

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

1. Name of Property

historic name DeLaney Barn

other names/site number The Silo, The Milk Barn

2. Location

street & number 200 South Chambers Road

not for publication

city, town Aurora

vicinity

state Colorado

code CO

county Arapahoe

code 005

zip code 80012

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing |
|--------------|--------------------|
| <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> buildings |
| | _____ sites |
| | _____ structures |
| | _____ objects |
| <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agricultural/Subsistence

Storage, animal facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Part of City of Aurora's Historic Farm

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Round and polygonal design

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Weatherboard-wood

horizontal, beveled clapboard

roof Shake shingles

other Galvanized metal 144"x26" panels

nailed to exterior base of building

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The DeLaney Barn is a round barn located on the DeLaney Farm in Aurora, Colorado. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period. It is an example of what Eric Sloane in The Age of Barns refers to as Utopian Shaped Architecture.¹ This vernacular building is representative of round and polygonal barns, the design and construction of which peaked in the Midwest between the years 1900 to 1910.² Built circa 1900 it may be the only known round historic barn in Colorado.³

The structure was designed and built near the turn of the century by an unknown architect and/or builder. It is likely that the DeLanays were influenced in choosing the design by agricultural bulletins or agricultural and architectural journals containing articles on structures of this kind.⁴ Although the structure has been used as a barn for at least the past fifty years, it was originally meant to be a silo.

The two story building is free-standing, perfectly circular, and has an interior diameter of thirty-one feet. The construction is wood frame with horizontal beveled clapboard exterior and interior. It is painted white with a green colored conical roof composed of wooden shingles. The rafters on the interior converge toward the central radius with an impressive dizzying effect. Outside, the center of the roof is ornamentally capped with a spindle and wood ball projecting about two feet above the roof cap. The technical expertise, design, and workmanship of the round barn provides a sense of awe as well as aesthetic appeal. In spite of the later addition of windows and a wooden plank second story floor, the structure maintains its original integrity. The barn is built slightly into a southwest facing slope. This berming may be the result of the construction of an earthen reservoir embankment to the east. The first story doorway faces south-southwest in the direction of the farmhouse located a quarter of a mile away across Toll Gate Creek.

The installation date of the existing doorway is unknown. The original opening for the silo appears to have been a trapezoid approximately 34x48 inches cut into the eastern facing and lower portion of the roof. This opening would have been accessed by a conveyor for the purpose of filling the structure. The silage was possibly removed through an opening and chute on the southwest side of the building which has since been replaced by the existing ground floor doorway.⁵ It appears that when the doorway was cut other alterations were also made to convert the silo into its present form--a barn.

These modifications include a second story floor, a second story doorway on the east side, exterior windows, and milk barn stanchions on the lower floor. The silo roof opening has been sealed and today, a large side opening exists directly below the original. The dimensions of the new door are 34x71 inches. Most of the remodeling took

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place on the interior. A plank floor was installed seven feet above the original dirt floor. It is of post and beam construction with support stringers of rough cut 2x8 inch pine or fir over which is laid 3/4x4 inch wood flooring. There is a central opening in the floor to the lower level for cattle feeding. The interior walls are clad with 1/2x5 inch tongue and groove planed lumber on studs roughly spaced 12 to 14 inches. The dimensions of the studs themselves are 1 5/8x7 1/2 inches. The first floor door is flanked by four windows on the left side and two on the right. In addition, three other windows are found on the east and north sides. Eight of the nine windows face east, south and west. This may indicate a desire to add light and winter sun to the interior. Apparently sixteen windows were envisioned at one time but only nine were completely cut through the exterior clapboard. The eight unfinished openings on the interior have since been repaired with newer materials. The floorplan consists of a central feeding crib and walkway with two rows of stanchions. One side has eight functioning stanchions and the other appears to either have been for storage of materials or feeding of non-milking animals such as calves. All of the material utilized in this construction was wood. No commercial or prefabricated cattle handling materials were used.

Today the weathered building stands vacant. Old lumber and materials stored in the barn have been sifted through and strewn about by vandals. The walls of the loft are covered top to bottom with graffiti. Some of the support studs are rotting and need replacement as do sections of the exterior clapboard walls. On the exterior there are numerous small metal plates nailed over woodpecker holes, however new generations of woodpeckers have pecked their holes and are now residing within the walls.

The barn sits on a one hundred and sixty-eight acre site on the banks of West Toll Gate Creek. The stream has retained its original course over the years, however now it has cut deeply into the ground and no longer flows into the reservoir directly east of the barn. According to Alice DeLaney Crowley, the family simply walked across a foot bridge laid over the stream. Today erosion has lowered the creek bed by at least fifteen feet. The banks are nearly vertical, unstable and erode constantly. The barn is not now in any danger, yet a flash flood or sudden runoff could change the course of the flow and become a potential hazard. Otherwise, the natural features of the property appear to have changed little since Alice DeLaney Crowley was a small girl.

