

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

CLICK HERE for Multiple Property Listing,
"Fraternity and Sorority Houses at the Urbana-
Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois
Multiple Property Submission"

*Sent to Washington
4/14/89*

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Beta Theta Pi Fraternity House
other names/site number Sigma Rho Chapter of Beta Theta Pi

2. Location

street & number 202 East Daniel Street (Building F20 on key map) not for publication
city, town Champaign vicinity
state Illinois code IL county Champaign code 019 zip code 61820

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Fraternity & Sorority Houses at the U of Illinois

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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, this property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 6-26-89
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. 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.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/education-related housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/education-related housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
REVIVALS/Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity house is a three story structure in the Neo-Classical Revival style constructed in red face brick with white wood trim. It is situated in a residential campus neighborhood of similar size and type dwellings. Except for a sympathetic extension of the kitchen and minor changes due to building code requirements, the historic and structural integrity of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity house has been retained. The nomination consists of one contributing building which represents the property type defined in the Multiple Property Listing of Greek Letter Society dwellings.

Exterior

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity house is situated on the north side of Daniel Street facing Washington Park, which is bordered by similarly large and well designed Greek Letter Society dwellings. It is centered on the width of the property at the northeast corner of Daniel and Second Streets well back from Daniel Street. A concrete walk and steps lead from the street to the front terrace, which originally extended from the center section of the main facade and wrapped around to the east side of the structure. The original structure is linear in plan.

The main facade is dominated by a two-story entry porch which is supported by four wooden Tuscan columns and topped with a wide frieze and a wooden cornice and balustrade at the flat porch roof line. The brick facade is divided into three main sections. The three-bay wide porch juts out from the central section, which is five bays wide and projects out about eight feet from the main facade. The main rectangle of the building extends three bays to the left and two bays to the right. Each bay has one opening in each of the three stories. An additional bay occurs at the far left or west, set back a few feet from the main building. The central section has wooden pilasters at its front corners, and a brick parapet at the third story roof line. Other corners of the building have brick quoins. A stone belt course occurs around the entire building at the third story sill line, and a wood cornice at the roof level.

On the east side of the structure is a one story flat-roofed porch, also supported by Tuscan columns and extending around to the eastern half of

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the back of the building. To this porch was originally attached a portecochere, which has been removed for a parking lot.

The main entrance at the center of the structure is Adamesque in style. The door is topped with a rectangular single-pane transom; it is framed by pilasters with curved brackets supporting a cornice. Between the first and second story windows on either side of the entrance are carved stone panels with the chapter coat-of-arms in relief.

Many of the original double hung, eight over one windows remain intact. A few windows have been replaced with one over one, double hung sash to meet safety regulations. Leading from the living and dining rooms are twelve-pane French doors, with single-pane transoms, which originally had stone arches above them. The arches have been replaced with brick lintels.

The hipped roof is nearly flat and its original painted tin covering has been replaced with asphalt shingles. The eaves are boxed with a moderate overhang and have dentils underneath. The dentils are repeated on the west bay addition and on the entry and side porches.

A third floor was added to the west bay in 1928. It continues the same lines of the main bays in brick work and cornice line. A three-story addition was added to the rear of the structure in 1931, making the structure T-shaped in plan. It, too, follows the lines of the original building. A 1960s addition increased the size of the front terrace by extending it across the front of the western section of the building and adding a concrete stair entrance to the terrace at the west end. At this time, the first floor of the west bay was also added to, extending the kitchen area. The west side of the 1960s addition is divided into four bays by Tuscan pilasters. A three foot high wall around the perimeter of the rear service area (now used for parking) was constructed at this time as well.

Interior

One enters the dwelling through an oak arched entry which opens onto a reception hall around which the main public spaces are grouped. The arched entry boasts a carved wooden keystone design. The original oak floor of the entryway and reception hall was been replaced with linoleum. The reception hall is dominated by a "not-quite-spiral" staircase with a bannister of wrought iron spindles and oak handrail.

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To the east of the reception hall is the living room with its oak ceiling beams, panelling and flooring. A fireplace dominates the east wall, and at the north end is an oak panelled window seat above a boxed-in (oak) radiator. On the south side of the living room is a small study room with a built-in oak arched bookcase. The keystone of the main entry is repeated in the arch of the bookcase. The room is panelled up to a chair rail.

