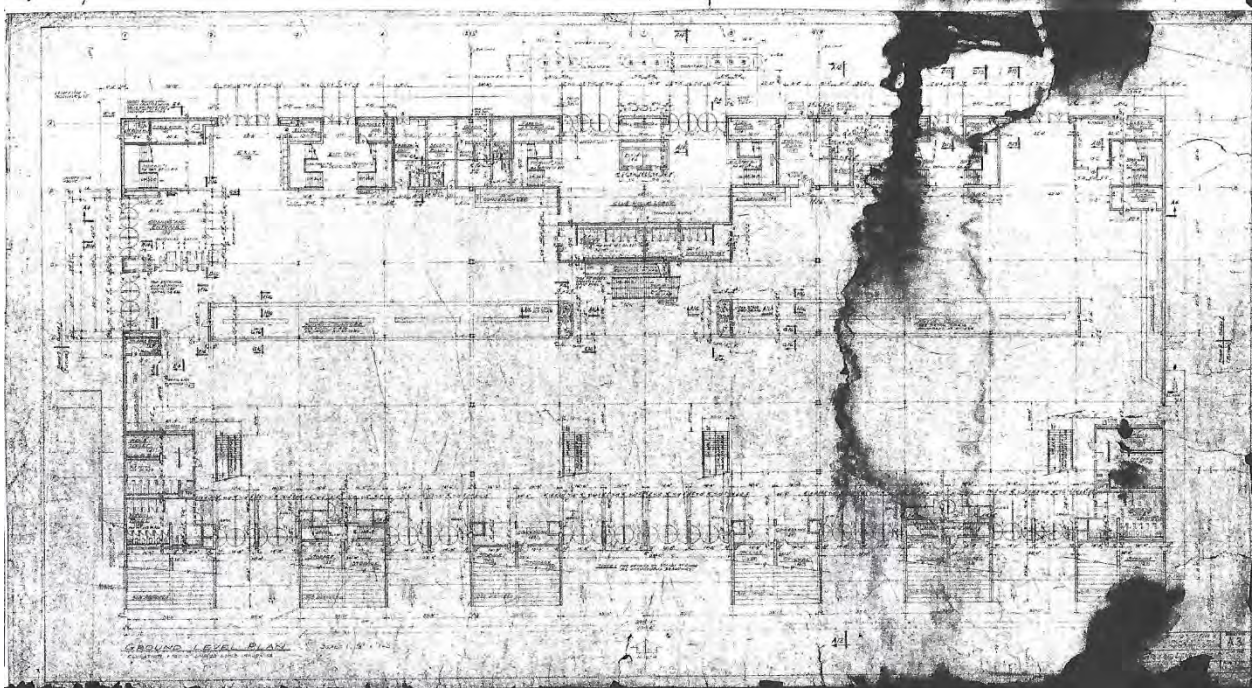


Figure 16: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Ground Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

