

ADDENDUM TO:
NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS -
BATTLE MOUNTAIN SANITARIUM, CONSERVATORY
(Hot Springs Veterans Administration Medical Center, Building No.
16)
(VA Black Hills Health Care System - Hot Springs Campus, Building
No. 16)
500 North Fifth Street
Hot Springs
Fall River County
South Dakota

HABS SD-24-H
HABS SD-24-H

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ADDENDUM TO

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS –
BATTLE MOUNTAIN SANITARIUM, CONSERVATORY
(Hot Springs Veterans Administration Medical Center, Building No. 16)
(VA Black Hills Health Care System - Hot Springs Campus, Building No. 16)

HABS No. SD-24-H

Location: 500 North 5th Street, Hot Springs, Fall River County, South Dakota

The coordinates for the Conservatory are 43.438644 N, -103.475262 W, and they were obtained through Google Earth in June 2013 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Present Owner: Department of Veterans Affairs, Black Hills Health Care System

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Conservatory was support structure built for the Battle Mountain Sanitarium of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in 1905-1907. Well-known Omaha architect Thomas Rogers Kimball designed the Mission Revival hospital complex as well as a variety of support structures including the Conservatory. Prominent Kansas City landscape architect George Kessler prepared a landscape plan for the Sanitarium that included curved roads and ornamental plantings. The Conservatory was used to as a nursery to grow plants for the grounds. Many of the NHDVS branches included similar greenhouse facilities in order to inexpensively beautiful the landscape and provide therapeutic gardening work for veterans. The Conservatory was situated north of the main hospital complex, along the road to the adjacent veterans' cemetery on the hill. A artificial pond was created in front of the Conservatory to enhance the scenery. Only the center section of the Conservatory and a rear potting shed are extant; the side wings have been demolished.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, Ph.D., HABS Staff Historian

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1905-07

2. Architect: Thomas Rogers Kimball, Omaha, Nebraska
 3. Original and subsequent uses: The Conservatory was used to grow plants for the Battle Mountain Sanitarium grounds until the mid/late twentieth. It is now vacant.
 4. Builder: Reynard and Oak, Omaha, Nebraska
 5. Original plans and construction: Original plans for the Conservatory have not been located but fieldwork and historic photographs indicated that the remaining sections appear to retain their early form.
 6. Alterations and additions: The side wings of the Conservatory were demolished (possibly c. 1960), leaving only the remnants of the concrete foundation at grade level.
- B. Historical Context: See overview historical context HABS No. SD-24 for additional information on the Battle Mountain Sanitarium and the NHDVS.

For individual building reports see:

HABS No. SD-24-A	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Administration Building
HABS No. SD-24-F	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Mess Hall
HABS No. SD-24-T	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Ward 4
HABS No. SD-24-O	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Plunge Bath/Protestant Chapel
HABS No. SD-24-P	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Laundry/Catholic Chapel
HABS No. SD-24-B	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Governor's Quarters
HABS No. SD-24-W	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Treasurer's Quarters
HABS No. SD-24-X	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Engineer's Quarters
HABS No. SD-24-Y	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Duplex Quarters
HABS No. SD-24-K	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Bandstand
HABS No. SD-24-Z	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Grand Staircase
HABS No. SD-24-J	NHDVS-Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Tuberculosis Hospital

Battle Mountain Sanitarium, the tenth expansion of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, was built between 1903 and 1907 in Hot Springs, South Dakota. Hot Springs was a mineral springs resort located in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Omaha-based architect Thomas Rogers Kimball designed a striking Mission Revival hospital of local red sandstone which included the Administration Building with a dramatic dome, six wards arranged in a spoke-like fashion around a courtyard encircled with hallways, and a matching mess hall/service building attached at the rear. Kimball also designed a set of four officer's quarters in addition to other support structures such as the powerhouse and Conservatory. The Conservatory was used to as a nursery to grow plants for the grounds. Many of the NHDVS branches included similar greenhouse facilities in order to inexpensively beautiful the landscape and provide therapeutic gardening work for veterans. The Conservatory was situated north of the main hospital complex, along the road to the adjacent veterans' cemetery on the hill. A artificial pond was created in front of the Conservatory to enhance the scenery.

Battle Mountain Sanitarium was unique within the National Home system in its primary purpose as a medical facility. Veterans would travel for short term treatment of acute conditions before returning to other primarily residential NHDVS branches. Construction began with the main hospital complex; the NHDVS Board of Managers approved Kimball's plans in late 1902.¹ After the hospital complex was well underway, Kimball turned his attention to designing the officer's quarters and other support structures, as well as enhancing the grounds. In May 1905 Kimball visited the site with Captain Palmer, the NHDVS local manager, and George Kessler, "a distinguished landscape gardener of Kansas City." Kessler recently worked with Kimball on the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904, contributing the landscape design for the grounds.