Paradoxically, the expansion of Chambers Road threatened the existence of the farm, yet without its presence the thousands of Aurorans who drive by daily would not have the opportunity to pass by and observe a landmark of their community. The entire property named The DeLaney Farm is part of an open space project sponsored by the City of Aurora. Over the next three to five years all of the buildings and structures will be stabilized and the major structures, including the barn, will be restored. Stabilization of the structure is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 1988 and will follow the Secretary of the Interior Guidelines.

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Endnotes for Section 7

1. Eric Sloane, An Age of Barns (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1975?), 41-43.
2. Martha Hagedorn-Krass, "Round Barns: A Part of Kansas' Building Heritage", Kansas Preservation, November/December 1987, 5.
3. Literature searches and personal conversations with Chris Pfaff of The Colorado State Historical Society (Centennial Farms Project), Barbara Norgren of The Colorado State Historical Society, Mary Humstone of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (Barn Again!), and Dr. James E. Hansen of the Colorado State University Archives have led me personally to conclude that this is indeed the only historic round barn in Colorado. However the possibility exists that there may be others so I cannot take that leap of faith and say it is the only round barn.
4. Ibid., 5.
5. Alice DeLaney Crowley, personal communication January 13, 1988. Ms. Crowley, who is the oldest living descendant of John and Bridget DeLaney, remembers the 'silo' while it was in use.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Significant Person

Period of Significance

1900 to 1938

Significant Dates

none

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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

The DeLaney Barn is a rare example of round barns in Colorado. In fact it may be the only round barn in Colorado. It is representative of a distinctive form of architecture and method of construction. It evokes a time when agriculture was developing on the Colorado high plains and is a striking example of the craftsmanship, technology, and expertise employed by area farmers.¹ Today as part of a municipal open space project the DeLaney Barn gives the Aurora community a sense of its roots—a direct link with the area's past, and serves as a focal point for community pride and appreciation.

The barn was constructed near the turn of the century on a farmstead owned by the John DeLaney family. DeLaney arrived in Colorado in 1862, an emigrant to Central City from Neenagh, Tipperary County, Ireland. He and his wife, Bridget, accompanied her parents to Central City and operated the Central City Bakery from 1862 until 1870, when they began raising horses on Toll Gate Creek, east of Denver.² DeLaney became keeper of the Toll Gate Stage Station on the North Smoky Hill Trail, an early route from the east into the Denver region. The toll gate station was an active location at this time—tolls were collected of ten cents per passenger and twenty five cents per horse,³ as well as helping traffic cross the bridge that spanned the creek. In addition, the DeLanays assisted passengers, served meals, and handled postal duties.⁴

Agriculture in Colorado from the late 1870s to the early 1900s was a thriving industry, supplying Denver and the mining towns with needed food and other supplies. The great open prairie around Denver was being cultivated to fill those needs.⁵ Many farmers had to adapt to a new type of agriculture, dryland farming. They were open and willing to try innovative ideas that might make their task easier. Much of what they learned was by observation, exchanging information, reading agricultural journals, bulletins, and books.⁶ The round barn is one example of the progressive techniques farmers employed to succeed at the difficult task before them.

At the turn of the century, the DeLaney barn was referred to as "The Silo,"⁷ and since no specific source for the Barn design is available, the use of this term may account for its unusual design. The first reported use of silos occurred in New York state in 1878, and siloing itself was considered a revolutionary method of storing crops.⁸ It appears, from the materials and dimensions, that the silo never functioned efficiently, resulting in its conversion for use as a barn.

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In the period between 1900 and 1910 many round barns were constructed throughout the Midwest. Publicists of the "new scientific" agriculture claimed that these barns were time and labor saving, had more interior space, and were more resistant to the wind than the usual gable roofed barns. Others countered that round and polygonal barns "often lacked adequate ventilation and lighting, and were considered expensive to build."⁹ Additionally, such a barn required astonishing skill and expertise on the part of the carpenter. In comparing photographs of this barn with others surviving in Kansas, it is particularly notable that this example used horizontal placement of the clapboards, and that it is truly round, rather than merely polygonal. These attributes, together with the craftsmanship evident in the roof trusses, demonstrate the builder's skill, and meet the significant criteria for buildings which represent a type, period, and method of construction.

