

**City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)**

Name of Building or Site	
Common Diocese of Madison Chancery Building	Historic (if applicable) Madison Catholic Assn. Clubhouse
Location	
Street Address 15 E. Wilson Street	Aldermanic District Fourth
Classification	
Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.) Building	
Zoning District C4	Present Use Offices
Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)	
Name(s) Roman Catholic Diocese of Madison	
Street Address 15 E. Wilson Street Madison, WI 53703	Telephone Number 256-2677
Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)	
Parcel Number 0709-242-0115-9	Legal Description All of Lot 3 and the SW 1/2 of Lot 4 except part used for railroad purposes, Block 87, original plat.
Condition of Property	
Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins) Good	
Altered or Unaltered? Altered	Moved or Original Site? Original site
Wall Construction Brick on tile	

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Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

The Madison Catholic Association Clubhouse (Catholic Clubhouse) was built in 1938 at a cost of \$47,000.¹ Designed by Madison architect John Flad, it is an eclectic building. It shows the influence of two Period Revival styles: the Elizabethan Revival and Mediterranean Revival. In this building, Flad selected elements from each style, and used them in an abstract, stylized manner. Further, Flad incorporated Art Moderne/Art Deco references on the interior. The main block of the clubhouse is a rectangle measuring 68 feet along the front (East Wilson Street) and 80 feet along the sides. The front part is two-story and side-gabled. The rear part, where the meeting hall is located, is one tall story with a flat, built-up roof. On the front, a central enclosed gabled entrance porch, two stories tall, projects an additional 14 feet. The clubhouse is of structural clay tile with red brick veneer in common bond. The foundation is concrete. As the lot slopes to the rear, the foundation becomes a raised basement. The gable roofs on the porch and the front part of the main block intersect, and are clad with barrel tile. Each gable end has a shouldered parapet. The first floor windows are either 9/9 double- or 12/9/9 triple-hung sash, except in the rear section, where they are 6/6. The first floor windows have a projecting rowlock sill and a lintel of brick soldiers. The second floor windows, found only on the gabled sections, are 6/6 double hung sash on the main block, and 2/2 on the entry porch. The building is enriched with a belt course made up of two courses of brick rowlocks, with a band of red tile in a diamond pattern between. This belt course forms the sill for the second floor windows. There is also a plain concrete cornice, which is carried across the gable ends as a belt course.

On the front facade, a short flight of concrete steps leads up to the entry porch. The main entrance is recessed within an arch of brick soldiers outlined with rowlocks. It consists of a pair of metal doors surmounted by a semi-circular transom with a decorative grille, all framed with an egg and dart molding. On either side of the arch is a plaque. The eastern one reads: "Diocese of Madison Chancery." The western one reads: "Catholic Center 1938." At the second floor, there are five windows. Each window is separated from the next by a column of stretchers, stacked and finished with a concrete cap to give the appearance of pilasters. This presents the appearance of a stylized colonnade. There is a bull's-eye window above, and a small cross on the peak of the gable. There are two bays of windows on the front facade of the main block on either side of the entry porch.

The east and west facades are nearly identical to each other. On the gabled section, there is a large exterior brick chimney with a plain concrete cap. There are two bays of windows on either side of the chimney. Beyond the southern bays, the gable roof-line has been altered, and two more bays of windows built. This is an addition, designed by John Flad and built in 1954.² The walls and windows match the original block, although the windows are metal rather than wood. At the rear of the main block is the flat-roofed section which houses the meeting hall. On each of the east and west facades, there are two bays of 6/6 wood double hung sash windows and a pair of steel doors. On the rear (south) facade of the main block, a series of paired 6/6 metal double hung sash windows can be seen at the second story. These are

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part of the 1954 addition. On the meeting hall section, there is a tall central section with three 6/6 windows, and on either end of this facade, a single door.