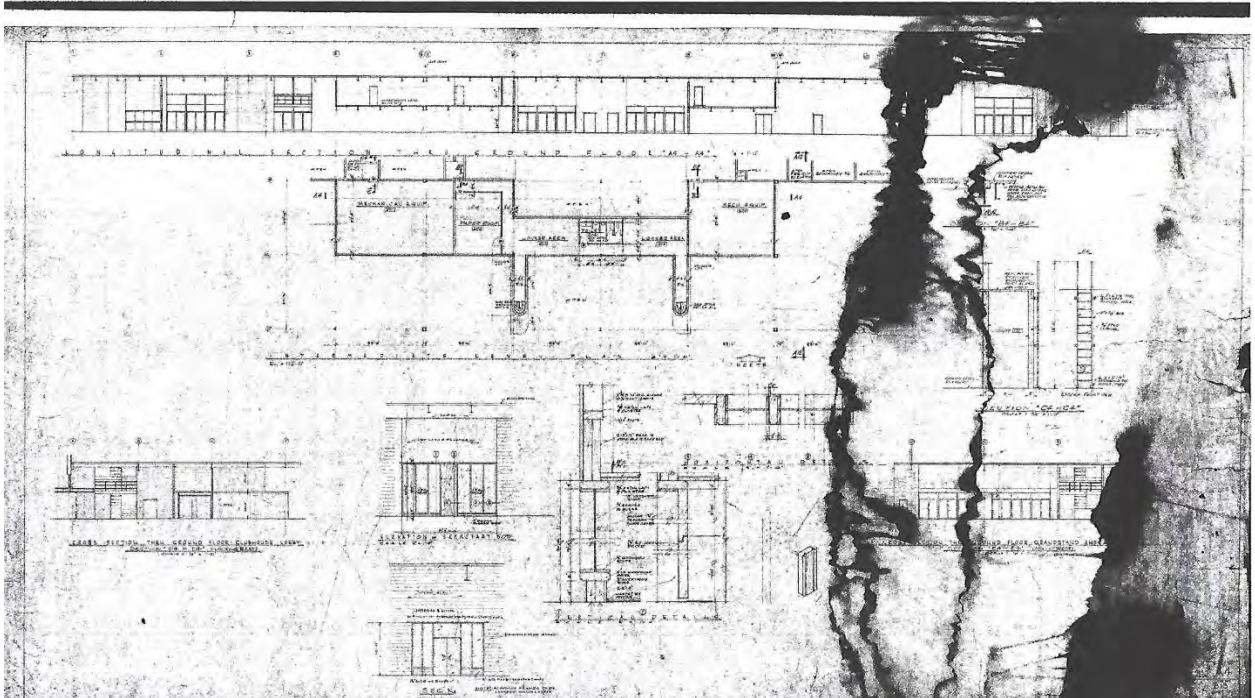


Figure 17: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Intermediate Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

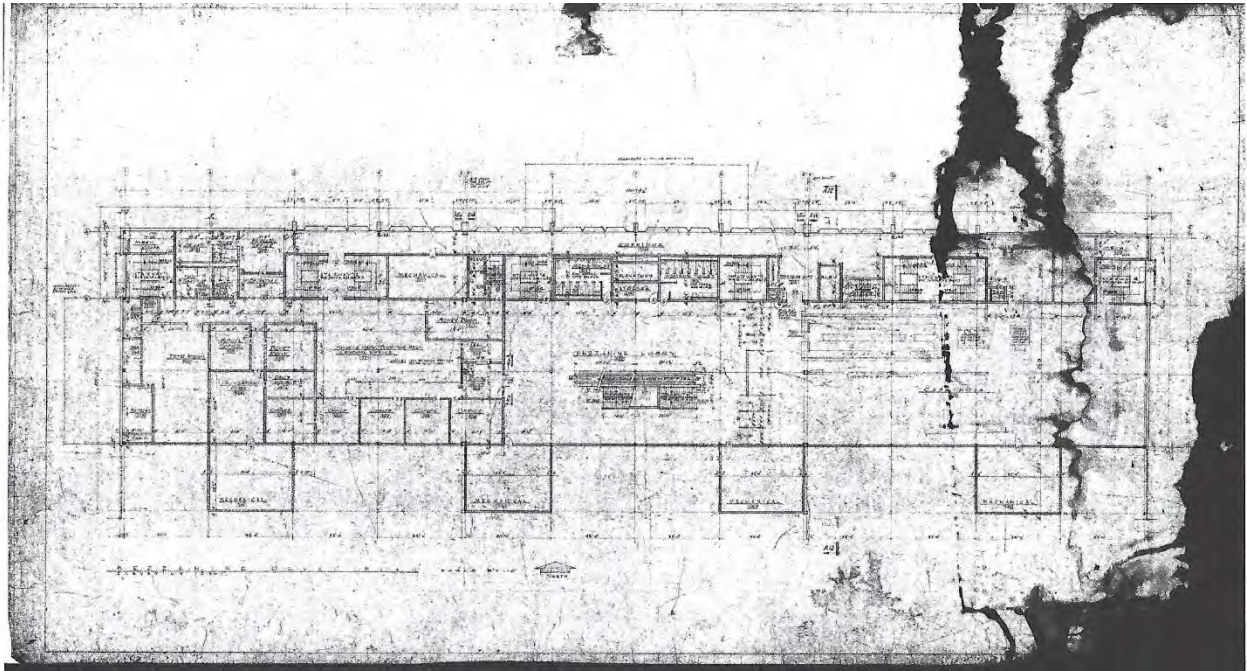


Figure 18: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Mezzanine Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

