

MAYWOOD PARK RACETRACK
STABLE BUILDINGS

HABS IL-1244

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

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED & INTERPRETIVE DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MAYWOOD PARK RACETRACK STABLE BUILDINGS HABS No. IL-1244

- Location: The Stable Buildings are situated within the Maywood Park Racetrack, which 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). It 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: Vacant.
- Significance: The Stable Buildings were erected ca. 1969-73 and in 1977 as part of a major decade-long renovation of the Maywood Park Racetrack's facilities, which included the construction of a massive new Grandstand/Clubhouse Building and the replacement of all original wood outbuildings with modern concrete structures, including new stables and motel-like dormitories. The Maywood Park Racetrack operated from 1946 to 2015 and served as one of the premier half-mile Standardbred racetracks in the United States for much of its history. The racetrack represented an era when harness racing was one of the most popular spectator sports in the nation.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of construction: Stable Buildings east of Fifth Avenue were built ca. 1969-73; the Stable Building group west of Fifth Avenue was built 1977.
2. Architect: C.G. Clarke Associates, with offices in Akron, Ohio and Lexington, Kentucky.
3. Contractor/Builders: Unknown.

4. Original and subsequent owners: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
5. Original plans and construction: The six Stable Buildings built in the 1970s featured about 900 stalls. Four of these Stable Buildings featured a series of double-loaded aisles with stalls on either side, accessed from a large sliding metal door on either end. One Stable Building had three pairs of stall bays, each accessed from an exterior sliding metal door. The sixth Stable Building had a long rectangular footprint lined with a series of metal sliding doors opening onto fourteen bays, each of which had a double-loaded aisle with six stalls, three on each side, and a feed stall at the end. All Stable Buildings had concrete slab walls and low gable roofs. Partition walls were concrete slabs (in the aisles) and wood (separating stalls).
6. Alterations and additions: The Stable Buildings appear to be unaltered.

B. Historical Context:

The Stable Buildings together feature about 900 stalls and were built as free accommodations for horses racing at Maywood Park. These buildings were all constructed in the 1970s and replaced the original wood barns that originally surrounded the racetrack on three sides.

Historical context for the overall Maywood Park Racetrack is included in the Maywood Park Racetrack Report and features the following contextual essays:

1. Overview of Harness Racing in the U.S. and the Chicago Region.
2. Establishment of Cook County Fairgrounds on the site in 1930s.
3. History of Maywood Park Racetrack: 1946 to 1965.
4. Post-1965 History of Maywood Park Racetrack.
5. Original Owner Arthur T. Galt Sr.
6. Architect Lionel K. Levy.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: Maywood Park Racetrack has about 900 total stalls contained within the six Stable Buildings discussed in this report. Four groups of Stable Buildings featured a series of double-loaded aisles with stalls on either side, accessed from a large sliding metal door on either end. One Stable Building has three pairs of stall bays, each accessed from an exterior sliding metal door. The sixth Stable Building has a long rectangular footprint lined with a series of metal sliding doors opening onto fourteen bays, each of which has a double-loaded aisle with six stalls, three on each side, and a feed stall at the end. All Stable Buildings have concrete slab walls and low gable roofs. Partition walls are concrete slabs (in the aisles) and wood (separating stalls).

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Stable Building 7a has a total length of approximately 252'-0", and a total width of 200'-0". Stable Building 7b has a total length of approximately 574'-0", and a total width of 44'-0". Stable Building 7c has a total length of approximately 240'-0", and a total width of 207'-0". Stable Building 7d has a total length of approximately 66'-0", and a total width of 36'-0". Stable Building 7e has a total length of approximately 275'-0", and a total width of 239'-0".
2. Foundations: Concrete slab.
3. Walls: Precast 5" concrete slab walls.
4. Structural system: Load-bearing walls and precast concrete interior supports
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Stables are accessed through large sliding metal doors on metal tracks.
 - b. Windows: Not applicable.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: All buildings have low gable roofs with built-up covering. Ventilators are situated along the ridgelines of the roofs.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Stable Building groups 7a, 7c, 7e and 7f all feature connected tiers of double-loaded aisles with 10'-0" square stalls on either side. The tiers within each stable group are internally connected and accessed from large doors at either end. Stable Building 7d has a total of six stalls—three on either side—each accessed by an exterior door. Stable Building 7b has a total of 14 bays, each of which has a double-loaded aisle with six stalls, three on each side, and a feed stall at the end.
2. Flooring: Concrete slab.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Stable Buildings 7a, 7c, 7e, and 7f have concrete slab partition walls lining the aisles and wood partitions separating the stalls. Ceilings in those stable buildings are covered with corrugated metal. Stable Building 7d has concrete slab partition walls between the stall bays; its

