

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Chapel in the Hills

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3788 Chapel Lane

city or town Rapid City

state South Dakota

code SD

county Pennington

code 103

zip code 57702

☐ not for publication

☐ vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide x local

Jay D. Vogt
Signature of certifying official/Title

04-25-2012
Date

SD SHPO
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:)

John Edson H. Beal
Signature of the Keeper

8-7-12
Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: Religious Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Stave Church

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Wood: Log

roof: Wood: Shingle

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The chapel is roughly cruciform in plan (see Figure 1). The nave, chancel and apse form the interior of the church. An ambulatory surrounds the entire church. The main entrance is on the east elevation and there are also entrances on the north elevation into the chapel (there is an entrance into the ambulatory on the south elevation but no entrance on the chapel). The entrances lead into the ambulatory and then into the nave. The entrances into the ambulatory are gabled. The main roofs over the nave and chancel are gabled with secondary roofs cascading down below them. The roof over the apse is conical. A steeple tops the gabled roof above the nave. Vertical planks of wood clad the walls and floors of the chapel. Heavy, diagonal wood shingles clad the roofs. Elaborate wood carvings are found throughout the interior and exterior of the chapel, including crosses above the entrances and carvings of dragon motifs at the gable peaks. The chapel is tucked into the hills and coniferous trees surround it on the north, south and west. Terraced, stone retaining walls front the chapel. A concrete sidewalk approaches the chapel from the south and leads to stone steps at the front of the chapel. To the rear of the chapel is a small courtyard with rock retaining walls and steps. Located south and north of the chapel are gardens, stone steps and retaining walls (see Figure 2).

Narrative Description

General Characteristics

The chapel's footprint roughly follows a cruciform pattern. There are four main segments of the chapel: the nave, chancel, apse and steeple. The rectilinear nave is the largest segment and begins at the eastern entrance to the chapel. The nave connects to the rectilinear chancel, and then the chancel connects to the semicircular apse. Like their counterparts in stone, stave churches have a rectangular chancel, somewhat narrower than the nave, but as a rule the nave and chancel have walls of the same height.¹ The semicircular apse is also a common feature of stave church architecture in southeastern Norway.² The steeple straddles the gable of the nave segment and is executed in the stave technique.

Gables and steep roof pitches give the chapel a vertical emphasis. The wooden shingles that cover the roofs and most of the walls provide a surface effect similar in appearance to a pine cone, which echoes a popular theme from the Norwegian forests.³ The many roofs of the church also draw a parallel to the clustered branches of the fir tree which narrow toward the top of the tree.⁴ The intersecting ridges of the roofs are capped with cut logs.

The foundation of the chapel is stone. The rest of the chapel is completely constructed out of Douglas fir imported from Oregon. The only non-wood features of the chapel are the small, circular glass portals located on the nave and chancel, a small, glass window on an upper gable on the east and north elevations and the metal hardware.

¹ Gunnar Bugge. *Stave Churches in Norway: Introduction and Survey*. (Oslo: Dreyer, 1983), 15.

² Ibid, 15.

³ Anders Bugge. *Norwegian Stave Churches*. (Oslo: Dreyer, 1953), 12.

⁴ Ibid, 12.

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An ambulatory surrounds the nave, chancel and apse. The ambulatory, with its protruding entrances on the east, north and south elevations, gives the chapel its roughly cruciform footprint. The ambulatory has a waist-high enclosed wall topped by a miniature colonnade that connects to the roof eave. This runs the course of the chapel and is only interrupted by the entrances and for the semicircular segment around the apse. The wall of the ambulatory around the apse does not continue the colonnade and is enclosed with wood. The floor of the ambulatory is stone.

Basic Structural Elements of the Chapel

The foundation is stone quarried from the Keystone area. Wood beams are placed on the foundation, intersecting one another at the corners and continuing outward to support adjacent transepts. The fourteen staves which frame the nave are inserted into the rafter beams and joined on top by a square section of string beams. The columns and beams are mortised to interlock.^v This square section supports the sharply pitched triangular roof trusses. The roof trusses support the expanse of the roof and the steeple that straddles the ridge of the roof.

Additional structural support for the church was added in three ways. First, parallel horizontal bracing-planks with cross braces between them (in the decorative motif of Saint Andrew crosses) run a continuous course between the staves. Second, structural support was also achieved by inserting arches in between the staves in the form of curved wooden brackets (these are found in small and large stave churches). Third, the floor section resting on the raft beams protruding from the nave helped add structural support to the church.