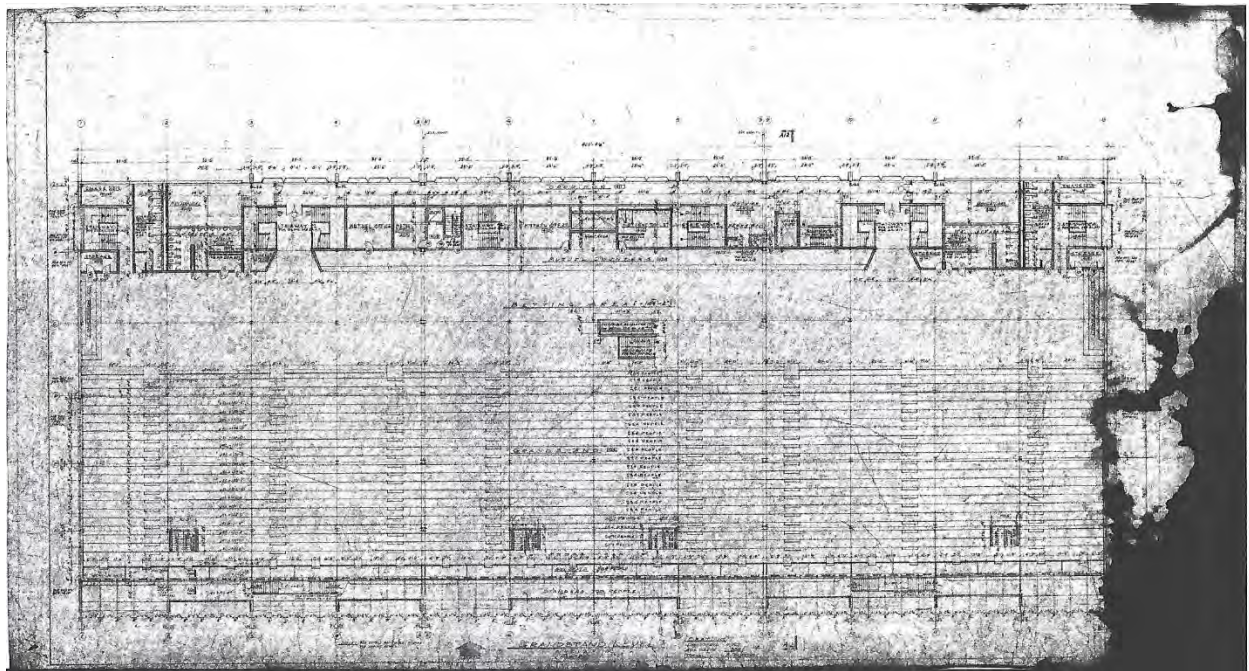


Figure 19: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Grandstand Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