Directly opposite the main entrance is the 1931 library (now used as a game room). Its arched entry mirrors that of the main entrance. Like the living room, the library has oak panelling and flooring. The fireplace on the east wall has a "broken pediment" mantle with the same broken pediment design repeated at the ceiling above the fireplace.

To the west of the reception hall is the dining room and kitchen. The dining room has oak floors and panelling up to a chair rail. The windows on the north side retain their original eight over twelve sash. The kitchen has been completely modernized to meet health and safety requirements.

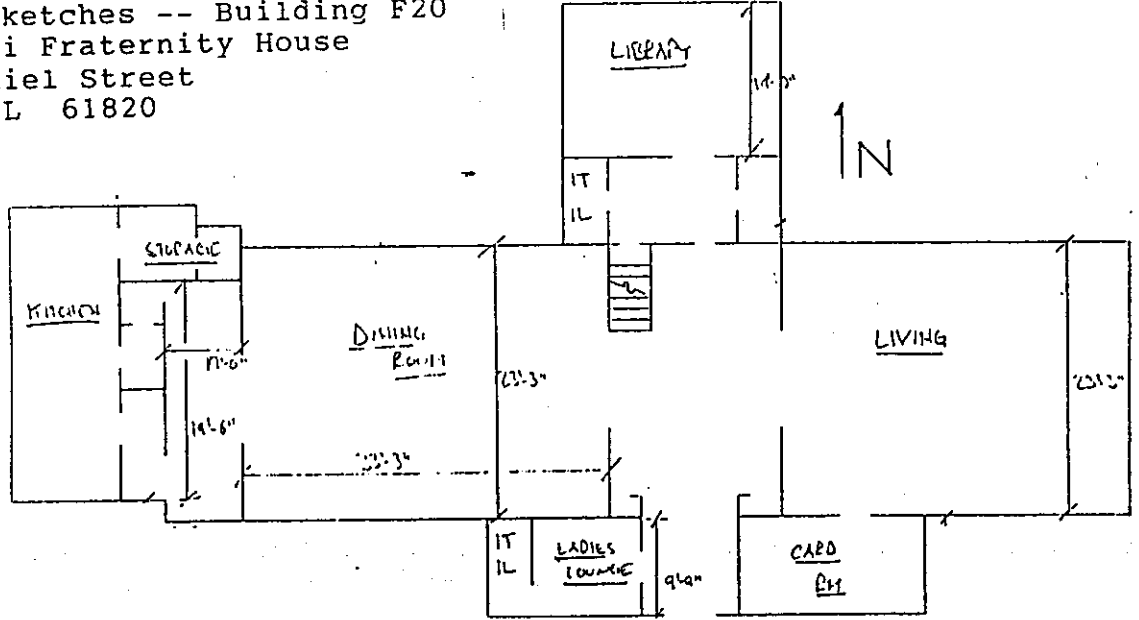
The second and third floors are made up of individual bedrooms of varying sizes. Originally, the second floor had bedrooms and study rooms arranged as suites, and the third floor served as a dormitory.

