United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property
   Historic name: Alano Society of Minneapolis Clubhouse
   Other names/site number: Washburn, John, House
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
   Street & number: 2218 1st Avenue South
   City or town: Minneapolis
   State: MN
   County: Hennepin
   Not For Publication: N/A
   Vicinity: N/A

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 at the following
   level(s) of significance:
   X national    X statewide    X local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   X A    B    C    D

9/3/2021

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy SHPO, MN Dept. of Admin. Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official: Date

Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__ entered in the National Register
__ determined eligible for the National Register
__ determined not eligible for the National Register
__ removed from the National Register
__ other (explain:) ____________________

Signature of the 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
Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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<th>Noncontributing</th>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _N/A_

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

_SOCIAL/Clubhouse_

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

_SOCIAL/Clubhouse_

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

_LATE VICTORIAN/Shingle Style_
Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property:
Foundation: STONE (house), CONCRETE (garage)
Walls: WOOD/Shingle (house), BRICK (garage), OTHER/Stucco (addition)
Roof: ASPHALT (house and garage)
Other: WOOD (house and garage)

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph
The Alano Society of Minneapolis is located in the Whittier neighborhood of South Minneapolis. The building is an L-shaped clubhouse composed of three segments: a three-story, Shingle-style residence constructed in 1887; a two-story, hipped-roof brick garage constructed in 1916; and a two-story, flat-roofed, reinforced concrete block addition constructed in 1950 that connects the house and garage (see Figure A). The clubhouse fronts on 1st Avenue South, and is set back from the street by a grass lawn with a patio, a small shed, and trees. A metal and brick fence with brick piers separates the lawn from 1st Avenue South along the eastern edge of the site. An associated parking lot occupies the two lots to the north of the clubhouse.

The 1887 house is basically rectangular in shape with multiple projecting round bays, and features a cross-hipped, asphalt-shingled roof with hipped dormers and several flat-roofed segments; a stone foundation; brick chimneys; wood shingle siding and wood trim; and a porch with wood columns and railings that wraps around the northeast corner at the location of the primary entrance. The brick garage features an asphalt-shingled roof; porch with wood pediment supported by wood columns and posts; brick headers and sills at windows; and a brick chimney. The 1950 addition is utilitarian in character with a flat roof, stucco siding, glass block windows, and brick sills.

At the interior, the house features highly-finished common spaces at the first level; meeting rooms at the second level; a boardroom and storage rooms at the third level; and storage, utility, and meeting rooms at the lower level. The interior of the garage and addition are joined at the first level into an open volume auditorium space. The second level of the garage is comprised of
a kitchen, bathroom, and meeting and storage rooms, while the second level of the addition contains meeting rooms.

The property has not been moved and retains integrity of location. The surrounding neighborhood retains its character of large residences along 1st Avenue South, with mixed uses including commercial, cultural institutions, and parks in the blocks to the east and west; thus, the property retains integrity of setting. The Alano Society of Minneapolis and Alcoholics Anonymous have occupied the clubhouse continuously since 1942, allowing the property to retain integrity of feeling and association. Much of the property’s historic material, both original late nineteenth and early twentieth century materials (such as brick veneer and wood trim at the exterior and wood trim, wood wainscot, and plaster floors and ceilings at the interior) as well as interior finishes likely installed in Midcentury by the Alano Society (such as vinyl floor tile, plastic laminate wall paneling, vertical wood wall paneling, and adhered ceiling tile) remain. Examples of historic workmanship, such as coffered wood wall paneling and wood built-ins, also remain. The exterior of the clubhouse appears to retain most of its key design elements, and its interior circulation and spatial layout appear mostly unaltered since the end of the period of significance. Thus, the property retains integrity of materials, design, and workmanship.

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**Narrative Description**

**Setting and Site**

The Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse is located in the Whittier neighborhood of South Minneapolis and the locally-designated Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District. The blocks in the immediate vicinity contain a mixture of apartment buildings, houses (including several other large mansions associated with the local Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District), and institutional buildings, as well as some commercial development (particularly along Nicollet Avenue to the west). An apartment building is located on the adjacent parcel to the south and a house on the adjacent parcel to the north (Photo 0001).

The house segment of the L-shaped clubhouse fronts on 1st Avenue South, with the garage and addition set back farther from the street at the rear of the lot (Figure A, Photos 0002 and 0003). The clubhouse is fronted by a grass lawn with a small shed, trees, and concrete walkways. The lawn also contains a non-historic patio, located at the vertex of the “L” where the addition joins the garage and house together (Photo 0003). A historic brick and metal fence with brick piers runs parallel to 1st Avenue South along the length of the clubhouse, separating the east edge of the lawn from the public sidewalk and street. To the north of the clubhouse, a parking lot occupies the northern half of the site (Photo 0001). An alley runs along the west border of the property (Photo 0004).

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1 The property’s period of significance is 1942 – 1968. This narrative uses the term “historic” to refer to any materials or features that could feasibly have been installed through 1968.

2 Historic aerials indicate that the patio was installed sometime after 2006. Historic Aerials, NETRONline, accessed January 10, 2020, https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer.
**Exterior**

**1887 House**

The 1887 house is rectangular in shape with multiple projecting round bays (Photos 0005 – 0007). Each façade is asymmetrical and irregular in appearance, as is typical of Queen Anne and Shingle style residences. Likewise, the cross-hipped roof has an irregular roofline with hipped dormers and several flat-roofed segments. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles, and its overhanging edges feature a wood fascia with exposed wood rafter tails, as well as hanging gutters connected to downspouts. Three brick chimneys project from the roof. A porch with a gently sloped roof supported by wood columns wraps around the northeast corner of the house at the first level (Photo 0010).

The house is set on a stone foundation and clad in wood shingles (Photos 0005 – 0007, 0010). Its façades feature windows of various sizes and shapes in an irregular layout, though most are rectangular and framed with wood trim. The primary types of historic windows include fixed and hung wood windows with leaded and stained glass and hung, multi-light wood windows. Hung single-light wood windows are also present; building permits suggest that these may have been installed by the Alano Society in 1953. The house also contains a few glass block windows, two historic hopper-style windows at the lower level, a fixed wood window at level one, and sliding and fixed metal windows. A few window openings have infill panels or mechanical equipment, and some are covered with non-historic aluminum storm windows. At the first level of the north elevation, a stained glass window bears the motto of the Washburn family, “Persevera Deo Que Confide” (Preserve and Trust in God”). A wood-framed bow window is located on the north façade, and two oval-shaped windows (one with glass block infill) are located on the north and east façades.

The primary entrance to the house is a non-historic flat slab metal door located at the northeast porch (Photo 0010). The porch rests on the building’s stone foundation and features a tile floor, wood columns, railings, fascia, and a beadboard ceiling. The porch is accessed on the east and north by concrete stairs with metal railings. The east porch entrance is marked by a blind

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3 Portions of the exterior trim, soffits, and fascia as well as the asphalt roof shingles at the 1887 house and 1916 garage may be replacements. In 1992, Precision Painting filed a permit to replace exterior trim, soffits, and facia “as needed” at an estimated cost of $500, and the next year a permit was filed to reroof the building for an estimated $22,800. Building permit B0592765, 2218 1st Avenue South, September 15, 1992, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center; Building permit for 2218 1st Avenue South, August 30, 1993, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center.

4 Building permit B332418, 2218 1st Avenue South, January 30, 1953, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center. In 1953, a building permit was filed for “interior alterations to building; new arch supports, windows, etc., and miscellaneous repairs” at an estimated cost of $500. Some of the simple hung wood windows in the building may have been installed at this time.

5 William Armstrong Crozier, ed., Crozier’s General Armory: A Registry of American Families Entitled to Coat Armor (New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, 1904), 133, https://books.google.com/books?id=TqorAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA133&dq=persevera+deo+que+confide+washburn+family&source=bl&ots=yQiANqDkfK&sig=ACfU3U2qUGeiaEq6tY_BkTgLAY3JYJeSP6Q&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ah UKEwjyqtQ54jnAhWTW80KHCgQAMgQ6AEwAHoECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=persevera%20deo%20que%20confide%20washburn%20family&f=false.
eyebrow dormer in the porch roof, and the north entrance is marked by an extension of the porch roof supported by two decorative brackets. At the western edge of the porch, it appears that an historic set of full-light double doors has been fixed shut.

1916 Garage

The 1916 garage has a basically rectangular massing (Photos 0002, 0008 and 0009). It features a concrete foundation, brick veneer walls, and a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and a single brick chimney. Like the house, the roof features a wood fascia with exposed wood rafter tails, as well as hanging gutters connected to downspouts. Windows have brick headers and sills and are spaced along the façade at the first and second levels. Windows include historic hung six-over-six wood windows, historic multi-light hopper-style wood windows, and non-historic sliding ribbed plastic windows in metal frames. The rear (west) elevation also has hung wood windows (similar in style to the simple hung wood windows on the 1887 house). Several window openings have been infilled with plywood.

The garage has two entrances on the east façade (Photo 0009). One, designed as the primary entrance, features a triangular wood pediment supported by a wood entablature and wood columns and posts set on a concrete base. The entrance contains a flush wood door with light and a historic wood storm door with screen. The other entrance on the east façade features a non-historic flat slab metal door. First-level entrances at the south and west façades have been infilled with plywood panels (Photo 0008). A historic paneled wood door is located at the second level on the west façade.

1950 Addition

The 1950 addition has a rectangular massing with a flat roof, brick chimney, and metal coping and downspouts (Photos 0003 and 0004). The addition’s south elevation is joined to the north elevation of the garage, and its east elevation is joined to the west elevation of the 1887 house. The exposed north and west elevations have stucco walls and glass block windows with brick sills spaced along the first and second levels. Non-historic mechanical units and non-historic small ribbed plastic windows with metal frames are set within the glass block windows. Two non-historic flat slab metal doors are located on the north façade. A recessed entry with concrete ramp leading to a wood paneled door is also located at the northeast corner of the addition, where it joins the house. At the southeast corner of the addition, a small section of the addition is visible (Photo 0003). This section contains a set of flat metal slab double doors at the first level accessed by a set of concrete steps with a metal handrail, and two glass block windows at the second level. A stone plaque reading “Alano 1950” is set in the first level façade.