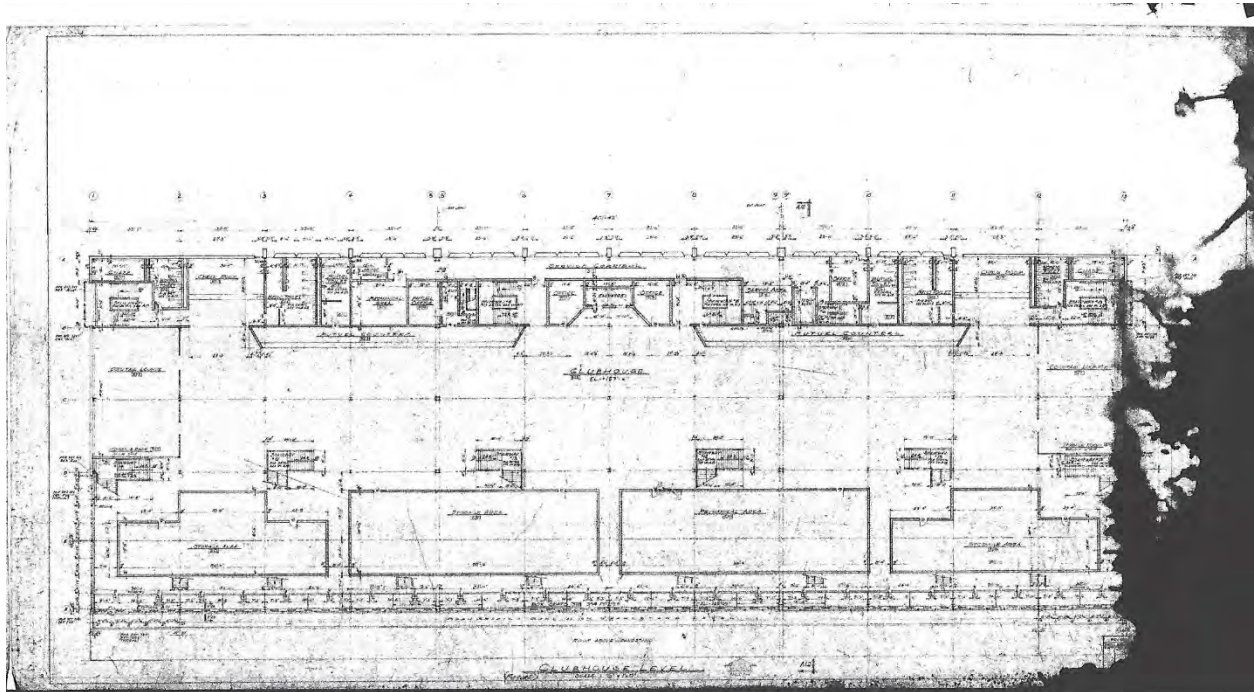


Figure 20: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Clubhouse Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