ceilings are covered with corrugated metal and have steel beams. Each bay in Stable Building 7b has concrete slab partition walls lining the aisles and wood partitions separating the stalls. The ceilings in this building are covered with metal and have metal decking.

4. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The feed stalls within the bays of Stable Building 7b are corrugated metal. No other interior doors exist within these buildings.

b. Windows: Not applicable.

5. Hardware: Exterior sliding doors to Stable Building 7b have horseshoe handles. Other sliding stable doors have standard metal handles.

6. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating: No source of heating was evident during the site visit.

b. Lighting: Ceiling hung incandescent light fixtures.

c. Plumbing: Water piping is extended to the large tiered Stable Buildings as some of the stalls were used as wash stalls.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Stable Building group 7a is located at the southeast corner of the racetrack. Stable Building 7b spans the length of the racetrack's south side. Stable Building group 7c is located at the southwest corner of the racetrack. Stable Building 7d is located on the west side of the racetrack, just north of Stable Building group 7c. Stable Building group 7e is located at the northwest corner of the racetrack. Stable Building group 7f is located across Fifth Avenue, just south of Dormitory Buildings 6e and 6f.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

C.G. Clarke Associates, Elevation Drawing and Floor Plan of Stable Building, May 31, 1977.

W.J. O'Brien Electric Co., Detail of Electrical Service Equipment for Stable Building across Fifth Avenue, May 31, 1977.

- B. Interviews: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
- C. Bibliography: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
- D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
- E. Sketch Plan: Floor plans of the various Stable Building groups are attached to this Outline Report.
- F. Supplemental Material: The following materials are attached to this report:
 - Figure 1: Stable Buildings Location Plan, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.
 - Figure 2: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7a at southeast side of racetrack.
 - Figure 3: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7b on the south side (backstretch) of the racetrack.
 - Figure 4: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7c on the southwest side of the racetrack.
 - Figure 5: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7d on the west side of the racetrack.
 - Figure 6: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7e on the northwest side of the racetrack.
 - Figure 7: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7f on the west side of Fifth Avenue.
 - Figure 8: Stable Building group 7a.
 - Figure 9: Entrances to Stable Building group 7a.
 - Figure 10: Entrances to Stable Building group 7c.
 - Figure 11: Stable Building group 7e.
 - Figure 12: Typical interior of a tiered Stable Building group.
 - Figure 13: Horse stall within typical tiered Stable Building group.
 - Figure 14: Passage between sections of a typical tiered Stable Building group.
 - Figure 15: Stable Building Group 7b on south side of racetrack.
 - Figure 16: Horseshoe handles on entrances to stalls on Stable Building 7b.
 - Figure 17: Typical six-stall interior within Stable Building 7b.
 - Figure 18: Stable Building 7d on west side of racetrack.

PART IV. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH:

- A. Research Strategy: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
- B. Actual Research Process: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.
- C. Archives and Repositories Used: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.

D. Project Team: See Maywood Park Racetrack Report.

PART V. PROJECT INFORMATION

This HABS documentation project was undertaken to mitigate the adverse effects of a proposed commercial project by Maywood Realty Company LLC on cultural resources within the 55-acre project area. The terms of the mitigation were agreed upon and executed to ensure compliance with the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420).

