

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Margaret and Vernon Maxon House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1305 McDonald ^{Drive.} Street not for publication
city or town Huron vicinity _____
state South Dakota code SD county Beadle code 005 zip code 57350

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 _____ nationally _____ statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

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

Contributing

Noncontributing

1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) Lustrons in South Dakota

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Family

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Family

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Lustron prefabricated metal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Porcelain enameled steel
walls Porcelain enameled steel
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets

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)

- 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 a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Industry _____
Architecture _____

Period of Significance

1946-1950 _____

Margaret and Vernon Maxon House
Name of Property

Beadle, South Dakota
County and State

Significant Dates 1950

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

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Balss, Roy and Beckman, Morris

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: _____

Margaret and Vernon Maxon House
Name of Property

Beadle, South Dakota
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 14 564980 4911080
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____
 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title On Site Photography and Preservation
organization On Site Photography and Preservation date May 1998
street & number Box 94627 telephone (402) 438-8093
city or town Lincoln state Nebraska zip code 68509

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Margaret and Vernon Maxon House

Name of Property

Beadle, South Dakota

County and State

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Margaret Maxon

Street & number 1305 McDonald Street

telephone _____

city or town Huron

state SD

zip code 57350

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 7 Page 1**Narrative Description:**

The Margaret and Vernon Maxon House is a rectangular three-bedroom Westchester Deluxe Lustron built in 1950, model number 03-1829. The house measures 31' x 39' feet and rest on a concrete slab. The Maxon House is one of the few yellow Lustron houses found in South Dakota. There is also a two-car garage attached to the house by a breezeway that is not from the Lustron manufacturers. Neither breezeway nor garage has an affect on the integrity of the property. The house is located in Huron, South Dakota on a curving corner lot with large conifer trees in front and expansive landscaped front yard. The property retains a high degree of historic integrity and is in excellent condition.

The Westchester model was the most popular of all Lustrons manufactured and this is a good example of the three-bedroom deluxe type. The main entrance to the Westchester Deluxe is entered directly under the gable. The interior to the deluxe model was originally constructed with kitchen built-in cabinets with pass-through to a china cabinet in the dining room. Other features to the Westchester Deluxe are the built-in bookcase and cabinets in the living room, combination dishwasher-clothes washer in the kitchen, automatic water heater, built-in vanity and storage cabinets in the master bedroom, seven large closets and a radiant panel heating system. Most bathrooms in the Westchester and especially the Westchester Deluxe were outfitted with all essential elements for storage like a built-in (antennae like) projection for a washcloth in the shower, swiveling toothbrush holder, and built-in tissue holder. All that was needed from the owner was a refrigerator, stove and furniture. The interior doors are enameled steel sliding pocket doors, which continued the streamline appearance and decreased the need for the space a swing door requires. The floor covering consisted of resilient asphalt tiles. Because of the durability of the enameled steel, the majority of the original features are still retained in the home today. Those that have been changed are the dishwasher/clothes washer combination unit has been taken out, the original glazed glass in the outside doors has been replaced with sliding glass for ventilation, parts of the kitchen and bathroom have been wallpapered and the floors have been completely covered with carpeting.

The most often changed item in a Lustron house is the heating system. The original system consisted of a small generator supplying radiant heat through the ceiling panels to waft pleasing rays down through the house without any uncomfortable forced air moving dust around. However, these were usually the first items to fail or act insufficiently in the house. The house continues to use the radiant heat system although the heating unit has been replaced. Often this system was changed to a new heating system of forced air. Although the Lustron house came with a heating NPS

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 7 Page 2

system, it did^{not} contain a cooling system. Like most Lustron owners the Maxons have installed a cooling unit to their home.

The exterior of the house contains very little ornamentation. However, the 2' x 2' yellow enameled panels, the blue-green enamel tile roof, enameled steel panel chimney, and the bay window give this house its distinct appearance. One common feature to the two and three bedroom Westchester houses is the single decorative spiral porch-roof support. The gabled ends are clad in 1' wide vertical cream-colored enameled steel panels. The front and back entry doors are the only ones that swing open. An attached metal canopy is located directly above the front entrance. The original windows contained all-aluminum sashes and were operated by small crank-type handles, with enameled cream-colored surrounds and curved lintels. The original windows have been removed, however they were replaced in the same style and with similar materials. The surrounds and lintels have been retained.