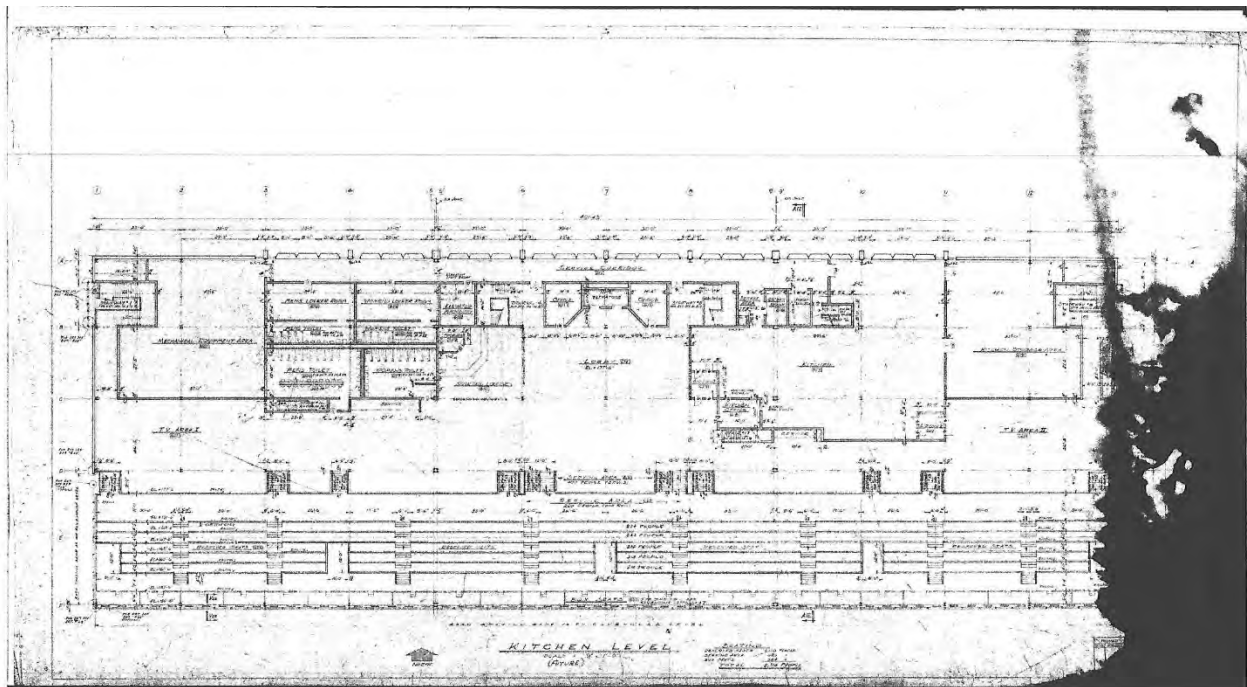


Figure 21: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Kitchen Level Floor Plan for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