Interior: 1887 House

First Level

The primary entrance on the house’s east façade leads to an enclosed entry vestibule with coffered wood panel wainscot and wood crown molding. The vestibule leads via a non-historic glass and aluminum door into a foyer with a reception desk, historic painted wood fireplace, and
historic plaster ceiling with exposed wood trim (Photo 0011). A large piece of mechanical equipment is suspended from the ceiling of the foyer. At the northeast corner of the lobby, a historic curved wood staircase with decorative iron handrails ascends to the second level. Metal grating has been installed at the opening of the stair shaft, around and above the reception desk. A door underneath the primary staircase leads to a small bathroom with tile floor and wainscots and to a set of historic wood stairs with wood baseboard that descends to the lower level. Proceeding to the south, the foyer opens into a common space (likely originally used by the Washburn family as a parlor) that features historic floor-to-ceiling coffered wood paneling at walls, built-in wood bookcases and shelves (including a bookcase with leaded glass doors), a prominent wood fireplace with stone surround, and a plaster ceiling with moldings in a geometric design (Photo 0012). The common room opens to the north into a dining hall with historic wood wainscots and wood trim, plaster ceiling with exposed wood rafters, and a wood fireplace with granite surround (Photo 0013). From the dining hall, one can move east back to the foyer, west to a transition hallway that leads to the 1950 addition, west to the “Crying Room,” or south to the kitchen. The Crying Room (likely the original study) features historic, floor-to-ceiling coffered wood paneling, historic plaster ceilings with decorative molding, historic built-in wood cabinets and shelving, an historic built-in window seat, and an historic stone-clad fireplace with a metal hood (Photo 0014). The original exterior view of historic leaded glass windows at the west side of the room has been obscured by the 1950 addition. The kitchen contains an historic plaster ceiling and molding as well as historic built-in wood cabinets. The kitchen serving window opens onto the transition hallway to the 1950 addition; the hallway features painted vertical wood wall paneling and a dropped ceiling.

Flooring on the first level consists primarily of resilient flooring, non-historic carpet, and historic tile at the vestibule and foyer; walls are primarily historic plaster. Doors include a few remaining historic wood paneled doors as well as a few flush doors. A few historic radiators also remain.

Second Level

The second level consists of several meeting rooms organized around a double-loaded corridor and lobby area off of the house’s primary north staircase. The corridor and lobby feature historic plaster walls with decorative molding and trim and historic adhered ceiling tile and flat plaster material ceilings (Photo 0015). Meeting rooms typically have Midcentury finishes likely

6 The bay window seat located in this room has a metal bar base and appears to have been modified after the house’s original construction, but the date of the modification is unknown.
7 The “Crying Room” (likely used by the Washburn family as a private study) has been used for 12th Step Calls since the building was purchased by the Alano Society. In a 12th Step Call, a veteran AA member listens to a newcomer’s reasons for joining AA. The emotional nature of these conversations led to the name the “Crying Room.” The room is now dedicated in honor of Richard “Dick G” Giles, a member of Minneapolis 2218 who helped found the Nu-Way Halfway House for alcoholics in the late 1960s. Email from member of the Alano Society of Minneapolis to author, January 29, 2020.
8 It is unclear if suspended ceilings are historic. A building permit to install a new suspended ceiling and “panel exterior walls” for an estimated cost of $7,100 was filed in 1979. There are two type of suspended ceilings in the clubhouse, one with a light-colored frame and the other with a dark-colored frame. It is unknown which suspended ceilings were installed in 1979 and are therefore non-historic. Building permit B486347, 2218 1st Avenue South, January 10, 1979 on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center.
installed by the Alano Society – vertical wood wall paneling (some painted) with wood chair rail and molding at the ceiling\(^9\) and adhered ceiling tile\(^{10}\) – as well thin wood trim around windows and doors (Photo 0016).\(^{11}\) Two rooms feature wood or wood and tile fireplaces, some have built-in coat racks, and one has a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. There are also three restrooms at the second level that display a variety of finishes. At the west end of the house, the corridor continues into the second level of the 1950 addition. Near the junction of the house and addition, a secondary staircase with carpeted stairs feeds from the south side of the corridor down to the first level, to the transition area between the addition and the house.

Floor finishes at the second level are primarily non-historic carpet, with ceramic tile and resilient flooring in restrooms. Much of the historic thick wood trim around doors remains. Most doors are flush, but a few historic doors remain. Historic radiators remain throughout.

**Third Level**

At the third level, a board room and several storage rooms and closets are organized around a double-loaded corridor and stairway lobby. At the primary staircase (which features a wood banister from the second to third levels), the lobby has been separated from the stairwell by a partition with vertical wood paneling and a flush door. Finishes at the third level include Midcentury vinyl tile\(^{12}\) over wood floors (with some exposed wood floors in closets) and historic plaster ceilings and walls (Photo 0017). Historic paneled wood doors remain throughout, as does historic wood baseboard and trim (including thick trim around windows and doors). Other

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\(^{9}\) Prefinished hardwood plywood panels were widely used in the 1950s. For examples, see types of prefinished “Weldwood” plywood paneling displayed in a 1958 trade catalog of the United States Plywood Corporation: [https://archive.org/details/WeldwoodPrefinishedPanelingForFineInteriors_37/page/n11/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/WeldwoodPrefinishedPanelingForFineInteriors_37/page/n11/mode/2up). The several types of vertical wood wall paneling at the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse cannot be dated with certainty, but could feasibly have been installed during the period of significance. Thomas C. Jester, ed., *Twentieth Century Building Materials: History and Conservation* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2014), 130.

A building permit to install a new suspended ceiling and “panel exterior walls” for an estimated cost of $7,100 was filed in 1979. Since none of the clubhouse’s exterior walls are paneled, this may refer to paneling installed on the interior side of exterior walls, but the scope of this alteration is unknown. Building permit B486347, 2218 1st Avenue South, January 10, 1979 on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center. Vertical wall paneling is historic.

\(^{10}\) After World War II, acoustical board materials were replaced by acoustical tiles and plasters as ceilings. The “regular perforated” and “pin-perforated” styles of the adhered ceiling tile located in the 1887 house and 1950 addition appear similar to designs in 1950s and 1960s acoustical ceiling trade catalogs: [https://archive.org/details/ArmstrongCushiontoneCeilings/page/n3/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/ArmstrongCushiontoneCeilings/page/n3/mode/2up) and [https://archive.org/details/USGProductBulletin1968/page/n61/mode/2up/search/pin-perf?q=pin-perf](https://archive.org/details/USGProductBulletin1968/page/n61/mode/2up/search/pin-perf?q=pin-perf). It is likely that the adhered tile ceilings at the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse were installed during the period of significance. Jester, *Twentieth Century Building Materials*, 234.

\(^{11}\) Thin wood trim is different in appearance from the thick wood baseboards and trim that are original to the 1887 house. It is not known when this was installed.

\(^{12}\) The use of vinyl tile expanded greatly during the 1950s. For examples, see types of vinyl tile displayed in a 1954 “Flor-Ever” trade catalog: [https://archive.org/details/FlorEver/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/FlorEver/mode/2up). The several types of vinyl tile at the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse cannot be dated with certainty, but some of these types appear to date to Midcentury and could feasibly have been installed during the period of significance. Jester, *Twentieth Century Building Materials*, 210.
remaining historic features include a metal fire door and a set of wood built-in drawers. A ladder and attic access hatch are visible at the corridor ceiling. Historic radiators are located throughout.

**Lower Level**

The lower level consists of several storage and utility rooms, two meeting rooms, and a restroom organized around a double-loaded corridor. The lower level is accessed by the staircase at the southwest corner of the house near the junction of the house and the 1950 addition as well as the staircase at the north edge of the house. Much of the lower level has a utilitarian character (Photo 0018), with some exposed mechanical systems, exposed concrete floors, exposed stone and brick walls, and exposed wood framing at the ceiling. Midcentury finishes include vinyl tile flooring and vertical wood paneling; historic plaster walls and ceilings are also located at the lower level. Other finishes include resilient flooring and dropped ACT ceilings, as well as ceramic tile flooring and wainscot in the bathroom. Most doors are flush doors, though a few historic wood panel doors remain. Other remaining historic features at the lower level include a historic metal fire door at the southwest staircase, historic radiators, and some thick wood trim around doors. At the southeast corner of the level, columns have been finished with vertical wood panels (Photo 0018). Some door and window openings feature thin wood trim.

At the north side of the lower level, a meeting room with a high degree of finish is located directly to the west of the north staircase (Photo 0019). It features a historic wood floor and wood wainscot; finished ceiling with historic molding; historic fireplace; historic built-in wood bench; and historic wood doors and frames.

**Interior: Garage and Addition**

**First Level**

The first level of the 1916 garage and 1950 addition is located below grade, and consists of a historic open volume space that serves as an auditorium. A transition area at the west edge of the first level of the addition includes two short flights of stairs that lead to exterior, at-grade exits on the north and south façades of the addition, as well as a set of stairs that lead east to the transition hallway at the first level of the historic house. Finishes in the transition area include non-historic carpet, resilient flooring and historic wood baseboard; walls and ceilings are composed of a flat paneling material. An historic metal fire door is also located in this area.