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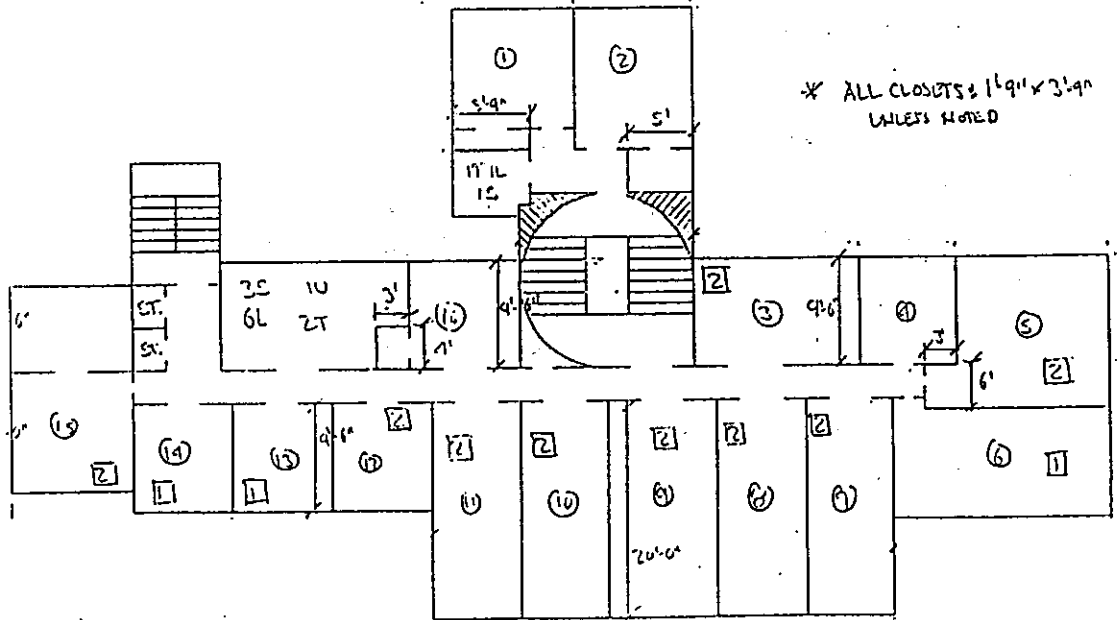
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Floor Plan Sketches -- Building F20
Beta Theta Pi Fraternity House
202 East Daniel Street
Champaign, IL 61820



BETA THETA PI - FIRST FLOOR

8/1/87



BETA THETA PI - SECOND FLOOR

8/1/87

Third Floor Similar

Source: Certified Housing Inventory
U of I Housing Division

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Beta Theta Pi, c. 1915

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Education

1912-1939

1912

Architecture

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Klein, Frederick J./
Stoolman, Almon W.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Beta Theta Pi Fraternity house is significant as one of the earliest extant facilities exemplifying the Greek Letter Society movement which contributed much of the broader patterns of higher education on the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois (Criterion A). The building was designed by Frederick J. Klein and constructed in 1912 by A.W. Stoolman. Integrity of design has been maintained with sympathetic additions made to the first and third stories and to the rear of the structure as well as with modifications made to accommodate new building code and life/safety requirements. The Beta Theta Pi fraternity house has architectural significance as being representative of the Neo-Classical Revival style (Criterion C). As part of an active fraternity on the University of Illinois campus, the significance of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity chapter house continued until 1939, the arbitrary 50-year cut-off date.

Sigma Rho of Beta Theta Pi

Beta Theta Pi was founded as a national fraternal organization at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio on September 8, 1839. The road to the establishment of a local chapter at the University of Illinois was a long one, spanning 30 years. "Between 1871 and the turn of the century, four local societies at Illinois had unsuccessfully petitioned the National Convention of Beta Theta Pi for a chapter charter."¹ In the fall of 1900, the local society of Sigma Delta was established by Frank H. Holmes, a Beta Theta Pi member from Knox College, for the express purpose of obtaining a national charter. By August of 1901, Sigma Delta had 18 members and occupied a rented house (the Stoltey House) at 411 East John Street in Champaign.² Sigma Delta presented their fifth petition for a Beta Theta Pi charter to the National Convention in the fall of 1901, resulting in the establishment of Sigma Rho at the University of Illinois as the 66th chapter of Beta Theta Pi on February 28, 1902.

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Having outgrown their original quarters, Beta Theta Pi moved to a rented house at 209 East Green Street in Champaign in the fall of 1902. This residence also proved to be inadequate to house the growing membership. In 1903, the Sigma Rho Building Association was formed for the purpose of locating a permanent chapter home. In the fall of the same year, a new house was built at 305 East Green Street and was occupied by the chapter under a long-term lease agreement. In 1905, the property at 202 East Daniel was purchased by the Building Association and construction plans were begun. When occupied in 1912, with a chapter enrollment of 32, the "colonial revival structure was the largest fraternity house on the campus and had a total valuation of \$40,000."³ The Beta Theta Pi house joined Kappa Sigma in defining the infant fraternity district west of the University of Illinois campus.

