

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery
other names/site number Grand Forks Synagogue and Montefiore Jewish Cemetery

2. Location

street & number 601 Cottonwood Street 1450 North Columbia Road not for publication N/A
city or town Grand Forks vicinity _____
state North Dakota code ND county Grand Forks code GF zip code 58201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____
Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr. SHPO
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government _____

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

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
- other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: None applicable

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION Sub: Religious facility; Synagogue
FUNERARY Cemetery

Cat: RELIGION Sub: Religious facility; Synagogue
FUNERARY Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT; Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Asphalt
walls Stucco
Light Wood framing
other _____

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

See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

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

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE
RELIGION
SOCIAL HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1888-1960
1935-1960

Montefiore Cemetery
 Congregation B'nai Israel second Synagogue

Significant Dates 1927
1937

consolidation of two parcels to form Montefiore Cemetery
 dedication of the completed Synagogue building

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder Joseph Bell DeRemer; Architect
Samuel Teel DeRemer; Architect

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

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

See continuation sheets.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: UND Orin G. Libby Special Collections; ND Institute for Regional Studies

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.411-acres (0.575-ha)

UTM References; NAD 27 (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

14	647 100	5 308 700	Synagogue/Temple B'nai Israel center of entrance
Zone	Easting	Northing	
14	644 270	5 310 380	Montefiore Cemetery, southwest corner
Zone	Easting	Northing	

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

See continuation sheets.

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheets.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title:	Steve C. Martens; Architectural Historian	steve.martens@ndsu.edu
organization:	Peg O'Leary; Coordinator for the Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission	POLeary@grandforksgov.com
street & number:	1405 First Avenue North; PO Box 1386	date: July 15, 2011
city or town:	Grand Forks	telephone: 701/772-8756
		state: ND zip code: 58208-3876

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- See Continuation Sheets
- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- Photographs 1-20: Representative black-and-white and color photographs of the property.

Property Owner

name:	B'nai Israel Synagogue	NDBnaiIsrael@gmail.com
street & number:	601 Cottonwood Street; PO Box 14122	telephone: 701/775-5124
city or town:	Grand Forks	state: ND zip code: 58208

The preparation of this nomination has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, and administered by the State Historical Society of North Dakota. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of the Interior or the State Historical Society of North Dakota, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

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B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

7. Narrative Description:

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Cottonwood Street and 6th Avenue South in a residential neighborhood just south of downtown Grand Forks. The synagogue is the second building constructed in Grand Forks for purposes of Jewish education and worship, replacing an earlier synagogue (1893-1938) nearby in the core neighborhood of Jewish immigrant settlement.¹ The corner site on which the new synagogue is situated is 50-feet wide by 140-feet deep, extending to a rear alley. The synagogue is approached on a sidewalk that widens at the front entry.

The site is landscaped with carefully trimmed, modestly scaled perimeter plantings set close to the base of the building. Plants consisting primarily of yew (*Taxus baccata*), columnar and globe-formed arborvitae cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), caragana (*Caragana aurantiaca*), and Tatarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tartarica*) are organized in a planting bed with neatly trimmed geometric border, emphasizing the Art Deco architectural treatment of the synagogue.

The Grand Forks synagogue building's Art Deco architectural design is exemplified by emphasis on geometric patterns throughout the building's composition, evident in overall organization and in detail embellishments. In the building's massing and exterior surface treatment, the synagogue exhibits a flat roof and four articulate, primary volumetric elements; entry vestibule, sanctuary, classroom gathering spaces, and apse. The temple is constructed of light-wood framing with smooth-finished stucco exterior in a warm cream color, over a full concrete basement. The entire exterior stucco finish is in excellent overall material condition, freshly painted and exceptionally well-maintained.

The synagogue building is generally linear, symmetrical, and rectangular with the exception of a semicircular apse. The height of each element of massing corresponds to its overall size in plan, with the sanctuary element being largest in scale, anchoring the overall composition. Each of the four volumetric elements culminates in a low-slope roof. The exterior reads generally as a

¹ A variety of terms are used to identify Jewish religious centers, which generally serve multiple purposes of prayer, celebration/commemoration, study, charitable work and social gathering. According to the web site "Judaism 101" <http://www.jewfaq.org/shul.htm> Orthodox Jews and Chasidim use the Yiddish word "shul" to emphasize the synagogue's role as a place of study, Conservative Jews usually use the word "synagogue", which is actually a Greek translation of the Hebrew "Beit K'nesset" or place of assembly. Reform Jews prefer the term "temple", even though it offends some traditional Jews who see it as trivializing The Temple in Jerusalem.

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series of volumetric solids, pierced by window openings. A geometric Art Deco detailing motif is introduced in the raised (embossed) chevron "zigzag" surface treatment in shallow relief that forms a cornice band around the sanctuary section of the building. The geometric pattern on the cornice recurs in the stepped sides of the front vestibule element and in the geometric patterning of the stained window glazing.

West Exterior Elevation (front facade):

The synagogue is approached axially from the west (facing Cottonwood Street). The front façade (west elevation) is nearly square in its proportions. A shallow arcade is formed at the entry by three narrow, Romanesque arches that lead to a covered (shadowed) entrance behind. (This symmetrical, three-arch, arcaded entry configuration is typical of many Midwestern synagogues in the Reformed tradition from the early 20th century.) The arcaded entry is raised above grade by three steps, on a podium that differentiates the sacred interior from the "profane" exterior. Behind the shallow arcaded entry, the synagogue is entered through one of three arched-top wooden doors. These stained and varnished wood doors original to the building. Each is recessed approximately 4-feet behind a matching arched entry.

Three concrete steps extend nearly the full width of the projecting entry and are flanked by simple, wrought iron railings. The steps lead through the arcade to three separate, recessed, round-arched entry doors. The entry doors are approximately half the height of the projecting entry facade. On the front elevation, above the center entrance, a pair of arched tablets is inset into the stucco, repeating the arches of the doors and representing the Ten Commandments. The paired, arched tablet motif is glass fitted and backlighted with electric lights. The ornamental (glazed and illuminated) tablet motif is original to the building's architectural design. Above the tablets, a brushed-aluminum, stylized *menorah* is attached to the face of the entrance facade. Letters, in matching brushed metal finish, spell out "B'nai Israel", placed so the tablets are positioned between the two words. The *menorah* and lettering are not original features, but are from the historical period and in a style consistent with the architectural design.

A projecting entry element (suggesting a "porch") is centered and 16-inches narrower than the body of the building. The roof of the projecting entry is about 3-feet lower than the roof of the main sanctuary element. Expressive of Art Deco architecture, the sides of this projecting element are cropped at a 45-degree angle, comprised of seven geometric, "sawtoothed" step-backs (in plan) of

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5-inch increments. Sides of the projecting entry wall then extend straight back 4 1/2-feet to meet the sanctuary element at a right angle. The cornice of the entry vestibule element is smooth stucco meeting a squared metal downspout painted to match the stucco. Small rectangular niches, measuring 12-inches wide by 25-inches high, are recessed into the north and south ends of the arcaded entry. These niches have wrought iron grillwork anchored almost flush with the wall. The vestibule space is entered through the front façade. The zigzag cornice detail around the sanctuary follows the upper roofline across the front of the building and is visible from the exterior steps below.

North (street side) Elevation:

The north facade of the main building is smooth stucco from the ground to the cornice line of raised zigzags that follow the upper roofline around the central (sanctuary) element. Fenestration (window openings) are the main feature organizing the otherwise unadorned elevations. There are ten windows on the north façade plus one smaller window in the apse. All the windows are recessed 4 1/2-inches from the outermost face of the exterior wall and appear as pierced openings in the volumetrically solid stucco massing. The building's fenestration is generally symmetrical, so the south side elevation is very nearly the same.

The windows are generally grouped in sets of four. Four taller, ornamental windows are more widely spaced and centered compositionally on the sanctuary element. Four sets of fixed rectangular windows (admitting daylight into the sanctuary) are evenly spaced with sills approximately 56-inches up from the ground. These four windows are tall and slender in their proportions (30-inches wide by 120-inches high) with a wide central joining post. The diagonally-divided muntin pattern is organized vertically in sets of three, which emphasizes the diagonal patterning associated with Art Deco ornamentation.

Two small, flanking side vent windows (measuring 7-inches wide by 26-inches high) "bracket" the tall, ornamental windows in the sanctuary. The small vent windows on this secondary side elevation remain functional. (On the south side, the corresponding western-most window has been covered on the interior to obscure the elevator/wheelchair lift shaft.)

Toward the east end of the sanctuary's north elevation (near the back of the building), the exterior wall projects 23-inches outward (to the north and south) at right angles, forming the wider, articulate, rear educational element of the synagogue. Four double-hung windows are

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located in the rear education element toward the east of the main sanctuary. This 20-foot (east to west) by 33-foot (north to south) element contains a row of four smaller, utilitarian wood windows (1:1 double-hung units, evenly spaced). These windows are wood framed and aluminum wrapped in a color matching the exterior stucco, with sills set level with the sanctuary windows. The cornice and low-sloped roof on the education element is approximately 4-feet lower than on the sanctuary section. On the education element and rear apse the stucco is smooth with no chevron cornice detailing. All parapets are capped with utilitarian metal coping.

East (rear facade) Elevation:

The rear elevation is organized around a centered, semicircular projecting entry (in the nature of a flat-roofed apse) of about 17-feet diameter. A flush steel service door is centered on this element, opening toward the east. A small window (with three lites, matching the design of the small windows on the north and south sides of the sanctuary) is located on each side of the door midway between the door and the flat rear wall of the volumetric element that contains the education functions (classroom, library, offices and a smaller worship space). As with other elements of the synagogue's massing, the stucco finish on the education element and the apse is smooth, extending to the roofline where it terminates in a metal coping detail.

South (side) Elevation:

The south elevation mirrors the north facade in most respects. Four modest windows on the south side of the classroom element (to the east of the sanctuary) have exterior protective wrought iron grillwork on the south elevation only. The westernmost window on the south elevation was covered over in 1998 to allow installation of the elevator/wheel chair lift in the vestibule behind this window. The window frame remains visible from the exterior of the synagogue, filled in with a solid panel painted to match the stucco. A stucco-clad, 4-foot chimney rises above and is inset slightly from the cornice at the southeast corner of the sanctuary on the south side. The Art Deco zigzag ornamental cornice motif follows the upper roofline, along the front and sides of the predominant sanctuary feature.

Interior

Scholars Henry and Daniel Stolzman characterize the spatial configuration of Jewish temples that are similar in organization and form to Grand Forks' B'nai Israel Synagogue as typical of the "theater-style" interior configuration. The sanctuary of the building aligns east-

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west (so that prayers are offered while symbolically facing Jerusalem). The semicircular apse element is sometimes associated with Midwestern synagogue designs, particularly under the Reform tradition. Spatially, one enters the synagogue through the vestibule. The vestibule is 8-foot deep by 17-foot wide and slightly irregular, owing to the stepped setbacks at the sides. The vestibule accommodates two coat closets, as well as the elevator/wheelchair lift and winding stairways to the upper gallery and basement. The hoistway enclosure for the wheel chair lift is located in the southwesternmost corner of the vestibule. This added feature connects all three floors of the building including basement, main floor, and upper women's gallery. Removing a second staircase and substituting the wheelchair lift in its place efficiently and unobtrusively modified the building for accessibility. The wheelchair lift alterations and flood repairs took place in the spring/summer of 1998.

From the vestibule, two doors lead into the sanctuary. The sanctuary has two aisles leading to the *bimah*, a raised platform at the easternmost end of the sanctuary. This configuration reflects the temple founders' expectation that more Orthodox visiting congregants might wish to maintain separation between men and women during worship. Moreover, mindful that some individuals visiting the synagogue from Conservative or Orthodox congregations might have harbored more rigid reservations about worshipping in close proximity with members of the opposite sex, an upper-level gallery was constructed for women and girls at the building's origin. This upper gallery remains intact, essentially unaltered over the past 75 years. The upper gallery is reached by a steep, curved staircase from the interior vestibule, enabling women to reach the gallery without actually entering the sanctuary. A second staircase originally led to the upper gallery, but it was removed to accommodate the elevator/wheelchair lift.

In more recent times, particularly under Reform Judaism, the overt separation of men and women was not required, but was occasionally provided at B'nai Israel as a courtesy to any visitors who might feel the necessity of separation. In fact, differing accounts from the earlier historical period of the Synagogue confirm that, though the balcony was used at times for women's worship, on other occasions women were seated in the right half of the sanctuary, and occasionally separated from male worshippers by a drawn curtain. At least one interesting anecdote still known to worshippers recounts that the practice of separating male and female worshippers ended abruptly when one of the socially prominent women decided she had put up with the separation long enough and decided to sit with her husband.

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The sanctuary is 28-feet wide and 40-feet in length. On the eastern end stands an 8-foot by 18-foot *bimah* (raised platform). The *bimah*, accessed by three steps, is 2-feet above the synagogue floor. Some accounts suggest that raising the *bimah* may be a traditional feature in some synagogue architecture, but according to B'nai Israel congregants, it was more likely a practical consideration for improved sight lines. The absence of a railing on this elevated platform is, similarly, a feature common to many synagogues benefiting the congregants' view of worship.

The main floor of the synagogue's interior is, for the most part, unaltered and in its original good condition. In its configuration and details, the sanctuary interior reflects architectural understanding of the formal, ceremonial aspects of Judaic worship. No significant structural changes have been made to the sanctuary since the synagogue's construction in 1937. The pew benches and stained glass are those initially installed, as is the *bimah*; an unrailed but raised platform at the easternmost end of the sanctuary. Upon the *bimah* entered into by three steps, as is traditional in Jewish architecture, is the *almemar* or pulpit.

Attached to the east partition wall defining the front of the sanctuary, the location closest to Jerusalem, is the *Aron Hakodesh* (sometimes referred to as the *Hekhah*). This is frequently referred to in English as the Torah Ark. The Ark is crowned by a wooden carving of the Ten Commandments (in Hebrew) and holds the *sefer* Torah when it is not in use. The Ark is the central feature of worship in any synagogue, and thus would have been original to the building. Above the Ark, beside the Ten Commandments, is *ner tamid*, a continuously illuminated "eternal light". It is to remind the congregation of the constantly lit *menorah* of the Temple of Jerusalem. Some more contemporary woodwork features evident in the backdrop and surround for the Ark were reportedly the work of a 1960s era remodeling by the B'nai Israel Men's Club.