The auditorium is accessed by a set of historic wood double doors on its east side and features resilient flooring, a dropped ACT ceiling, and walls composed of a flat paneling material (Photo 0020). Midcentury adhered ceiling tile is visible above the ACT. A sliding fabric room divider is hidden by wood panel partitions on the east and west sides of the room. At the south side of the auditorium, an historic sliding metal fire door remains in place. Above the wood-paneled, carpeted stage at the north end, a large decorative plaque (likely historic) displays the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the south side of the auditorium, a small carpeted hallway leads to

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13 The author of this narrative was unable to access three rooms at the lower level of the house.
14 The fissured tile at the garage ceiling appears similar to the Armstrong Textured Cushiontone ceiling shown in a 1957 trade catalog and is likely historic: [https://archive.org/details/ArmstrongCeilings/page/n3/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/ArmstrongCeilings/page/n3/mode/2up).
two non-historic restrooms installed in 1987 with ceramic tile flooring and hollow wood veneer doors.\(^\text{15}\) Ceilings and walls in the hallway and restrooms are composed of a flat paneling material. Two historic doors (one leading to the second level of the 1916 garage) are also located in this area.

**Second Level**

The second level of the 1950 addition is accessed by a flight of carpeted stairs at the transition area between the addition and the house. It contains meeting and storage rooms along a corridor (a continuation of the corridor at the second level of the house). Finishes include plaster ceilings and walls as well as some Midcentury finishes: vinyl tile floors, adhered tile ceilings, and vertical wood wall paneling (some painted) (*Photos 0021 and 0022*). One room has a dropped ceiling and another has a resilient tile floor. Flush wood doors, thin wood trim, and historic radiators are located throughout. A wood and metal built-in desk (possibly historic) is located in the southernmost meeting room.

The second level of the 1916 garage is accessed by two sets of staircases at the south side of the building. It contains a kitchen, meeting and storage rooms, and bathroom organized around a central hallway (*Photo 0025*). Like the 1887 house, the second level of the garage primarily features a combination of early twentieth century and mid-century features and finishes. Wall finishes are a combination of plaster and vertical wood wall paneling (*Photo 0025*). Flooring consists of several types of resilient tile, including a dark brown vinyl tile and a unique, fissured vinyl tile in the kitchen and pantries. The kitchen and its two adjacent pantries feature historic built-in cabinets and drawers (*Photos 0023 and 0024*). The bathroom features Midcentury plastic laminate wall paneling\(^\text{16}\) with a dropped ceiling (*Photo 0026*). Ceilings are a combination of flat plaster and textured ceilings. Historic features include a wood banister at the staircase, several wood paneled doors, some thick wood door and window trim, and a few radiators.

**Integrity**

The Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse retains sufficient levels of all seven aspects of integrity to convey its history from its period of significance, 1942 - 1968. The seven aspects of integrity are discussed separately, as follows:

**Location**

The Alano Society of Minneapolis has not been moved and retains integrity of location.

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\(^\text{15}\) A permit for $10,000 of interior modifications to the garage, specifically, the construction of two handicapped bathrooms, was filed in 1987. Building permit B550674, 2218 1\(^\text{st}\) Avenue South, May 27, 1987, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center.

\(^\text{16}\) The use of laminates, developed in earnest beginning in the late 1920s, expanded during the postwar era. Laminates had a variety of applications, including wall paneling and countertops. While the paneling in this bathroom cannot be precisely dated, the use of plastic laminate suggests that it was installed in the postwar era and is historic. Jester, *Twentieth Century Building Materials*, 95 – 96.
Design

The Alano Society of Minneapolis retains integrity of design. The exterior of the clubhouse retains many of the character-defining features present between 1942 and 1968, including the multiple projecting round bays, cross-hipped roof with hipped dormers and several flat-roofed segments, three chimneys, irregular-patterned fenestration, and prominent porch of the 1887 house; the hipped roof, pedimented entrance, and regular fenestration of the 1916 garage; and the flat roof and regular fenestration of the 1950 addition. The 1887 house appears to retain most of its historic spatial layout and circulation, as well as the general hierarchy of finish: highly-finished spaces such as the common room, dining hall, and Crying Room at the first level, lesser degrees of finish at the second and third levels, and a low degree of finish at much of the lower level. A c. 1951 Sanborn map (see Figure F) indicates that the open volume auditorium at the first level of the garage and addition is historic. Aside from the alteration to the south end of the garage’s first level to install restrooms in 1987, the authors of this report did not observe significant alterations to the layout of the garage and addition that could be dated to post-1968, after the end of the period of significance.17

Setting

The Alano Society of Minneapolis retains integrity of setting. By 1967, the surrounding blocks in the Whittier neighborhood had many of the residential, institutional, and commercial buildings that exist today (although the apartment building directly to the south of the Alano Society of Minneapolis was not constructed until after 1967).18

Materials

The Alano Society of Minneapolis retains integrity of materials. At the exterior, the house retains its historic stone foundation, wood trim and fascia, and wood porch elements; likewise, the exterior of the garage retains its historic brick veneer, brick headers and sills, wood pediment and columns, and wood fascia. Some historic windows are also present at both the house and garage. Though there are no historic photographs of the exterior of the 1950 addition, the brick headers likely date to the period of significance, and the glass block windows may be historic as well. At the interior, the Alano Society of Minneapolis retains decorative wood paneling and wood built-ins; some wood trim, baseboard, and wainscot; some wood doors; and much of its historic plaster. It also retains Midcentury finishes that likely date from the period of significance, including adhered ceiling tile, plastic laminate and vertical wood wall paneling, and vinyl floor tile.

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17 Few building permits for the property have been filed in the past 50 years. Permits for unspecified scopes of work that might apply to the interior of the building include a permit for “miscellaneous alterations” estimated at $5,800 filed in 1974 and a permit for miscellaneous repairs and alterations (none structural) estimated at $1,100 filed in 1978. Building permit B449716, 2218 1st Avenue South, September 19, 1974, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center; Building permit B476972, 2218 1st Avenue South, January 26, 1978, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center.

Workmanship

The Alano Society of Minneapolis retains integrity of workmanship. Historic workmanship is most evident in the floor-to-ceiling wood paneling and wood wainscot, decorative fireplaces, built-in shelves, bookcases, and drawers, decorative plaster ceilings, and historic wood doors and windows with thick wood trim. Unique historic features such as metal fire doors, the built-in desk, auditorium plaque, and radiators also contribute to the property’s integrity of workmanship.

Feeling

The meeting rooms, auditorium, and common spaces of the Alano Society of Minneapolis communicate the property’s historic and current use as a clubhouse, allowing it to retain integrity of feeling.

Association

The Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse retains integrity of association, as it continues to be occupied by the Alano Society of Minneapolis and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as the headquarters of the Minneapolis 2218 chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous from 1942 through 1968.
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.)

- [x] 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 grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorating property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
  Social History
  
  
  
  
  
  
  

Period of Significance
  1942 – 1968
  
  
  

Significant Dates
  1950
  
  
  

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
  N/A
  
  
  

Cultural Affiliation
  N/A
  
  
  

Architect/Builder
  Whitney, William Channing (architect)
  Pike & Cook (builders)
  Pike, W. C. (builder)
  E.M. Ganley Co. (builders)
**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History as the headquarters of the most influential chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in the State of Minnesota. Formed in 1941, the original Minneapolis chapter of AA (known as Minneapolis 2218) was not only the state’s first chapter of AA, but also acted as an incubator for numerous chapters in the metropolitan region. After the Alano Society of Minneapolis acquired the former residence of wealthy industrialist John Washburn in 1942, Minneapolis 2218 utilized the building for its member meetings and occasional regional events and notable speakers. With the cooperation of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, the clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South also acted as an information hub for AA chapters in the greater Minneapolis area. Through its members’ engagement with alcoholics in Minneapolis and the surrounding region, Minneapolis 2218’s influence extended beyond its members and AA itself to the broader community. The period of significance for the property ends in 1968, when some of the clubhouse’s coordinating functions passed to the Minneapolis AA Intergroup. The applicable local context is *South Minneapolis: An Historic Context* by Hess, Roise and Company (2000). There are no applicable statewide contexts. The property is located within the City of Minneapolis’s locally-designated Washburn Fair-Oaks Historic District and was identified as eligible for the National Register in the Volume Two of the *Phase I/Phase II Architecture History Investigation for the Proposed Southwest Transitway Project, Hennepin County, Minnesota* by Hess, Roise and Company (2010).

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Alcoholics Anonymous and the Modern Alcoholism Movement**

The establishment of the organization known today as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) has its roots in the spring of 1935, in the meeting between its future founders William Griffith Wilson (Bill Wilson) and Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith (Bob Smith) in Akron, Ohio. New York resident Bill Wilson was a 39-year-old stockbroker who had recently achieved four months of sobriety through participation in the Oxford Group, a Christian Protestant movement that focused on spiritual awakening. Discouraged by an unsuccessful business negotiation while on a business trip to Akron, Wilson sought out conversation with a fellow alcoholic in the hopes of staving off a desire to drink. A local minister connected Wilson with the surgeon Robert Smith, then a

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19 Alano Societies were non-profit organizations that often acted as landlords for AA chapters. Like AA, Alano Clubs were focused on providing aid to those struggling with drinking problems; they used their clubhouses to host activities and provide gathering spaces for recovering alcoholics, and often provided answering services to distribute information about alcoholism and AA. Alano Societies were distinct from AA and membership in AA was not required for membership in the Alano Society, though in practice members of one organization were often members in the other. This nomination proposes that 2218 1st Avenue South is significant for its association with the original Minneapolis chapter of AA; however, the activities of the Alano Society of Minneapolis in the building are also discussed, as these were likely attended by many AA members. See “Alano Club Formed,” *Longview (WA) Daily News*, December 22, 1975 for a helpful article on the Alano Society.
struggling alcoholic. After several weeks of living with Smith and his wife Anne, Wilson had not only remained sober but also convinced Smith to give up alcohol.²⁰