East Elevation (front)

Three stepped gables cover the entrance to the ambulatory and chapel. All three gables are topped with wooden crosses. The lower gable covers the entrance to the ambulatory and protrudes. The entrance is narrow; it is flanked by columns that support a semicircular arch. The middle gable has diagonal crossing planks (similar to fretwork in appearance, but on a larger scale). The higher gable has a small, arched window of glass. Above the three stepped gables positioned over the entrance is the main gable of the nave. At the peak of this gable is a wood dragon-motif carving.

The chapel has a three-plank wood door on the east elevation. The entrance to the chapel is narrow so that only one person can enter at a time, signifying that the sacred was to be approached alone without the company of evil.^{vi} The opening is encircled by a richly-carved frenzy of struggling serpents, dragons and lions. Here these fabled animals of the Vikings are juxtaposed with Christian portrayals of the battle between good and evil.^{vii} This struggle has particularly strong emphasis in these carvings at the entrance to the sanctuary, "the threshold to salvation."^{viii} These highly artistic carvings on the exterior of the chapel are in stark contrast to the simplicity of the interior.

South Elevation

The majority of the south elevation consists of the nave, with the chancel located on the western segment of the elevation. There is a pair of stepped gables that cover the entrance to the ambulatory. Both gables are topped with wooden crosses. The gables cover the entrance of the ambulatory and protrude from the ambulatory wall. The entrance is narrow and flanked by columns.

There are no openings on the south elevation of the chapel.

^v "Unique Stavekirk Rising Near City" *Rapid City Journal*, 29 September 1968.

^{vi} Eva Valebrokk and Thomas Thiis-Evensen, *Norway's Stave Churches: Architecture, History and Legends*. (Norway: Boksenteret, 1993), 15.

^{vii} Ibid, 15.

^{viii} Ibid, 15.

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West Elevation

The west elevation is the apse. The apse is semicircular and has two roof lines paralleling the roof lines of the nave and chapel. Its construction is the same as the rest of the chapel with columns and vertical boards comprising the walls; everything above the walls at the bottom roofline is wood shingle. Topping the apse is a small, conical steeple with a cross. The gable of the chancel is between the apse and nave and is topped with a cross. At the peak of the gable of the nave is a wood dragon-motif carving.

North Elevation

The majority of the north elevation consists of the nave, with the chancel located on the western segment of the elevation. Two stepped gables cover the entrance to the ambulatory. Both gables are topped with wooden crosses. The gables cover the entrance, which protrudes from the ambulatory. The entrance is narrow; it is flanked by columns that support a semicircular arch.

There are two entrances to the chapel on the north elevation, one goes into the nave and the other into the chancel. The eastern most entrance has two wood motif carvings at the top corners of the doorway. One is of a human head and the other is of an animal head.

Steeple

The steeple is centered on the ridgeline of the nave. In between the steeple and the wood dragon-motifs carvings at the ends of the gable peaks is a relief of carved wood, similar to a fretwork design.

There are four segments of the steeple: a gabled segment, a segment with a truncated hipped roof, a segment with a pyramidal roof and spire. The gabled segment straddles the roof of the nave. It is of the same stave design as the rest of the nave in a smaller scale with four corner staves, wood walls and a gable roof with wood shingles. Three holes are carved in the wood planks in the gables of the east and west ends. On the north and south walls of the gabled segment of the steeple are intricately carved motifs similar to what is found near the entrances to the chapel. At the gable ends are wood dragon-motif carvings. Centered on the gabled segment of the steeple is a truncated hipped roof segment. In between this segment and wood dragon-motif carvings at the gable ends is the same wood relief carving as on the ridge of the nave. On the north and south sides of the truncated hipped roof segment are intricately carved motifs similar to what is found near the entrances to the chapel. On top of the truncated roof section is the pyramidal segment. Each side of this segment has a narrow slit. On top of the pyramidal segment is a wood spire.

Interior

The floor of the chapel (nave, chancel and apse) is vertical plank lumber laid east to west. Low wooden benches are arranged into two rows with a central aisle. There are also wooden benches lining the perimeter of the nave and benches on the north and south walls of the chancel. At the west end of the chancel is a stone altar topped with a wood cross and two wooden candle holders. Behind the altar, and running its width, are vertical boards dividing the chancel from the apse.

The walls of the nave have large Saint Andrew's crosses that run from the floor to the top of the beams. The structural system of the chapel – the staves, the arches between the staves, the cross braces above them in the design of Saint Andrew's crosses, and the roof trusses – are their own decoration for the chapel. The interior of the chapel lacks the adornment of areas of the exterior. At the top of the staves are wood carvings of human faces and simple wood relief crosses that flank the arched windows at the east and west gables.