In 1912, the General Fraternity issued Sigma Rho a chapter coat-of-arms and a chapter motto. The motto, "The Seal of the Rose," honored Clarence Judson Roseberry, who had "contributed much to the planning and building of the Daniel Street chapter house" and had served Sigma Rho as Chapter Advisor and, at various times, President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Building Association for nearly 50 years.⁴

World War I had a profound effect on Beta Theta Pi, as it did all fraternities on the University of Illinois campus. Sixty percent of the chapter roll entered the armed forces between April 1917 and November 1918. The chapter became virtually inactive during the war years, with the chapter house being leased briefly to the University of Illinois for the Student Army Training Corps.

Scholarship and sound fiscal stability have long been Beta Theta Pi traditions. Soon after establishment of the local chapter, Beta Theta Pi began consistently to rank in the upper 25% of fraternity house grade point averages. Members of Beta Theta Pi have also long been active in University activities, including participating in varsity football, track and baseball, and serving in such positions as editor and art director for the Daily Illini.

Architecture

The formation of the Building Association in 1903 marked a turning point in the handling of Sigma Rho chapter house affairs. To that point, active members of the fraternity were responsible for all facets of their living arrangements. The Building Association took control of the provision and maintenance of housing for active members.

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In November of 1908, final payment was made on the purchase of lots 8, 9, and 10 of block 19, Fairland Place, formerly the Champaign fairgrounds. On this property would be built the new Sigma Rho of Beta Theta Pi house. Proposed plans were submitted by Riddle and Riddle of Chicago; Archie Hubbard, Champaign; J.E. Henry, a member of the local fraternity who later withdrew from competition; Bert Ashby; M.J. Morehouse of Chicago; and F.J. Klein of Peoria. Klein's neoclassical plan was chosen after several of the other plans had been eliminated as not acceptable.⁵ J.E. Henry would serve as consulting architect and as such was responsible for many details including the stone panels on the front of the structure and the living room mantel (now in the library), panelling and beams. A.W. Stoolman, a prominent Champaign contractor, was chosen to build the structure. Stoolman was also responsible for building the Sigma Chi, Kappa Sigma, Phi Kappa Sigma, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity houses. Other contractors included Reliable Plumbing and Heating of Champaign, Champaign Gas and Electric Co., and the Burr Company.

The landscaping plan was developed by Professor Ralph E. Root of the University of Illinois landscape gardening faculty. Original plantings, some of which remain, included roses, red dogwood, white kerria, privet and lilac.

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity house is a typical representation of the Neo-Classical Revival style. Many of its details distinguish it from other classical revival styles: the facade is dominated by a nearly full-height entry porch; classical columns support the porch roof; and the windows are symmetrically balanced around a central door. Other distinguishing characteristics include roof line balustrades, multi-pane over single pane double hung windows, and a wide frieze band below the porch cornice.⁶

¹James B. Ellern and Steven B. Sample, "A Short History of Sigma Rho of Beta Theta Pi" (Unpublished manuscript, April 19, 1962).

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Minutes from the December 10, 1910, March 4, 1911, and May 6, 1911 meetings of the Sigma Rho Building Association.

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Beta Theta Pi Fraternity House

Barlow, R.L., editor. *Sigma Rho Bulletin*. December, 1913.

"Beta Theta Pi." *The Illini*. February 28, 1902

Ellern, James B. and Steven B. Sample. "A Short History of Sigma Rho of Beta Theta Pi." Unpublished manuscript, April 19, 1962.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Murphy, H.D., editor. *Sigma Rho Bulletin*. December 22, 1914.

"Will Have a New Fraternity." *Champaign Gazette*. February 24, 1902.

Sigma Rho Building Association. Minutes. May 2, 1910; December 10, 1910; March 4, 1911; May 6, 1911; December 16, 1911; June 1, 1912; November 17, 1912.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

University of Illinois Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References

A

1	6
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3	9	4	6	8	0
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4	4	4	0	2	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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Verbal Boundary Description

The property is described as: Lots 7, 8, 9, and 10 in Block 19 of Fairland Place Subdivision, located in the west half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 18, Township 19 North, Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian, in Champaign County, Illinois.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire town lots that have historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Bastyr, Lachlan F. Blair
organization The URBANA Group date 9 May 1989
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city or town Urbana state Illinois zip code 61801