COMMUNITY SURVEY FORM — Historic Preservation Division — State Historical Society of Wisconsin

City:	County:	Surveyor:	Date:
Milwaukee	**MI**	G. Hunton	5-4-80

Street Address: 3126-32 W. Pierce Street

Map Used: LUQS #435

Map No. 23-4

Current Name/Use: Ray's Nob Hill Restaurant

Film Roll No. 4-23

Negative No. 4

Facade Orient.: S

Special Features Not Visible In Photographs:

Interior Visited? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Original Name/Use: | Source

Dates of Construction: 1875 (Unverified) | Source 1

Architect/Builder: | Source

Historical Data

Owner	Dates	Uses	Sources

Architectural Significance:
- ☐ Represents Work of a Master
- ☐ Possesses High Artistic Values
- ☒ Represents a Type, Period, or Method of Construction
- ☐ Is a Visual Landmark
- ☐ Other:

Statement of Architectural Significance:

Long rectangular Cream City brick structure of undetermined age and origin; possibly it was built as a commercial block or a rooming house. (There are no building permit records and the address is outside the area covered by early insurance maps.) Original windows on the upper story have round and segmental arches. The brick exterior has been painted and the first floor facade has been altered badly.

Historical Significance:
- ☐ Associated With the Lives of Significant Persons
- ☐ Associated With Significant Historic Events
- ☐ Associated With Important Cultural Pattern
- ☐ Other:

Statement of Historical Significance:

No.	Sources of Information (Reference To Above)
1	Tax Program
2	Rascher's Insurance Map, 1876.
3	Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1888 and 1894.
4	
5	

Representation in Previous Surveys: ☐ HABS ☐ NRHP ☐ WRL ☐ Local Landmark ☐ Other:

Opinion of Eligibility for National Register: ☐ Eligible ☑ Not Eligible ☐ Unknown

Initials: Date:

W. Pierce

3126 - 32

Curtiss class of 1912. John Kaminski (second from left) poses with some of his fellow students at the flight school in San Diego.

desolate, the flat expanse of land was ideal for flight training. Today it is known as the North Island Naval Air Station, one of the busiest in the nation, but in 1911 the Curtiss Aviation School provided its only inhabitants. For four miles in every direction the flat sand offered ideal runway space for the school aircraft, and as John landed on the island he was thrilled by the sight of an airplane performing maneuvers such as he had never seen before. Later he learned that the pilot of the aircraft was the famous Lincoln Beachey.

DAYS AT THE SCHOOL WERE BUSY ONES. IN THE MORNing while the air was still and calm, the students practiced their flying. Afternoons were devoted to experimenting by Mr. Curtiss and his assistants, while occasionally the more professional aviators did their flying. The aircraft were like nothing we see today. Crude in construction, they were of the lightest materials possible, a wooden and bamboo structure covered with fabric. The pilot sat on a small seat in the open, ahead of the engine which drove a pusher type propeller. He steered the aircraft by moving the rudder with the steering wheel and tilting the wings by moving the ailerons with a shoulder rig. The throttle of the engine was worked with the right foot.

Flight training consisted of running across the field in the school machines, gaining just enough speed to lift the craft a few feet off the ground to enable the pilot to get the "feel" of the controls.

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This was possible due to the four mile stretch of runway available. The speed was regulated by a stop-nut attached to the foot throttle which prevented the engine from gaining enough speed for flight, but at the same time allowed the fast runs a few feet off the ground.

Whether by accident or otherwise, the nut on Kaminski's machine came loose one day and he suddenly found himself soaring across the field fully fifty feet above the ground. He throttled back instantly and landed without mishap. However Mr. Curtiss was quite startled and immediately dashed over for an explanation. Satisfied that John could handle the aircraft, he allowed him to continue his practicing.

Soon Kaminski was ready for his tests. Much more simple than today, the license test required that the pilot demonstrate his proficiency by flying twice around a closed circuit around two poles about 1,500 feet apart without touching the ground. An altitude of at least 150 feet was required, and one of two landings had to be made with the engine shut off. For his test Kaminski had as observers two U. S. Navy fliers who later became very famous, Lts. Ellyson and Towers. Passing his tests easily, Kaminski was awarded F. A. I. License No. 121 on May 8, 1912. He was the first licensed aircraft pilot from Wisconsin.

He immediately went to work for the Curtiss Exhibition Co., purchasing his own Curtiss pusher airplane. He flew with such famous early pilots as Lincoln Beachey, Horace Kearney, and Farnum Fish, and made many exhibition flights at fairs and other public gatherings in the south and east during the following three years. In 1916 he joined the instructor staff at the flying field at Mineola, Long Island, where he trained military pilots. In 1917 he joined the Army and served throughout World War I with the 7th Aero Squadron in Panama.

After the war his sight began to fail, so he decided to give up flying and went to work for the U. S. Post Office Department. He retired in 1955 and now lives in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida.

South Side Parks of Yesteryear

By Will Talsey

WHERE THERE WAS AN ATTRACTIVE WOODS, CONveniently located, and in season, there the young and the old began to go. Then families began to go there for their Sunday outings and basket picnics. Next, some enterprising citizen bought the woods, did some clearing, put in some buildings, and the pleasant grove became a robust grove or park where school, church, lodge,

club, and family picnics were held. With the passing of years the city grew and more homes were built, and the grove, or park, became an area of homes and stores.