With the conviction that they could help other men achieve sobriety, Wilson and Smith began seeking out alcoholics at the Akron City Hospital and bringing them to an Oxford Group in Akron. After Wilson returned to New York in August 1935, he similarly began gathering alcoholics at Towns Hospital and taking them to Oxford Group meetings, as well as meetings at his own home. By November of 1937, the two groups had helped 40 individuals find sobriety.²¹ Among the convictions of the new movement advanced by Wilson and Smith was a belief that alcoholism could only be cured through the adoption of certain spiritual beliefs and attitudes and in community with other alcoholics. Rather than trusting their own willpower, alcoholics were encouraged to acknowledge the hopelessness of their addiction, surrender their lives to a higher power, and commit themselves to dependence on this higher power and other alcoholics to maintain sobriety. A key component of the method was the sharing of one’s personal experience with alcoholism with other alcoholics, the means of not only bringing in new members but also keeping existing members sober.²² In 1938, Wilson codified the fellowship’s core ideas in what became known as the Twelve Steps:²³

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs [emphasis in original].²⁴

²² Rotskoff, Love on the Rocks, chap. 3.
²³ Rotskoff, Love on the Rocks, chap. 3.
In 1939, these principles were included in Bill Wilson’s book Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How One Hundred Men Have Recovered from Alcoholism. The “Big Book” (as it came to be known) was published by the Alcoholic Foundation, established by Wilson, Smith, and a group of trustees in 1938 for fundraising purposes. The Big Book not only laid out the fellowship’s program but also provided member testimonials.25 A second significant event that occurred in 1939 was the establishment of the fellowship’s third meeting group, which was founded in Cleveland, Ohio in May of 1939 under the name “Alcoholics Anonymous.”26 By October of 1939, both the Brooklyn and Akron groups had completely separated from their respective Oxford Groups, and “Alcoholics Anonymous” was established as a distinct entity.27

Compared to the explosive growth of later years, national expansion of AA during 1940 and early 1941 was relatively slow. A dinner hosted by the Rockefeller family in 1940 to introduce prominent and wealthy New Yorkers to the fledgling movement helped provide publicity, as did Cleveland Indians catcher Rollie Hemsley’s revelation of his membership in the Akron AA group that same year. During 1941, AA members traveling for work carried the movement to new cities, including Milwaukee, St. Louis, Boston, Miami, and Minneapolis. The key event that propelled AA to national prominence, however, was a cover article by reporter Jack Alexander published in the Saturday Evening Post in February of 1941. Between March and December of that year, national membership increased from 2,000 to 8,000. For the first time, the Big Book, rather than personal contact from members, became the primary means of establishing new AA groups.28

By 1943, AA had accumulated over 10,000 members across 235 cities in the United States; by 1945, the fellowship’s total had risen to more than 15,000 members. After World War II, an average of 17,000 individuals joined each year, increasing the membership to 111,000 individuals in 4,000 groups by 1951. The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, first published in the newly-established journal The A.A. Grapevine in 1946 and finalized in 1950, codified AA’s guiding principles of operation for its numerous chapters. Among other things, the Twelve Traditions reinforced the independence of local groups, the anonymity of individual members, the rejection of outside financial support, and AA’s desire to remain separate from and unassociated with outside enterprises, organizations, and issues. Together, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions laid out the key principles of AA’s philosophy.

By 1950, AA maintained members in 35 different countries; that year, the fellowship held its first international conference in Cleveland, Ohio. Annual regional meetings composed of delegates from American and Canadian chapters began in 1951. That same year, control of the organization began to shift from the Alcoholic Foundation (which consisted primarily of non-alcoholics) to a General Service Conference made up of AA members elected by their peers at the annual meetings. The five-year experimental conference was made permanent in 1955.

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26 By October 1938, some members used the term Alcoholics Anonymous informally to refer to the fellowship. The Cleveland group appears to have been the first to use the term as a specific and exclusive name, following the publication of Wilson’s Alcoholics Anonymous book. See Kurtz, Not-God, 74, 78.
conference assumed control of the AA’s service office, publishing company, and the corporation that published the *A.A. Grapevine*, as well as responsibility for electing the trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation (renamed the General Service Board in 1954). By 1957, the AA had approximately 200,000 members worldwide, with approximately 26% of its membership located outside of North America in 1960.\(^{29}\)

According to cultural historian Lori Rotskoff, Alcoholics Anonymous “is known today as the most influential self-help group in modern history.”\(^{30}\) The establishment and growth of AA did not occur in a vacuum, however, but was part of a larger shift in the perception and treatment of alcoholism in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century. In the mid-1930s, quality medical care for alcoholics was scarce, as many hospitals and inebriate asylums for alcoholics that had closed in response to Prohibition remained closed following its repeal, and many physicians viewed alcoholism as incurable.\(^{31}\) Public drunkenness often resulted in commitment to an insane asylum or jail. Moreover, during the first few decades of the twentieth century, alcoholism was viewed by psychiatrists not as a primary disease but as a symptom of an underlying psychological issue. In the popular mindset, the term alcoholic was synonymous with moral inferiority, criminality, and insanity.\(^{32}\)

During the 1940s, these perceptions began to shift in favor of the view that alcoholism was a disease.\(^{33}\) In the United States, three organizations founded in the late 1930s and early 1940s - the Research Council on Problems of Alcohol (known as the RCPA, founded in 1937), the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies (founded in 1943), and the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism (known as the NCEA, founded in 1944) – advanced what has been termed the “modern alcoholism movement.” In contrast to the temperance movement that preceded it, the modern alcoholism movement contended that misuse, not simply any use of alcohol, was the issue to be solved. Historian William White notes that rather than focusing on alcohol itself or alcohol-related problems, the movement centered around the “unique vulnerability of a small subpopulation of drinkers,” or alcoholics.\(^{34}\)

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\(^{30}\) Rotskoff, *Love on the Rocks*, chap. 3.

\(^{31}\) The terms “insane asylum” and “inebriate asylum” have a pejorative connotation today. They are used here to accurately reflect the vernacular terminology of the mid-twentieth century.


\(^{33}\) The disease concept had actually originated earlier in the nineteenth century but had fallen out of favor by the early 1900s. See White, “The Rebirth of the Disease Concept.”

Two influential publications by Dwight Anderson and Marty Mann contained the ideas at the core of the modern alcoholism movement. In his seminal 1942 article, Dwight Anderson of the RCPA laid out four key tenants of a public education campaign that sought to reorient common perceptions of alcoholism. These included:

- “The problem drinker is a sick man, exceptionally reactive to alcohol
- He can be helped
- He is worth helping
- The problem is therefore a responsibility of the healing professions as well as health authorities and the public generally.”

Marty Mann, founder of the NCEA in 1944, used these ideas to define the foundational tenets of the NCEA, incorporating the words “alcoholism” and “alcoholic” as well as a fifth principle, that “alcoholism is a disease.”

The modern alcoholism movement was effective in changing the way people viewed alcoholism and also in encouraging medical and public health authorities to assume ownership of treatment. White notes that:

By 1980, it appeared that many of the goals of the modern alcoholism movement were being achieved. The movement had extended its influence into major cultural institutions (media, law, medicine, religion, education, business and labor). There was growing professional and public acceptance for the proposition that alcoholism was a disease. The country had established national institutes that advocated medical research on addiction and public health approaches to alcohol and other-drug related problems. People from all walks of life, including First Lady Betty Ford, were publicly declaring their recovery from alcoholism. The disease concept was being applied to a wide spectrum of other drugs and behaviors, as recovery briefly became something of an American cultural phenomenon...

A few statistics provide evidence of this shift in perception and treatment. By 1954, general hospitals were increasingly receptive to treating alcoholics; between 1944 and 1954, the number of hospitals in the United States accepting alcoholics for emergency treatment increased from 100 to 3,000. The percentage of Americans who identified alcoholism as an illness increased from 20% in 1946 to 93% in 1964. In 1954, the American Medical Association created a

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37 White, “The Rebirth of the Disease Concept.”
38 Finan, Drunks, 207.
39 William White, ed., “The Combined Addiction Disease Chronologies of William White, MA, Ernest Kurtz, PhD, and Caroline Acker, PhD: 1956 - 1966,” September 2001, p. 1, http://www.bhrm.org/media/pdf/pub/1956-1965.pdf. White notes that “between 1956 and 1965, there was an increased acceptance of the disease concept of alcoholism by major medical and public health groups, at the same time there were emerging criticisms of the disease concept in both the popular and scientific literature. The number of Americans agreeing with the statement that alcoholism was an illness rose from 20% in 1946 (Riley, 1946) to 93% in 1964 (Mulford and Miller,
subcommittee on alcoholism; two years later, the AMA’s House of Delegates unanimously adopted a “Resolution on Hospitalization of Patients with Alcoholism” which included a definition of “alcoholism as an illness which justifiably should have the attention of physicians.”

In conjunction with these developments, Alcoholics Anonymous received increasing acceptance in the 1940s and 50s. The production of the 1945 film *Lost Weekend*, a realistic portrayal of alcoholism, brought news coverage to the fellowship, and a 1951 article on AA by *Fortune* magazine also provided AA with helpful publicity. That same year, the American Public Health Association awarded AA the prestigious Lasker Award in recognition of its positive impact on public health. The actress and singer Lillian Roth’s confession of alcoholism and involvement in AA in 1954 and the 1958 teleplay *Days of Wine and Roses* (which depicted the devastation caused by alcoholism and recovery through AA) also put the spotlight on the fellowship.

By 1962, 75% of states had sponsored commissions on alcoholism to educate state legislatures. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the federal government began to increase its engagement in the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction through legislation, including the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Act (or Hughes Act) of 1970.

### AA and the Modern Alcoholism Movement in Minnesota

Developments in Minnesota played a key role in the modern alcoholism movement. Addiction specialist William White states that “the model of alcoholism treatment that most exemplified the disease concept subsequently emerged from the synergy of three programs in Minnesota: Pioneer House (1948), Hazelden (1949), and Willmar State Hospital (1950). This model drew heavily on the experience of AA members in its conceptualization of alcoholism as a primary, progressive disorder whose management required sustained abstinence and an active, continuing program of recovery.”