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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.)

Property is:

- ☐ 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 commemorative property.
- ☒ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1969

Significant Dates

1969

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Builder: Dilly Construction

Landscape Architect: Franz Lipp

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is the date of construction 1969.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The Chapel in the Hills is 43-years old at the time of nomination (2012). It has exceptional architectural importance as an example of stave church architecture, design and workmanship in South Dakota. The Chapel is a replica of the Borgund Church in Norway built in the late 1100s. The Chapel in the Hills was built

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using blueprints drafted under the authority of the Norwegian Antiquities Department and approved by the Norwegian government. It is the only known reproduction authorized by the Norwegian government and reproduced to the exact scale of the blueprints. As an authentic replica of stave architecture, it is a great example of significant ecclesiastical architecture in South Dakota.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Chapel in the Hills is significant locally under Criterion C for its stave architectural style. It is the best example of stave church ecclesiastical architecture in the region.

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

The Chapel in the Hills is significant for its stave architecture. It is an authentic replica of the Borgund stave church in Norway. The Borgund stave church was built circa 1150 in Norway. The architecture is unique to the area and stave churches in Norway are considered national treasures. Because the Norwegian government places such high cultural importance on these churches, it is significant that they allowed Lutheran Vespers to use the blueprints to the Borgund stave church to build an exact replica in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

The Chapel in the Hills has significant architectural value of design and workmanship. The chapel's steep gables and roof pitches, wood shingles, massive stave (or post) construction and intricate carvings represent a high-level of craftsmanship and artistry. No other ecclesiastical architecture in the region is similar to the chapel. The setting for the chapel complements its stave architecture and the landscape, designed by Franz Lipp, adds to its significance.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

History of the Chapel in the Hills

Lutheran Vespers was a weekly half-hour religious radio program that was aired Sunday evenings. In the late 1960s when the chapel was constructed, the program had an audience of over two million. Pastor Harry R. Gregerson was the originator and preacher. Lutheran Vespers was a component of the Commission on Evangelism of the American Lutheran Church. When the chapel was built in 1969, it became the home office of the Lutheran Vespers with the preacher living in a home provided on the site. If it wasn't for the Lutheran Vespers Radio Hour, the Chapel in the Hills would not exist.^{ix}

The Lutheran Vespers was the vision of Gregerson, who in the 1940s was the pastor of East Side Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. One night while he was returning from a speaking engagement, he tried in vain to find some good religious programming on his car radio. Unable to find any, he asked himself if this was possibly an opening in ministry that God was calling him to fill. Gregerson's main Sunday service at East Side Church was aired on the radio every Sunday, but he felt there was more he could do to extend the Word of God. With the

^{ix} O.G. Malmin. *Chapel in the Hills*. Self-published by Lutheran Vespers, 24.

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help of his congregation and administration of his church district, the first broadcast of Lutheran Vespers was aired on 23 November 1947 over station WNAX in Yankton.^x

Gregerson recorded the sermons he preached with equipment in his Sioux Falls basement. Once recorded, he would send copies to the various stations on the Lutheran Vespers network.^{xi} Lutheran Vespers was immediately successful and Gregerson and the show became synonymous. The simple presentation and the voice of the preacher made the show popular. People wrote letters and sent donations to fund the show and continue the Lutheran Vespers motto: "The Salvation of Souls – Our Concern."^{xii}

Gregerson's basement engineering worked, but he longed for the day when more adequate facilities would be available. He also believed that if Lutheran Vespers had its own base of operations that it would be possible to expand the ministry with a complex that included a chapel for visitors to worship and reflect. The choice of location for such a complex was carefully considered. The Black Hills, with its scenic beauty and potential to draw visitors from all over the world, was selected. The goal of the Lutheran Vespers was to draw people to its ministry, so the complex was located in a place where people would want to visit.^{xiii}

The Board of Directors of Lutheran Vespers investigated many locations for the complex. The first site purchased turned out to be inadequate, so the search continued. Eventually another site was selected five miles from Rapid City near Canyon Lake. Forty acres were purchased where there would be room for a chapel, parsonage, reception house and caretaker's residence.^{xiv} Arndt Dahl would later comment, "I've often said that God created this place for the stave church."^{xv}

Once the land was purchased, the Lutheran Vespers had to decide what type of chapel to construct. Architects were consulted and there was even a contest to select plans. A plan was eventually selected, but it turned out not to be feasible. Finally a decision was made to erect a Norwegian stave church ("stavekirke" in Norwegian).^{xvi}