The historic Ark of the B'nai Israel congregation was originally installed in the earlier Grand Forks synagogue. This Ark holds several additional *sefer* Torahs, one of which was brought by Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster from Lithuania in 1891. (*Sefer* Torah refers to the "books" of the Torah or the Torah "scrolls" used in worship and ceremony. The *Chumash* is a bound version of the Torah used for study.) A separate Ark, now stored in the classroom, dates to the schism with the Independent Congregation of Children of Israel and is of additional historic interest. It is ornately constructed and is adorned with wooden carved lions of Judah, a traditional Jewish decorative motif.

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Lighting from the raised, coffered ceiling in the sanctuary is original to the construction of the synagogue. Six milk-glass pendant globes extend from the ceiling in two rows of three lights each, with brushed chrome finish on the fixtures. These fixtures were clearly selected architecturally as a definitive motif of the Art Deco style. The ceiling of the sanctuary under the women's gallery is somewhat lower than that of the primary sanctuary and is illuminated by two additional brushed chrome light fixtures that match those in the volumetrically higher main part of the sanctuary.

Interior woodwork is darkly stained fir or pine softwood that is unaltered from its original condition. The windows are recessed 4-inches into the 1-foot thick walls, both on the interior and exterior. Lighting fixtures, original to the building, are predominantly brushed chrome and are character-defining features of the Art Deco architectural style. The interior walls of the building are smoothly plastered to match the Portland cement stucco on the exterior to simulate a more monolithic masonry type of construction. Diffuse sunlight penetrates from the two, parallel side walls of the sanctuary through eight tall, narrow colored glass windows (deep purple and peachy pink). These are original to the building. Consistent with tradition in most Jewish architecture, the windows do not represent human figures, but are geometric in design. This characteristic, geometric feature, with strongly expressed diagonals, is also consistent with the Art Deco architectural style. These windows on the north and south walls of the synagogue are 30-inches by 120-inches in size.

The sanctuary has two additional, small windows toward the eastern end, flanking the *bimah*, one on the south wall and one on the north wall. These windows measure 7-inches by 26-inches and are glazed with translucent yellow glass. The interior frames of all the windows are wood, painted a turquoise-blue shade. The small windows can be opened for ventilation and are secured by a latch when closed.

The pews of the synagogue are original to the building, and were very likely relocated from the earlier synagogue. There are approximately 30 of them currently in use. Others have been removed to accommodate wheelchair users. The pews are arranged in three sections, divided by two aisles allowing for the separation of the sexes on either side of the center row of benches. The center pews could be used by both sexes, as well as by children. The solid wood pews have unpadding backs and seats. The seats, however, have cushions that have been replaced periodically. A sound system has been added to the sanctuary, but it does not intrude upon the integrity of the space.

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Behind the sanctuary (toward the east), the first floor education element contains an office, a modernized restroom, a classroom, a small library space, and a small worship space. This education component includes storage space for several sets of Torah scrolls in an exceptionally elaborate *Ark* that was originally consecrated by the separate Grand Forks Jewish congregation that formed in 1912 as the (more orthodox) *Independent Children of the Congregation of Israel* later rejoined the main congregation at about the time the new synagogue was being planned (in 1935).

The office is 12-feet by 20-feet and is oriented towards the south. It has four standard-sized, wood double-hung, one-over-one, evenly spaced windows. These south windows have exterior grillwork. As with the sanctuary, the interior woodwork is original and darkly stained. The classroom also extends from the small hallway and contains the usual materials of a room devoted to education. It is 12-feet by 20-feet and orients towards the north. It has four standard-sized, wood, double-hung one-over-one, evenly spaced windows. Unlike the corresponding windows on the south side of the structure, these windows are not covered with grillwork. The rear educational portion of the temple, including the office and classroom, has modern combination storm windows.

A modern, irregularly shaped restroom conforms to the curved eastern wall of the synagogue, and is entered from a short, connective hallway leading from the office and library area. The library is an entirely interior space with built-in bookcases that reduce its open floor area to 6'-10" by 10'-6". From the short hallway that connects the classroom, restroom, office and library, two steps extend to the east, allowing access to an outside exit door or, by winding interior staircase, to the basement.

Basement spaces

The synagogue sits atop a fully site-cast concrete basement. There are two sets of stairs by which to access the basement. The front staircase curves tightly down from the north side of the vestibule, to a similarly sized room at the base of the stairwell. This basement vestibule serves a number of small rooms, including a coat closet, a supply closet, and a storage closet. Due to severe flooding that occurred city wide in April 1997, basement spaces of the synagogue were extensively renovated. However, because no structural damage occurred, the facility was modernized after the flood with new wiring, restroom facilities, heating/cooling equipment, kitchen equipment, and flooring. An elevator/wheelchair lift was also installed at that time.

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Entered from the vestibule area of the basement, a large assembly room is located directly below the sanctuary. This open meeting room is used for fellowship, business meetings, and education. In 1998 (following the flooding of 1997) the basement was renovated with paint, carpet, lighting, and furnishings. The plaster ceiling was restored to an attractive coffered configuration.

To the east of the large meeting room is a kitchen, modernized in 1998. Small rooms containing the furnace/air conditioning equipment, storage, and toilet facilities were also updated. Continuing eastward, two steps lead up to a short hallway containing a coat rack and storage closet, and then to the rear stairs. The rear stairs curve rather tightly, leading to a small entryway with a door to the alley east of the building. The rear entry/exit door is centered on the apse. From this entryway, two steps lead up to the main floor.

Several detail features attract the notice of non-Jewish visitors. In fact, within the historical period, early Grand Forks residents from many other faiths were welcomed to the synagogue to observe the differences in Talmudic worship. One distinctive characteristic is the use of brilliant color, particularly the rich blue (*Tekheleth*) used on the temple's interior and the deep purple and pink of the stained glass windows of the sanctuary. Also related ritually to the synagogue's interior architecture is the placement of *mezuzot* (the plural form of *mezuzah*), containing tiny handwritten scrolls on doorposts; a custom derived from the passage in Deuteronomy (6:9, 11.19), "And you shall write [the words I command you today] on the doorpost of your house and on your gates."

The synagogue appears very much as it did at its dedication, both inside and outside. Minor exterior alterations (added signage, a metallic *menorah*, and protective grill work on four windows) do not detract from the Art Deco architectural motif. After a major flood that affected the entire community, the interior was remodeled for comfort and safety, while retaining high integrity of workmanship, materials, feeling, and association. B'nai Israel Synagogue is exceptionally well maintained, with a high degree of material integrity in its interior and exterior architectural details, style, and functional utilization for the broad range of activities of the Grand Forks Jewish community.

Narrative description of Montefiore Cemetery:

Montefiore Cemetery is a tangible reminder of Grand Forks' Jewish heritage; a reminder of

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significant social, civic, and business contributions to the community since Territorial times in the last two decades of the 19th Century. The cemetery is the oldest Jewish cemetery in use in the state of North Dakota. Its first marked burial took place in 1888. Given the cemetery's historic location in a rural location, it is entirely possible that there were burials in the cemetery before that time that are unmarked.

The cemetery is situated at the extreme southwest corner of what was, at the cemetery's founding, a section of rural land. With subsequent platting and improvement of two major city streets, today the cemetery is situated at the northeast corner of the intersection of Columbia Road (along the west boundary) and Gateway Drive/U.S. Highway 2 along the south. A concrete paved parking area is located along the northern part of the cemetery. Anecdotally, the original cemetery parcel (the west half of the present-day cemetery) was donated to the Jews of Grand Forks in 1888 by the gentile postmaster, William Budge. The cemetery was located alongside a railroad spur line and the east branch of English Coulee, on the outskirts of Grand Forks and near two other historically important cemeteries.

The cemetery parcel is somewhat irregularly shaped, probably owing to its location alongside what was once a railroad spur line. The parcel is approximately 251 feet wide east to west, and deeper (225 feet in north-south dimension) at the western end, tapering to 208 feet toward its eastern end. The cemetery and associated parking area cover an area of 54,905 square feet. Nearly 300 marked graves are identified within the burial area, roughly divided into two equal parts as indicated on a cemetery lot plan prepared in 1956 by William F. Huggins, a gentile member of the Grand Forks community who served as site superintendent for the nearby Grand Forks fairgrounds and manager for Memorial Park (an historic cemetery) across Gateway Drive from Montefiore to the south. This suggests that even though each of the three cemeteries (nondenominational, Catholic, and Jewish) has its own distinct boundaries, they are not unrelated in terms of their location and symbolic purpose. Historical accounts reflect that they were planned and situated as "country cemeteries" on the outskirts of Grand Forks' developed area, adjacent to a branch of the English Coulee. (Pietsch, 1934:266-9)

The historical record of the cemetery is marked by a rift that occurred in the congregation between about 1910 and 1927, addressed under Section 8 "Significance". The original cemetery parcel, deeded to the Jewish congregation by postmaster Budge, consisted of the western part of

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the cemetery in which most of the headstone markers from the historical period are located. A faction of the congregation acquired the less-developed, eastern part of the cemetery at the time of the schism arising from an acrimonious controversy over burial customs. By 1927, the two parcels had been combined under the unifying, commemorative title "Montefiore Cemetery".

The cemetery is named in honor of British philanthropist and Jewish immigration promoter Sir Moses Montefiore. The cemetery is bordered by mature, severely top-trimmed spruce trees (*Picea glauca densata*) and deciduous vegetative plantings; mainly cotoneaster hedge (*Cotoneaster lucida*) with several larger Tatarian honeysuckle shrubs (*Lonicera tatarica*). A few of the burial plots are also marked with perennial peony bushes. Two large American elms (*Ulmus americana*) overhang the more easterly part of the cemetery. Brick and stone corner markers and simple, commemorative entry gates are located along the south edge. A wrought-iron fence, constructed early in the period of historical significance using standard manufactured parts, surrounds the cemetery. In recent times, with increased traffic along the adjacent arterial streets, the principal public access to the cemetery is through an opening in the trees along the north edge. Jewish cemetery rites and customs necessitate that a proper Jewish cemetery must be articulately defined, independent of burials of other faiths, and have its own, separate entrance.

Within the cemetery, a memorial erected on May 30, 1931, notes that the cemetery was founded on July 2, 1888. The July 25, 1888, *Grand Forks Herald* reported the cemetery's establishment with the burial of Sarah Rosenzweig (d. July 24, 1888). Nearly 300 graves are accounted for by the cemetery plat layout and stone markers. Indentations on the surface of the ground suggest that there may be additional, unmarked graves. Approximately one-third of the cemetery is currently in use, with burial space remaining for a considerable number of burial plots.

Montefiore Cemetery contains a substantial number of monuments marking the individual burial sites of well-known Jewish families, prominent in Grand Forks. The stone monuments pay tribute to the Judaic heritage of Grand Forks and surrounding rural communities. A wide variety of gravemarker types is evident, some of which clearly have Judaic associations and others that are associated with melancholic remembrance associated symbolically with other religious faiths. Several of the grave markers also acknowledge that the person interred had served in the military.

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Some of the memorial markers illustrate traditional Jewish symbols such as the Star of David, ram's horns, *menorahs*, Torah scrolls, and *Kohanim* (hands positioned as for priestly blessing). An especially unusual feature is the presence of four "wolf stones," associated (in early 17th and 18th century New England and eastern Europe), with the perceived need to protect graves from scavengers by placing a stone or concrete monolith over the burial site, placed flush or slightly elevated from the grade. Rustic tree trunks carved in stone evoke awareness of a life cut short. They are interspersed with more traditional markers bearing carved messages in both English and Hebrew, carved in sandstone, limestone, marble, and granite. One or two markers appear to be hand made. A number of the earliest grave markers at Montefiore display a porcelain photograph of the deceased, generally in sound condition, undisturbed by vandalism.

While most of the earliest marker headstones indicate birth and death dates based on the Jewish calendar and reflecting months of the year by their Hebrew names, many later memorials display only the Gregorian dates and English months, reflecting adoption of American customs over time. (The Jewish calendar begins dating 3760 years prior to the Gregorian calendar; hence the current year 2011 on the Gregorian calendar correlates with 5771 on the Jewish calendar.) The burial plots appear much narrower and more closely spaced than in many other cemeteries of similar age.

Also especially noteworthy within the cemetery is the conspicuous presence of small random stones or pebbles placed informally on many of the grave markers. This custom of remembrance, commemorating visits to the grave site, is addressed further under the "Significance" section of the nomination. A digital on-line tour of Montefiore Cemetery with names listed and photographs of many of the memorials can be accessed through the web site "Findagrave"; <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gsr&GScid=2134231>.

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B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

8. Statement of Significance

Summary Overview:

B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery fulfill the requirements for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level based on NRHP Criteria "A" and "C". The synagogue is the work of a master architect (the firm of Grand Forks architect Joseph Bell DeRemer) whose architectural career has been recognized with several prior National Register listings in Grand Forks and statewide in North Dakota. Joseph Bell DeRemer and his son Samuel Teel DeRemer are well known for architectural design excellence in various parts of North Dakota from until 1902 to 1955. The synagogue is part of their body of work that advanced the Art Deco style regionally.

Architecturally, the synagogue is a work of high artistic value, embodying the early application of Art Deco stylistic motifs to a classical design vocabulary. The synagogue's associations with the architectural firm of Joseph Bell DeRemer support its eligibility under criterion "C" as an example of the work of a recognized master architect and, in this instance, an important work in the Art Deco architectural style. Construction and maintenance of the DeRemer-designed synagogue marks the Hebrew community's sustained commitment to their faith and to the city of Grand Forks.

The synagogue serves as a religious structure and place of assembly for cultural activities. Together with its associated cemetery, these paired resources embody Jewish burial traditions and provide significant testimony to the cultural diversity of Grand Forks. They reflect broad patterns of American religious history, coupled with the history of immigration, entrepreneurship, and cultural adaptation under Criterion "A". Historical events contributing to the establishment of an influential Jewish (mostly-immigrant) community in Grand Forks, and the construction of the new synagogue in 1937, reflect the solid core of a unified immigrant cultural complex. Grand Forks was home to the largest Jewish community in the state of North Dakota in the late 1800s. Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster's steady hand and guiding wisdom played a crucial part in the successful acculturation and continuity of Grand Forks' Jewish families.