The Pioneer House, a municipal treatment facility in Medicine Lake, Minnesota, was established by the Minneapolis Department of Public Relief in 1948. The center’s director, Pat Cronin, was an influential regional leader of AA, and the center’s program featured lectures on AA’s Twelve

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1964) while the American Medical Association, American Hospital Association and the American Psychiatric Association passed formal resolutions advocating more medicalized approaches to the problem of alcoholism. At the same time, there were research studies that began to challenge some of the tenets of the disease concept (Selzer and Holloway, 1957; Davis, 1962; Kendell, 1965), and there were the first allegations that the disease concept could actually do harm to alcoholics.”

44 White, “The Rebirth of the Disease Concept.”
Steps, small group sessions, and individual counseling. Hazelden, a treatment center for alcoholism in Center City, Minnesota, was established in 1949 to treat professionals and clergy. Most of its founders were graduates of AA, and the center of the Hazelden program was AA’s Twelve Steps. The following year, Dr. Nelson Bradley and psychologist Daniel J. Anderson reinvented the treatment of alcoholic patients at the state mental hospital in Willmar. Anderson and Bradley accepted AA’s threefold definition of alcoholism as a spiritual, mental, and physical issue, and provided recovering addicts at Willmar with a multidisciplinary staff of doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, sober alcoholics, and ministers. The AA program was a foundational underpinning of the program, and the hospital collaborated with AA groups in the region. During the 1970s and 80s, the model of treatment that emerged from the Pioneer House, Hazelden, and the Willmar State Hospital, known as the Minnesota Model, spread throughout the country. Moreover, Minnesota became a center for addiction treatment; by 1977, it had the highest number of treatment centers of any state in the U.S.

Other developments in Minnesota included the increased engagement of local and state government in alcoholism treatment. In 1953, the State Legislature created the Advisory Board on the Problems of Alcoholism and added a Consultant on Alcoholism to the Department of Health. Together, the Department of Health and the Advisory Board were tasked with educating the public on alcoholism; working with nationally known organizations like AA to study, treat, and rehabilitate individuals with alcoholism; and studying other states’ methods of combating alcoholism. An Interim Legislative Commission created in 1955 provided a series of recommendations to the State Legislature that drew attention to the problem of alcoholism and the services needed to combat the issue. Ramsey County established Minnesota’s first community-based information and referral center, The Information and Referral Resource for Problem Drinkers, in 1961, and the Hennepin County General Hospital began its first alcoholism therapy program in 1969. Hennepin County also contracted with nonprofit organizations such as the Wayside Halfway House for women (a house for destitute women converted to alcoholism treatment center in 1963) and the Nuway Halfway House for men (an alcoholic treatment center established in 1967) to provide treatment.

Concurrent to these developments, Alcoholics Anonymous grew and flourished within the state. The state’s first chapter (Minneapolis 2218) was established in March of 1941. By 1945, the state claimed 14 groups; by 1950, that total had risen to 44. The number of Minnesota residents who were members of AA increased from an estimated 3,500 in 1951 to over 20,000 by 1977.

46 Finan, Drunks, 225 – 226;
47 Finan, Drunks, 228 – 231; Richeson, Courage to Change, 50 – 53.
Throughout the 1940s, 50s, and 60s, references to AA in city newspapers indicate AA’s extensive engagement in efforts to rehabilitate alcoholics in the Twin Cities and Minnesota. For example, a 1946 newspaper article in the Minneapolis Star implied that AA was the most effective treatment for alcoholism in the state. The article noted that the state maintained a treatment center for alcoholics at the Willmar State Hospital, but that resources were inadequate to provide enough psychiatric care. Private sanatoria were too expensive for many in need of treatment, and alcoholics at the Minneapolis General Hospital were combined with those suffering from mental illnesses, making it unappealing to alcoholics. “The most effective attack upon chronic alcoholism,” asserted the article, “has been made by Alcoholics Anonymous…This group, which has clubs all over the nation, is as great a force for social good as has appeared on the American scene in a long time.” The article encouraged the State of Minnesota and the City of Minneapolis to “help the good work by providing additional facilities for care.”

In 1951, another newspaper article stated that “Alcoholics Anonymous, the Willmar State Hospital, and…Pioneer House are giving hope to hundreds of Minnesota alcoholics,” asserting that “perhaps Alcoholics Anonymous – or “AA” – ought to get most of the credit.” In yet another supportive article, an internal medicine specialist quoted in the January 1, 1956 edition of the Minneapolis Sunday Tribune noted that “I personally believe that membership in AA is absolutely vital — is fundamental to any other treatment for alcoholism.” During the second half of the twentieth century, AA members worked with alcoholics at the General Hospital, the Wayside House, the Minneapolis Veterans Hospital, the Minneapolis municipal court, and several correctional facilities in the metropolitan area.

The extent of AA’s involvement in the treatment of alcoholism in Hennepin County was evident in 1968, when William Keaton of the alcoholism therapy program at Hurley Hospital in Flint, Michigan was brought to Minneapolis by the Minnesota Commission on Alcohol Problems and the Hennepin County General Hospital to study Hennepin County programs for the prevention and treatment of alcoholism. Keaton noted that the Minneapolis and Hennepin county private agencies that sponsored treatment and educational programs related to alcoholism were “dominated by the Alcoholics Anonymous approach to the treatment of alcohol.” Keaton contended that the dominance of the AA program had actually “deterred other groups – such as medical doctors – from becoming involved in the problem.”

Of all the state’s AA chapters, perhaps none was so influential as its first. Minneapolis 2218 was not only the earliest AA chapter in the state, but also dates to the very beginning of the national expansion of AA spurred by the publication Saturday Evening Post article in February 1941. At the Alano Society of Minneapolis in South Minneapolis, the members of the AA chapter held

52 Victor Cohn, “There’s Hope Here for Alcoholics,” Minneapolis Sunday Tribune, February 18, 1951.
meetings and hosted regional events and speakers. Minneapolis 2218 was an incubator for new AA groups in the metropolitan area, and members from the chapter were responsible for starting new chapters in the Twin Cities and the surrounding region. Furthermore, its members were actively engaged in the rehabilitation of alcoholics in the surrounding community, extending the influence of Minneapolis 2218 beyond AA itself to the general public.

**Minneapolis 2218**

*Founding*

The founding of Minnesota’s first chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous can be traced back to Bernard Patrick John Thomas Cronin’s discovery of a review of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* in the early summer of 1940, and later the book itself in the public library. Cronin, who struggled with alcoholism, was intrigued by AA, and wrote to the Alcoholic Foundation in New York in the hopes of finding AA alumni in Minneapolis. Though the New York office was unable to connect him with any Minneapolis AA members, it forwarded his name and address to two AA members in Chicago, who visited Cronin the following November. Detained by the Armistice Day Blizzard of November 11, 1940, Chandler Forman and Bill Long remained with Cronin for four days, marking the beginning of Cronin’s sobriety.56

Cronin began to spread the AA message to other alcoholics, though his success was limited until the publication of Jack Alexander’s *Saturday Evening Post* article in February 1941. As inquiries from Minnesota residents came into the New York AA headquarters, they were forwarded to Cronin. Cronin also worked with Cedric Adams, a columnist in the *Minneapolis Star Journal*, to notify the public that AA inquiries could be sent to Adams, who would forward them to the local (one-man) chapter.57

By April of 1941, the Minneapolis chapter of AA had six members and met in rented quarters at 200 East Franklin Avenue. In June 1941, the original two rented rooms at 200 East Franklin Avenue became five rooms. By July of that year, an article by Cedric Adams in the *Minneapolis Star Journal* noted that the group had almost 80 members, and that “the group’s membership is mounting steadily [and] the meetings are well attended.”58

In October 1941, the chapter’s offices were moved to club rooms at 19th Street and Park Avenue.59 A series of three articles published in the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune and Journal* in the fall of 1941 give insight into the group’s early operation. By that date, the Minneapolis group had about 100 members, including five women. Columnist Ben Holstrom attended a meeting and recorded his experience in his column, titled “Here Is the Evidence for You to Judge: The Story of a Minneapolis Miracle, Seen First Hand.” Though Holstrom wrote that he expected to find “a bunch of blue-nosed fanatics who would probably examine me with doubt and suspicion…or else a bunch of individuals who had conquered their taste for liquor by main force of will and

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58 Cedric Adams, “In This Corner,” *Minneapolis Star-Journal*, July 13, 1941.
consequently were taking it pretty grimly” what he found was much different than he had expected. “The atmosphere of the whole meeting,” Holstrom wrote, “was one of lightness and humor. You could detect below it, of course, an undercurrent of seriousness. [The participants] knew every side of the liquor question. They knew what the hard stuff had done to them. But they could afford to talk lightly about it, kid each other and themselves because they felt confident they had licked the thing and were no longer afraid.” Holstrom also noted that the members, who included doctors, lawyers, dentists, storekeepers, salesmen, WPA workers, and artists, were “drawn together by a strong bond of common understanding which broke down all ordinary reserve and made them friends.”

The disease concept of alcoholism then beginning to grow in popularity was evident among Minneapolis AA members, who agreed that an alcoholic was “a person afflicted with an illness just as real as cancer,” someone who had been mastered or was beginning to be mastered by alcohol. According to Holstrom’s article, however, most of the Minneapolis members were not “extreme” alcoholics who had reached rock bottom before finding AA; instead, many saw the warning signs of the devastation that their drinking problem could cause and joined the fellowship.