The executive director of the Commission on Evangelism of the American Lutheran Church, Dr. Conrad M. Thompson, first suggested the stave church plan. Thompson had travelled in Norway and realized the symbolism and spiritual meaning of stave church architecture. With the idea and plan in place for the chapel, further funding was needed before the real work could begin. Arndt E. Dahl of Rapid City stepped forward with a large donation that covered both the construction of the chapel and its landscaping. The estimated cost of the chapel was \$120,000, but the actual cost ran over \$200,000.^{xvii} Costs ran high due to the commitment to not cut corners in building an exact replica.

Arndt Dahl was born on 25 April 1897 in Wisconsin to the Reverend and Mrs. Anton A. Dahl. After Arndt's father's death, the family settled in Toronto, South Dakota, where he began working for the First National Bank of Toronto. He joined the Navy during World War I and then returned to the Toronto Bank until 1926. He next moved to Castlewood where he was vice-president of the Citizen's State Bank. He then worked briefly as a bank examiner for the State of South Dakota. He was then transferred to Rapid City and became the receiver

* Ibid, 25.

^{xi} Ibid, 13.

^{xii} Ibid, 26.

^{xiii} Ibid, 13-14.

^{xiv} Chapel 14.

^{xv} "Chapel in the Hills" *The Dakota Farmer*, 7 June 1969.

^{xvi} Malmin, 14.

^{xvii} "Chapel in the Hills" *The Dakota Farmer*, 7 June 1969.

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of the closed Pennington County Bank. A group of Black Hills businessmen formed the Rapid City National Bank (later the American National Bank) in 1934 and Dahl managed the bank from its opening day until its merger with the National Bank of South Dakota in 1968. Dahl then became chairman of the board of the merged banks, which became the largest bank in the state.^{xviii}

With Dahl's contribution, the Lutheran Vespers were able to begin turning their vision into reality. The Sioux Falls architectural firm Spitznagel and Partners was hired and one of the partners, W.E. Bentziger, made a trip to Norway to visit a number of stave churches. While abroad, Bentziger conferred with the Norwegian government to come to the conclusion that the stave church at Kirkevoll, Borgund, Sogn, was the ideal candidate to replicate in the Black Hills.^{xix}

The Borgund church was chosen to serve as the model for several reasons. First, the Borgund church is generally considered the most beautiful and preserved stave church in Norway.^{xx} With the exception of the baptismal font, altar and pulpit the church exists as it was in 1150. Second, it represents an ordinary parish that was built during the period of flourishing stave church construction in Norway. Finally, a complete set of drawings for the church were available that were almost as detailed as modern blueprints. Without those blueprints, a true reproduction would not have been possible.^{xxi}

At first, Norwegian officials were not overly thrilled about plans to reproduce the church. The chief antiquarian of Norway's Department of Antiquities commented, "Borgund stave church is one of the finest monuments in our history. We did not want any poorly done or popularized replica."^{xxii} However, supporters of the Lutheran Vespers in Norway were able to convince officials that a proper replica would be created and the authority to proceed with the plan was granted.^{xxiii}

Dilley Construction Company of Rapid City was awarded the contract to construct the chapel. Robert Dilley took a deep personal interest in the project and secured the right craftsman to construct the church.^{xxiv} During construction Dahl would comment that, "From architects through contractor we have had skilled workers and I've never seen more dedicated men."^{xxv} The Borgund church is built of malm-furu, an extinct tree species native to Norway. It was determined that Douglas fir was the closest available match to the malm-furu, so two representatives of Dilly Construction travelled to Oregon to personally select the trees. This included timber for the 52 massive staves and for the Tilar, which are the vertical planks which enclose the structure.^{xxvi} Enough lumber was also purchased to make the 16,000 shingles to cover the roof of the church.

Shaping the staves, making the shingles and carving the intricate features on the church were challenging. Both a Norwegian carver and one from Rapid City took on the detailed carving process. Erik Fridstrom of Norway carved some of the details that could not be done on the building site and Helge Christainsen, a Dane who had immigrated to America, undertook the interior carvings.^{xxvii}

^{xviii} Malmin, 30.

^{xix} Ibid, 15-16.

^{xx} Ibid, 16.

^{xxi} Ibid, 16.

^{xxii} Ibid, 16.

^{xxiii} Ibid, 16.

^{xxiv} Ibid, 17.