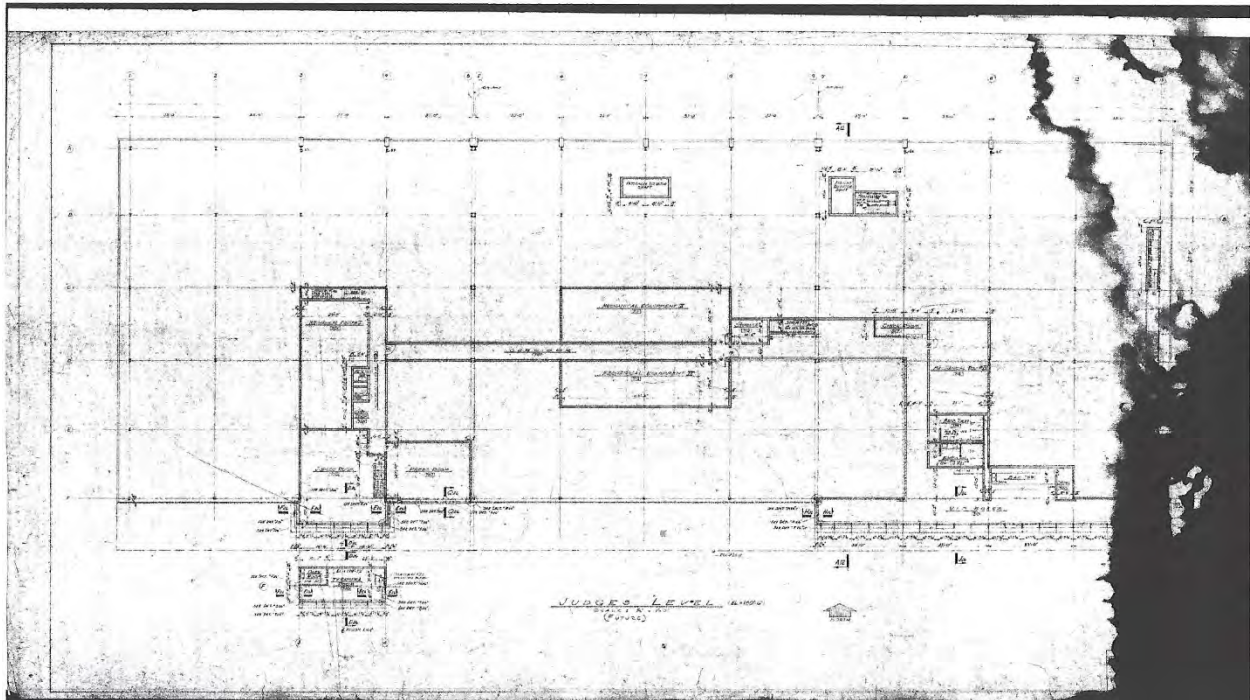


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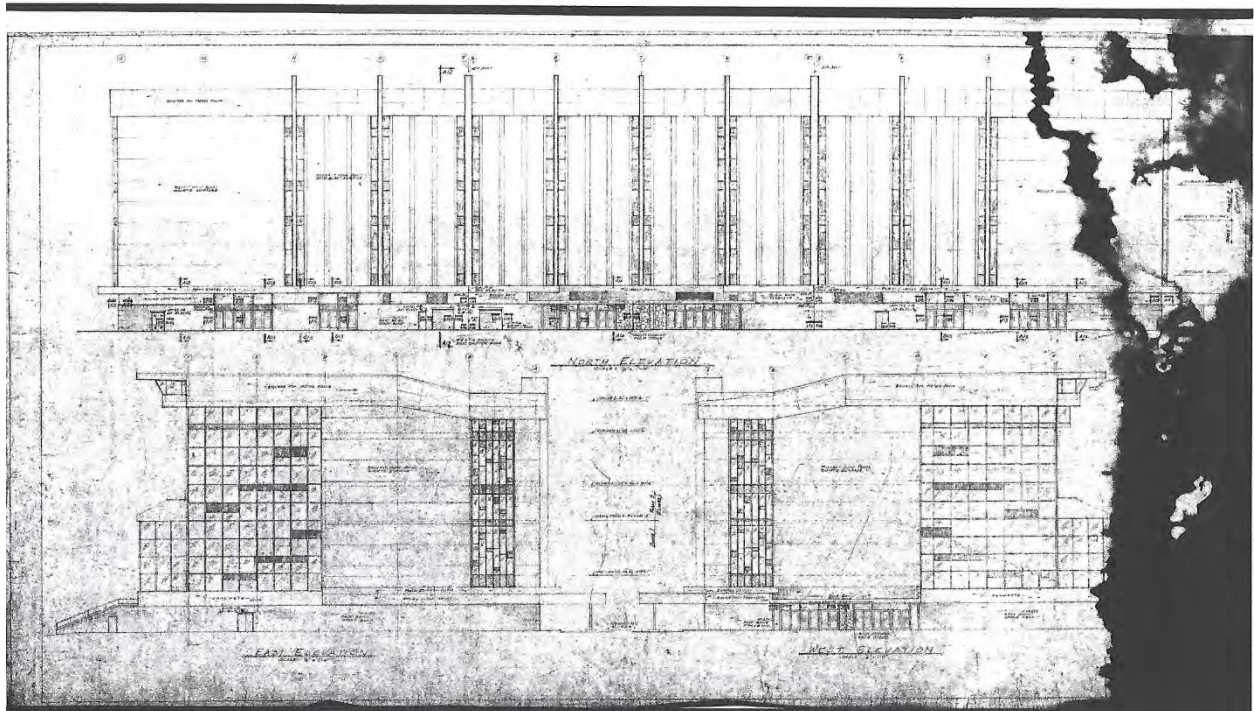


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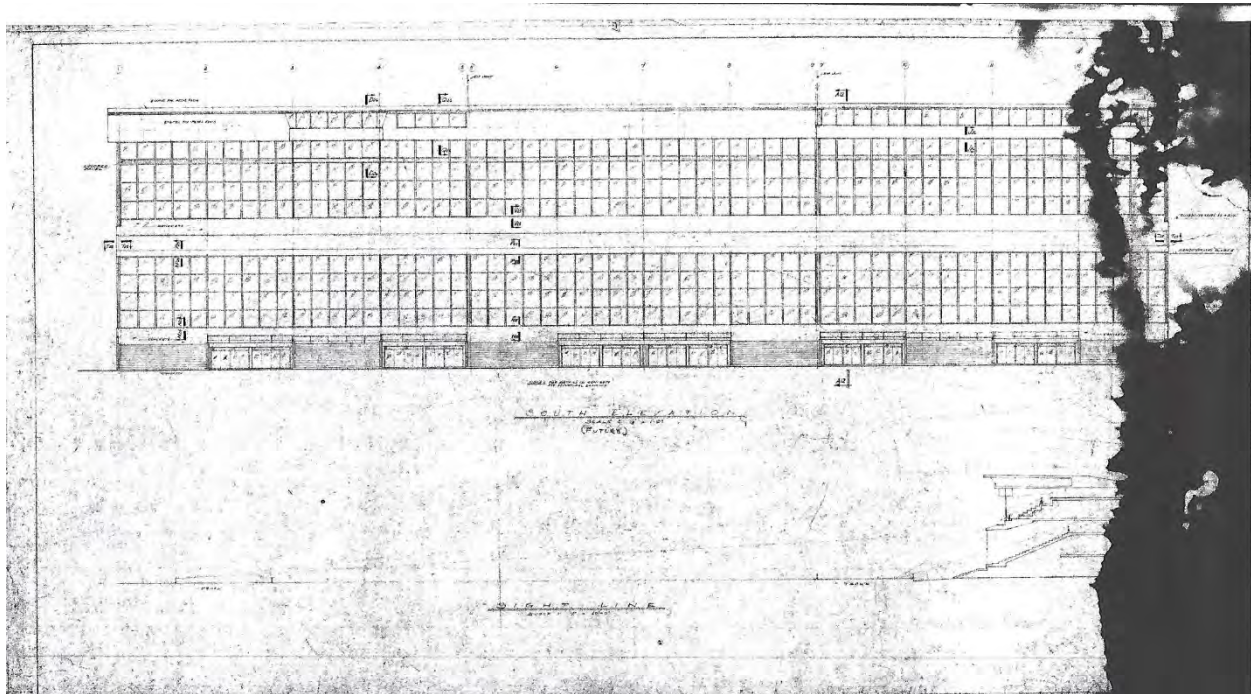