During this early phase of the Minneapolis AA’s development, members used their clubhouse to socialize and play cards, meeting in smaller groups called “squads” in members’ homes. Apparently, the concept of dividing into “squads” rather than creating new chapters was an innovation advanced by group member George W. Instead of simply dividing into new chapters as it grew larger, as the Chicago AA group had done, the Minneapolis AA formed smaller units or “squads” within the existing chapter. In addition to their club rooms and members’ houses, AA members used the Citizen’s Aid Building in downtown Minneapolis for meetings. Bill Wilson, co-founder of AA, spoke at this building when he made his first visit to Minneapolis in October of 1941. Another invited speaker during the early development of the chapter was Dr. J. C. Michael, head of the Minneapolis General Hospital section on mental and nervous disorders.

By October of 1941, AA was beginning to gain the confidence of local Minneapolis authorities, and the municipal court often released drunken individuals to AA members. In the words of one probation officer, recorded by journalist Holstrom, AA members “were the best thing that ever

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63 Richeson, Courage to Change, 272 – 274. Richeson notes that “It was George W. who was the principal innovator of “the squad concept” in Minnesota A.A. It was his strong belief that small units could increase intimacy, participation and quality sponsorship in a way in which large groups could not. Chicago at that time had no squads. Thus when a group numbered as many as thirty, it automatically “split,” dividing into another group.” The uniqueness of this concept to the Minneapolis group could not be verified by other sources.
happened’ in the alcoholic world with which he deals.”65 The organization began to spread through the state of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest, with groups formed in Hibbing, Duluth, and St. Paul, Minnesota and Eau Claire, Wisconsin during 1941.66

The growing membership of the Minneapolis chapter necessitated additional space. To enable the group to purchase property, the Alano Society of Minneapolis was incorporated on April 7, 1942, with Pat Cronin as president and Barry Collins (chapter member) and Mary Barnd as vice-presidents. That same month, the Alano Society purchased a large residence from the Washburn family at 2218 1st Avenue South that would serve as a permanent location for the Minneapolis AA chapter. The establishment of a separate organization, an “Alano club,” to purchase the Minneapolis property was consistent with national trends. Following the creation of Alcoholics Anonymous, Alano clubs were organized across the United States to act as landlords for AA chapters, which traditionally did not own property. The clubs provided activities and gathering spaces for recovering alcoholics, and often operated answering services to provide information on alcoholism and AA. Membership in Alano clubs was not restricted to AA members, but was open to anyone with a drinking problem; however, members in one organization were often members in the other. Though the Alano Society of Minneapolis was a separate entity from the Minneapolis AA chapter, the Society’s clubhouse was closely associated with the Minneapolis AA chapter, as the following history demonstrates.67 To differentiate the original Minneapolis AA group from other Minneapolis chapters of AA that developed in later years, this narrative will refer to the chapter as Minneapolis 2218 (a term used by Minnesota AA historian Forrest Richeson), while the clubhouse itself is referred to as the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse.68

The residence at 2218 1st Avenue South was constructed in 1887 for wealthy industrialist John Washburn. Washburn was the nephew of C. C. Washburn, the founder of the milling firm Washburn, Crosby, & Co., the predecessor to General Mills. John Washburn became a member of the milling firm in 1887, eventually serving as its vice-president and president. At the time of its construction, John Washburn’s residence was located in a prestigious residential district, demonstrating the prominence of the Washburn family in Minneapolis. Designed by architect William Channing Whitney and constructed by contractor W. C. Pike, the Shingle-style wooden residence was originally accompanied by a wood barn at the rear of the property (see Figure B). The third story of the house was not finished until 1893, and $4,500 of alterations and repairs constructed by contractors Pike & Cook were made to the property in 1900. Another $5,000 of repairs and alterations designed by architect William Channing Whitney (also constructed by contractors Pike & Cook) were made in 1913. This may have been the one-story semi-circular addition that projects from the south elevation of the house (according to Sanborn maps and historic photographs, this was added sometime between 1912 and 1939; see Figures B and C). In 1915, a building permit was filed for a 29 by 57-foot brick and frame garage (again designed

66 Richeson, Courage to Change, 14.
by Whitney and constructed by Pike & Cook) with a second floor intended for use as servants’ living quarters. The old barn was demolished in 1916, and the new garage was constructed in the barn’s former location at the southwest corner of the property (see Figure C). The house was reroofed in 1937. (See Figure D for the property as it appeared in 1941).**69**

By February of 1942, both John Washburn and his widow Elizabeth H. Washburn had passed away, and the title of the property had passed to one of their daughters, Sydney Young. By March of 1942, the house was listed for sale. Though the Alano Society of Minneapolis purchased the property for $19,000, it appears that other interested groups had offered $30,000, suggesting that Young was amenable to the goals of the Society and AA. However, the deed to the property stipulated that some or all of the residence would be maintained in its original form.**70** Building permit index cards indicate that the Alano Society made few or no immediate alterations to the property, and the first open house for the Minneapolis clubhouse was held in May of 1942.**71**

**Growth, Expansion, and Influence**

Following the Alano Society’s acquisition of the clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South, Minneapolis 2218 continued to expand. Its first group banquet, at which members who had achieved a year of sobriety were honored, was held that spring. Its first Founders’ Day Banquet, which celebrated the beginning of the Minneapolis chapter in November 1940, was held in November of 1942. By November of 1943, the group had 200 members, including 12 women.**72**

Three years later, the chapter numbered 600 members, and had received its own telephone number in the city directory.**73**

Concurrently, membership in AA was growing throughout the state of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. A 1946 newspaper article listed some of the communities in which AA chapters could

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**73** Cedric Adams, “In This Corner,” *Minneapolis Star-Journal*, June 28, 1946.
be found. These included Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Hibbing, Mankato, St. Cloud, Rochester, Faribault, Owatonna, Cambridge, Stillwater, Morris, Alexandria, Osakis, Elbow Lake, Moorhead, and Winthrop. Other groups in the Upper Midwest included Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, and La Crosse in Wisconsin; Fargo, Grand Forks, Bismarck, Mandan, Cando, Grafton, Minot and Kenmare in North Dakota; and Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Faulkton, Ree Heights, Yankton, Vermillion, Mitchell, Gayville, Rapid City, and the Veterans’ Hospital at Sturgis, South Dakota. By 1948, the Twin Cities contained 1,500 of the approximately 3,500 AA members in the Upper Midwest. By 1950, Minnesota alone had 44 AA chapters, and a 1950 newspaper article asserted that “there now are groups in almost every Upper Midwest town, with a total of more than 5,000 members [in the region].”

Minneapolis 2218 served as an incubator for several other chapters of AA in Minnesota. The first of these was the Nicollet Club, which split from the original Minneapolis group in January of 1944. The Nicollet Club was co-founded by Barry Collins, influential early Minnesota member of AA, and Ed Webster, author of several publications on the subject of AA and alcoholism. Feeling that Minneapolis 2218 had accepted individuals who were not truly alcoholics, the Nicollet Club took a less inclusive approach to membership, emphasizing that the fellowship was only for true alcoholics with a strong desire to change. The Nicollet Club also differed from its parent group (and many other AA groups) by placing a greater emphasis on family involvement, accepting only couples and expecting wives to attend with their husbands. Through the late 1970s, the Nicollet Club remained smaller than its parent group (its membership never climbed above 100 individuals), and Minneapolis 2218 retained its position as the leading chapter in the area, as the following information will demonstrate.

In the early years of AA in Minnesota, some residents of outstate Minnesota drove to Minneapolis to attend meetings at 2218 1st Avenue South. In the mid-1940s, Minneapolis 2218 encouraged these members to start their own groups, and commuters from Rochester and Mankato formed their own chapters around 1946. The first group to leave the Minneapolis group for the metropolitan area suburbs was the Robbinsdale group, which established its own chapter in 1952. The Downtown group, organized by Minneapolis 2218’s Squad 17, split off from the group in 1957, eventually establishing its headquarters at 409 Willow Street in Loring Park. The Southwest Suburban group, formed in 1966, was also an offshoot of the original Minneapolis chapter.

74 “In This Corner,” Minneapolis Star-Journal, July 21, 1946.
75 “Foes of Alcohol to Meet in City: 3,000 Expected; Co-Founder to Speak,” Minneapolis Sunday Tribune, October 24, 1948.
77 Barry Collins appears to have been the earliest adherent to AA in Minnesota, before Pat Cronin, though hospitalization prevented him from bringing the AA message to others for a significant amount of time. See McElrath, The Story Behind the Little Red Book, 11 – 14.
80 Richeson, Courage to Change, 21.
81 Richeson, Courage to Change, 126.
82 Richeson, Courage to Change, 128.
Though Minneapolis 2218 continued to form new independent groups, it retained its position as the leading chapter in the Minneapolis area, the state, and the Upper Midwest. In 1944, the chapter began publication of its bimonthly *Hi and Dry* newspaper. According to Richeson, the publication "became a valuable means of communication between groups throughout the region, as well as a vehicle for helping “loners” sustain their sobriety where groups did not exist." The importance of the chapter to the surrounding region was also evident in 1945, when the chapter entertained 800 members of AA from the Upper Midwest at the 1945 Founders’ Day Banquet. Held in the ballroom of the Nicollet Hotel, the event was attended by 800 individuals, with members from AA chapters in Iowa, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Illinois present, as well as members of the local judiciary, clergy, police, and legislature. Minneapolis 2218 continued to sponsor Founders’ Day Banquets through at least 1977, when a record-breaking number of individuals (1,775) attended the evening dinner at the Hotel Radisson South. The importance of the chapter is also demonstrated by the influential speakers who visited the chapter during the 1940s and 50s, including AA co-founders Bill Wilson and Bob Smith, the founder of Al-Anon Lois Wilson (wife of Bill Wilson), Dr. Nelson Bradley of Willmar State Hospital, NCEA founder Marty Mann, and nationally-known recovered alcoholic Julian B. A 1945 article on Alcoholics Anonymous published in *Look* magazine suggests that Minneapolis 2218 may have also gained a reputation outside of the Midwest. The article featured the case study of “Joe” in Minneapolis, who was guided to recovery by two members of the Minneapolis chapter, Frank Barnes and Ken Botham.