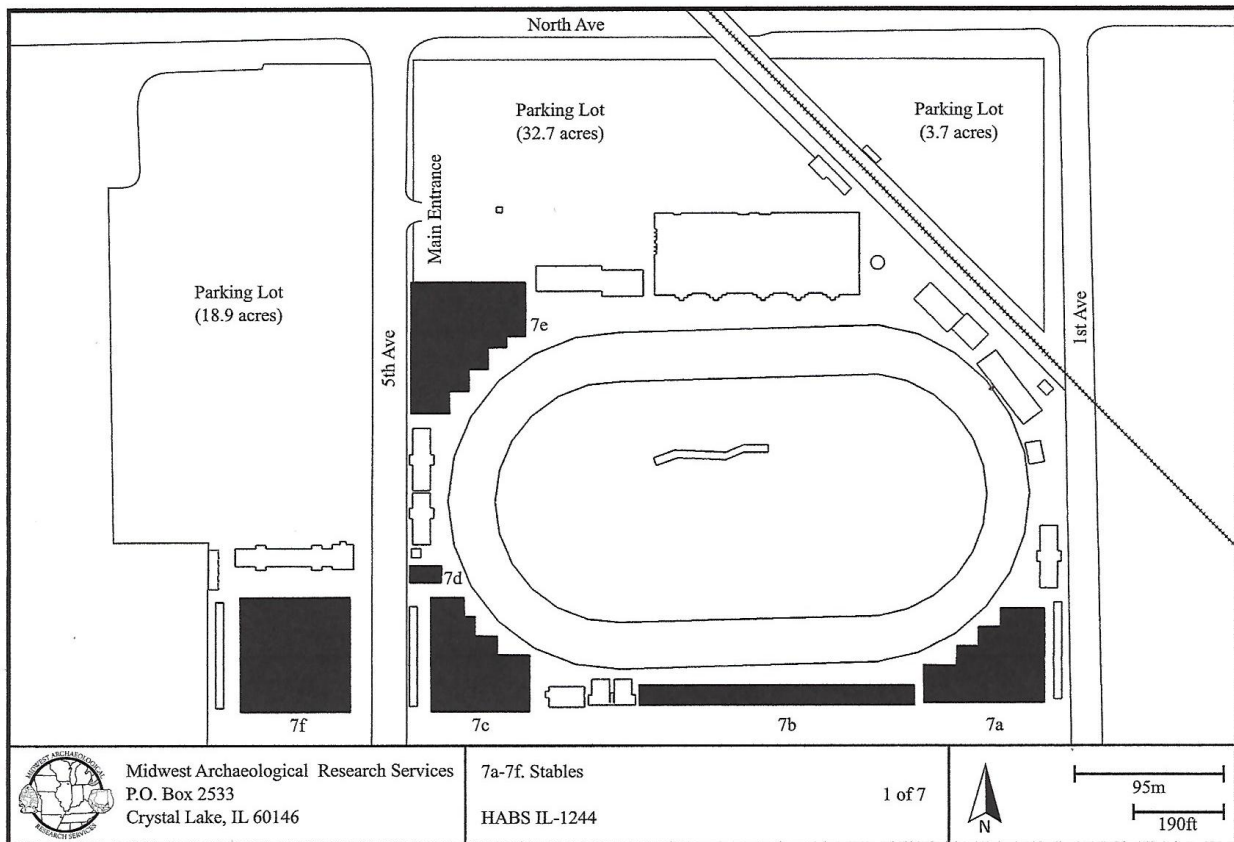


Figure 1: Stable Buildings Location Plan, 2019, drawn by Lucas Howser, MARS.