On the interior, there is a lobby inside the main entrance. On each of the east and west sides of the lobby, a dog-leg stair leads up to the second floor. To the south, a broad straight stair leads down to the first floor to the meeting hall. On the first floor in the gabled section there are storage rooms and a kitchen. The second floor contains a series of small offices along a branching corridor. The Catholic Clubhouse has steel reinforced concrete floors. There are terrazzo baseboards and flooring in the lobby, on the stairs and in the corridors. The flooring is wood in the meeting hall, linoleum in the kitchen, and carpet everywhere else. Throughout the building, the walls and ceilings are metal lath finished with plaster. The doors and windows have simple surrounds of light wood. Many of the spaces have a light wood chair rail and a classical ceiling molding. On the second floor, and in the meeting hall, there are dropped acoustical tile ceilings and suspended fluorescent lights. The lobby features several Art Moderne/Art Deco details, including curving walls, chrome stair handrails, round chrome light fixtures with opaque glass globes on the ceiling, and a porcelain drinking fountain with a stepped bowl.

The Catholic Clubhouse retains very good integrity. The impact of the 1954 addition is minimal, as it is confined to the rear of the building, and matches the original in materials and windows, on both the interior and exterior. Further, both of the belt courses were carried over onto the addition. The only other alteration is the addition of the dropped acoustical tiles.

¹Building permit, City of Madison Department of Planning and Development.

²Building permit, City of Madison Department of Planning and Development.

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Original Owner Diocese of Madison	Original Use Catholic Clubhouse
Architect or Builder John J. Flad	Architectural Style Mediterranean and Elizabethan Revival
Date of Construction 1938	Indigenous Materials Used None

List of Bibliographical References Used

Building permit files, Department of Planning and Development.
Capital Times, Jan. 1, 1928.
Catholic Herald, p. 11, December, 1927.
"John J. Flad, Sr., 78, Dies; Headed Architectural Firm," Capital Times,
August 23, 1967.
Klaas, Monsignor, interview with Elizabeth Miller, October 16, 1993.
The Master Builder, 1928 and 1929.
Wright's Madison City Directory, 1916 through 1994.

Form Prepared By:

Name and Title

Elizabeth Miller and Katherine Rankin

Organization Represented (if any)

City of Madison Dept. of Planning and Development

Address

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53710

Telephone Number

266-6552

Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

March 23, 1994

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Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

Architectural Significance

The Catholic Clubhouse is architecturally significant as a modest local example of an abstract Period Revival building, with good integrity, and as a representative work of prominent local architect John J. Flad. The Catholic Clubhouse shows the influence of two Period Revival styles. The Elizabethan Revival is one. This style is generally masonry, with a formal composition, rather than half-timbered and picturesque, like its relative, the Tudor Revival. Gabled parapets with shoulders, prominent chimneys and Renaissance (classically-inspired) detailing such as that on the building's gable roofed entry pavilion, are sometimes found in Elizabethan Revival design. Elizabethan Revival is rare in Madison. One of the best and most intact examples of this style is the Longfellow School. In comparison, the Catholic Clubhouse is a modest example. The Catholic Clubhouse also shows the influence of the Mediterranean Revival style, with its symmetrical facade, barrel tile roof, round arched entrance with enriched surround, and abstracted colonnade above the entrance. Mediterranean Revival is also very rare in Madison. Lowell School is one of the few nonresidential buildings that shows Mediterranean Revival influence. In addition to abstracting these Period Revival styles, Flad incorporated modern references in the Catholic Clubhouse interior, using Moderne curving walls and Deco light and plumbing fixtures.

The Catholic Clubhouse was designed by prominent local architect John J. Flad, Sr. (1889-1967). Flad served his apprenticeship with the firm of J. O. Gordon and Son of Madison. He then worked as a draftsman for Robert L. Wright until 1916 when he was listed in the city directory as an architect for Alvin Small. After a short departure from private practice, during which Flad was a draftsman for the State Architect, and then superintendent of the Wisconsin Fish Hatchery, Flad rejoined Small's firm in 1922. By 1926 Flad had become a partner in the firm, which was then known as Flad and Small. In the late 1920s Flad left Small to work with Frank S. Moulton under the firm name Flad and Moulton. In the mid-1930s Flad dissolved his partnership with Moulton and set up his own firm. By the time he died in 1967, J. J. Flad and Associates (including three of his sons) was one of the largest architectural firms in Madison.