As the Minneapolis chapter grew, it became evident that its clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South was too small to accommodate its numbers. A lack of space meant that general meetings were often held at the Citizens’ Aid Building, and the chapter saw the need for an auditorium and additional squad rooms. Planning for an addition began in 1947. In 1949, the Alano Society of Minneapolis filed a building permit for a 53 by 33.5 by 24-foot, two-story reinforced concrete block addition to the club, estimated at $37,000. The building permit also included a reference to “alt. dwelling to club,” suggesting that additional areas of the former residence were better adapted to the needs of Minneapolis 2218 and the Alano Society at this time. Constructed by the E. M. Ganley Co., the addition was attached to the west elevation of the Washburn house and the

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north elevation of the garage, creating an L-shaped complex. The addition was dedicated on May 9, 1950 (see Figures F and G).  

During the 1940s, 50s, and 60s, the Alano Society of Minneapolis held both regularly-scheduled AA meetings and special events for struggling and recovering alcoholics. A journalist who visited the clubrooms one evening in 1958 noted that “the center hall was as busy as an airport waiting room after a plane has come in,” and asserted that “hundreds of men and women” came and went in a single evening. Orientation classes for new AA members, held one day a week for four-week segments, were hosted at the clubhouse, as were at least some of the individual squad meetings. The clubhouse also appears to have operated as a space for struggling alcoholics to stop by. According to the visiting journalist, first-time visitors would be greeted by “a duty member…sitting in a private room, offering coffee – and urging that first step towards a new life.”

Examples of special events held at the clubhouse included a 1946 New Years Eve party (described in the Minneapolis Morning Tribune as a “rip-roaring wing-ding revel”) where the garage was used as dance hall. The clubhouse sometimes hosted events in conjunction with large AA gatherings held at Minneapolis conference venues. For example, the clubhouse hosted an open house during the 1948 conference of Upper Midwest AA members held at the Minneapolis Armory. In 1950, the clubhouse hosted a dance in conjunction with the Founders’ Day Banquet held at the Radisson Hotel, as well as a breakfast for visiting AA members and an open house the following day.

With the exception of the 1949 addition, building permits indicate that the clubhouse underwent few alterations between 1942 and 1970. In 1947, the floor was “strengthened” for an estimated cost of $250, and an interior plaster and lath project estimated at a cost of $2,500 was completed in 1950. In 1953, a building permit was filed for “interior alterations to building; new arch supports, windows, etc., and miscellaneous repairs” at an estimated cost of $500. A 1941 photograph of the property suggests that there was originally a drop-off circle at the north entrance to the house (see Figure D); this was likely removed at the same time as the parking lot.

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92 “Foes of Alcohol to Meet in City: 3,000 Expected; Co-Founder to Speak,” Minneapolis Sunday Tribune, October 24, 1948.
94 Building Permit Index Card for 2218 – 20 1st Avenue South, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center; Building permit B332418, 2218 1st Avenue South, January 30, 1953, on file at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Center.
was installed. The parking lot replaced the lawn on the northern half of the site sometime between 1967 and 1970 (see Figures J and K).  

Among the earliest important visitors to give a speech at the clubhouse was AA co-founder Bill Wilson, who visited 2218 1st Avenue South in 1943 (see Figure E). The Minneapolis mayoral candidate Kenneth Peterson visited an AA breakfast in 1957, and Dr. Nelson Bradley, superintendent of the Willmar State Hospital, spoke to AA members on the topic of drug addiction in 1958. By 1959, the Women’s Home committee (composed of the wives of alcoholics) hosted bingo games at the building, with 80% of profits returned as prizes and the other 20% devoted to maintain the club and providing services to alcoholics. The bingo games illustrate the opportunities for social interaction that the clubhouse offered. According to a testimony by the wife of one AA member published in the Minneapolis Sunday Tribune in 1950, the clubhouse served as a social gathering space for not only alcoholics but also their spouses. Some wives (AA membership was primarily male) attended squad meetings with their husbands, staying for the refreshments and socialization that followed.

Though the membership of Minneapolis 2218 remained primarily male through the end of the period of significance, the number of women involved in the fellowship continued to grow. According to a 1956 newspaper article, there were approximately 80 women members out of a total of 800 members in 1951; by 1956, the total number of members remained at about 800, but the number of women had increased to 100. By 1977, women formed approximately 20% of the chapter’s approximately 1,000 members. According to another newspaper article, Minneapolis 2218 drew some of its female members from outlying areas, as women often preferred the anonymity of the larger chapter to the smaller meetings in their home towns or suburbs.

From its founding through the late 1960s, the clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South acted as an information hub for AA activities in the greater Minneapolis area. According to Richeson:

From the early 1940’s, this strong and active club, centrally located, had monitored the great majority of telephone calls for help and information. Daytime and evenings, members of 2218 were on “duty” and available to make Twelfth Step calls, provide information to inquirers, 

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96 Earl Almquist, “10,000 Saved from Drunkard’s Grave by Alcoholics Anonymous, Says Founder,” Minneapolis Morning Tribune, June 11, 1943.
and endeavor to direct needy alcoholics into an A.A. group somewhere in the area. It had quite effectively fulfilled much of A.A.’s need in the greater Minneapolis area.\textsuperscript{102}

The expansion of AA groups beyond Hennepin County to Anoka, Dakota, and Scott counties eventually necessitated the formation of AA’s Minneapolis Intergroup (also known as the Central Office) to organize information and provide referrals. However, this did not occur until 1968, two years after the formation of the St. Paul-Ramsey County Intergroup, a delay which Richeson attributes to the coordination work at the Alano Society of Minneapolis.\textsuperscript{103}

A final indication of Minneapolis 2218’s importance within AA was its strong support for several institutional AA groups in the metropolitan area. Chapter members Glenn Steele and Pat Cronin organized the Stillwater Prison AA in 1947. From approximately 1960 until 1972, an Inter-City Institutional Committee assisted Stillwater inmates as they transitioned into society. In 1960, members of Minneapolis 2218 made up over 50% of the AA members on this committee.\textsuperscript{104} The Institutional Committee at the Women’s Reformatory at Shakopee was established by chapter members Marj R. and Bob H; these and other members of the Minneapolis chapter helped with AA meetings and programs at the facility.\textsuperscript{105} The AA group at Sandstone Federal Prison, formed in 1959, was supported by multiple AA groups, but according to Richeson, the largest amount of assistance came from Minneapolis 2218. Finally, the Minneapolis chapter helped to activate an AA program at the Minneapolis Veteran’s Hospital in 1960.\textsuperscript{106}

Minneapolis 2218 was not only significant within AA itself, but also within the broader community for its participation in the rehabilitation of alcoholics. The chapter’s impact on the community was evident as early as the early 1940s, when Twin Cities AA groups reached out to absentee alcoholic workers in the defense industries. Reverend Forrest Richeson of First Christian Church, the first Minnesotan to attend the Yale School of Alcohol Studies and historian of the AA movement in Minnesota, wrote that “Twin City [sic] A.A. in the early 1940’s gained a reputation for aiding the war effort by contacting men and women engaged in war work who were continually absenting themselves from their jobs because of drinking.”\textsuperscript{107} By 1943, over 100 members of the Minneapolis AA chapter were engaged in wartime industrial work or in the military.\textsuperscript{108}

Minneapolis 2218 also impacted the surrounding community through its work with the municipal court to rehabilitate individuals charged with intoxication.\textsuperscript{109} By 1941, individuals arrested on charges of public intoxication were sometimes released to members of the chapter, and newspaper articles note the continued work of AA with the municipal court through the 1940s,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{102} Richeson, \textit{Courage to Change}, 135.
\textsuperscript{103} Richeson, \textit{Courage to Change}, 135.
\textsuperscript{104} Richeson, \textit{Courage to Change}, 139 – 140.
\textsuperscript{105} Richeson, \textit{Courage to Change}, 144 – 145.
\textsuperscript{106} Richeson, \textit{Courage to Change}, 147, 197.
\textsuperscript{109} “Alcoholics Anonymous Honors 35,” \textit{Minneapolis Sunday Tribune}, April 30, 1944.
\end{flushright}
50s, and 60s. Though most of these articles do not mention Minneapolis 2218 by name, presumably, the chapter continued the engagement with the municipal court that it had begun in the early 1940s. In 1947, the municipal court judges went as far as to recommend that the city hire an AA member on a part-time basis. In 1956, a newspaper article noted that “back of most of the cases that stream daily through Minneapolis municipal court...is...the problem of alcoholism,” and the chief probation officer of the municipal court remarked that “we have to look for most of our help in these cases to Alcoholics Anonymous, Pioneer House, the Salvation Army and the chaplains.” A 1953 Minneapolis visit by city officials from Detroit also indicates the importance of Minneapolis 2218 and its clubhouse in the treatment of alcoholics in the city – among the sites visited by officials were the municipal court probation offices, the Pioneer House, the Union City mission, and the clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South.

Members of Squad Six of Minneapolis 2218 were responsible for the vision and development of the Nu-Way House, a halfway house designed to help alcoholics recently discharged from treatment to remain sober and continue their rehabilitation. In 1967, the center was founded in an existing residence at 2200 1st Avenue South, just north of the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse. According to a 1968 newspaper article, members from the Minneapolis AA chapter provided the seed money for the project, which was also supported by several industries and labor unions. Minneapolis AA member Richard “Dick G” Giles was one of the founding board members. During its first year, it housed 129 men for an average of 6 ½ weeks. By 1978, Richeson labeled the center “one of the most successful halfway houses in Minnesota.”