Fortunately, what remains in Aurora today is one of the most striking farm buildings in Colorado. This perfectly round barn fits especially well into the early twentieth century wave of round and polygonal barn construction. It would be easy to appreciate the significance of the DeLaney Barn solely on this basis. However, an equally important consideration is that farming and ranching are declining in America and as a result the barn of the past is becoming an endangered species.¹⁰ Every attempt to preserve, protect, or call attention to these special vernacular buildings is a tribute to our agricultural heritage. We must also appreciate the DeLaney Barn's ties to the progressive agricultural movement which has contributed to America's role as the leading producer of farm products in the world.

Endnotes for Section 8

1. David McComb, "Agriculture and Society of Colorado," (Fort Collins: n.p., 1981), 9-18.
2. Rebecca A. Hunt, "The Gully DeLaney Site: A Sense of Place. An Interpretive and Exhibit Plan," October 3, 1986, Manuscript Aurora History Museum, Aurora, Colo., 4.
3. Margaret Long, A.B., M.D., The Smoky Hill Trail: Following the Old Historic Pioneer Trails on Modern Highways, (Denver: The W.H. Kistler Stationary Co., 1953).
4. Oscar O. Winther, The Transportation Frontier: The Trans-Mississippi West, 1865-1890, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1966), 66.
5. William E. Pabor, Colorado As An Agricultural State, (New York: Orange Judd Co., 1883), 27-36.
6. McComb, "Agriculture," 9.
7. Alice DeLaney Crowley, interview with author, January 13, 1988.
8. Frank Sherman Peer, Siloing: Ensilage and Stable Construction, rev. ed., (New York: the author, 1885, 1900), xi.
9. Martha Hagedorn-Krass, "Round Barns: A Part of Kansas' Building Heritage," Kansas Preservation, November/December 1987, 5.
10. Mary Humstone, "How Your Barn Can Make History," Successful Farming, June 1987, 10.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Arthur, Eric Dudley. The Barn: Vanishing Landmark in North America. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1972.

Ditmer, Joanne. "The Past Has Place in Aurora's Present, DeLaney Farm Takes On New Life," The Denver Post, Living and Arts, July 31, 1987, Sec. 3, 1e & 2e.

Glazier, Lloyd J. "Preliminary Report on the Toll Gate Stage Station, Fort Morgan Cutoff and N. Smoky Hill Routes." Manuscript Aurora History Center. March 1981.

Hafen, LeRoy and Ann W. Hafen. Colorado, A Story of the State and its People. Denver: The Old West Publishing Co., 1944.

Hagedorn-Krass, Martha. "Round Barns: A Part of Kansas' Building Heritage," Kansas Preservation. Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society. November/December 1987, 10.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Aurora History Museum, Aurora, Colorado

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1 acre

UTM References

A
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D 13 516500 4395760

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point 1550 feet north and 460 feet east of the Northeast Corner of the intersection of East Alameda Avenue and South Chambers Road then continue East 208.7 feet, thence North 208.7 feet, thence South 208.7 feet to the point of beginning. The boundary of the nomination encompasses approximately 1 acre.

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Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ramona G. Hutchinson and Lewis A. Hutchinson