John Flad, Sr. was responsible for the design of several important buildings in Madison, including the National Guardian Life Insurance Co. and Anchor Savings and Loan. In the pre-World War II period he designed many houses in University Heights, West Lawn Heights and Nakoma. His known commercial works prior to World War II are few, however, and include the Harman Bruce Co. building at 1721 Monroe Street (altered), the Cantwell Printing Co. building at 127 E. Wilson Street (altered) and the Meuer Fuel Co. Offices at 102 N. Park Street (gone).

Flad was a prominent Catholic layman and designed several buildings for the Catholic Church, including, in Madison, St. Bernard's Church, Convent and School (2460 Atwood Avenue) and Blessed Sacrament Convent

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and Priory (2121 Rowley Avenue). He also designed the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Winona, Minnesota and Christ the King Chapel in Dubuque.

While St. Bernard's Church is clearly Flad's most impressive and imposing Madison design, the Madison Catholic Clubhouse is also a fine local example of his non-residential work and deserves Landmark status for its association with this important local architect.

Historical Significance

The Catholic Clubhouse was built in 1938 for the Madison Council of the Knights of Columbus (K of C). The K of C had been headquartered in a house on the same site beginning in 1929, and in a neighboring house (21 E. Wilson Street) from 1917 until 1929. The K of C moved out of the clubhouse in 1967. Since that time, the building has housed the administrative offices of the Madison Catholic Diocese. According to Monsignor Klaas, the K of C is a fraternal organization with two purposes: first, to help its members live the Catholic faith; and second, to support, financially and spiritually, the Catholic Church.¹ The K of C raises funds not only for the local Catholic church, but also in support of the Vatican, for its restoration, its archives, and so on. The K of C does also raise funds for the disabled, but this is not one of its major activities. The Catholic Women's Club, an organization with a more social focus, also met in the clubhouse, but the clubhouse was built for, and dedicated to the use of, the K of C.

There were several religious organizations in Madison in the period between Madison's founding and World War II. Most of these organizations were fraternal societies formed as an alternative to the many non-sectarian, but often Protestant-oriented, fraternal societies active in the 19th century. These alternative benevolent and insurance associations usually met in the churches or synagogues with which they were connected. Sometimes, they also had ladies' auxiliaries. Such groups included the Catholic Knights, the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Order of Foresters, St. Michael's Benevolent Society and B'nai B'rith. Only two buildings are known to have been constructed to house religious fraternal organizations. One was the Labor Lyceum, constructed on North Mills Street to house the Workmen's Circle, a mutual benefit society for Jewish men (gone). The other was the Catholic Clubhouse built at 15 E. Wilson Street in 1938, built for the Catholic Knights of Wisconsin and other Catholic services, including the diocese offices. This building is the only one remaining connected with a religious fraternal organization.

There are seven structures remaining in Madison built to house other fraternal, benevolent or charitable organizations. Non-religious fraternal organizations played a large part in the social life of early Madison. In the 19th century these fraternal groups met in halls in larger office buildings. Several of these buildings remain, although spaces that housed the clubrooms have been altered significantly. At the turn-of-the-century several fraternal groups built their own clubhouses, including the Masons, the Odd Fellows, the Elks, the Eagles, the Moose, the Knights of Pythias and the Beavers. Today, only two of these remain: the Beaver Insurance Building at 119 Martin Luther King,

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Jr. Blvd. (built in 1921), and the Masonic Temple at 301 Wisconsin Avenue (1923, landmark).

Another form of fraternal group was the ethnically-oriented benevolent and mutual aid society. Three buildings remain in Madison connected with such groups: the Douglas Beneficial Hall at 647 E. Dayton Street, built in 1901 for African-Americans (landmark); the Italian Workmen's Club at 914 Regent Street (1922, landmark); and Turner Hall at 21 S. Butler Street, built in 1941 to house several German-American organizations.

A social club for men, with no formal insurance or mutual aid programs was the Madison Club, whose building at 5 E. Wilson Street, built in 1918, still remains (landmark). Just off State Street, the Women's Building of 1906 (240 W. Gilman Street) was built to house several women's organizations, although it has been severely altered. Thus, the Madison Catholic Clubhouse is one of eight remaining buildings constructed as clubhouses for fraternal, charitable, business and ethnic groups in Madison in the period before World War II.

¹Monsignor Klaas, interview with Elizabeth Miller, October 26, 1993.