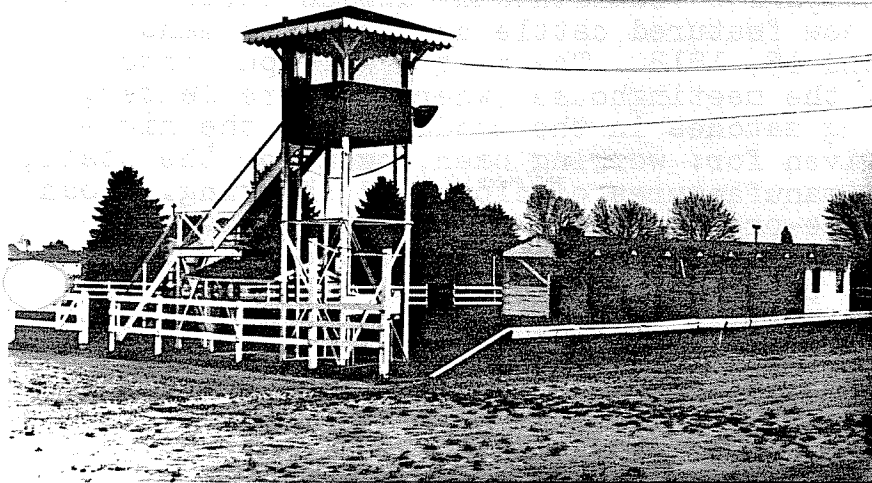
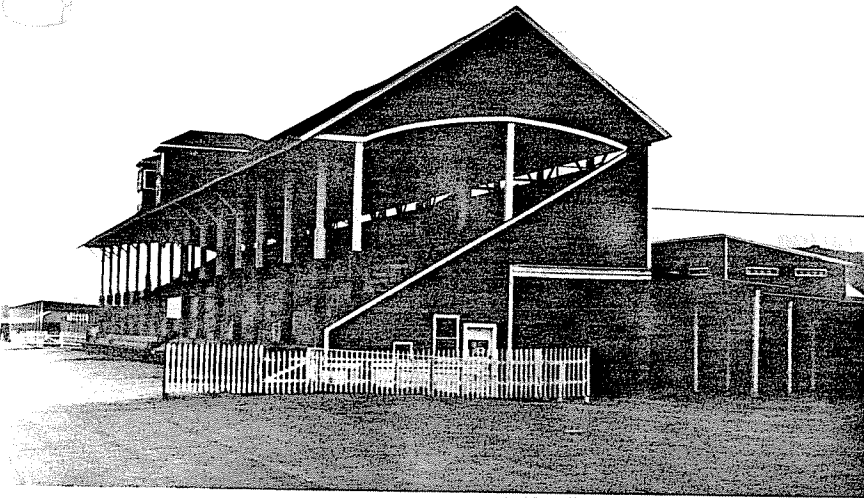


In Area no.	Form no. 25C-251
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416



Northampton
 Fair St.

Tri-County Fairgrounds

ent use _____

ent owner _____

of structure (check one)

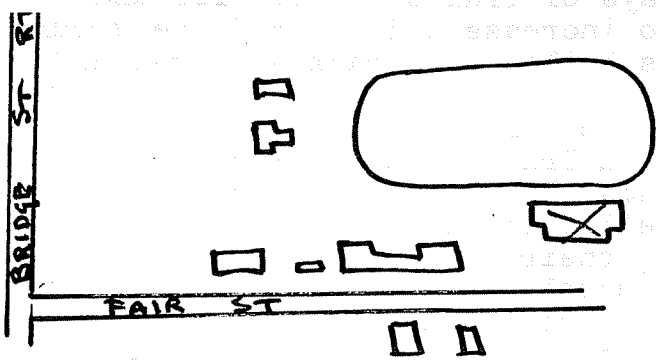
- pound
- powder house
- street
- tower
- tunnel
- wall
- windmill

grandstand and judges' stand

ription

late 19th c.

ource Hampshire Gazette



Construction material wood

Dimensions _____

Setting _____

Condition good

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by E. Lonergan

Organization NHC

Date June 1980

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Hampshire, Franklin & Hampden Agricultural Society
 Original use horse racing
 Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Aboriginal | _____ | Conservation | _____ | Recreation | _____ |
| Agricultural | _____ | Education | _____ | Religion | _____ |
| Architectural | _____ | Exploration/
settlement | _____ | Science/
invention | _____ |
| The Arts | _____ | Industry | _____ | Social/
humanitarian | _____ |
| Commerce | _____ | Military | _____ | Transportation | _____ |
| Communication | _____ | Political | _____ | | |
| Community development | _____ | | | | |

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

On January 20, 1818 the Hampshire Franklin and Hampden Agricultural Society was organized. The first show featured cattle and domestic manufactures and was held October 14 and 15, 1818. The cattle were put into a six acre "mowing lot" in the rear of the meetinghouse (where now are Center, Trumbull and State Sts.), and plowing matches in the meadows were the highlight of the show. Premiums were given for: working oxen, oxen for the stall, bulls, milch cows, swine, sheep and manufactures of cloth and sheeting. Noah Webster, a d Amherst resident and vice-president of the Society delivered the first oration: "The proper business of man is to enlarge the powers of his mind by knowledge, and refine it by the culture of moral habits; to increase the means of substinance and comfort; to supply the wants and alleviate distresses."

By mid-century the annual event had outgrown its Main St. site and in 1856 fourteen acres of land were bought on the east side of North St. (north of the present RR tracks). A half-mile track and small grandstand were built at this time. In 1861 an exhibition hall was built to house the articles of domestic manufacture and displays of fruits, vegetables and flowers. The size of the fair continued to increase and in 1872 the grounds were enlarged by two acres, extensive sheds built, the track enlarged and city water pipes extended to the site.

The coming of horse racing ended the old plowing matches, and as it grew steadily more popular the Northampton Driving Park Association was formed. They built a half-mile track and small grandstand on Fair St. In 1891 the Agricultural Society decided to sell their land and lease the new driving park for their annual event, taking their grandstand with them. There was some opposition to the proposal, mostly from the agriculturalists who thought that they would get the short end of the arrangement. However, the move was made and eventually the Three County Fair directors bought the entire driving park and enlarged the site by buying surrounding meadowland.

cont'

10. Bibliography and/or references such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.

1831 Town Map. 1860 County Map. 1873, 1884 and 1895 Atlases.
Hampshire Gazette Oct. 20, 1918; Aug. 20, 1872; May 12, 1891; Nov. 30, 1895;
 Dec. 15, 1906; Aug. 23, 1917; Sept. 27, 1924.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Northampton	Form No: 250-251
Property Name: Tri-County Fairgrounds	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

9.

During the 20th century many exhibit buildings have been built and a new Bridge St. entrance, to replace the one off of Fair St., was built in 1924. Horse racing continues to be a major part of the fair and there are a large number of horse sheds at the northeastern corner of the grounds.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

2

3

4