^{xxv} "Chapel in the Hills" *The Dakota Farmer*, 7 June 1969.

^{xxvi} Malmin, 17.

^{xxvii} Ibid, 18.

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The carvings on the church have both Christian (such as crosses) and pagan (such as serpents and dragons) iconography. There are at least three possible explanations for this. First, Norway became a Christian nation over many years and the remnants of pagan religion existed among the people concurrently. Second, the pagan symbols might not necessarily represent pagan ideas as icons like the dragon were popular in Norwegian culture without a religious connotation. Finally, the carvings can represent the struggle between the old religion of paganism and the new religion of Christianity, with Christianity being victorious.^{xxviii}

The staves, siding and shingles were milled on the work site. The ten-foot plank that covers the main wall are tongue-and-grooved and vary from eight to sixteen inches in width. A circle bevel was cut on one side of each plank to give a rounded shape to its exterior. Two hundred pieces of siding were milled for the walls.^{xxix}

The large corner columns and the smaller interior columns were also shaped on site. The large posts required a special rigging device designed to hold large pipes while they are being welded to shape the largest columns. A motor slowly turned the columns while workmen shaped them with electric routers. It took 1,127 passes with an electric router to carve the decorative collars into the ten-inch posts.^{xxx}

Landscaping of the site includes curving walkways and stone retaining walls from stone mined near Keystone. Franz Lipp, a nationwide known landscape architect from Chicago, created the landscape design and handpicked the trees and bushes placed around the chapel. The landscape contractor for the chapel was Gundersons Inc. of Rapid City. Plantings on the site include large birch trees, juniper trees, clump mountain ash, Japanese yews, flowering dogwood bushes, potentilla bushes, bittersweet, flowering crab and viburnum prunifolium shrubs. A sunken garden is located off the chapel's courtyard. Wide steps leading up into the wooded area behind the church were included in the landscape design to offer visitors a place to rest and reflect. The area in front of the chapel is grass.^{xxxi}

Franz Lipp was born in Leipzig, Germany, but left after graduating high school at the age of 16 to sail around the world aboard merchant ships. During World War I, he and his crewmates were detained in Australia for the duration of the war. While interned, Lipp learned basic horticulture and engineering from his fellow German internees. When the war was over, Lipp returned to Germany to study horticulture with Karl Foerster.^{xxxii}

With encouragement of his professors in Germany, Lipp travelled to Boston in 1921 to study with E.H. Wilson at Harvard's Arnold Arboretum. Lipp moved to Chicago in 1923 to work with distinguished landscape architect Jen Jensen as a construction supervisor. Lipp worked with Jensen briefly before relocating back to the East Coast. However, Lipp returned to Chicago in 1928 and established his own landscape architecture practice.^{xxxiii}

^{xxviii} Ibid, 19-21.

^{xxix} "Unique Stavekirck Rising Near City" *Rapid City Journal*, 29 September 1968.

^{xxx} Ibid.

^{xxxi} "Stavekirke Open" *Rapid City Journal*, 1 June 1969.

^{xxxii} [http://digital-](http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/findingaids&CISOPTR=11915&REC=4)

[libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/findingaids&CISOPTR=11915&REC=4](http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/findingaids&CISOPTR=11915&REC=4) Accessed 1 February 2012

^{xxxiii} Ibid.

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Lipp had steady work through the Depression before taking time off during World War II to undertake a photographic survey of Yellowstone National Park. When the war was over, Lipp continued with his landscape design practice in conjunction with landscape engineer Carl Pathe. Lipp retired in 1981.^{xxxiv}

Lipp was known for his work on commercial buildings, shopping centers, hospitals, schools and churches across the Midwest. He worked for years with several of Chicago's noted architectural firms including Holabird and Root; Perkins and Will; Schmidt, Garden and Erikson; Paul Schweikher and Winston Elting; Loeble, Schlossman and Bennett; and Ernest Grunsfeld III. Lipp also created many landscapes for Sioux Falls, South Dakota, architect Harold Spitznagel. Several of Lipp's designs were a product of many years' work. His work for Colonel Robert R. McCormick's estate "Cantigny" in Wheaton, Illinois, took nearly ten years. He also worked on multiple commissions from the Kohler family of Kohler, Wisconsin.

Lipp was awarded national honors for the American Association of Nurserymen in 1968 and 1971. He was also awarded the Hutchison Medal from the Chicago Horticultural Society in 1977 and a Distinguished Service award from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1980. Lipp died in 1996.