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Montefiore Cemetery significance:

The significance of Montefiore Cemetery is predominantly local, serving as a burial place for the community's Jewish population over a 70-year historical period. The high proportion of graves of first generation Jewish immigrants, especially those of Jewish families relocating to Grand Forks from fledgling agricultural colonies on the urban frontier, marks the historical trend of assimilation. Considered together, the cemetery and synagogue fulfill the requirements of Criterion A of the National Register as a (single, unified) "property . . . associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." Culturally distinct customs and burial traditions differentiate Montefiore from other nearby historic cemeteries (Memorial Park and Calvary Cemetery; NRHP, 2010).

The cemetery landscape serves as a distinct reminder of the influential presence of Jewish residents in Grand Forks and, according to the analysis of UND history professor Kimberly Porter, stands as a symbol of diversity. Names of persons interred in Montefiore cemetery are immediately recognizable locally as persons of civic influence, not only within the Jewish community, but also more broadly in Grand Forks' civic life and the development of North Dakota. Under the pragmatic, balanced leadership of Grand Forks' longest-serving rabbi, Benjamin Papermaster (b. Nov. 19, 1859 - d. Sep. 24, 1934), the Jewish community grew to have considerable influence on civic, political, and business affairs in the eastern North Dakota Red River Valley region. The cemetery landscape is a direct physical link with those past events and persons whose importance continues to have relevance to the larger community of Grand Forks.

Narrative of significance:

Criterion A – properties reflecting broad patterns of historical events:

The B'nai Israel Congregation has a long history in the community of Grand Forks, North Dakota. Its endurance marks not only the persistent strength of a minority faith, but it also symbolizes the diversity of thought in an area sometimes viewed as rather homogeneous. Summarizing the origins of the Jews of Grand Forks is a bit complicated, in that they emanated from several geographic locations and consciously retained many of the distinct traditions brought from those distinct cultural hearths. Not all these aspects of context are evident in the architectural fabric of the synagogue, although the names on grave markers in Montefiore knit together the significant history of the role of members of the Jewish faith and cultural complex

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on the civic life of Grand Forks.

Jewish settlers often relocated a number of times, usually in pursuit of religious freedom, economic success, or the expectation that the next stop would assure their happiness. Indeed, the first Jews to live in North Dakota (or, until 1889, in Dakota Territory) were, most probably, men passing through, *en route* to the gold fields of Montana, either as prospectors or merchants. (Sherman, 1988: 388-89.) Examination of the first merchants of Grand Forks, as well as in the nearby speculative communities of Ojata and Wamduška, reveals that the majority of Jewish immigrants did not make North Dakota/Dakota Territory their first stop upon arrival in the United States. While some had been born in the United States, others were of German birth. (Sherman, 1988:389.) (U.S. Census, Grand Forks and Nelson Counties, 1900, 1910).

Some Jews came to North Dakota, specifically attracted to Grand Forks and the northern Plains by the Great Northern Railway's aggressive promotional literature and sustained efforts to attract immigrants, particularly from Eastern Europe. Others came to the area in a secondhand fashion, drawn by the entrepreneurial possibility of establishing small businesses to serve the simple, basic needs of pioneer settlers. Commencing in the late 1870s and continuing through the early portion of the 1900s, Jews in Eastern Europe and Russia found their lives imperiled by anti-Semitic *pogroms*.¹ Not only were livelihoods endangered in the Old World, so were lives. While many individuals fled to the urban centers of the United States, others determined to start their lives anew in a rural setting, distant from the cities in which their concentrated populations sometimes attracted the enmity of anti-Semites.

Three colonies of Jewish homesteaders attempted to make lives for themselves within the confines of Dakota Territory/North Dakota. Jewish agricultural resettlement colonies were established in south central Dakota Territory (near Ashley and Wishek in McIntosh County and in Burleigh County), as well as northeastern Dakota Territory in Nelson and Ramsey Counties. Several North Dakota towns (extant and deserted) such as Starkweather, Webster, Garske, Ben Zion, Adler, and others, owed their existence, if only for a brief time, to the efforts of Jewish aid societies (Sherman, 1988:390-91); (Plaut, 1965); (Schwartz, 1965:217-231).

The Jewish Agricultural Aid Society and the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society

¹ Papermaster (2004) writes, for example, of the 1903 Kishinev Pogrom; see p.67.

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encouraged the immigrants in their endeavor to find security and opportunity in rural areas. As separate entities, both organizations sought to place Jewish families in rural America and to turn their interests to farming. (Rikoon, 1998) Many of the recruits to North Dakota's Jewish colonies did not have an agricultural background. Indeed, many had been prohibited from owning land in their native countries. This lack of agricultural skill, combined with exceptional poverty, a lack of unifying Jewish community life, absence of rabbinical support, dreadfully unforgiving weather, and the basic disinclination to be farmers, led to the rather rapid collapse of the colonies. Little evidence is found of anti-Semitic behavior on the part of farm neighbors from other cultures. There is no indication that cultural prejudice was a major factor in the failure of these colonies. (Plaut:59-70); (Schwartz:217-31); (Rikoon, 1998) To the contrary, there seemed to be a refreshing degree of acceptance and local curiosity about unfamiliar cultural practices and customs.

As the remote agricultural colonies failed, one after another, the vast majority of the residents relocated to urban environments, often in Minneapolis, Chicago, Denver, or cities on the west coast. With regard to colonists who relocated to Grand Forks, the decline of the Garske (North Dakota) community brought a number of Jewish residents to the growing community of Grand Forks. According to Fr. William Sherman, the move to the city rarely came in a single step. As the colonies proved unsuccessful, many colonists gave up farming in favor of peddling or working in the stores of small communities, often keeping ties to their agricultural dreams. Further, as so many of the farms did not succeed, Jewish homesteaders redoubled their efforts in merchandising, often with considerable success.² From peddlers' carts and small stores in obscure towns, the progression to larger stores in larger towns took place within the course of a single generation.

Marking the beginning of Jewish relocation to a more "urban" life in Grand Forks, the first recorded burial occurred in Montefiore Cemetery in 1888. Montefiore Cemetery was named in honor of Sir Moses Montefiore (October 24, 1784 – July 28, 1885), a popular British philanthropist, banker, and financier of Jewish background who vigorously promoted the notion of Jewish agricultural resettlement societies, such as the ones attempted in Dakota Territory. Montefiore Cemetery contains the grave of Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster (*né* Papermeister), the first permanent rabbi to live and work in North Dakota, and the most influential leader of

² Sherman, *Plains Folk, North Dakota's Ethnic History*; p.398.

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divergent Jewish immigrant groups in the region.³ Montefiore Cemetery is maintained by the B'nai Israel congregation and remains an active cemetery, marking a chronology from 1888 to the present.

The first Jewish immigrants to Grand Forks began arriving in the 1880s. Many were of German background and were attracted by the rapid development and extension of the Great Northern Railroad. Early Jewish residents included Michael Fishman, Nathan Greenberg, Moses Goldstein, Joseph Horowitz, Pincus Schreiman, Sam Levy, and Moshe Sprung. A significant number, increasingly over the years, originated in eastern European locations, coming to the United States and ultimately to North Dakota to escape *pogroms*. Jewish émigrés soon chose to relocate from the Ramsey County, North Dakota agricultural colonies/communities of Garske, Iola, Ben Zion, and Starkweather, to Grand Forks. Many of these were of Eastern European origins and specifically Chasidic Judaism, including Max Rabinovich, David Horwitz, Joseph Aronovitch, Nathan Frankel, S. Linetzky and their families. Many of these family names are represented by grave markers in Montefiore Cemetery (Papermaster. 1959:23). By 1891, the Jewish population of Grand Forks was comprised of 60 families, as well as a considerable number of unmarried men. These individuals and their families made up the first congregation that eventually became Congregation B'nai Israel. (Lieberman, 2008)

In his comprehensive retrospective of early Jewish life in Grand Forks, Rabbi Isadore Papermaster highlighted many of his father's early experiences as the first rabbi of the community.⁴ At the time of his father's arrival in Grand Forks (March 1891), the river city included "60 Jewish families" among its inhabitants. From stories told to him by his father, Isadore Papermaster noted that the majority of the families were originally from Ukraine, but several were from Galacia (southeastern Poland) and Romania. Very few of the early Hebrew residents were from Germany; perhaps no more than five or six of the families (Papermaster 1959:13). Rabbi Papermaster himself came from Kovno, Lithuania. He was educated in the Orthodox tradition but always maintained an accepting, progressive attitude toward pragmatic

³ "Papermaster", the Americanized form of the Lithuanian family surname, is used consistently throughout this narrative.

⁴ Most of the citations of Isadore Papermaster in this nomination are taken from his 1959 self-published reminiscences. Many of the anecdotes are recounted in a more academically disciplined version in Isadore Papermaster's 2004 article in *Upper Midwest Jewish History* journal, although the page numbers for citations in that later-edited article vary. A helpful glossary of terminology appears at the end of this published resource.

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reforms in the North American setting. As the steady, unifying influence on a culturally diverse congregation, Benjamin Papermaster experienced particular challenges among congregants from a widely diverse range of linguistic and dialectical backgrounds.

Jews coming from southern Russia, Poland, and Rumania were strongly influenced by their Chasidic background. Their Yiddish dialect was different, and they pronounced Hebrew differently than the Lithuanian[s]. My father . . . decided that if he were going to remain there, he would have to adjust himself to their dialect and customs. The community at that time consisted chiefly of younger men and women who were anxious to adjust themselves to a new life in this country.⁵

“The Congregation of the Children of Israel” was incorporated on November 28, 1891, and met in a downtown storefront in the early years. The incorporation of the congregation also marked the beginning of the search for a resident rabbi and the decision by founding members to obligate themselves financially to construct a synagogue. The first rabbi to serve the community arrived in time to celebrate the Feast of Passover in 1892. The first Passover service was held in a downtown storefront because there was not yet a dedicated synagogue building.

Soon afterward, construction of a permanent synagogue was commenced in a neighborhood of concentrated Jewish settlement, alongside the Great Northern railroad tracks at the intersection of what was then Second Avenue South and Girard Street (later renamed South Seventh Street), in Budge and Eshelman’s Addition. This core community of initial Jewish settlement was a rich and interesting mix of first generation business enterprises interspersed with residences. The “Jewtown” neighborhood was displaced by a major urban renewal project in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

At the traditional celebration of *seder*, in 1891, held in the home of Nathan Greenberg and his large family, Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster, (*né* Binyomin Papermeister) faced his first challenges in the religiously disparate community. Older, more Orthodox members of the community, met the service with somewhat stony silence due to its lack of certain Hassidic ceremonies. The younger, less Orthodox members of the community found the new rabbi to be a refreshing alternative to their prior experiences at Passover and the *seder*. Over time, these variances led to a temporary split in the small community of Hebrew worshippers, but the historical record recounts the remarkably pragmatic and patient guidance Rabbi Papermaster

⁵ Papermaster, 2004; 59.

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demonstrated in mediating the divergent points of view in a frontier setting. (Papermaster, 1959:14-18). In 1892, Rabbi Papermaster celebrated Rosh Hashana in the newly constructed Children of Israel Synagogue, in the close-in Grand Forks neighborhood known less formally as “Jewtown.” (Papermaster. 1959:13; Lieberman, 2006).

Urbanization of Grand Forks' Jewish community.

The original Grand Forks Jewish temple was constructed at the intersection of Second Avenue South and Girard Street (later renamed South 7th Street), in the center of the town's Jewish neighborhood. To facilitate construction of the original synagogue, William Budge, the Protestant postmaster of Grand Forks and a local town builder and booster (and operator of Budge and Eschelman's Saloon on Third Street in Grand Forks) donated the land on which to build the first temple.⁶ To finance the construction of the first temple, members of the Jewish community mortgaged their houses and peddlers' carts. The structure cost a total of \$3000 to complete and could accommodate 300 worshippers. (Sherman, 1988:401) The congregation managed to pay off the synagogue's mortgage within approximately ten years' time. (Lieberman, 2006)

The first generation of the Congregation of the Children of Israel created a tightly knit social and religious community in Grand Forks. The neighborhood surrounding the temple was composed almost entirely of Jewish homes. Entrepreneurs who once peddled for a living prospered and became established grocers, clothiers, and jewelers. In turn, they helped congregants arriving in the city and in the region to establish themselves in similar businesses. Rabbi Papermaster led community-wide collections for Jewish individuals and families arriving without means (Lieberman, 2008).

Second Avenue was known as the Jewish Street. The odor of fresh-baked loaves of bread permeated the street on Fridays. On summer days, with the windows open, one could hear the voices of the children singing in the Cheder the Shir Hashrim, the Maftir, or the [Torah] portion of the week.⁷

⁶ William Budge had also provided the land on the undeveloped northwestern outskirts of the city on which the Jewish Cemetery, later Montefiore, was established. (Pietsch, 1934)

⁷ Papermaster, 2004; p.73. Grand Forks served as a center for cultural adjustment and acculturation under the leadership and wisdom of Rabbi Papermaster. Grand Forks' Jewish residential community became well-established from 1900 to 1935 in a discrete neighborhood in south Grand Forks. The neighborhood was referred to locally as “Jewtown” and was bounded roughly by Cottonwood, Fourth Avenue South, and the Great Northern Railway corridor. Little tangible evidence remains of this close-knit community, where Jewish urban life first became firmly established in Grand Forks.

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Intra-synagogue groups bound the community on a daily and weekly basis. Holidays provided occasions to unite as well. On Purim, for example, congregants would begin the evening with a celebration at the Rabbi's house and continue on to the homes of the congregation's officers before attending services at the synagogue. The influence engendered by the community's vibrancy and success extended regionally on High Holy Days well into the early 20th century. Jews from across North Dakota traveled to Grand Forks to join members attending services at the synagogue. Many of the out-of-town attendees knew Rabbi Papermaster from his frequent trips to officiate at ceremonies and to provide guidance and support to Jews scattered across the state. (Lieberman, 2008:16-27) Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster's pragmatism and even-handed judgment helped facilitate myriad adjustments to American customs, while remaining consistent with traditional Jewish practices of the culturally diverse eastern Europeans.