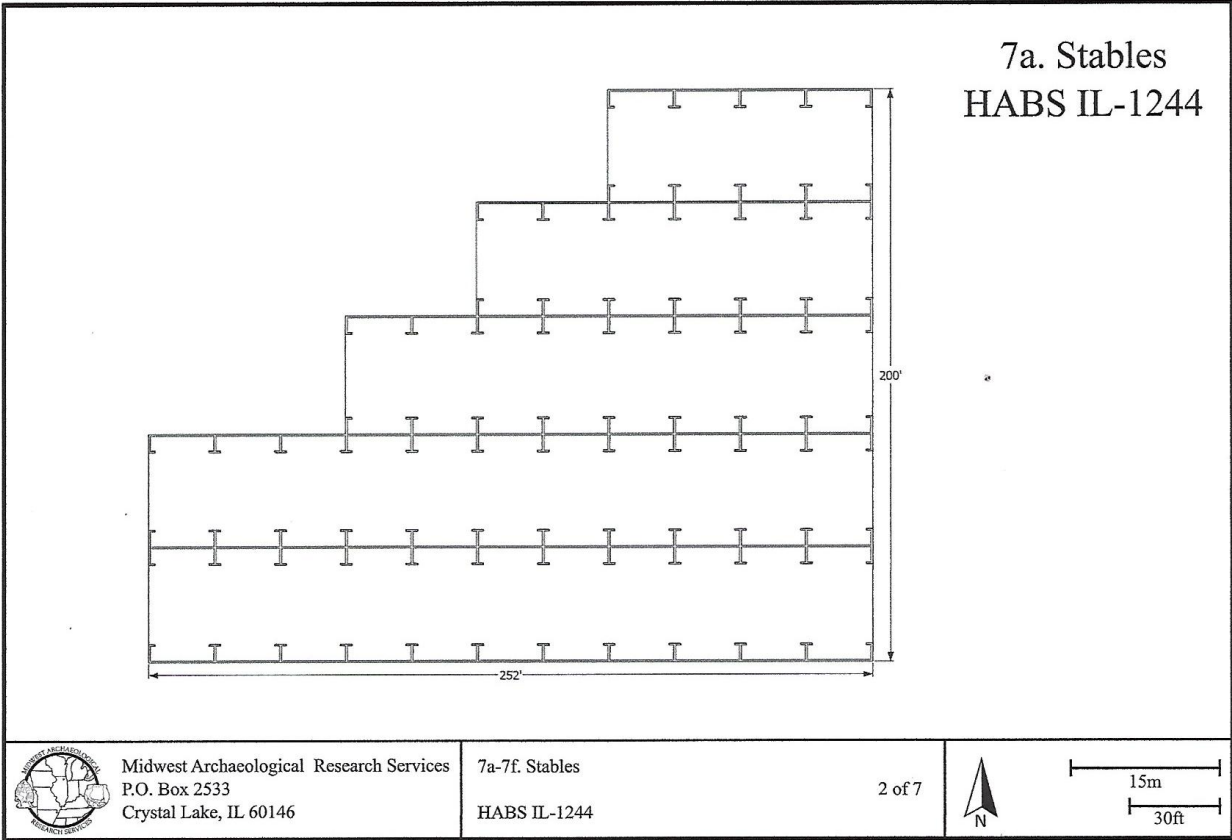


Figure 2: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7a at southeast side of racetrack.