The chapel was opened to the public 1 June 1969 following a short ceremony. The chapel was open seven days a week throughout the summer with nightly vesper services. Benches installed in the chapel made it possible to accommodate 96 persons at a time.^{xxxv}

The American Lutheran Church dedicated the chapel in July of 1969. Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz, president of the American Lutheran Church, gave the dedication address and Dr. Harry R. Gregerson, founder and regular speaker on Lutheran Vespers' broadcasts and pastor of the chapel, gave the invocation and greeting. Many dignitaries associated with the American Lutheran Church attended the dedication including Governor Frank Farrar. A local choir under the direction of Clifton Madson of Canton sang "Beautiful Savior" and "O For A Thousand Tongues."^{xxxvi}

While the chapel was to serve an evangelical purpose through Lutheran Vespers, it quickly garnered attention as a tourist attraction. Rapid Citians realized that the unique stave architecture had tourist value and almost immediately incorporated the chapel into the city's "Red Carpet Tour," which was a chamber of commerce promotion attached to the larger Old West Trail Association.

The Lutheran Vespers left the chapel in 1975. Since the Vesper's departure, the chapel has taken on a tourism ministry attracting visitors from around the world for worship. Evening services are held at the chapel from June through August and the chapel is a popular location for weddings.

A handful of replica stave churches have been constructed in the United States. Most are located in the upper Midwest and northern plains where Norwegian settlement was dense. Most of these, such as Boynton Chapel at Bjorklunden in Door County, Wisconsin; Hopperstad Stave Church at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, Minnesota; and the Scandinavia Heritage Park in Minot, North Dakota, are used more as tourist attractions in heritage parks than for religious purposes.

^{xxxiv} Ibid.

^{xxxv} "Stavekirke Open" *Rapid City Journal*, 1 June 1969.

^{xxxvi} "Stavekirke Dedication On Sunday" *Rapid City Journal*, 2 July 1969.

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Stave Churches in Norway

The golden age of stave church construction occurred 1100-1300 A.D, from about the time King Magnus ruled until the civil wars that broke out with the arrival of Priest Sverre Sigurdsson.^{xxxvii} Of a total some 2,000 churches erected in Norway during the Middle Ages, half were stave churches.^{xxxviii} At the conclusion of the Middle Ages, Norwegian wood churches change to notched-log techniques and then gradually transition to lighter frame buildings.^{xxxix}

Since almost 1,000 stave churches were built in a period of 200 years, it is thought that a certain amount of specialization and prefabrication existed to accomplish this feat.^{xl} A possible source of this work may have been the inner Sogn district.^{xli} In the inland districts of Norway, the stave church was practically the only form of church architecture.^{xlii} The remote Norwegian population took advantage of the vast forest to construct the stave churches at a time when the rest of Europe was chiseling monuments out of stone.^{xliii}

Stave churches are divided into two categories labeled Type A and Type B. Type A churches do not have free-standing posts while Type B have a raised roof and free-standing internal posts. Type B churches are further divided into two subgroups: the Kaupanger group and the Borgund group. The Kaupanger group has a whole arcade row of posts and intermediate posts that run along the side of the church. This arcade, along with details that mimic stone capitals and archivolt, give the Kaupanger group the impression of a basilica.^{xliv} The Borgund group has cross braces joining upper and lower string beams to the posts, forming a rigid interconnection and resembling the triforium of stone basilicas. This allows the omission of the freestanding lower portion of the intermediate posts. The Borgund system offers greater technical freedom than the classic approach of the Kaupanger group and may be considered as a further development of the latter.^{xlv}

The Borgund church, of which the Chapel in the Hills is a replica, obviously belongs to the Borgund group. The Borgund church is dedicated to Saint Andrew (hence the use of Saint Andrew's crosses) and is first mentioned in the *Bjorgynjar Kalfskinn*, a church register of the Bergen diocese, in about 1360.^{xlvi} However, it is believed that it was constructed in the mid to late 1100s.^{xlvii}

Borgund is the best preserved stave church in Norway and the only one that has been allowed to stand unchanged since the Middle Ages.^{xlviii} It gives the best representation of what the average parish church would have looked like during these great years in Norwegian ecclesiastical architecture.^{xlix} This period of church architecture was ushered in when King Sigurd Jorsalfar introduced tithes as a way to support the church.^l

^{xxxvii} Bugge, Anders 8.

^{xxxviii} Bugge, Gunnar 12.

^{xxxix} Ibid, 13.

^{xl} Ibid, 13.

^{xli} Ibid, 13.

^{xlii} Bugge, Anders 8.