[Rabbi Papermaster added that] throughout Jewish history, customs in Jewish life had varied according to conditions from which all of them had come. In Russia, [he said], the government interfered with the Jewish way of life; in this country, we have the liberty to conduct ourselves according to our religious laws which can also guide us as good citizens. He promised to do his utmost to adjust himself to their ways [those of the new 'host' community] and practices as was consistent with his knowledge, training, and views.⁸

Early intra-synagogue groups included a *Chevra Kaddisha* society (attending to burial practices), two adult education groups dedicated to study of the Torah, a Hebrew School, a youth athletic club, and a Yiddish theater group that staged plays for the community. By 1915 congregants had also formed an Ahavath Zion Society of 96 members including 22 women, a Hebrew Literary Society for children ranging in age from 8 to 15, and a chapter of B'nai B'rith. From the first, the Congregation placed supreme value on educating their children about the beliefs and practices of Judaism. Temple members hired their first Hebrew teacher, a Mr. S. Yoffee, in 1894. Mr. Yoffee established a Hebrew school patterned after the public school system. He departed Grand Forks in 1899. A long succession of Hebrew teachers followed his lead. After 1902, classes were held in a separate building devoted to religious education. (Papermaster, 1959:30)

Rabbi Papermaster died on September 24, 1934, and is buried in the Montefiore Cemetery. Given Rabbi Papermaster's status in the largest Jewish community of the Great

⁸ Papermaster, 2004:62.

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Plains, he was carried to his grave by pallbearers -- all rabbis -- from Devils Lake, Minot, and Williston, in North Dakota, and from St. Cloud, Minnesota, and Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Such was the rabbi's standing in Grand Forks that he was served by honorary pallbearers, including the city's non-Jewish mayor E.A. Fladland and the ministers of a number of Protestant churches. Their presence reflected the esteem in which the rabbi was held during his over 40 years of service to the Grand Forks community, and indeed, the North Dakota/Minnesota Jewish communities (Sherman, 1988:402).

The death of Rabbi Papermaster, in 1934, marked a turning point for the Congregation of the Children of Israel. (Lieberman, 2008.) No other rabbi served the community for as long nor earned such a great reputation. In the 1930s, the Jewish population of Grand Forks began to dwindle. Various reasons can be discerned for this. First and foremost, the Great Depression encouraged the youth of the region to seek their fortunes elsewhere, often in larger cities and in ones with a greater population of Jewish individuals. Some individuals apostatized because of the lack of marriage mates, while others quietly converted to a variant of Christianity or simply disengaged from organized religion. Still the community maintained itself and even fortified its resolve to construct a new synagogue during the national economic Depression.

After the death of Rabbi Papermaster, the Jewish community consolidated its center of worship at the site of the "new" B'nai Israel Synagogue on Cottonwood Street that is the principal subject of this nomination. By the late 1930s, the disparate Jewish communities of faith had reunited. Religious artifacts from the Independent Congregation being given to the newly formed B'nai Israel Congregation. (Papermaster, 1959:23). The unified Congregation reached an important point of transition by the middle 1930s, unified by the commitment to construct a new synagogue.

Although the original synagogue building was razed (demolished 1938), its dedication in 1892 reflected the strong commitment of a Jewish community in Grand Forks to remain a significant part of the city (Lieberman, 2008) For a period of time from 1910 to 1935, occasional religious services were conducted by a separate faction of Grand Forks' Jewish community, "The *Independent* Congregation of the Children of Israel," (filed for record May 27, 1912). Believing that Rabbi Papermaster was becoming too religiously liberal in some of his practices, this more orthodox-leaning group met in storefront spaces in the surrounding neighborhood in the vicinity of the more-established Orthodox synagogue.

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With completion of the “new” synagogue in 1935, the two groups were reunified in a non-Jewish neighborhood using the Americanized translation “Congregation of the Children of Israel.” B’nai Israel Synagogue was given as the name for the new temple, and the Hebrew and Americanized names were used interchangeably for many years. In the late 1980s, after the end of the historical period, Congregation B’nai Israel formally affiliated with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, part of the Judaic Reform tradition, largely for the practical purpose of being able to secure student rabbis.

Architectural design and construction of the new synagogue building:

Beginning in the mid-1930s, members of the Jewish community began the process of raising funds for a new temple. Using pledges of as little as a dollar per year, increasing to \$500, a total of \$4,615 was raised to commence the work. In addition, the congregation received the donation of a double lot at 601 Cottonwood Street, valued at \$2500 for the temple's siting. Donation of the site was made by Philip and Lena Greenberg, members of the congregation. They had purchased the lot from Anna Kincaid, a widow, whose parents had purchased the land in 1895. The land was transferred to the Hebrew congregation (May 1937), encumbered by the \$1700 remainder on a mortgage that accompanied the Greenbergs’ acquisition of the property. (Sherman, 1988:402); (Register of Deeds, Grand Forks County, ND:20-111, 100-239, 354, 192-301).

In addition to pledges from congregation members, considerable funds for building the new synagogue were raised at the low point of the Great Depression through a series of ingenious fundraising initiatives led primarily by the Sisterhood. B’nai Israel organizational records in the Orin G. Libby Special Collections of the UND Library reflect a sustained series of social events, card parties, luncheons, etc. Historical records and minutes of the Sisterhood’s meetings reflect an energetic approach to social gatherings and a refreshingly non-judgmental approach that included the availability of alcoholic spirits, provided by one or another of the social members.

At its completion, expenses for constructing the new Temple B'nai Israel totaled approximately \$14,000. The temple was constructed by Skarsbo and Thorwaldson, a local construction firm. Some of the construction was done by members of the Jewish community in an effort to keep expenses to a minimum.⁹ Liturgical furniture (such as pews, the *Ark*, etc.) was relocated from the

⁹ Harold Pollman, a longtime member of B’nai Israel who was the first Bar Mitzvah in the new building, recalls the building’s foundations being excavated with horsepower.

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old synagogue. In addition to the \$1700 mortgage the congregation assumed with the gift of land from the Greenbergs, it also carried a mortgage of \$7500 for the building's construction. (*Grand Forks Herald*, May 14, 1937:1); (Register of Deeds, Grand Forks County, ND:192-301).

With the completion of the new synagogue in 1937, Grand Forks' two, disparate Hebrew congregations—The Congregation of the Children of Israel, and the Independent Congregation of the Children of Israel (the more conservative organization)—melded into one organization and restructured themselves as B'nai Israel. With the construction of the new temple, not only did the congregations join, they also settled their dispute with regard to the cemetery's orthodoxy. Moreover they combined the holdings of their libraries, furnishings, and Jewish religious items, including the 1880s Torah brought to the United States by Rabbi Papermaster (Sherman, 1988:402).

Patterns of historical events for immigrant culture and adjustment to Grand Forks life:

The endurance of the Congregation of the Children of Israel/B'nai Israel signifies a community of undiminished dedication to its faith, through the process of adaptation to a new cultural setting. The current synagogue represents the oldest, urban Jewish community in North Dakota. With regard to more permanent populations of Jewish individuals in North Dakota/Dakota Territory, Jewish merchants arrived in Grand Forks beginning in 1881-1882. N. Rosenthal, M.J. Mendelson, and Martin Rukeyser owned and operated the Milwaukee Store in downtown Grand Forks in the 1880s and thereafter. Along with Charles Adler, these merchants also engaged in the mercantile business in communities to the west of Grand Forks, particularly Ojata (no longer extant) and Wamduska (also no longer extant). (Sherman, 1988:388-91).

In the early layout and development of Grand Forks, several blocks of the new town came to be composed predominantly of Jewish residences; significant testimony to the importance of the early Jewish community in Grand Forks. While quite clearly many of the congregants did not come with, or aspire to, wealth -- working for the Great Northern Railway and operating peddler's carts in the surrounding counties -- other individuals maintained small stores and businesses in fledgling towns. (Papermaster, 1959:18) Rabbi Papermaster was especially widely travelled in the region, going great distances to serve families of Jewish faith in scattered settings throughout the northern Great Plains. He also facilitated the relocation of many of the Jewish farming families to Grand Forks by cosigning for small loans that enabled many of them to start new businesses.

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Among the early business leaders of the city was Max Rabinovitch. Rabinovitch was born in Romania and immigrated to the United States in 1885. After a circuitous route through several eastern states he settled in Grand Forks where he owned and operated a jewelry store. Sigmund Wolff was born in Germany and immigrated to the United States in 1893. Shortly after he arrived in Grand Forks he opened "The Mammoth Store." Both Rabinovitch and Wolff served as members of the First National Bank board of directors (*Reform Advocate*:13-14). Rabinovitch also served on a variety of city and regional committees devoted to tax issues, parks, roads, and rivers. Rabinovitch's son, Joseph, became state commander of the American Legion. Wolff was an early director of the Grand Forks Commercial Club. (Sherman:1988.)

Early business leaders in the Jewish community included Michael Fishman, a Russian-born survivor of the agricultural colonies. Fishman initially operated a scrap iron business and later established the "Boston Store," a mercantile shop. Joseph L. Lewinsohn arrived in the community holding a law degree from the University of Chicago; he served the University of North Dakota as a professor of law (*Reform Advocate*:15-17)

Samuel Panovitz, of Russian birth, arrived in the United States in 1890, intent on a career in the manufacturing of hats and caps, and soon afterward began selling furniture. Indeed, at the turn of the 20th century, Panovitz Furniture Store (extant; NRHP, 1982) was the largest purveyor of home furnishings in the city (*Reform Advocate*:15-17). Louis Rosoff, a pharmacist, arriving with the second wave of settlers, served on the Grand Forks School Board and the city's Welfare Board in the 1920s and 1930s. (*Reform Advocate*:15-17); (Sherman, 1988:402)

Other Jewish families, whose graves are prominent in Montefiore Cemetery, were furriers, clothiers, grocers, teachers, butchers. Others worked as laborers and served as members of the professoriate at the University of North Dakota. Over several generations, names of successful Jewish business leaders have become well known locally, including Silvermans, Sterns, Mandels, and Gershmans.

Life in the Grand Forks Jewish community was not entirely free of acrimony. The primary conflicts came from within. In about 1910, the Congregation of the Children of Israel suffered a rupture. At that time, a few members of the congregation felt that Rabbi Papermaster and the larger part of the community had fallen into laxity with reference to Jewish tradition.

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Accordingly, the *Independent* Congregation of the Children of Israel gathered separately from the main congregation. They met in a commercial building (not originally constructed as a temple) on the same block as the established Orthodox temple. (Sherman, 1988:402.) They also arranged to have a second adjoining cemetery parcel (the east half of Montefiore) set aside for their use.

Further internal conflict came with changing views about burial rites. From 1910-1927, the cemetery functioned as two separate burying grounds. Following a dispute regarding the appropriate garments for a Jewish man to be buried in, the conservative faction demanded that individuals buried in an "American" way, (i.e., in regular clothing rather than the more traditional burial shrouds), should be separated from those individuals buried in the more traditional way. Rabbi Papermaster mediated between the sides, effecting the reunification of the cemetery in 1927. The new synagogue brought the two congregations back together soon after his death. (Papermaster, 1959:23. Papermaster, 2004:76-7).

Grand Forks' Jewish cemetery mediated religious traditions and practices among Jews from a variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Montefiore Cemetery is a tangible reminder of Grand Forks' Jewish heritage, a heritage that has been significant to the community since the last years of the 19th century. The cemetery is the oldest Jewish cemetery in continuous use (since 1888) in the state of North Dakota. Within the cemetery, a memorial erected on May 30, 1931, notes the cemetery's founding on July 2, 1888. The July 25, 1888, *Grand Forks Herald* reported the cemetery's establishment with the burial of Sarah Rosenzweig (d. July 24, 1888). An interesting later account in the *Grand Forks Herald* describes, for non-Jewish readers, the unfamiliar ceremony surrounding a Jewish burial timed to respect the Talmudic holy days, in an article titled "Mourners Lay Body to Rest at Midnight." (*Grand Forks Herald*, April 9, 1912.)¹⁰

The judgment and wisdom of Rabbi Papermaster were well-respected in the city's civic affairs, involving non-Jewish members of the Grand Forks community as well.

It was during one of [Democratic Mayoral candidate] Michael Murphy's campaigns that my father [Rabbi Papermaster] called his attention to the very bad conditions under which cattle slaughtering was being done in Grand Forks. After [the] election, Mr. Murphy's first order of business was the successful effort to [build] a city-owned abattoir. One was constructed with a special department for

¹⁰ The referenced newspaper article also reflects more general public curiosity about unfamiliar customs and traditions among diverse immigrant groups. It was not uncommon for non-Jewish residents of Grand Forks to occasionally attend a Jewish religious service in seeking insight into the beliefs and practices of unfamiliar neighbors.

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the slaughtering of Kosher beef. [Mayor Murphy later said], "we owe it to Rabbi Papermaster for the sanitary meat slaughtering and meat inspection we have had in this city for many years."¹¹

Members of the Grand Forks Jewish community served honorably in the United States military in several wars, beginning with World War I.¹² (Papermaster, 2004:87-8) In Montefiore Cemetery, the graves of military veterans are prominently acknowledged with bronze plaques, generally in addition to the more traditional headstones.

Much as the synagogue embodies the active life of Grand Forks' Jewish community throughout the historical period, Montefiore Cemetery commemorates the identifiable beginning and legacy of earlier generations of the Jewish community of Grand Forks, North Dakota. Prior to the burial of Sarah Rosenzweig's, there were no permanent grave markers to record the presence and influence of the Hebrew population. The cemetery symbolically embodies the cultural presence and heritage of the Jews of Grand Forks in a discrete, rural burial ground on the outskirts of what was a growing city.

Culturally distinctive burial customs are evident in the landscape fabric of Montefiore Cemetery. Wolf stones, for example, are an early tradition imported to the east coast of the United States during the Colonial period, but scarcely represented in the middle part of the nation except for instances like Grand Forks where eastern Europeans brought an unaltered cultural tradition, *verbatim* from their homeland to the frontier of settlement in North America, reflecting a perception of the wilderness. Placing small pebble-stones on graves in remembrance of the departed is a fascinating custom. This humble, modest gesture of acknowledgement is a tradition with multiple meanings and explanations associated with various immigrant culture groups.

¹¹ Papermaster, 2004:79-80.

¹² Happily for Jewish families in Grand Forks, the young Jewish men who enlisted to serve in World War I, including at least one of the Rabbi Papermaster's sons, all returned safely after the war, as did Joseph Bell DeRemer's son, Samuel. Enlistment entailed much soul-searching about the well-being of relatives left behind in Eastern Europe, balanced against a sense of patriotism, duty and moral obligation to a new country.