organization City of Aurora, Parks, Recreation & Pub. Prop. date January 1988

street & number 2000 Langshire telephone (303) 484-7601

city or town Fort Collins state Colorado zip code 80526

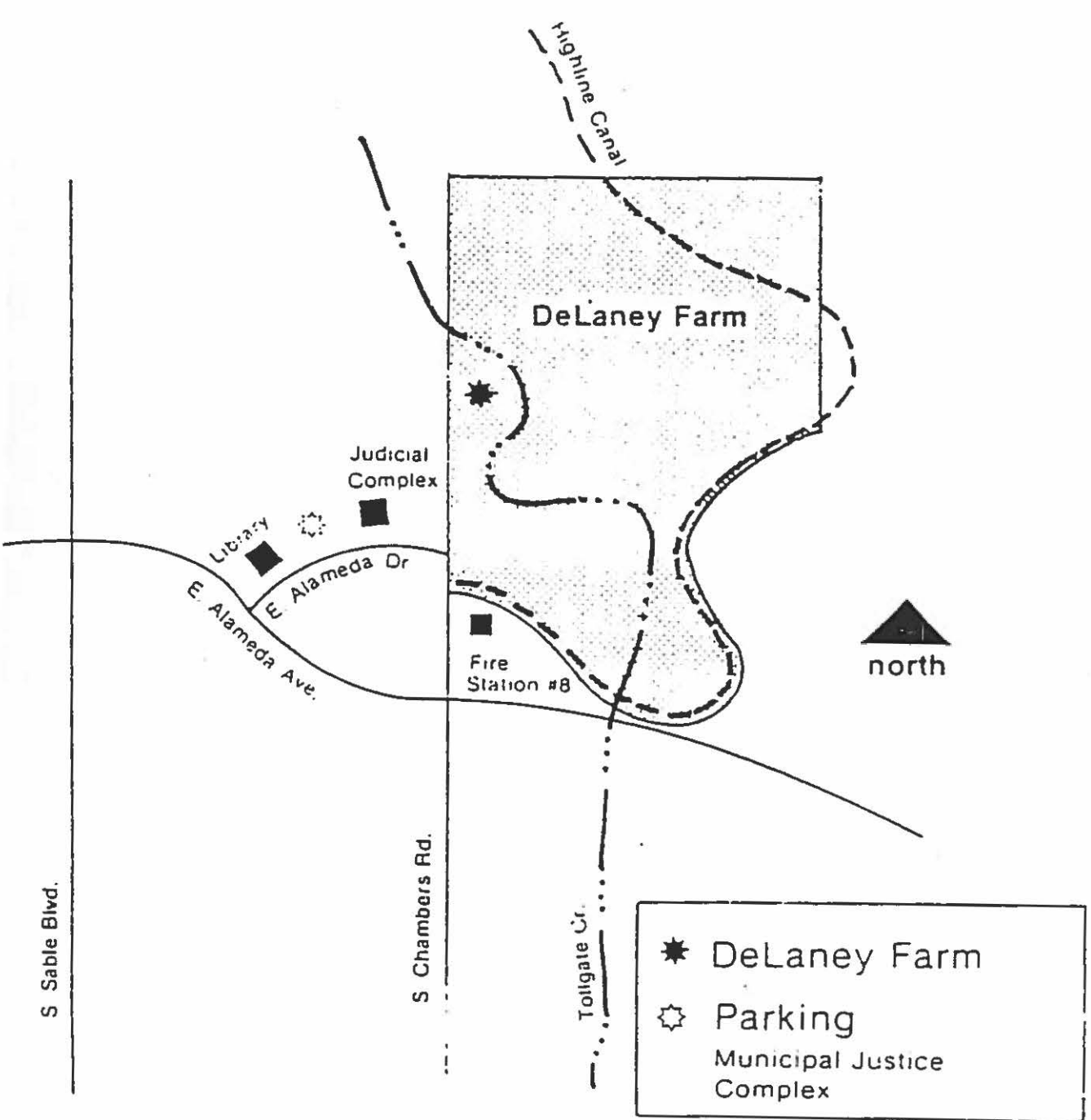
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References (continued)

- Humstone, Mary and John Walter. "How Your Barn Can Make History," Successful Farming, Des Moines: Merideth Corporation, June 1987, 85.
- Long, Margaret, A.B., M.D. The Smoky Hill Trail: Following the Old Historic Pioneer Trails on the Modern Highways. Denver: The W.H. Kistler Co. 1953.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1986.
- McComb, David. Agricultural Technology and Society in Colorado. 1981.
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- Pabor, William E. Colorado As An Agricultural State. Its Farms, Fields, and Garden Lands. New York: Orange Judd Company. 1883.
- Peer, Frank Sherman. Soiling: Soiling Crops and Ensilage-Barn, Stable, and Silo Construction. rev. ed. New York: the author. 1900.
- Radford, William A. Practical Country Buildings: A Handbook of Economical and Common Sense Plans for the Construction of Dwellings, Barns, Stock, and Implement Sheds, Icehouses, and All Types of Farm Structures. Wausau, Wis.: The Northern Hemlock and Hardwood Manufacturers' Association. 1912.
- Root, Frank A., William E. Connelley. The Overland Stage to California: Personal Reminiscences and Authentic History of the Great Overland Stage Line and Pony Express From the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean. Topeka, Kansas: the author, 1901.
- Rudofsky, Bernard. Architecture Without Architects. A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture. New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1965.
- Sloane, Eric. An Age of Barns. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, nd.
- Steinel, Alvin T., and D.W. Working. History of Agriculture in Colorado 1858 to 1926. Fort Collins: The State Agricultural College, 1926.
- Stone, Wilbur Fisk, ed. History of Colorado. 4 vols.. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918-1919.
- Winther, Oscar. The Transportation Frontier: The Trans-Mississippi West, 1865-1890. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1964.



S Sable Blvd.

Library
E Alameda Ave.

Judicial Complex

U Alameda Dr

S Chambers Rd.

Fire Station #8

Tollgate Cr.

Highline Canal

DeLaney Farm

north

- ★ DeLaney Farm
- ★ Parking
- Municipal Justice Complex