The interior floor plan to this Westchester Deluxe Lustron follows that of all other three-bedroom Westchester homes. The entrance to the Maxon house is under a metal canopy situated on the west elevation. The entrance leads directly into the living room, which contains 8' x 2' floor-to-ceiling, beveled, dove grey panels. A large picture window with sidelights gives the appearance and feeling of openness in this room. To the left is the open dining room. This room also contains one of the large picture windows. The dining room and kitchen are attached by a china cabinet with pass-through that allows for easier access between kitchen and dining room. The kitchen contains one small window above the kitchen sink. The rear door is also located in this area, on the south elevation. A utility room is provided that contained the original heating unit and a space for a laundry. The bathroom is located down the hall from the living room on the left. Across from the bathroom is one of three bedrooms. This room contains built in drawers, cabinets and floor-to-ceiling closets with sliding doors surrounding a large vanity mirror. A second bedroom is located next to the first bedroom, and contains a pocket-door closet. It does not contain the built-in features. Its major features are the windows along the north and east elevations. Both of these are small sliding windows. Across from this room is the larger master bedroom. It also contains a pocket-door closet and two windows. On its east elevation is also a small sliding window. A large picture window is located on its south elevation. A linen closet is located between these two bedrooms. All ceilings in the house consist of 4' x 4' steel dove grey enamel panels. The bathroom and kitchen are the only rooms that are yellow in color.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 3**Narrative Statement of Significance:**

The Maxon House, built in 1950, is significant under criterion "A" for its association with the mass production of post-World War II housing and construction method innovations. It is also significant under criterion "C" as an example of new and innovative construction method for residential housing. The frame and body of these houses are constructed entirely from porcelain enameled steel, and includes a modern "ranch-type" design and open layout.

The Lustron Corporation was formed in response to the growing national demand for increased affordable housing in the United States. In some areas demand was generated before the war ended. Often these demands were concentrated in areas where production for war materials or military schooling was located. Housing was crowded and rents became inflated. To counter this problem the War Production Administration placed price controls on housing cost. Other reasons for scarcity of housing was the decrease of building projects in the 1930s due to the depression. Also, during the war, materials that could have been used for housing were reserved by the government for war related needs. For almost seventeen years housing production came to a standstill. After the war, returning GIs needed affordable housing for themselves and their new families. The United States government tried to ease the situation by continuing price controls, offering low interest housing loans and encouraging the development of moderate priced housing. The government estimated that over three million new housing units would be needed, with an additional twelve million needed over a ten year period. To deal with the problems of housing, the Veterans' Emergency Housing Program was established with Wilson Wyatt appointed Housing Expediter in January 1946. To quickly expand housing production the Veterans' Emergency Housing Act was passed to set up a program to increase housing production by utilizing surplus war plants, guarantee markets for new types of materials and prefabricated buildings, set aside materials to be allocated to residential construction efforts, and guarantee loans to finance new projects under the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

It was in this atmosphere that the Lustron Corporation was formed. In 1946, Carl Gunnar Strandlund, vice-president and general manager of Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company went to Washington, D. C. to request steel to produce all-steel gas stations for the Standard Oil Company. Strandlund's plan was rejected on the basis that materials were needed to go toward housing and not gas stations. He was encouraged to develop a plan for a house instead. Later that year, Strandlund returned with plans for an all-steel house designed by Illinois architects Roy Blass and Morris Beckman. Not only could the house be constructed of available materials, the manufacture time and price were well within an accepted range. It was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 4

estimated that one hundred houses could be produced per day within nine months at a retail price of \$7,000. Finally in late 1946 the Reconstruction Finance Corporation committed a \$12.5 million dollar loan to production. The location for production of the new Lustron houses was a vacant Curtiss-Wright factory near Columbus, Ohio. Strandlund invested in state-of-the-art equipment and based production on the automobile assembly line. This was supposed to make manufacturing more time and cost efficient.

The major design element of the Lustron was the all-steel parts, which included studs, trusses, wall frame assemblies, exterior walls, roof shingle panels, rain gutters, window and door frame panels. Wall and ceiling panels were entirely encased in porcelain enamel, as were sliding doors, built-in cabinets, closets and every other surface. The concrete slab floor was covered with resilient asphalt tiles.

The prototype Lustron house designed by Blass and Beckman was known as the "Esquire." This design was never actually used in the construction of any of the homes. Instead the Westchester model, which contained slightly more living space by removing a jog in the rear wall which enlarged the bath and master bedroom, was used.

The Lustron came in three models which were the Westchester (the most popular), the Newport and the Meadowbrook. The majority of the houses built were the two and three-bedroom Westchester and Westchester Deluxe models. The two-bedroom plan measured thirty-one feet by thirty-five feet on the exterior, with a 6' x 12' corner recess for an entrance porch. The three-bedroom model measures thirty-one by thirty-nine feet with no corner cutout and is entered directly from the gable end under an attached canopy. This plan with built-in amenities, was later designated the Westchester Deluxe. Two and three bedroom Newport and Meadowbrook models were a response to the desire for a less expensive model, but very few were ever produced. One-and-a-half and two-and-a-half car garages with connection breezeways were made available in 1949-1950 and are also more elusive. Unlike the houses the garage packages did not include framing; the steel panels were fastened to light wood framing procured locally.