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Criterion "C" Context; architecture; *work of a known master, example of Art Deco design style:*

Biographical summary of DeRemer architects

Joseph Bell DeRemer (1871-1944) and Samuel Teel DeRemer (1894-1967)¹³

The synagogue is significant under Criterion "C" as an example of the Art Deco work of the Grand Forks master architectural firm of Joseph Bell DeRemer. Joseph Bell DeRemer was born September 14, 1871, in the small town of Montana, Warren County, New Jersey, the son of James K. and Nancy (Bell) DeRemer. Joseph Bell DeRemer emanated from a tradition in carpentry and building which his family had practiced for six generations. J. B. DeRemer worked as a carpenter from 1886 to 1896 in Warren County and became a master of the carpentry trade, working with his father and brothers. His skills and talents in carpentry so impressed friends that they encouraged DeRemer to pursue architecture. In the fledgling years of Beaux-Arts architectural education in North America, Joseph Bell DeRemer completed a one-year program of architectural study at Columbia University.¹⁴

In June 1897, DeRemer concluded his Columbia University training and returned to his family in Warren County, New Jersey, to establish a fledgling architectural practice. Between 1897 and 1902, DeRemer completed 78 commissions in New Jersey. The "professionalization" of architecture in terms of design and scientific thinking was growing in public acceptance in urban centers of the eastern United States, and soon after, in the 1910s, there was a strong trend toward credentialing of architects in the Midwest and Great Plains regions. DeRemer's relocation to Grand Forks was largely accidental, prompted by an initial resolve to move to the West Coast in order to find better architectural opportunities.

En route from New Jersey to the west coast, DeRemer's career path took an unexpected turn of direction in Grand Forks. Upon arriving in Grand Forks on March 3, 1902, DeRemer was convinced by pharmacist-businessman D.H. Beecher (who had himself relocated from Crookston to Grand Forks where he became president of Grand Forks' Union National Bank) to stay and participate in the town's growth and booming economy. A few months later,

¹³ *Source:* UND OGL Special collections and NDIRS finding aids (20101), and *Grand Forks Herald* obituaries. The Joseph Bell DeRemer Papers were deposited in the Orin G. Libby Manuscript Collection by Stanley Johnson, UND Art Department, on March 11, 1982 (Acc.#82-964) and Joe B. DeRemer, East Grand Forks, Minnesota, on March 25, 1982 (Acc.#82-967).

¹⁴ Together with programs at MIT, Cornell, Illinois State at Champaign, Tulane and others, the architectural program at Columbia (begun in 1881) was modeled closely after the classically-based École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. see, Paul Monroe (ed.); 1919):182.

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DeRemer secured the commission to build the Oxford House (UND President's house) at the University of North Dakota (NRHP, 1973). Subsequently, Joseph Bell DeRemer was the architect for several other well-crafted buildings at the University of North Dakota including Woodworth Hall, Commons Building, Liberal Arts Building, Merrifield Hall, Delta Gamma Sorority, and Sigma Nu Fraternity (all NRHP, 2010).

By 1904, DeRemer had become such a prominent member of the Grand Forks community that he was featured in the "Silver Anniversary Issue" published by the *Grand Forks Herald*. In 1906, he moved into a home he designed on Belmont Road (NRHP, 1983), in a growing neighborhood of upscale homes of prosperous business owners and professional people. Joseph Bell DeRemer was one of the first generation of North Dakota registered architects. He was active in the American Institute of Architects (professional association) and effectively promoted the value of architectural services. By 1912, his architectural work was well known throughout the state of North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. His Grand Forks buildings from 1902-1912 exhibit consistent Classical Revival proportions and details that reflect his academic training.

J.B. DeRemer's Classical and Renaissance Revival designs in Grand Fork from 1902-1912 include the Ontario Store (Griffiths), the Corliss Block (Panovitz Store), the Widlund Block, the Elks (BPOE) Lodge (ravaged by fire and flood in 1997 and subsequently razed). J.B. DeRemer residences include his own home at 625 Belmont (NRHP, 1983), the McCoy home at 401 Reeves Drive (NRHP, 2004), and DeRemer's 1906 remodeling of the Clifford house at 404 Reeves Drive (NRHP, 1986). Several of DeRemer's early architectural commissions reflect a cordial working relationship with members of Grand Forks' Jewish community.

In 1912, Joseph Bell DeRemer left Grand Forks for Los Angeles, California, to pursue architecture in a different venue. He practiced architecture successfully in Los Angeles from 1912-1919. However, he did not completely sever ties with North Dakota, as he designed the North Dakota State Building for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, held in San Francisco, California, in 1915. The family's son, Samuel Teel DeRemer (b. May 15, 1894 – d. September 18, 1967), graduated from a Los Angeles high school and entered service in World War I by volunteering for service in the French army. He served as an ambulance driver with the U.S. Army Ambulance Corps assigned to France. After the war, Samuel toured Europe briefly with a performing group that staged the musical production "Let's Go!"

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Perhaps his interest in theatrical performance, stage set design, and the decorative arts influenced his tastes for the Art Deco and the attention given by the DeRemer firm to the designed "auditorium" configurations of several religious structures, including B'nai Israel synagogue. Samuel Teel DeRemer graduated with a B.A. degree in architecture from the University of California Berkeley, where he was an active member of the campus Sigma Nu fraternity chapter. It can be fairly inferred that much of the Art Deco influence on the DeRemer firm's work derives from the younger Samuel Teel DeRemer's experience, although his father would also have been acquainted with early renditions of that emergent style from his time in Los Angeles.

After a brief time working as an architect in California, the elder DeRemer returned to Grand Forks in 1919 and began a partnership with his son, Samuel Teel DeRemer. With Samuel DeRemer's creative participation, the DeRemer architectural firm designed many important Art Deco and Art Moderne Buildings during the period 1929-1934, including Whitey's Bar in East Grand Forks (an Art Deco landmark destroyed by the 1997 flood), the New Ryan Hotel, the 1931 United Lutheran Church¹⁵ (NRHP, 1991), the 1941 administration building for the Grand Forks Municipal Airport, an addition to the Grand Forks County Courthouse, and the first California-style bungalow in Grand Forks at 706 Belmont Road (NRHP, 2007). In Grand Forks, Samuel Teel DeRemer lived in an unusual Chateausque cottage he designed on Riverside Drive (no longer extant).

Joseph Bell DeRemer retired from active practice in 1937 as a result of failing health, which also points toward the substantial role of Samuel Teel DeRemer in design of the synagogue. Joseph Bell DeRemer died in Grand Forks on February 16, 1944. Samuel Teel DeRemer operated the firm in his father's name from 1934 to 1944, and under his own name from 1944 to 1955 when he transferred his practice to the firm of (William E.) Harrie and (Robert L.) Kennedy. Samuel Teel DeRemer died in Bemidji, Minnesota on September 18, 1967. Both Joseph and Samuel DeRemer are buried in Grand Forks' historic Memorial Park, across the Highway from Montefiore Cemetery.¹⁶

¹⁵ Located just two blocks from B'nai Israel Synagogue, Grand Forks' United Lutheran Church is one of the best regional examples of the Art Deco style in full flower, employed for the architecture of worship. The Lutheran Church would certainly have been familiar to members of the Jewish congregation at the time they were seeking architectural input for the new synagogue.

¹⁶ Closely proximate to Montefiore, Memorial Park is an historic cemetery; National Register listed, 2010.

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Introduction and adoption of the Art Deco architectural style in North Dakota

Joseph Bell DeRemer and his son were premier architects of the upper Midwest/Great Plains during the first half of the 20th century. The B'nai Israel Synagogue is an excellent example of the architectural work of the DeRemer architectural firm, accepted (by prior scholarship) as an accomplished master of the architecture profession based on projects statewide and regionally. During the period of 1929 to 1938, the DeRemer firm played a pivotal role in introduction of the Art Deco architectural style on a variety of project types throughout the state of North Dakota.¹⁷ The B'nai Israel Synagogue is a particularly good example of the application of Art Deco design principles to a fairly traditional configuration of worship spaces and exterior formal expression.

Samuel Teel DeRemer's involvement with his father's firm stimulated the firm's emergent work in the Art Deco style. The DeRemers advocated the Art Deco as a preferred "internationally-influenced" style, "distinctly modern, and based upon simplicity and economy."¹⁸ These were all traits well-suited to investment in a 1930s worship facility. It is not possible to differentiate with certainty, projects that reflect the stylistic inclinations of the elder and younger DeRemer; their practice was truly collaborative and either architect was capable of designing in several identifiable styles. Among the architectural projects known to have been influenced by Samuel Teel DeRemer are the highly distinctive Art Deco United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks (1932) and Temple B'nai Israel synagogue (1937).

Joseph Bell DeRemer, along with Fargo architect William F. Kurke, served as supervising architect of record for the new North Dakota State Capitol in Bismarck, begun and completed in 1932. The initial basis for the capitol's somewhat *avant-garde* Art Deco character was the winning design by the architectural firm Holabird and Root, submitted to a capitol design competition soon after the original capitol building was destroyed by fire. Many of the design judgments about detailing and architectural treatment of the capitol design were contributed by the North Dakota architects who fleshed out the Holabird and

¹⁷ The 1928 Ward County Courthouse in Minot (Toltz, King and Day, Architects) is often cited as the earliest building in North Dakota to have been influenced by the Art Deco, following close on the heels of the 1925 Paris Expo. Los Angeles is cited as "rich in Art-Deco architecture", although the dates by which DeRemer and son left southern California indicate that they would likely not have experienced much of its decorative motifs before the 1925 Expo from which the style takes its name.

¹⁸ Steven Hoffbeck, in Grand Forks "United Lutheran Church" NRHP nomination; (1991).

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Root design concept. Based on the date of the DeRemer firm's involvement, Samuel Teel DeRemer clearly influenced the detailing and ornamentation of the Art Deco capitol work, as he did on United Lutheran Church and B'nai Israel Synagogue.

Planning and architectural development of the B'nai Israel Synagogue design

In designing the synagogue, Joseph Bell DeRemer and Samuel Teel DeRemer gave careful attention to ornamental details of Art Deco design style, especially in the interior treatment and along the stucco exterior ornamentation. In contrast to elaborate systems of ornamentation applied to Classical Revival style architecture, the Art Deco was identified as a suitably economical treatment for public buildings, employed by architects seeking to express modern ideas in building construction. Functionally, the synagogue is organized according to the theatrical or auditorium configuration advocated in the 1920s and 1930s for modern worship, augmented by separate spaces for education and social activities.

The overall massing of the Grand Forks synagogue building reflects a kind of Mediterranean or Moorish influence that was not uncommon in other synagogues built in the United States at about the time of the Great Depression, particularly those associated with the Reform tradition. A number of detail features expressed in the synagogue's applied architectural embellishments clearly connect it with the Art Deco. Additionally, the Art Deco style advocated more restrained forms of ornamentation and suppressed non-functional features, expressed through motifs of geometric lines, zigzag patterns, bas-relief figures, and machine-like ornament. The highly geometric, ornamental ceiling light fixtures in the sanctuary are pure Art Deco in their precise, machine-like qualities.

The construction of a new temple for the community's Hebrew population demonstrated the congregation's continuing Americanized presence in Grand Forks. It is unsurprising that when the members of the Congregation of the Children of Israel recognized the need for a new synagogue they approached the firm of Joseph Bell DeRemer. Given the firm's preeminent reputation and skill with religious structures—United Lutheran Church was only a few blocks from the proposed site of the new synagogue—the DeRemer firm undoubtedly seemed the appropriate architect to approach. The building also retains hallmark features, such as the worship furniture, use of color, *mezuzot* (small scrolls placed on the door jambs), and separate balcony seating for women in the Orthodox tradition.

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Particularly in Midwestern American communities, many 20th century synagogue buildings reflect adoption of architectural styles that are compatible with the community and neighborhood in which they are situated. The Jewish congregants were well prepared for the architects' design approach to a new synagogue in a non-Jewish neighborhood. The restrained design purposefully relates to neighboring residential properties in a quietly unobtrusive way that shows respect for the architectural expression of a new and progressive style, while accommodating more Orthodox traditions on the inside, on occasions when that was appropriate.

Discussion of Criteria Considerations:

Temple B'nai Israel synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery are afforded special consideration under Criteria Consideration A as a religious property and burial ground deriving their primary significance from architectural characteristics and early historical associations. The cemetery is nominated along with the synagogue, which is the primary resource. More than 90% of the grave markers are from the period of historical significance, revealing formative patterns of acculturation, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement.

Under Criteria Consideration D, Montefiore Cemetery is eligible because it derives its primary significance from its associations with historical events relating to a distinct cultural group, reflecting patterns of early immigrant settlement and formation of community. Grave markers contained in Montefiore Cemetery reveal distinct folkways and burial customs, as well as embodying the civic presence of a minority community that is not otherwise well-documented on the North Dakota landscape.

Conclusions:

Grand Forks' B'nai Israel Synagogue is National Register eligible, primarily under Criterion "C," for the strong expression of the Art Deco architectural style in a religious building that embodies the traditions of a distinct ethnic and religious community. B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery are eligible based on local significance under Criterion "A" for the pattern of historical events associated with Jewish immigration and settlement in a rural community on the northern Great Plains, for the important role of Grand Forks' Jewish community in business throughout the period of significance, and for Jewish residents' investment in maintaining their heritage during the Great Depression. Under Criterion "C", Montefiore Cemetery is significant as a distinctive landscape type expressive of ethnic and cultural burial traditions of Grand Forks' Jewish citizens.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 5

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery
10. Geographic data:

Acreage of Property

Temple B'nai Israel parcel
7000 square feet, equivalent to 0.161-acres (0.065-ha)

Montefiore Cemetery parcel:
54,905 square feet, equivalent to 1.25-acres (0.51-ha)

UTM References (NAD 27)

Temple B'nai Israel center of entrance:
Z 14 E 647 100 N 5 308 700

Montefiore Cemetery southwest corner:
Z 14 E 644 270 N 5 310 380

Verbal Boundary Description

Temple B'nai Israel parcel (601 Cottonwood Street):
Grand Forks City Parcel 1803.080.00
Hole's Central Addition to the City of Grand Forks
Block 06; Lots 23 and 24 (50' x 140')

Montefiore Cemetery parcel (1450 North Columbia Road):
An irregular parcel in the southwest quarter of SW1/4 of SW1/4, Section 33 T152N R50W
City of Grand Forks Addition/

Beginning from a point 251 feet north of the dedicated right-of-way boundary at the northeast corner intersection of Columbia Road and Gateway Drive, proceed 251 feet south, then 225 feet east, then 225 feet north, thence westward to the point of origination.