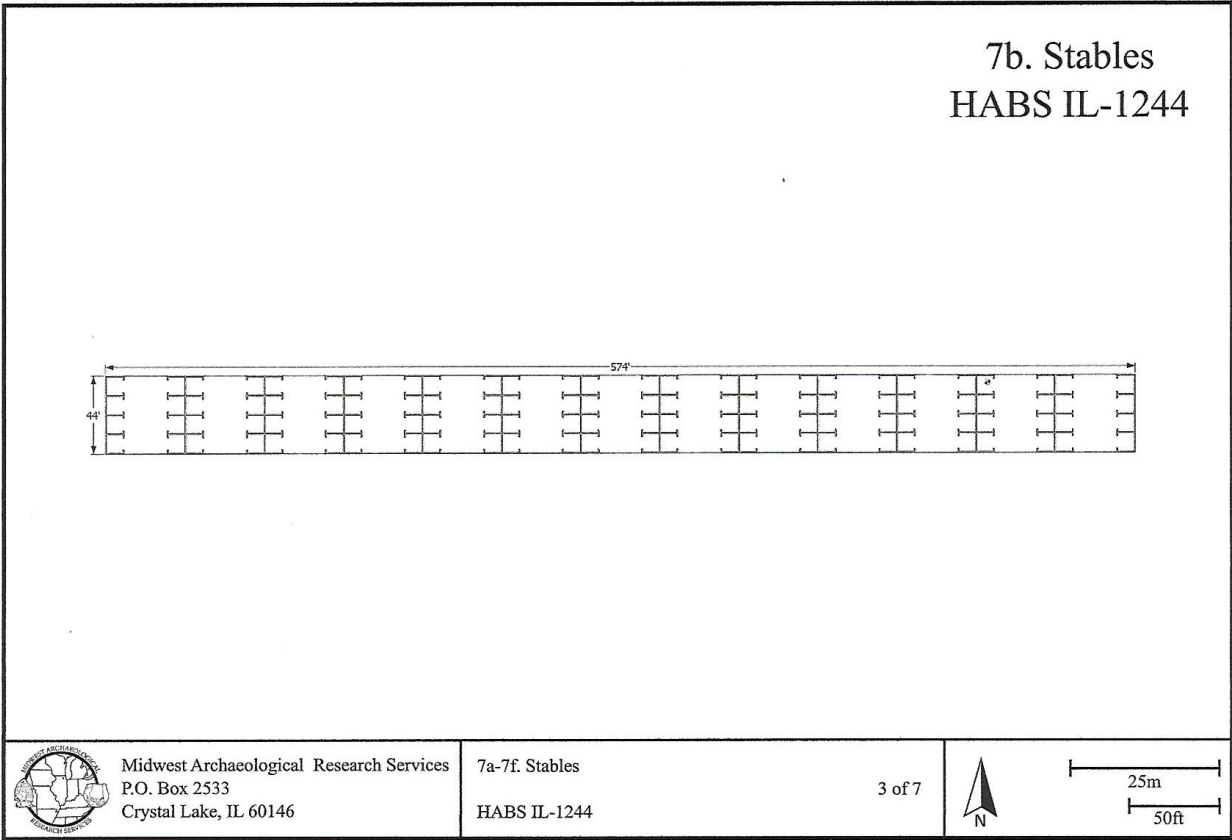


Figure 3: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7b on the south side (backstretch) of the racetrack.