^{xliii} Bugge, Gunnar 12.

^{xliv} Ibid, 16.

^{xlv} Ibid, 64.

^{xlvi} Valebrokk and Thiss-Evensen, 17.

^{xlvii} Ibid 17.

^{xlviii} Bugge, Gunnar 64.

^{xlix} Bugge, Anders 8.

^l Ibid, 8.

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Stave churches are considered national treasures in Norway and are the only wooden churches from the Middle Ages remaining in Northern Europe.

Paganism, Christianity and the Borgund Stave Church

Sources recording the early history of Norway, including its Christianization, are relatively abundant, though most of them were written late. In the broader context of northern and central Europe, there is plenty of historical information after Christianization but little from the preceding pagan period.ⁱ Sources that do offer insight on early non-Christian or indigenous pagan religions fall into three categories: the writings of Christian observers, archeology and, especially for the Scandinavians, post-conversion indigenous literature.ⁱⁱ The problem with all of these sources, including pre- and post-Christian, is determining what is historically reliable and what is a later invention.ⁱⁱⁱ

Of all the pagan practices, best known is the mythology for which the most important source is the *Elder Edda*. The *Elder Edda* is a collection of 29 pagan poems, 10 of which deal with the gods. It was collected and written down around 1230 A.D. and preserved in an Icelandic manuscript around 1270.^{iv} The majority of scholars agree that the *Elder Edda* contains stories passed down orally from the pagan period.^v The Old Norse "Trinity" of Thor, Odin and Frey is particularly prominent in the mythology, though other deities and supernatural beings are abundant.^{vi} The mythological sources depict the gods as married, having families and living on individual farms – just like their human worshippers.^{vii} Odin appears to be regarded as the leader of the gods, or at least the most prominent, but did not have absolute control over the others.^{viii}

Between the tenth and twelfth centuries new Christian monarchies were established throughout northern and central Europe. By the year 1200, Scandinavia was separated into the individual kingdoms of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Both the sagas and modern histories emphasize the influence of England on the Christianization of Norway.^{ix} Christianity was something Viking raiders brought with them back to Norway, not something missionaries carried directly to the people. There is no record of missionaries in Norway until the tenth and eleventh centuries when they were brought in by the missionary kings.^x

An example of the spread of Christianity occurred in 1015 A.D. A Viking named Olaf Haraldsson returned to Norway after many years abroad. While away, Haraldsson had converted to Christianity and sought to unite Norway under the rule of one king and to form a national government based on the European model.^{xi} Haraldsson canvased his homeland with missionary zeal and the Norwegian people eventually converted, though with strong resistance.^{xii} Norway was a converted Christian nation by 1100 A.D.

ⁱ Robert Bartlett, "From Paganism to Christianity in Medieval Europe," in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' 900-1200*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 47.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, 47.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sverre Bagge and Sabjorg Walaker Nordeide, "The Kingdom of Norway," in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' 900-1200*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 121.

^{iv} Ibid, 121.

^v Ibid, 121.

^{vi} Bartlett, 54.

^{vii} Bagge and Nordeide, 123.

^{viii} Ibid, 123.

^{ix} Ibid, 138.

^x Ibid, 129.

^{xi} Valebrokk and Thils-Evensen, 15.

^{xii} Ibid, 15.

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The Sagas are also a source of both pagan and Christian history. The Sagas are stories about early Scandinavian and German histories written as prose, often with stanzas or whole poems. According to the sagas, Hakon den gode was the first to bring missionaries to Norway. The Sagas later mention that he constructed churches and installed priests, but the people in the northwest and south burnt the churches and killed the priests.^{lxiii} As the Sagas eluded to, the conversion to Christianity was not seamless and occurred differently by regions.

As far as the Vikings were concerned, there was always room for another god in the Valhalla. It seems as if the Vikings simply allowed the new Christian god to join the Aesir and Vanir (the pantheon of gods in Norse paganism), which didn't cause ripples among the population as there was always room for another strong protector in the Norse notions of salvation.^{lxiv} The Vikings often saw Christ as a stronger god, rather than as a part of a different, monotheistic religion.^{lxv} In fact, Christianity and paganism likely coexisted for several years alongside each other before Christianity fully enveloped most of Norse society.