Boundary Justification

The boundary description includes all property within the boundaries of land that is associated with the present day B'nai Israel synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery, on two separate, discontinuous parcels.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 1

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

Photo caption/identifier continuation sheet:

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: May 28, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_748.jpg
- Subject description; West (front) entrance elevation of synagogue
Photographer facing east

Photo number 1

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: May 28, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_746.jpg
- Subject description; West (front) and north (side) elevation of synagogue
Photographer facing southeast

Photo number 2

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_384.tif
- Subject description; East (rear) and north (side) elevation of B'nai Israel Synagogue
Photographer facing southwest

Photo number 3

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_394.tif
- Subject description; Interior of sanctuary space of B'nai Israel Synagogue
Photographer facing southwest

Photo number 4

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 2

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_396.tif
- Subject description; Interior of B'nai Israel sanctuary, facing *bimah* at front of space
Photographer facing northeast
Photo number 5

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_660.jpg
- Subject description; West (front) and south (side) elevation of synagogue
Photographer facing northeast
Photo number 6

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_386.tif
- Subject description; West (front) elevation of synagogue
Photographer facing east
Photo number 7

- 1. Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue**
- Grand Forks County, North Dakota
- Photographer: Steve C. Martens
- Photo date: April 14, 2011
- Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Synagogue_392.tif
- Subject description; Cornice detail of Art Deco motif on B'nai Israel synagogue
Photographer facing northeast and upward
Photo number 8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 3

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: April 14, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_653.jpg
6. Subject description; South entrance gate into newer (east half) of Montefiore Cemetery
Photographer facing northeast, from Gateway Drive

Photo number 9

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_745.jpg
6. Subject description; Brick pilaster at south gate, with Star of David embedded in cap
Photographer facing northwest

Photo number 10

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: April 14, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_650.tif
6. Subject description; Wrought-iron perimeter fencing along west boundary of Montefiore Cemetery
Photographer facing southeast

Photo number 11

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_735.jpg
6. Subject description; Burial markers in northwest corner of old cemetery; note pebble remembrance stones
Photographer facing northwest

Photo number 12

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 4

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_720.jpg
6. Subject description; Array of headstone markers with Hebrew lettering in southwest corner of old cemetery
Photographer facing southwest

Photo number 13

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_726.jpg
6. Subject description; Headstone marker for earliest known burial in Montefiore Cemetery; "Rosenzweig", (1888).
Photographer facing west, near southwest corner of cemetery

Photo number 14

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_741.jpg
6. Subject description; "Sherman" monument (1896); one of four "wolf stones" in Montefiore Cemetery
Photographer facing southeast from outside west cemetery boundary

Photo number 15

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 17, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_379.tif
6. Subject description; Mrs. Sheine Getl Silverman monument (1905); one of four "wolf stones" in Montefiore Cemetery
Photographer facing southwest

Photo number 16

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Additional Documentation Page 5

Temple B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery; Grand Forks County, North Dakota

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_728.jpg
6. Subject description; Headstone grave marker (1934) for Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster in Montefiore Cemetery
Photographer facing west

Photo number 17

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: April 14, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_730.jpg
6. Subject description; Iconic (1914) burial marker at grave of Mrs. R. Greenberg; with tree cut short and remembrances
Photographer facing west

Photo number 18

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_722.jpg
6. Subject description; Bronze markers for Kushner brothers (1979, 1985); two veterans of World War II
Photographer facing west

Photo number 19

1. Montefiore Cemetery

2. Grand Forks County, North Dakota
3. Photographer: Steve C. Martens
4. Photo date: May 28, 2011
5. Digital image; Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission and State Historical Society of North Dakota
Photo log; ND_GF_Montefiore_739.jpg
6. Subject description; Markers acknowledge contributions to civic life; attorney & military veteran D. Kessler (2002)
Photographer facing east, toward newer, less utilized part of Montefiore Cemetery

Photo number 20

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 6

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

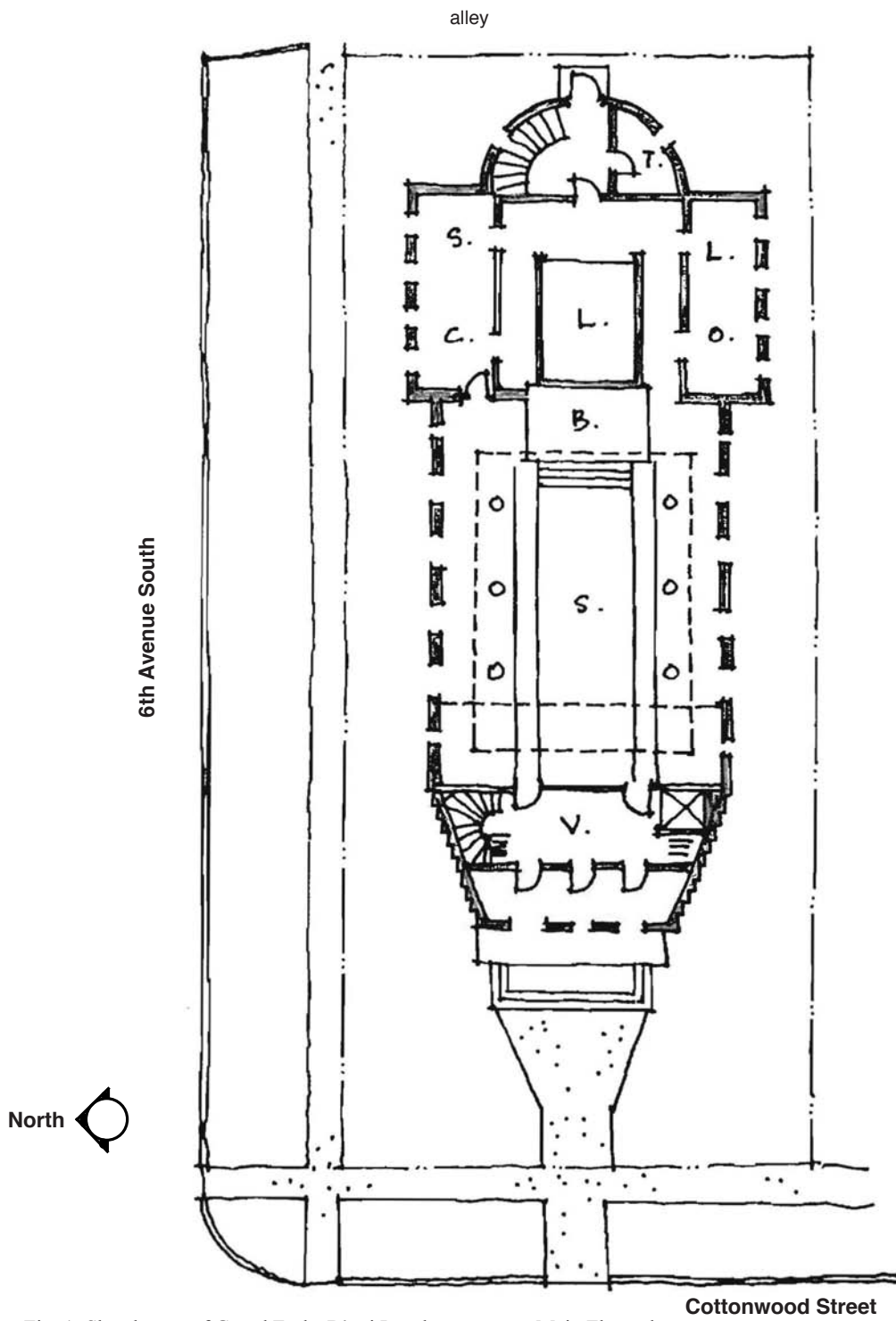


Fig. 1: Sketch map of Grand Forks B'nai Israel synagogue; Main Floor plan
Not drawn to scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 7

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

Montefiore Cemetery UTM=
Z14 E644270 N5310380



Synagogue UTM=
Z14 E647100 N5308700

Fig. 2: Aerial Photograph of B'nai Israel Synagogue in relationship to Montefiore Cemetery
Adapted from GoogleEarth image, April 2011

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

Section number Additional Documentation Page 8

Montefiore UTM=
Z14 E644270 N5310380



Fig. 3: Aerial Photograph of Montefiore Cemetery
Adapted from GoogleEarth image, April 2011

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

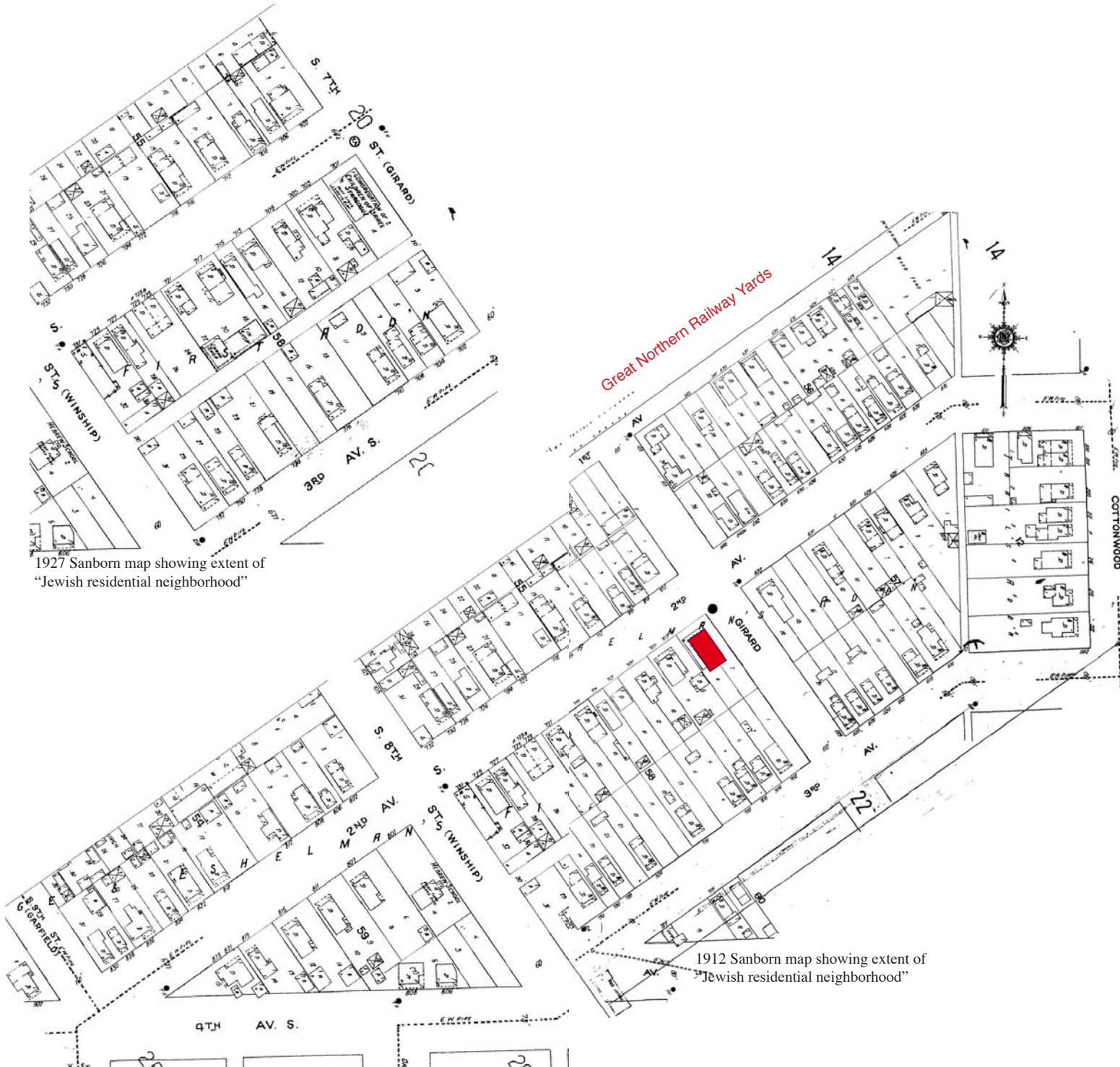
Section number Additional Documentation Page 9

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State



1927 Sanborn map showing extent of "Jewish residential neighborhood"

1912 Sanborn map showing extent of "Jewish residential neighborhood"

Figs. 4, 5: 1912 and 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, "Grand Forks, ND" (composite, showing location of original synagogue in relationship to Jewish residential community); these maps have been rotated so that they appear in matched orientation, with north up.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

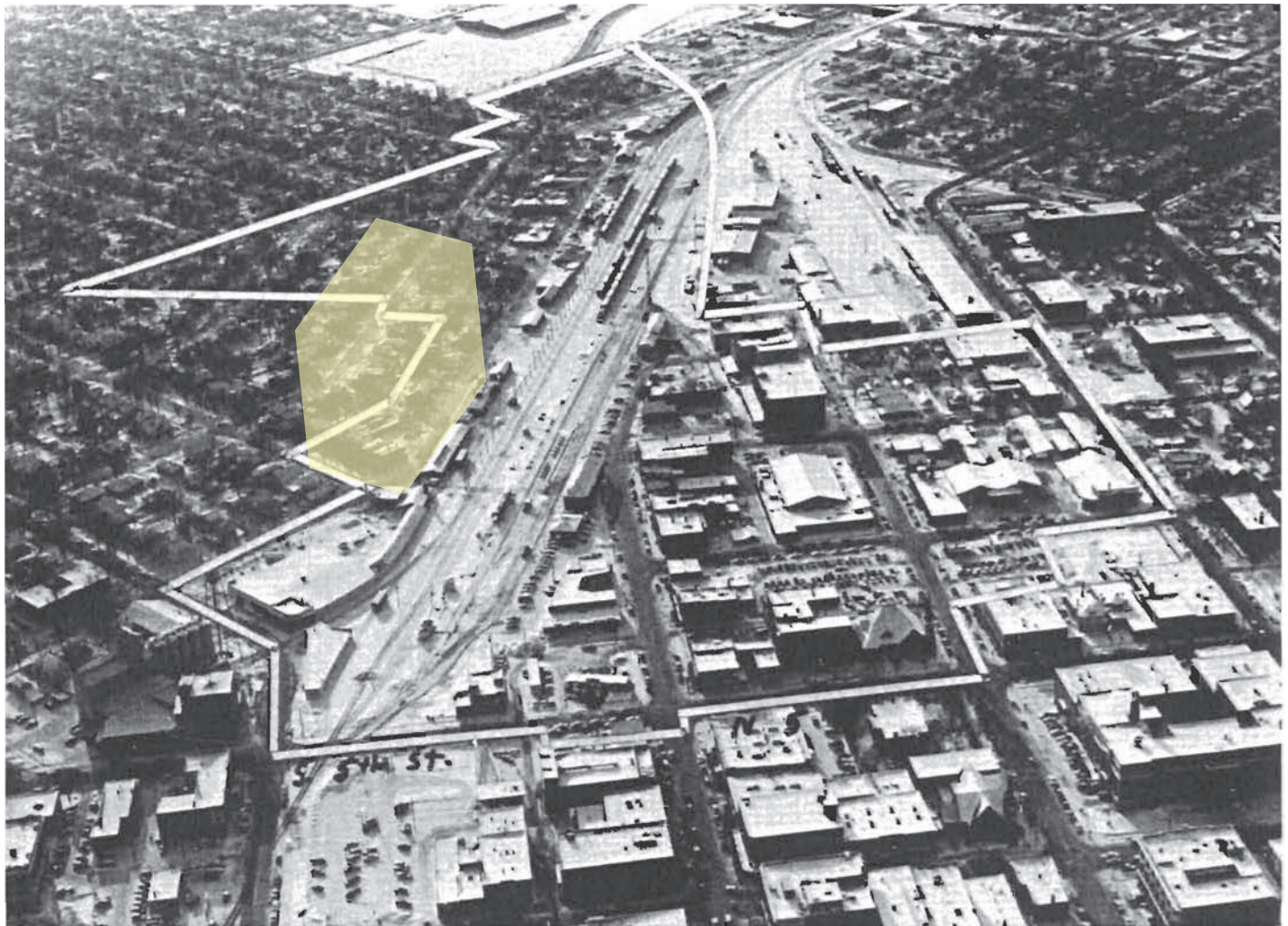
Section number Additional Documentation Page 10