Minneapolis 2218’s contribution to the treatment of alcoholism in Minnesota would not be complete without a discussion of Pat Cronin, perhaps the most well-known member of the chapter. Cronin was not only the founder of the state’s first AA group, but was an influential leader of AA activities in the Upper Midwest and in the modern alcoholism movement more broadly as a member of various organizations and commissions. As documented above, Cronin was the first director of the Pioneer House and helped to establish the AA program at the Stillwater prison. Cronin was also instrumental in forming AA groups throughout the Upper Midwest and was a popular speaker at AA gatherings in the region. In 1959, he was one of seven delegates from across the United States nominated to serve on AA’s General Service Board. His long list of accomplishments included approximately 14 years as the director of the Pioneer House, two and a half years as the president of the Alano Society at 2218 1st Avenue South, and a later term as an Alano Society board member. He served on the Minneapolis Mayor’s Committee on Alcoholism, the Midwest Council on Alcoholism, and the Minnesota Governor’s Commission on Alcoholism, and was frequently asked by city, county, and state civil service commissions to observe interviews of candidates for positions related to alcoholism.

114 Richeson, Courage to Change, 18 – 19, 28 – 34; John Shaver, “Those He Helped Pay Their Last Respects to B.
Epilogue

Though the period of significance for the Alano Society of Minneapolis clubhouse ended in 1968 with the formation of AA’s Minneapolis Intergroup, it continues to house the original Minneapolis chapter of Alcoholic Anonymous and the Alano Society of Minneapolis today. The clubhouse has experienced relatively few alterations during the last 50 years. In 1971, the building was partially reroofed for an estimated cost of $500. The chimney was repaired for an estimated $900 in 1972, and “miscellaneous alterations” estimated at $5,800 were completed in 1974. \(^\text{115}\) Historic aerial photographs indicate that the section of fence at the west side of the north half of the property was removed sometime between 1970 and 1974, and the remaining fence around the north half of the site was removed sometime after 1978 (see Figures K, L, and M).\(^\text{116}\)

A building permit indicates that miscellaneous repairs and alterations (“none structural”) were completed for an estimated $1,100 in 1978. A building permit for a “new suspended ceiling, panel exterior walls” estimated at a cost of $7,100 was filed in 1979, and a permit for $10,000 of interior modifications to the garage (specifically, the construction of two handicapped bathrooms), was filed in 1987 (see Figures N and O for images of the property as it appeared c. 1980).\(^\text{117}\) In 1992, Precision Painting filed a permit to replace exterior trim, soffits, and facia “as needed” at an estimated cost of $500, and the next year a permit was filed to reroof the building for an estimated $22,800.\(^\text{118}\) The existing patio at the interior of the “L” shaped building was constructed sometime after 2006.\(^\text{119}\)

The clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South continues to be occupied by the Alano Society of Minneapolis, the oldest Alano Club in the world to operate continuously at a single location. The clubhouse is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with Minneapolis 2218, the first and most influential chapter of AA in the state. Minneapolis 2218 played a central role in the growth and development of Minnesota’s AA by incubating other Minnesota chapters of AA, hosting regional events and notable speakers, and acting as an

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information hub for AA chapters in the greater Minneapolis area. Through its members’ engagement with alcoholics in Minneapolis and the surrounding region, Minneapolis 2218’s influence extended beyond its members and AA itself to the broader community. Its clubhouse stands as a tribute to the long history of AA in Minnesota, as well as the help it continues to offer men and women today.\textsuperscript{120}

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Historical Research Inc. Records. Hennepin County Library Digital Collections.


Minneapolis Historic Building Permits and Building Permit Index Cards. Minneapolis Public Service Center.


Newspapers:


Minneapolis Morning Tribune.

Minneapolis Sunday Tribune.

Minneapolis Sunday Tribune and Star Journal.
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 # __________
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # __________

Primary location of additional data:
___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
  X Other


Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): HE-MPC-4836

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __.64 acres________
Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**
Datum if other than WGS84:________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude:   Longitude:
2. Latitude:   Longitude:
3. Latitude:   Longitude:
4. Latitude:   Longitude:

**Or**

**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15T   Easting: 478161   Northing: 4978566
2. Zone:   Easting:   Northing:
3. Zone:   Easting:   Northing:
4. Zone:   Easting:   Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary of the property aligns with Hennepin County’s existing parcel boundaries for the parcel at 2218 1st Avenue South (see Figure A).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The current parcel boundaries, which include the clubhouse and associated parking lot to the north, were selected because they encompass the property associated with the Alano Society of Minneapolis during the period of significance, 1942 – 1968. The boundaries chosen correspond with the perimeter boundaries of lots 3, 4, and 5 of Kirkbride’s Rearrangement and lot 6 of block 2 of Remington’s Subdivision visible in a c. 1951 Sanborn map (see Figure F) and roughly with the location of a fence running the perimeter of the site visible in a c. 1950 aerial photograph (see Figure G). The northern half of the site continued to be associated with the clubhouse after the construction of a parking lot between 1967 and 1970 (see Figures J and K).
11. Form Prepared By

name/title: _Tamara Halvorsen and Lauren Anderson

Organization: _New History

street & number: _575 SE 9th Street

city or town: _Minneapolis state: _MN zip code: _55414
e-mail: halvorsen@newhistory.com

telephone: _612-843-4140
date: _March 22, 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.
Photo Log

Name of Property: Alano Society of Minneapolis

City or Vicinity: Minneapolis

County: Hennepin State: Minnesota

Photographer: Quentin Collette

Date Photographed: January 15, 2020

Photo #1 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0001)
View of north and east elevations of the clubhouse, looking southwest from 1st Ave. S.

Photo #2 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0002)
View of east elevation of the clubhouse, looking west.

Photo #3 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0003)
View of southeast corner of the 1950 addition, looking northwest.

Photo #4 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0004)
View of north and west elevations of the 1950 addition, looking southeast.

Photo #5 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0005)
View of east elevation of the 1887 house, looking west.

Photo #6 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0006)
View of north elevation of the 1887 house and 1950 addition, looking south.

Photo #7 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0007)
View of south elevation of the 1887 house, looking north.

Photo #8 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0008)
View of south and west elevations of the 1916 garage, looking northeast.

Photo #9 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0009)
View of east elevation of the 1916 garage, looking west.

Photo #10 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0010)
View of porch at the northeast corner of the 1887 house, looking southwest.
Photographer: Lauren Anderson

Date Photographed: January 15, 2020

Photo #11 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0011)
View of first level foyer in the 1887 house, looking west.

Photo #12 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0012)
View of first level common area in the 1887 house, looking southwest.

Photo #13 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0013)
View of first level dining hall in the 1887 house, looking southeast.

Photo #14 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0014)
View of first level Crying Room in the 1887 house, looking northwest.

Photo #15 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0015)
View of second level corridor in the 1887 house, looking east.

Photo #16 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0016)
View of second level meeting room in the 1887 house, looking northeast.

Photo #17 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0017)
View of third level storage room in the 1887 house, looking north.

Photo #18 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0018)
View of lower level storage room in the 1887 house, looking southwest.

Photo #19 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0019)
View of lower level meeting room in the 1887 house, looking northwest.

Photo #20 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0020)
View of first level auditorium in the 1916 garage and 1950 addition, looking north.

Photo #21 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0021)
View of second level meeting room in the 1950 addition, looking northwest.

Photographer: Cheryl Larson

Date Photographed: April 6, 2020

Photo #22 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0022)
View of second level meeting room in the 1950 addition, looking northwest.
Photo #23 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0023) View of second level pantry in the 1916 garage, looking south.

Photo #24 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0024) View of second level kitchen in the 1916 garage, looking northeast.

Photo #25 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0025) View of second level hall in the 1916 garage, looking north.

Photo #26 (MN_Hennepin County_Alano Society of Minneapolis_0026) View of second level bathroom in the 1916 garage, looking southwest.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number  Additional Information  Page  1

Figure A  Aerial photograph of Alano Society of Minneapolis, c. 2020.
           Courtesy of Hennepin County. Construction dates added by author.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota

County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number  Additional Information  Page  2

Figure B  Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting original wooden barn (razed) and John Washburn residence, c. 1912.
Figure C  Aerial photograph of the John Washburn residence, including the 1916 garage, May 12, 1939.  
Aerial photograph sheet 6BS, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure D  John Washburn Residence, November 13, 1941. Note the 1916 garage visible in the background at the left side of the photograph. *Minneapolis Star-Journal*, Minnesota Historical Society Collections Online.
Figure E  Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, shown in the library of the clubhouse at 2218 1st Avenue South, 1943. *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, June 11, 1943.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Information Page 6

Figure F  Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting the Alano Society of Minneapolis at 2218 1st Avenue South (including the 1949 addition), c. 1951.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure G  Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, c. 1950.
Aerial photograph sheet 6BS, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number  Additional Information  Page  8

Figure H  Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, 1956.
Aerial photograph sheet 81B, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure I  Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, 1961.
Aerial photograph sheet 6BS, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section number</th>
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<td>10</td>
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Figure J  
Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, March or April 1967.  
Aerial photograph sheet 81B, Chicago Aerial Survey, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
### National Register of Historic Places

#### Continuation Sheet

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<th>Additional Information</th>
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**Alano Society of Minneapolis**

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**County and State**

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**Figure K**


Aerial photograph sheet 81B, Chicago Aerial Survey, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number  Additional Information  Page  12

Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure L  Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, April 19, 1974.
Aerial photograph sheet 81B, Mark Hurd Aerial Surveys, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   Additional Information   Page 13

**Figure M**  Aerial photograph of the Alano Society of Minneapolis, April 1978. Aerial photograph sheet 81B, Mark Hurd Aerial Surveys, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure N  Alano Society of Minneapolis, c. 1980.
Norene Roberts, Historical Research Inc. Records, Hennepin County Library Digital Collections.
Alano Society of Minneapolis
Name of Property
Hennepin County Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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**Figure O**  Alano Society of Minneapolis, c. 1980.
Norene Roberts, Historical Research Inc. Records, Hennepin County Library Digital Collections.