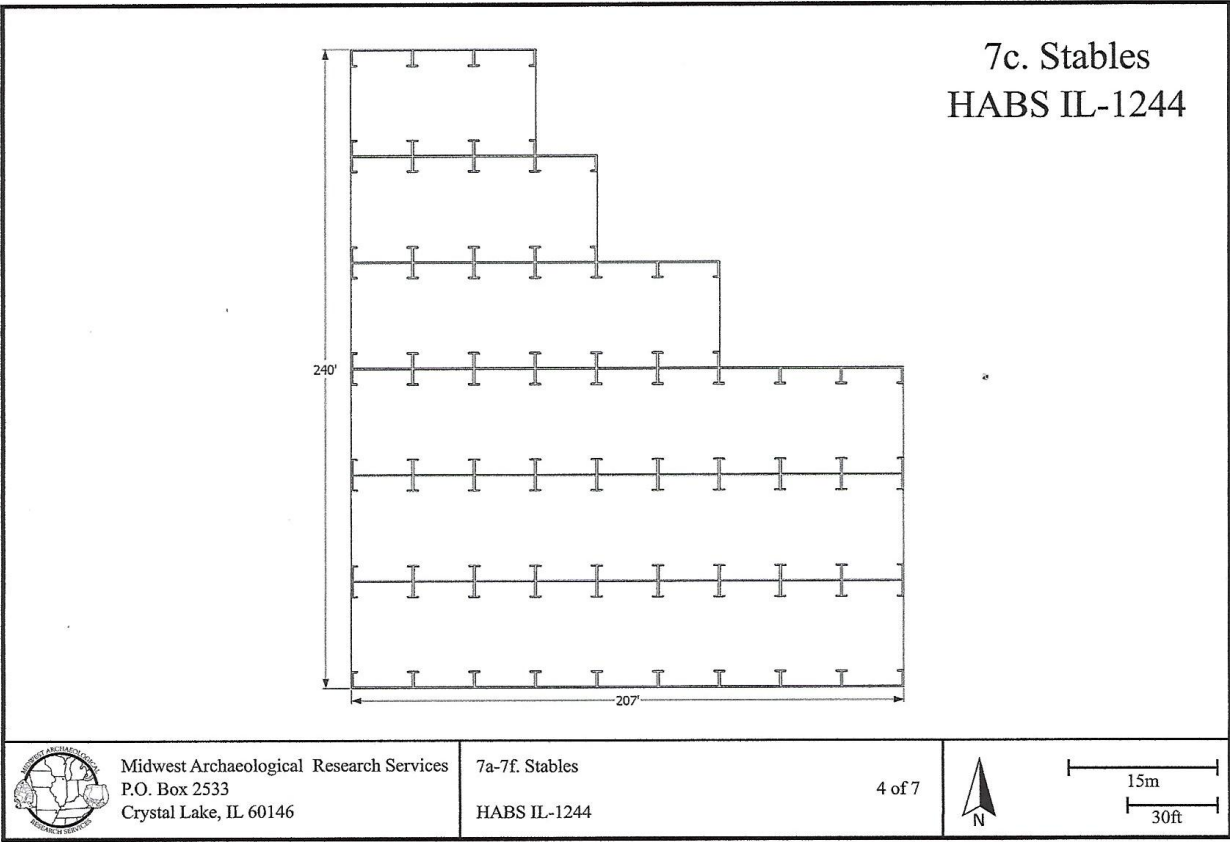


Figure 4: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7c on the southwest side of the racetrack.