The Lustron Corporation operated from 1946 to 1950 before government loans were recalled and their business came to a halt. Unfortunately many outside factors affected the success of Strandlund's project. Pressure from lumber and concrete companies fearful of losing their business, cast a negative light on the future and competition for the loans became fierce. After only four years of production and approximately 2,500 houses manufactured the Lustron Company folded despite the technological advances in production and standard design ideas. These included built-in combination dishwasher-clothes washer, built in cabinets, and construction methods that allowed the house to be erected in about one to two weeks.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 5

All surfaces of the house were made of the same enameled steel, which made it durable and gave it a singular look.

There are approximately ^{BEDROOM} thirty-eight Lustron houses in South Dakota, including two and three Westchester models and one Newport model. Not all of the Lustrons in the state are eligible for listing due to distracting alterations and additions; however, the Maxon House is a good example, retains a high degree of historic integrity and represents a typical three bedroom Westchester model. Architecturally the house is illustrative of the technological advancements in housing construction and the use of new building materials.

The Maxon House is located in Huron, South Dakota. Huron lies in the northeast section of the state and is one of the larger towns in this area. The house is located in a subdivision on the south side of town. This residential neighborhood is bordered by Huron High School, Washington School and Huron College. The Maxons were not the original owners of this Lustron. Yale Charbonneau, a physician and his wife built the house in 1950. The second owner was Ross Rhoades, a mechanic foreman for the Chicago & North West Railroad. Vernon W. Maxon and his wife Margaret bought the house in 1956, and have lived there ever since. Mr. Maxon worked as a soil scientist for the United States Conservation Service. Originally he bought a Lustron in Redfield, South Dakota. However, later he was transferred to Huron and bought one that was available there.

The Lustron was offered as a total package distributed through a dealer with pre-planned site layouts for maximum success of the setting of the house. The builder of the Huron Lustron was Fred W. Weisenburger. The Weisenburger Construction Company franchise constructed Lustron houses in Huron, Miller, Pierre, and Martin. Unfortunately, information about Mr. Weisenburger's building company and history as a Lustron dealer is unknown. The Weisenburger Construction Co., is no longer in business.

Lustron houses are significant under Criteria "A" because of their association with broad trends in United States architecture development. The origination of the Lustron Corporation and houses were the direct result of the housing shortage after World War II. Although the Lustron Corporation was not as successful as other companies, such as Levitt & Sons, it played a major role in developing post-war housing.

Lustron hoses are also significant under Criteria "C." The Lustron home was an innovation in housing design born from necessity. It was developed to meet specific needs; low cost, quick production, and the employment of available post-war materials. The use of built-in cabinets, recessed drawer handles, and sliding pocket doors made more space available. This allowed a smaller, less expensive house to be built that retained a feeling of spaciousness. Contributing to this feeling was the architects' use of

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8,9 Page 6

an open floor plan and large picture windows. Also important was the use of the assembly line to manufacture and package the total house for quick assemblage on site. Most important was the application of porcelain enameled steel to the construction of housing.

Although Lustrons houses have not yet met the fifty year criteria, its exceptional importance as a contributing component in United States post-war history should make it eligible under Criteria Consideration "G."

Bibliography:

Keister, Kim. "Showing Its Metal." *Historic Preservation*. The Magazine for the National Trust of Historic Preservation. January-February 1995.

The Lustron Home Informational Brochure.

Mitchell, Robert A. "What Ever Happened to Lustron Homes?" APT Bulletin vol. XXIII, Number 2, 1991.

Multiple Property Nomination. Lustron Houses in Georgia. Georgia State Historical Preservation Office. Atlanta, Georgia

Multiple Property Nomination. Lustron Houses in South Dakota. South Dakota State Historical Society. Pierre, South Dakota.

Ohio Historical Society survey information regarding guidance for Lustron database.

Oral Interview with Mrs. Margaret Maxon, 11-21-97 and August 11, 1998.

Scupholm, Carrie. Sioux Falls Historic Sites Survey, Summer, 1992. Prepared for the Sioux Falls Board of Preservation, Sioux Falls, South Dakota and South Dakota State Historical Society Preservation Center, Vermillion, South Dakota.

Huron Phone Directories, 1949-1957

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 7

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for the Maxon House includes the building itself and the land surrounding the corner lot property.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the lot originally chosen for the house.