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State



Jewish neighborhood indicated in shaded overlay

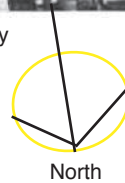


Fig. 6: Aerial photo of 1969 Grand Forks urban renewal district with historically Jewish mixed use district at far left of Great Northern track. Photo from UND Orin G. Libby Special Collections, reproduced here as it appears in Tweton, *Pictorial History of Grand Forks, ND*; p.181.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

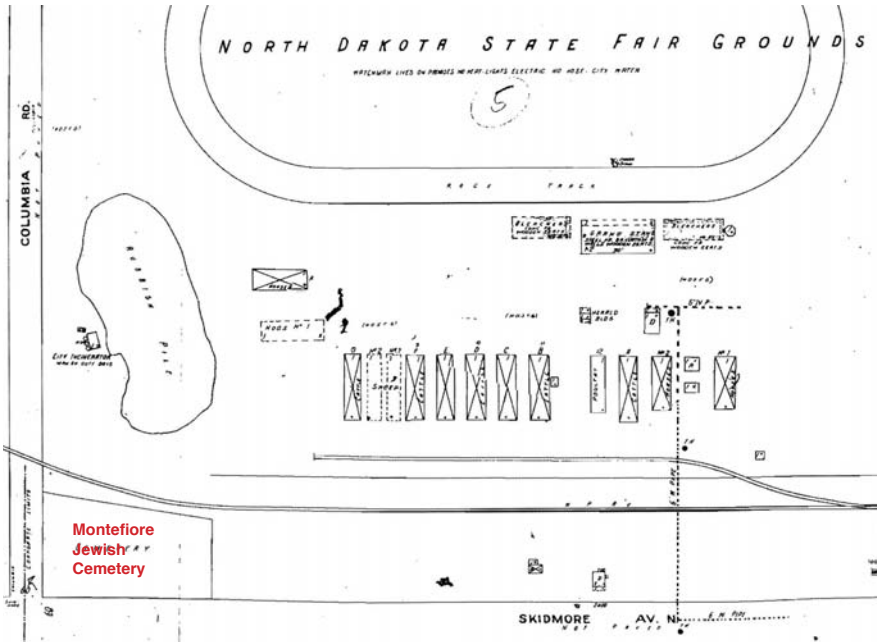
Section number Additional Documentation Page 11

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

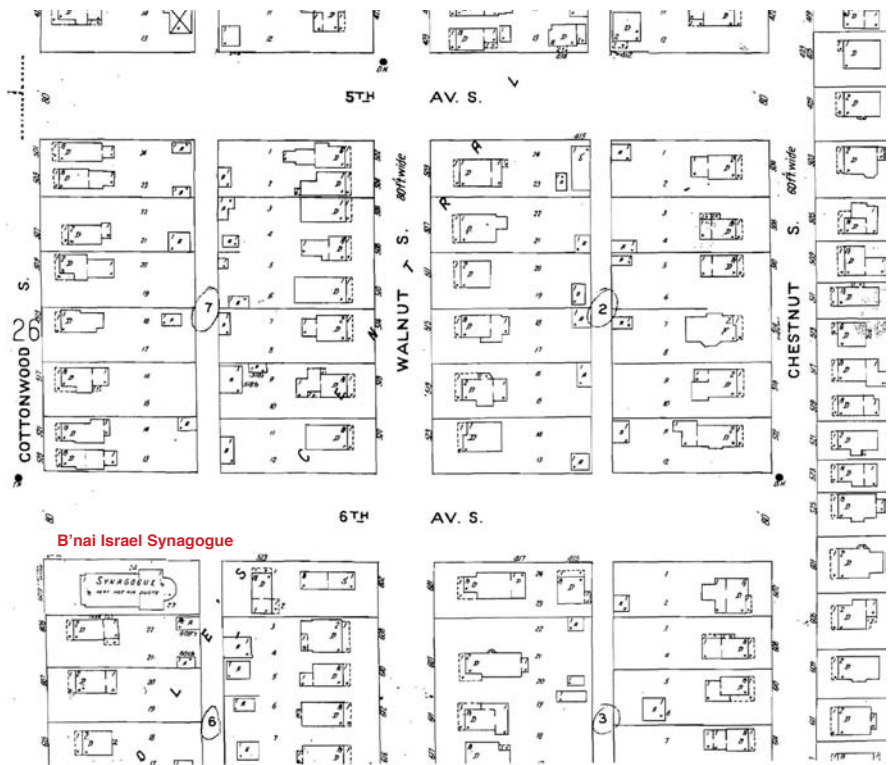
Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State



1927 Sanborn map showing location of Montefiore Cemetery at lower left



1939 Sanborn map shows Synagogue superimposed over earlier 1927 base map

Fig. 7: 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, "Grand Forks, ND" (with location of NRHP B'nai Israel Synagogue superimposed)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

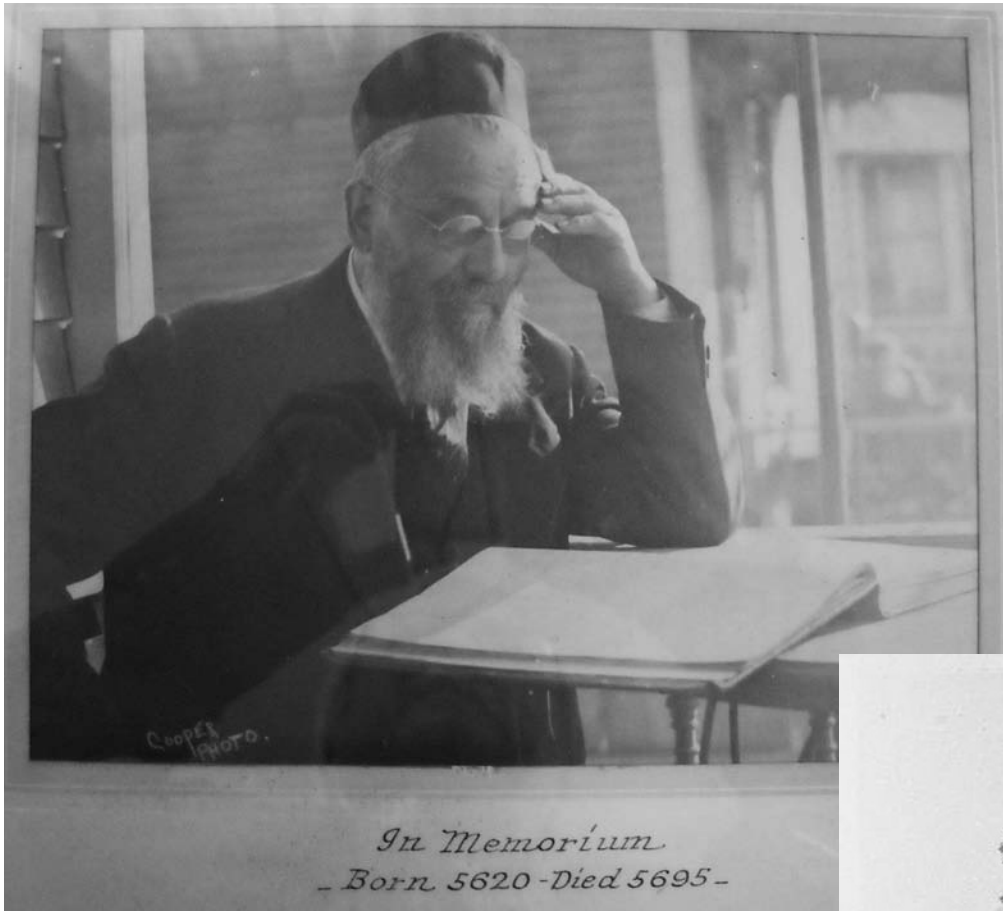
Section number Additional Documentation Page 12

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State



NDSU Institute for Regional Studies

Fig. 8-9: Historic photos of Rabbi Benjamin Papermaster and the original GF synagogue replaced in 1937

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Additional Documentation Page 13

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 14, 1937.

GRAND FOR

**Hint Actress
To Deny 'Heir'
Is Her Child**

NEW YORK —(AP)— A hint of possible efforts to induce May Yohe, once glamorous actress and wearer of the Hope diamond, to testify whether she ever had a child was left with an inheritance hearing Thursday.

Thomas J. B. Gilchrist, attorney who asserts Miss Yohe never was a mother, told Referee Jeremiah Connor: "We have been making an effort to locate May Yohe and obtain a statement from her. If we could, we would try to induce her to come here and testify, but that apparently is impossible."

Seeks \$200,000 Fund.

At Gilchrist's request, the hearing was adjourned until June 17.

The question of motherhood arose over the claim of Robert E. Thomas, 28, Hollywood "bit" player, that he is the son of Miss Yohe and Putnam Bradlee Strong, whom she married in 1902 and divorced in 1910.

Thomas seeks the principal of a \$200,000 trust fund established by the will of Strong's mother, Mrs. William B. Strong, wife of New York's reform mayor of the '90's. Gilchrist represents heirs who would inherit if Strong left no children.

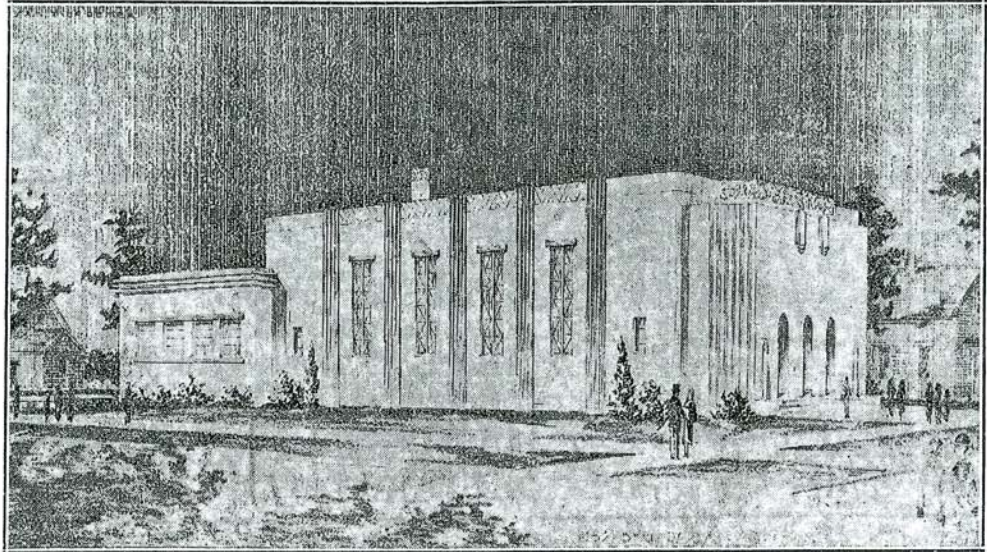
Upheld by Witness.

Mrs. Louise Glover, who was a buyer in a Portland, Ore., store 28 years ago, testified by deposition Wednesday that she knew the actress at the time the baby was born, but that the fact of birth was concealed because of Miss Yohe's career.

Subsequent to the Strong marriage, Miss Yohe was Lady Francis Hope. She now is the wife of Captain John Smuts of Dorchester, Mass. She was said to be in a sanitarium convalescing from an illness at present.

**Farmer Slain in Mystery
Attack; Brother Shot**

INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINN.—(AP)—Victim of an unexplained attack, Otto Ottoson, 42, died Thursday from bullet wounds received Wednesday when two men



NEW SYNAGOGUE—Here is the architect's drawing of the proposed new synagogue to be constructed by the Congregation of the Children of Israel at 603 Cottonwood street.

**Tabby Gets Revenge on
Grocer for Being Ousted**

SEDAN, KANS.—(AP)—Grocer Ira Joens ran into a cat that lacked a sense of humor. Jones found the animal prowling about in his store-room so he unceremoniously tossed it out the back door. Then he forgot the incident. Later, he opened the door to pick up a board. The cat, crouched by the doorway, pounced on his hand and severely bit and scratched him before he could pry it loose.

**YOUTH GIVEN \$600
IN WAR CASUALTY**

SAN FRANCISCO. — (AP) — San Francisco is paying \$600 for a world war casualty—to a child who was not even alive during the conflict.

In the patriotic days that saw "hamburger steak" changed to "liberty steak," this city changed the name of Berlin street to Brussels street. The name "Berlin" was chiselled out of the cement sidewalk and the hole never filled up.

A few weeks ago Robert Breuck, a school pupil, stepped in the depression and broke his leg. His parents put in a claim for damages and the \$600 award followed.

**PERMIT ISSUED FOR
JEWISH SYNAGOGUE**

Members of the Congregation of the Children of Israel were issued a building permit Wednesday for a \$14,000 synagogue building at 603 Cottonwood street.