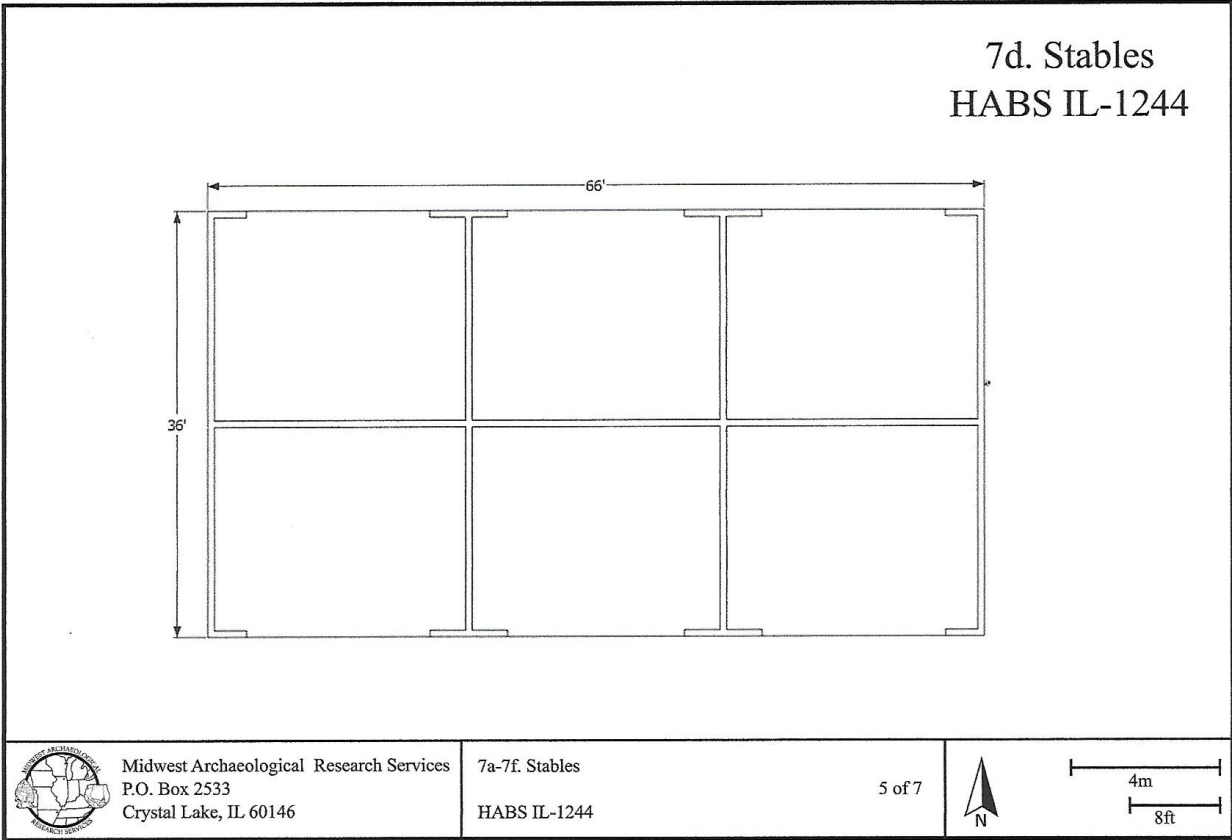


Figure 5: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7d on the west side of the racetrack.

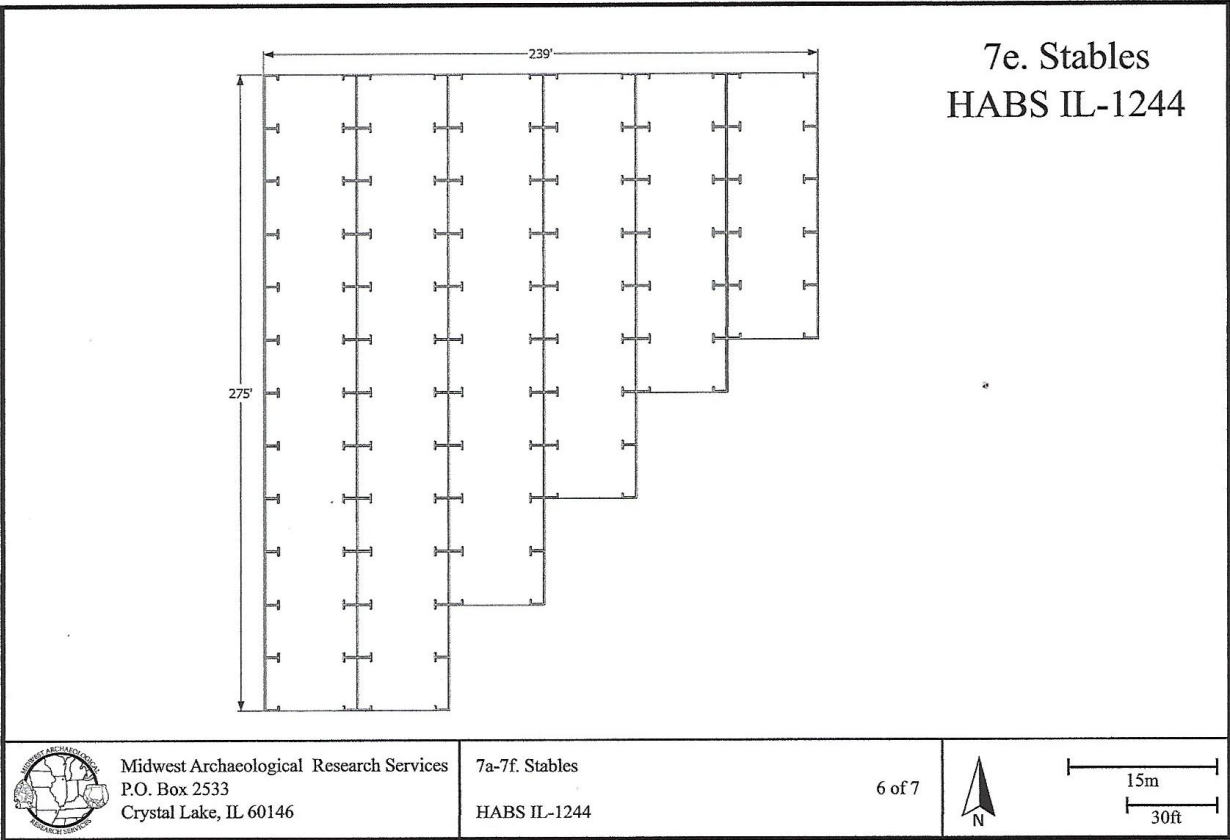


Figure 6: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7e on the northwest side of the racetrack.