In July 1905 Supervising Architect Frank Rooney received the preliminary drawings from Kimball for the next round of construction contracts to include the Governor's Quarters, power house, stables, Conservatory, and reservoir.² Reynard and Oak again won the construction contract with the lowest bid, this time \$30,000.³

Work continued on Battle Mountain Sanitarium through 1906, and the official opening was in May 1907. The construction of the Conservatory was finished during the last week of August, closely followed by completion of improvements to the grounds and three officers' quarters.⁴ The 1909 souvenir booklet noted the "\$7500 Conservatory for raising flowers, propagating plants, etc."⁵ A photograph from c. 1919 shows the completed Sanitarium and ornamental pond (Figure 1). The Sanitarium did not have an expansive farm like some of the Branch Homes, but it did have a large vegetable garden to supply the kitchen and an extensive orchard of apple, cherry, plum, and pear trees. The Conservatory was used to start plants for these purposes and decoration of the grounds. An early addition to the Conservatory probably involved expanding the wings.⁶

In 1930, NHDVS was reorganized into the new Veterans Administration. The NHDVS was no longer an autonomous agency; now their primarily domiciliary services were just one of many offered by the Veterans Administration. At this time the tuberculosis hospital built by the Veterans Bureau in 1925-26 began to be used for general medical care. The original hospital now functioned as a 548-bed domiciliary, while the 1920s hospital was a 255-bed medical/surgical facility. Now designated Building No. 16, the Conservatory very gradually fell into disuse, resulting in demolition of the greenhouse wings by the mid-1970s.⁷ The remaining

¹ *Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Hot Springs, South Dakota*, c. 1909, Battle Mountain Museum Collection.

² Battle Mountain Sanitarium transcribed newspaper articles, 28 July 1905, Hot Springs Public Library.

³ Battle Mountain Sanitarium transcribed newspaper articles, 26 January 1906, Hot Springs Public Library.

⁴ Battle Mountain Sanitarium transcribed newspaper articles, 6 September 1907, Hot Springs Public Library.

⁵ *Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Hot Springs, South Dakota*, c. 1909, 26. Battle Mountain Museum Collection.

⁶ Inspector-General's Office, *Inspection Report – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1911), 30-32; NHDVS Board of Managers, *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1912* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1913), 206.

⁷ "VA Florist is Surrounded by Beauty," *Hot Springs Star*, 24 September 1980. A aerial photograph from 1976 in the Battle Mountain Museum Collection shows the wings already demolished.

portion was renovated in the late 1980s. Currently the structure is vacant, but undergoing some repair.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Conservatory is a wood frame and glass structure with stone foundations partially built into a slope at the rear. The tall center section with movable window sash on the walls and ceiling has the appearance of a greenhouse structure typical to the period. Low greenhouse wings on either side of the Conservatory have been demolished, although evidence of the foundations remain. A sandstone potting shed ell is located at the rear, partially built into the hill slope.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 30 feet by 65 feet
2. Foundations: The foundations are random ashlar sandstone approximately three feet high with a sloped dressed stone water table.
3. Walls: The Conservatory has wood frame window walls with tall vertical lights arranged four over four in groups of three between wood posts. The soffits for the former greenhouse wings are visible in the wall on the side elevations. The former openings have been filled by overlapping panes of glass set into vertical frames. The potting shed ell has minimal exterior walls because it is built into the hillside, but the walls that are exposed are large blocks of sandstone laid with random ashlar coursing.
4. Structural system, framing: The structural system for the conservatory is an exposed wood frame with thicker posts at the corners and some reinforcement provided by metal plates. There are small metal I-beams supporting the roof at the corners of the cupola. The ell has load bearing stone walls and a light, common rafter roof.
5. Porches, stoops: None.
6. Chimneys: There is a stone chimney at the rear of the ell.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main doorway is at the center of Conservatory's front elevation. It contains a single leaf wood door with two horizontal panels in the bottom half and glazing at the top. It is framed by sidelights with two recessed beaded panels below and a tall fixed light in the top half. Over the door is a round arch fixed fan light divided vertically into five unequal lights. Over the opening is an elegant barrel vaulted hood with bead board sheathing

on the underside and metal of the top. It is supported by large scrolled volute brackets and includes an entablature with ovolo molding.

- a. Windows: The windows of the conservatory also serve as the walls and were partially described above. The uppermost set of windows is hinged at the top and opens with a wheel and pulley mechanism. The ell has wood sash hopper windows with six divided lights. There is a set of two larger windows on each side of the ell near the conservatory - one for the office and one for the bathroom. Two smaller variations are located at the potting room on the west façade only. These windows are set directly into the wall with no sill or trim.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The Conservatory has a tall pyramidal roof topped by a cupola and consisting of windows in a metal and wood frame. The ell has a gable roof covered with wood shingles.
- b. Eaves: The Conservatory has close eaves with an ovolo profile. The ell includes gutters and a stepped parapet at the rear gable end.
- c. Cupola: The top of the pyramidal roof has a wood and glass cupola with clerestory windows on four sides.