Joseph Bell DeRemer is the architect for the new building, and it will be constructed by Skarsbo and Thorwaldson. Work is expected to start the latter part of the month.

The building dimensions will be 32 by 184 feet, and it will be used as a social and education center for the Jewish people of the city as well as a place of worship.

The new structure will replace the present synagogue at Second avenue South, and Seventh street, which was built in 1891.

Rabbi S. H. Barenholtz heads the congregation.

**Czech Fires at Cabinet;
Is Captured by Police**

PRAHA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA — (AP)— The Czechoslovakian house of deputies was thrown into turmoil Thursday afternoon when a man suddenly arose in the spectators' gallery and fired a pistol at the

**Bus Driver Wins
\$75,000 For Ice
Breakup Guess**

NENANA, ALASKA.—(AP)—A bus driver won the world's queerest contest—the far north's annual ice breakup guessing.

When the ice started moving out Wednesday night in the Tanana river here at 10:04 P. M., about \$75,000 came in to Mervin E. (Buster) Anderson, 31, Fairbanks bus driver. He guessed within a minute of the actual time.

Anderson also tied with Billy Root, a bus line operator, for first place in the Chena river ice breakup guessing contest at Fairbanks. He split about \$3,500 when the Chena ice moved out Tuesday at 1:31 P. M.

About 75,000 guesses were made in the contest this year.

**Plot Against Coronation
Heads Revealed by Arrest**

PARIS —(AP)— A terrorist plot, possibly aimed at foreign sovereigns and diplomats attending the London coronation, was disclosed Wednesday by the French Surete Nationale with the arrest of two

Fig. 10: Grand Forks Herald announcement with architect's sketch of proposed synagogue (Dimensions of the proposed building are reported incorrectly in this article; actual dimensions were approximately 32' x 114')

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Additional Documentation Page 14

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery
Name of Property
Grand Forks County, North Dakota
County and State



Fig. 10: Joseph Bell DeRemer (at right) early in his career, at his Grand Forks office with an unidentified draftsperson
Photo from UND Orin G. Libby Special Collections, reproduced here as it appears in Tweton, *Pictorial History of Grand Forks, ND*; p.75.



Joseph Bell DeRemer.

Architect Joseph Bell DeRemer in Grand Forks, c.1904
(from the *Grand Forks Herald Silver Anniversary Edition*)



JOSEPH BELL DEREMER
1871 — 1944



SAMUEL DeREMER
1894-1967

Figs. 11-14: Photos of the architects, DeRemer father and son, reproduced from *Grand Forks Herald* obituaries

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 15

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

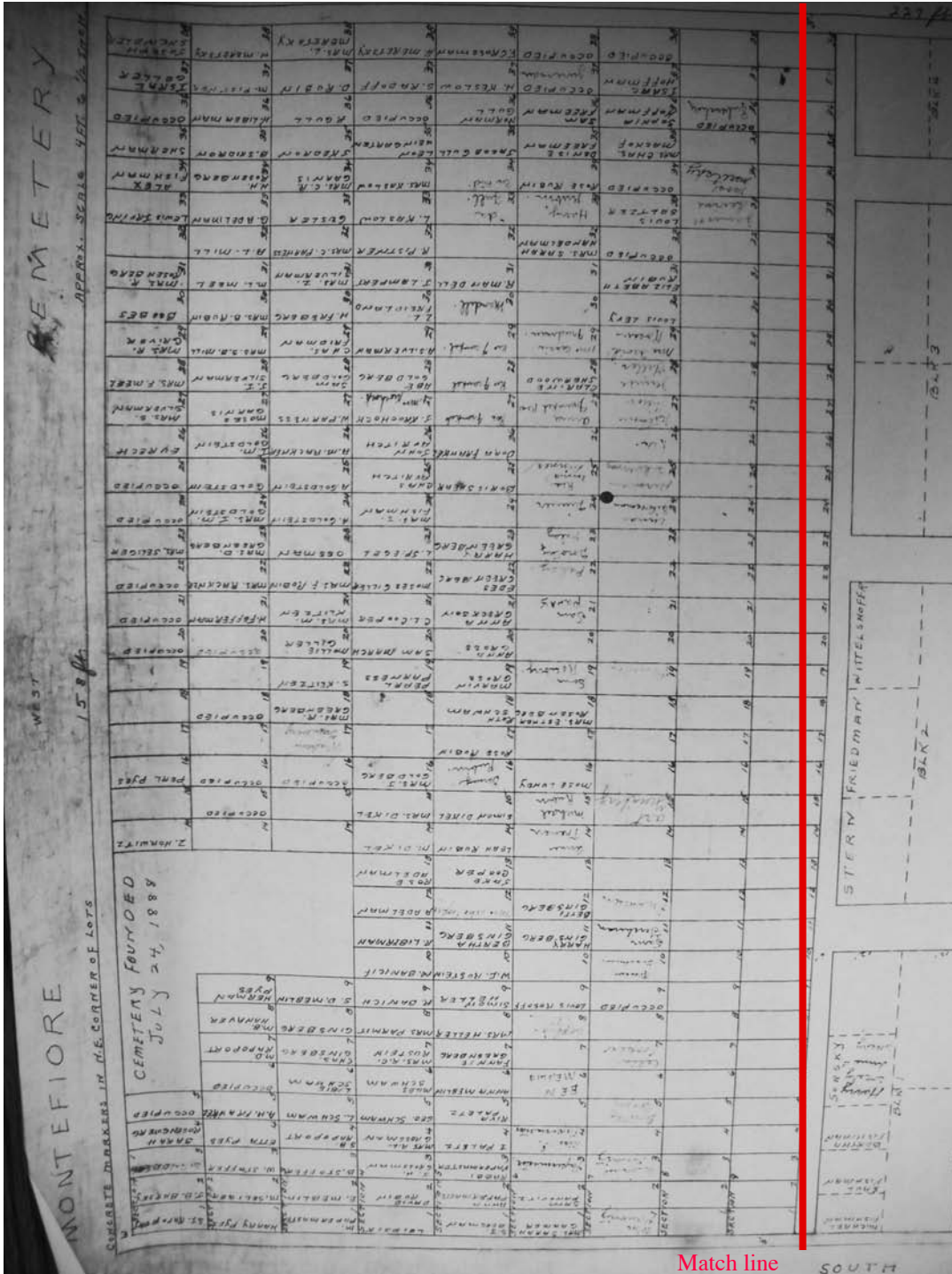


Fig. 15: Layout map of west half of Montefiore Cemetery

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 16

B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

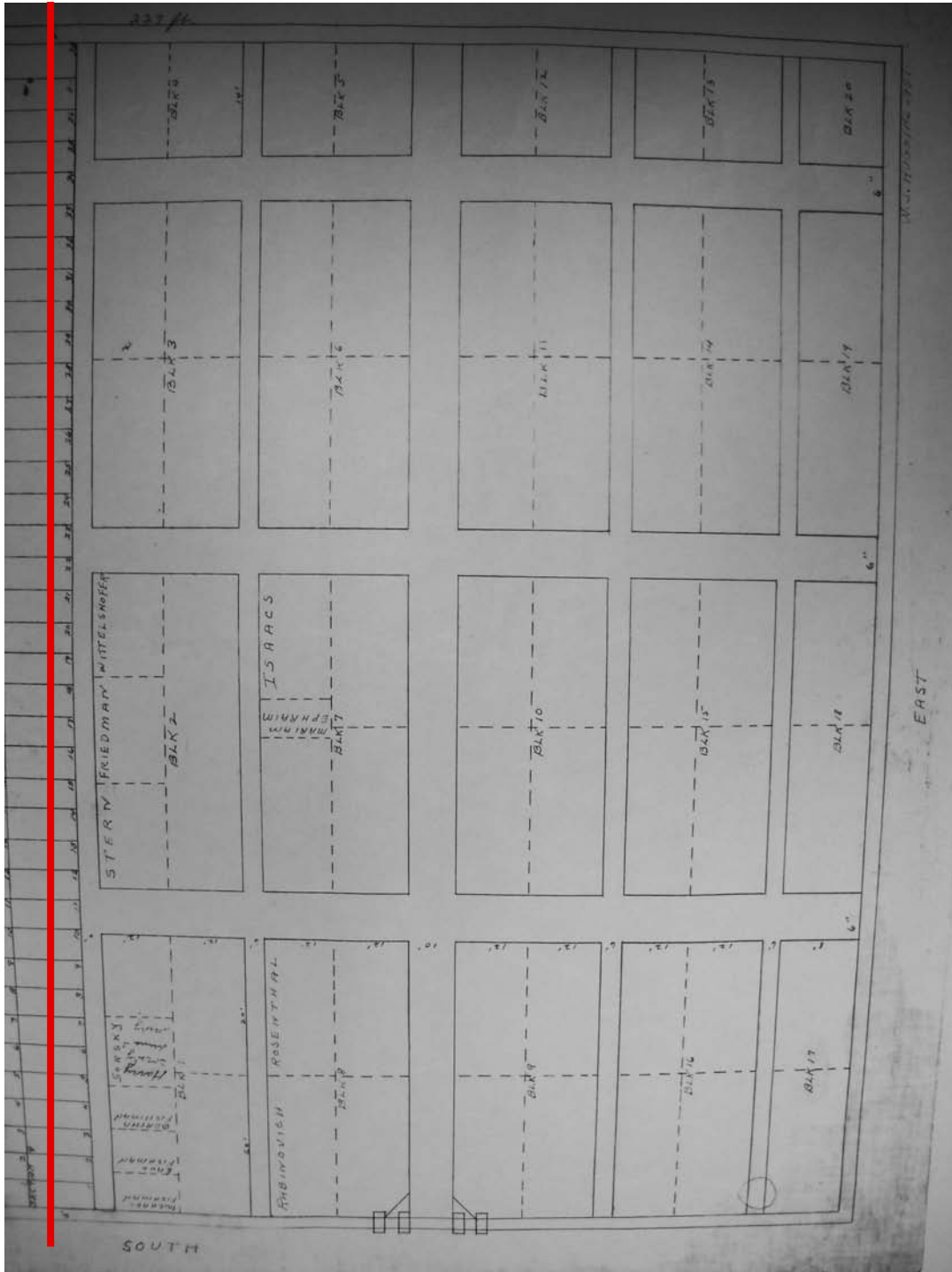


Fig. 16: Layout map of east half of Montefiore Cemetery

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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B'nai Israel Synagogue/Montefiore Cemetery

Name of Property

Grand Forks County, North Dakota

County and State

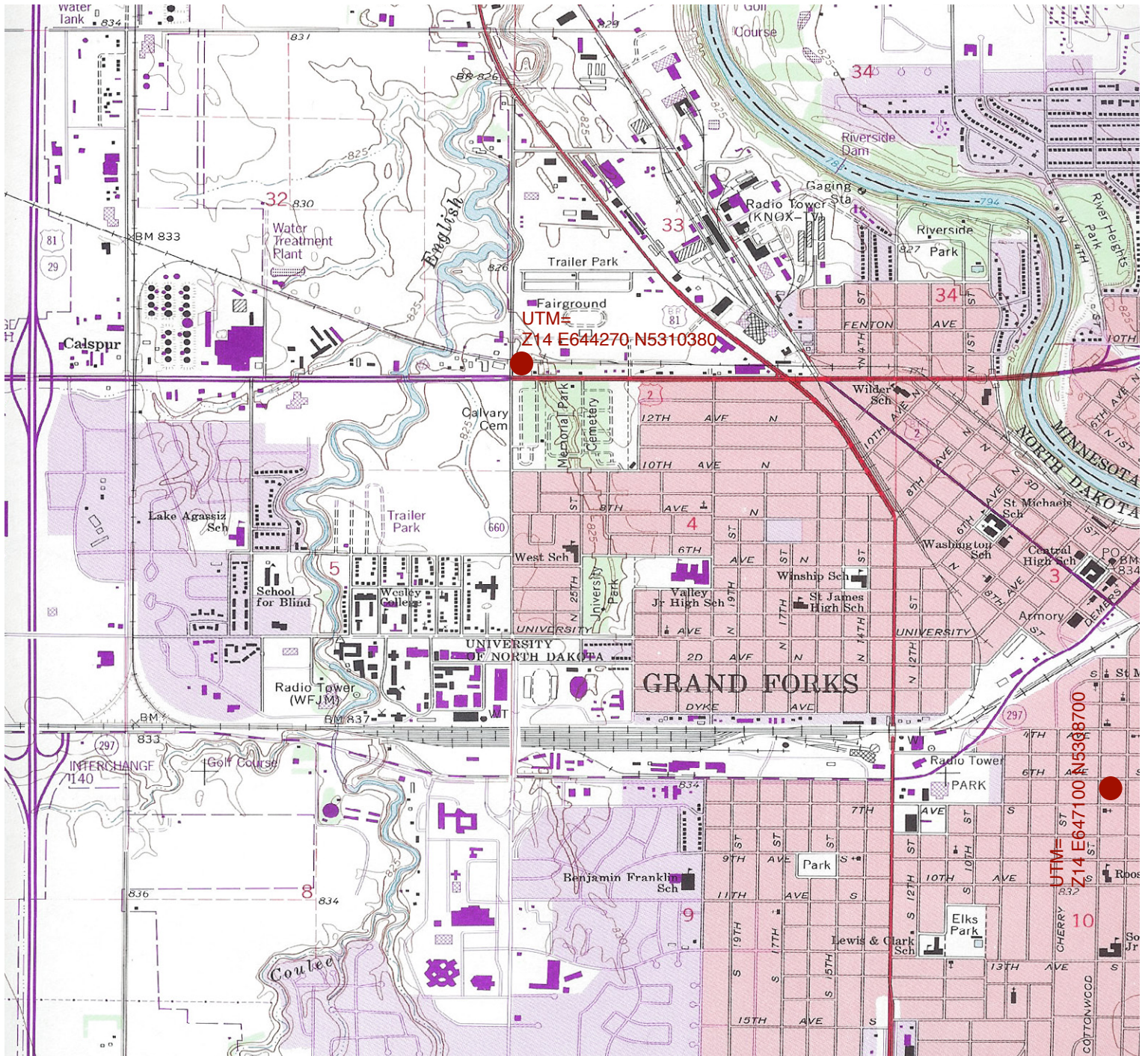


Fig. 17: USGS topographic map; Grand Forks quadrangle, with B'nai Israel Synagogue and Montefiore Cemetery superimposed