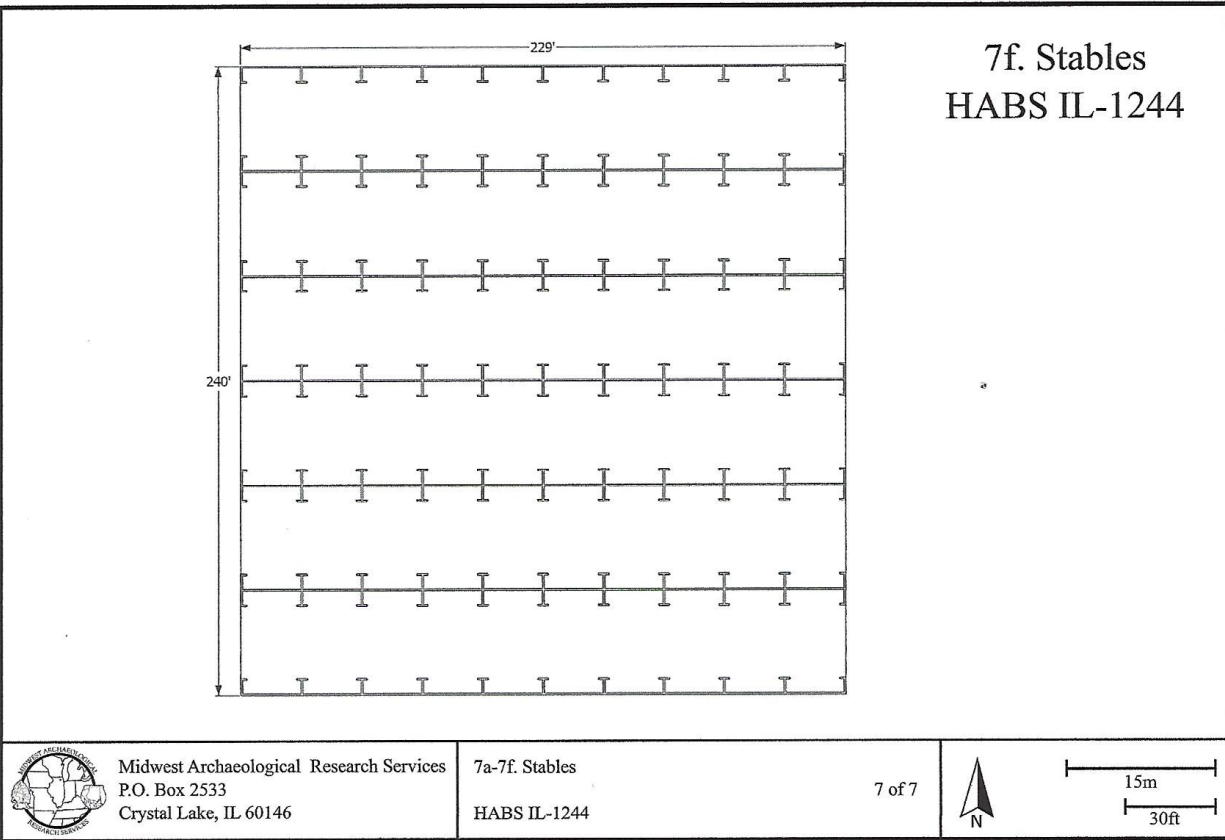


Figure 7: Floor Plan of Stable Building group 7f on the west side of Fifth Avenue.



Figure 8: Stable Building group 7a.



Figure 9: Entrances to Stable Building group 7a.



Figure 10: Entrances to Stable Building group7c.



Figure 11: Stable Building group 7e.



Figure 12: Typical interior of a tiered Stable Building group.



Figure 13: Horse stall within typical tiered Stable Building group.



Figure 14: Passage between sections of a typical tiered Stable Building group.



Figure 15: Stable Building Group 7b on south side of racetrack.



Figure 16: Horseshoe handles on entrances to stalls on Stable Building 7b.



Figure 17: Typical six-stall interior within Stable Building 7b.



Figure 18: Stable Building 7d on west side of racetrack.