"There are many such parks on the South Side that lived a robust life but are no more," lamented Henry Manke, a South-sider for over seventy years. "I can think of only two parks that began as woods or groves that remain today; Jackson began as Reynolds Woods, and Kozciusko as Coleman Woods."

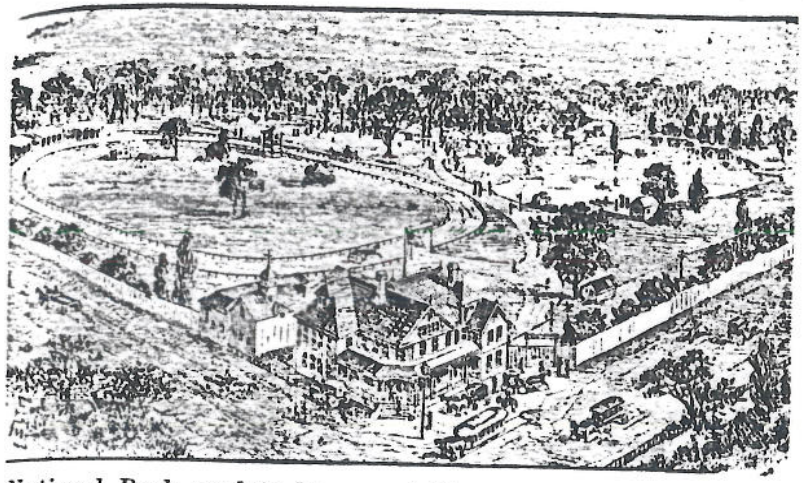
"I live at 2148 South Muskego Avenue," continued Manke. "Do you know that was in Rose Hill Park, a well-known park where many of the school, church, and club picnics were held during the warm months, and where masquerades and balls were held during the winter months?" Rose Hill Park faced on Muskego Avenue, running east to Forest Home Avenue, and north and south from Beecher to Dunlap Avenue, now Grant Street. The entrance was at the corner of Muskego and Dunlap, and in the park were many buildings, including dance hall, amusement stands, and the Major Domo tavern. The brick building presently housing a cleaning and dyeing plant is all that remains of Rose Hill Park. Across the street southward of the old park was the street car barns, southward of the Farmer's Inn, and across the street from that was—and is—the main entrance to Forest Home Cemetery. Rose Hill Park began about 1885 and ended about 1903.

A somewhat similar park was Berninger, facing what is now West Pierce Street, running northward to Menomonee Valley, and from Shea Avenue on the west to South 33rd Street on the east. This park had all that Rose Hill offered but in addition had a merry-go-round, so it was the favorite for school picnics. However old as well as young came here for hun, in family groups and in large school numbers. Berninger Park started in 1902, just about the time the great National Park was closing, and ended about in 1915. All that remains of Berninger is the brick tavern.

About two miles south of Berninger was the lusty Heim's Grove, which fronted on West Lincoln Avenue, ran to present Grant Street, and from South 35th to South 37th Street. Heim's Grove did not have as many buildings as Berninger, but the surrounding heavy woods lent itself acoustically to the colorful beer songs that were featured here. Heim's Grove began about 1895 and ended in 1914.

A short distance from Berninger Park was Conrad's Grove, on National Avenue from South 29th to South 32nd Street. Family, school and church gatherings filled the grounds in the good old summer-time. Conrad's Grove, as the well known National Park, gave way about the same time when the Town of Greenfield was annexed to the City of Milwaukee.

OF COURSE NATIONAL PARK WAS THE MOST FAMOUS of the south side parks that are no more. It ran from South 27th to South 31st Street, National to Greenfield Avenues. Within its fenced area were many buildings including horse barns for it had an excellent race track. Besides horse racing there was



National Park used to be one of the top recreational spots on Milwaukee's south side

"clay pigeon" shooting, and even a fishing pond. All the outdoor extravaganzas were held here, along with the circus and the carnival offerings. National Park closed about 1902.

When National Park ended, a National Grove began in the woods and fields opposite what is now the vast P & H plant. Its area included what is presently National Avenue south to Scott Street, South 44th Street eastward to the railroad tracks. When Harnischfeger located its new plant in its present area the grove was quickly taken over by homes and stores.

About the same kind of recreation area that was National Grove was Schaeffer's Grove, embracing what is now the land occupied by the Johnson Candy Company. This began about 1903 and ended just before World War I. The area was the former estate of the historical Sheriff family.

Another baseball park that served the South Side and the city well was the City League Park located on Forest Home Avenue. The entrance was on South 19th Street; the fence, of course, circled the field and bleachers running to South 20th Street and northward to Rogers Street. In this park games were played Saturday and Sunday afternoon by eight teams that made up the league and which then was a stellar organization. Such teams as American Candy, Quin's, Sisson & Sewell, Burghart's, Bob Krocker's, and Henry Bulder's made up the league. The park was erected in 1907, ended in 1912.

The City League Park was succeeded by the Lake Shore League Park that was built on old Grove Street, now South 5th, and Harrison Avenue. This was professional baseball, and the teams that made up the league included Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee's Kosciusko "Reds," along with three other teams.

Parks today on the south side as elsewhere are county-owned and operated efficiently and well, but the parks of yesteryear had an atmosphere that made for informal comradeship.