C. Description of Interior:

2. Floor plans: The main section of the Conservatory is one large open space. The ell is divided into a small office (east) and bathroom (west) closest to the Conservatory and a potting room beyond to the north.
3. Stairways: None.
4. Flooring: The floor is generally concrete or dirt, with some sheet linoleum in the bathroom.
5. Wall and ceiling finish: The Conservatory walls and ceiling are unfinished and consist of the exposed glass and wood structure. The interior walls and ceiling of the ell are also unfinished, except for some vertical and horizontal beadboard in the office area.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and Doors: The interior doorway between the conservatory and ell has a wood door with two panels of diagonal beadboard and simple metal hardware with a keyed lock in the escutcheon. The door has wide wood trim with mitred corners.

- b. Windows: The windows are set directly into the structure with no trim or molding.
7. Decorative features and trim: N/A
8. Hardware: The door hardware is a plain metal knob with a keyed dead bolt.
9. Mechanical equipment:
- a. Heating, ventilation: The greenhouse was heated with wall-mounted cast iron radiators connected to the central boiler. Many of these radiators are in place but no longer functional. In addition to the cupola with clerestory and upper windows in the clerestory, the greenhouse was naturally ventilated with a pyramidal metal ventilator through the ceiling of the potting room.
 - b. Lighting: There are mid-twentieth century fluorescent ceiling fixtures in the ell; the rest of the Conservatory receives abundant natural light.
 - c. Plumbing: The bathroom has a wall-mounted vitreous china sink with a mixer faucet, c. 1960. The Conservatory has extensive plumbing for plant irrigation; the remnants of the galvanized pipe for this system are visible. A metal plate in the floor near the rear of the Conservatory contains a small recess with pipes.

D. Site:

- 1. Historic landscape design: The Conservatory was placed along a loop road with a artificial pond at the center. Its location was both functional (south facing for abundant natural light) and decorative.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Battle Mountain Sanitarium, Hot Springs, South Dakota. c. 1909.

Battle Mountain Sanitarium: Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Omaha: Douglas Printing Company, c. 1919.

Board of Managers – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Annual Reports*, various years; many volumes include *Proceedings* of the Board of Managers meetings.

Inspector General's Office. *Annual Report of Inspection - National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers*. Washington, DC: GPO, 1894- . [author name and exact title vary]

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation of the Conservatory/Building No. 16 at the Battle Mountain Sanitarium of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was undertaken in 2013-14 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs division of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief. The project was sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Office of Construction and Facilities Management, Kathleen Schamel, Federal Preservation Officer. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; and by Douglas Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, DVA. The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by Project Supervisor Mark Schara, AIA, HABS Architect, HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Daniel De Sousa, and Ryan Pierce, Jobie Hill (University of Oregon) and Emma Greenberg (Louisiana State University). The historical report was written by HABS Historian Lisa P. Davidson. The large format photography was undertaken in 2008 by HABS Photographer James W. Rosenthal and in 2013 by HABS Contract Photography Renee Bieretz. Vital assistance was provided by Dena Sanford at the Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, and by Patrick Lyke, Douglas Sprinkle, and other VA staff members at the Hot Springs Campus.

PART V. ILLUSTRATIONS

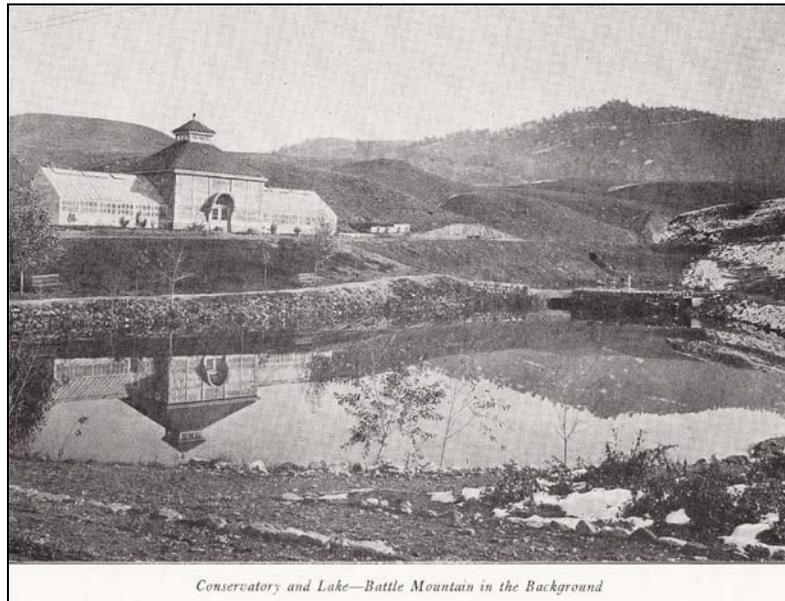


Figure 1: Conservatory and Pond, c. 1919

Source: *Battle Mountain Sanitarium: Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.*