Figure 24: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, South Elevation for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.

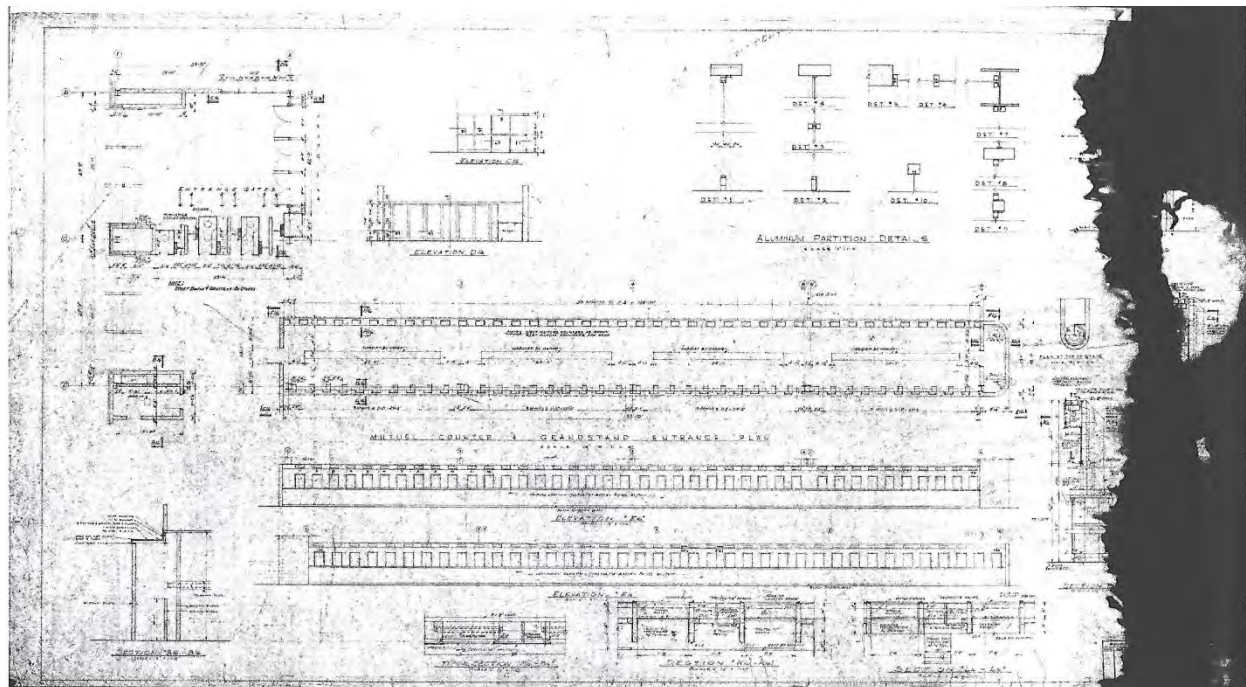


Figure 25: Miller Engineering Company, Chicago, Mutuel Counters for Maywood Park Grandstand and Clubhouse Building, September 13, 1963.





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