Many indigenous Norwegians would have been baptized Christians before they were taught about Christ, which can help explain the comingling of traditions. Rulers often viewed conversions as a way to establish a link with the Roman world and confer a political identity.^{lxvi} These conversions were sometimes an open question, with the converted using their new status to improve trade advantages or employ a diplomatic strategy.^{lxvii}

The conversion to Christianity in Scandinavia was gradual, sensible and not dramatic – there were no widespread death sentences, burning of temples or organized resistances.^{lxviii} While the Vikings were feared abroad, bloodshed was not wide-spread at home, at least in the conversion to Christianity. The conversion from Norse paganism to Christianity took about 150 years and wasn't without conflict. Evidence of this controversy can be seen in the architecture and adornment of stave churches.

There is a question as to whether stave churches were built as Christian edifices or adapted from pagan temples. The chancel connection is the weak point that complicates stave church design and has been used to support the theory that the stave church is a derivative from the pagan place of worship.^{lxix} Whether Christian or pagan in origin, it is understood that the stave church reflected Romanesque and Gothic cathedral architecture, which Viking raiders would have been exposed to in their forays across Europe.^{lxx} Hints of the Gothic style can be seen in sharp-pitched roofs, steeples and the Romanesque styled apses (thought to have been added in the 1200s).^{lxxi}

The dragon heads protruding from the gable edges are one of the most recognizable motifs on the Borgund church. Once again the interpretation of dragon heads is not clear. The dragon is an ancient pagan motif, but it is not clear what role it plays on the church. Some suggest that the dragon heads "sneer from the gable as

^{lxiii} Bagge and Nordeide, 135.

^{lxiv} Rudolf Doertner, *The Vikings: Rise and Fall of the Norse Sea Kings*, (New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 1975), 286.

^{lxv} Nora Berend, *Introduction to Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' 900-1200*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 22.

^{lxvi} Ibid, 13.

^{lxvii} Ibid, 12.

^{lxviii} Poertner, 286.

^{lxix} Bugge, Gunnar 9.

^{lxx} Thils-Evenson, 11-12.

^{lxxi} Bugge, Anders 29.

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graphic representations of evil paying lip service to the good.^{lxixii} What remains unclear, in the estimation of many, is if the dragons are sneering at or for Christ.

In the interior of the Borgund church, traditional ecclesiastical motifs are less in evidence; here the wood speaks its own language, undeniably more pagan in tone, with masks at the tops of the staves.^{lxixiii} Once again, though, the Saint Andrew's crosses serving as the cross-bracing relax the pagan overtones. Also a thirteenth century sermon claims that the twelve staves that make up the interior and the four heavy corner posts represent the 12 disciples and the four gospels.^{lxixiv} Another comparison drawn from the stave churches is the resemblance of their truss system to the upturned keel of the Viking longship.^{lxixv} The carvings surrounding the entrances to the church also employ traditional motifs of dragon-like animals battling in rhythmic vine motifs.^{lxixvi}

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Books

Berend, Nora. *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' 900-1200*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Bugge, Anders. *Norwegian Stave Churches*. Oslo, Norway: Dreyer, 1953.

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Derry, T.K. *A History of Scandinavia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

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Rapid City Journal, 29 September 1968 - 2 July 1969.

The Dakota Farmer, 7 June 1969.

Websites

<http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/findingaids&CISOPTR=11915&REC=4>
Accessed 1 February 2012.

^{lxixii} Valebrokk and Thiis-Evensen, 15.

^{lxixiii} Bugge, Gunnar 17.

^{lxixiv} Valebrokk and Thiis-Evensen, 11.

^{lxixv} T.K. Derry. *A History of Scandinavia*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 41-42.

^{lxixvi} Valebrokk and Thiis-Evensen, 18.

Chapel in the Hills

Name of Property

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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
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 155609 4886232
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See map

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes only the chapel and designed landscape surrounding it.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title C.B. Nelson

organization State Historic Preservation Office

date 1 January 2012

street & number 900 Governors Drive

telephone 605-773-3103

city or town Pierre

state SD

zip code 57501

e-mail Chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us.

Chapel in the Hills

Name of Property

Pennington County, SD

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Chapel in the Hills

City or Vicinity: Rapid City

County: Pennington County

State: SD

Photographer: C.B. Nelson

Date Photographed: 20 November 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 19.

ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0001	NW
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0002	W
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0003	W
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0004	S
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0005	SW
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0006	W
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0007	S
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0008	W
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0009	W
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ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0014	NW
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0015	SW
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0016	SW
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0017	W
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0018	S
ChapelintheHills_PenningtonCounty_SD_0019	W

Chapel in the Hills

Name of Property

Pennington County, SD

County and State

Property Owner:

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

name Chapel in the Hills

street & number 3788 Chapel Lane

telephone 605-342-8281

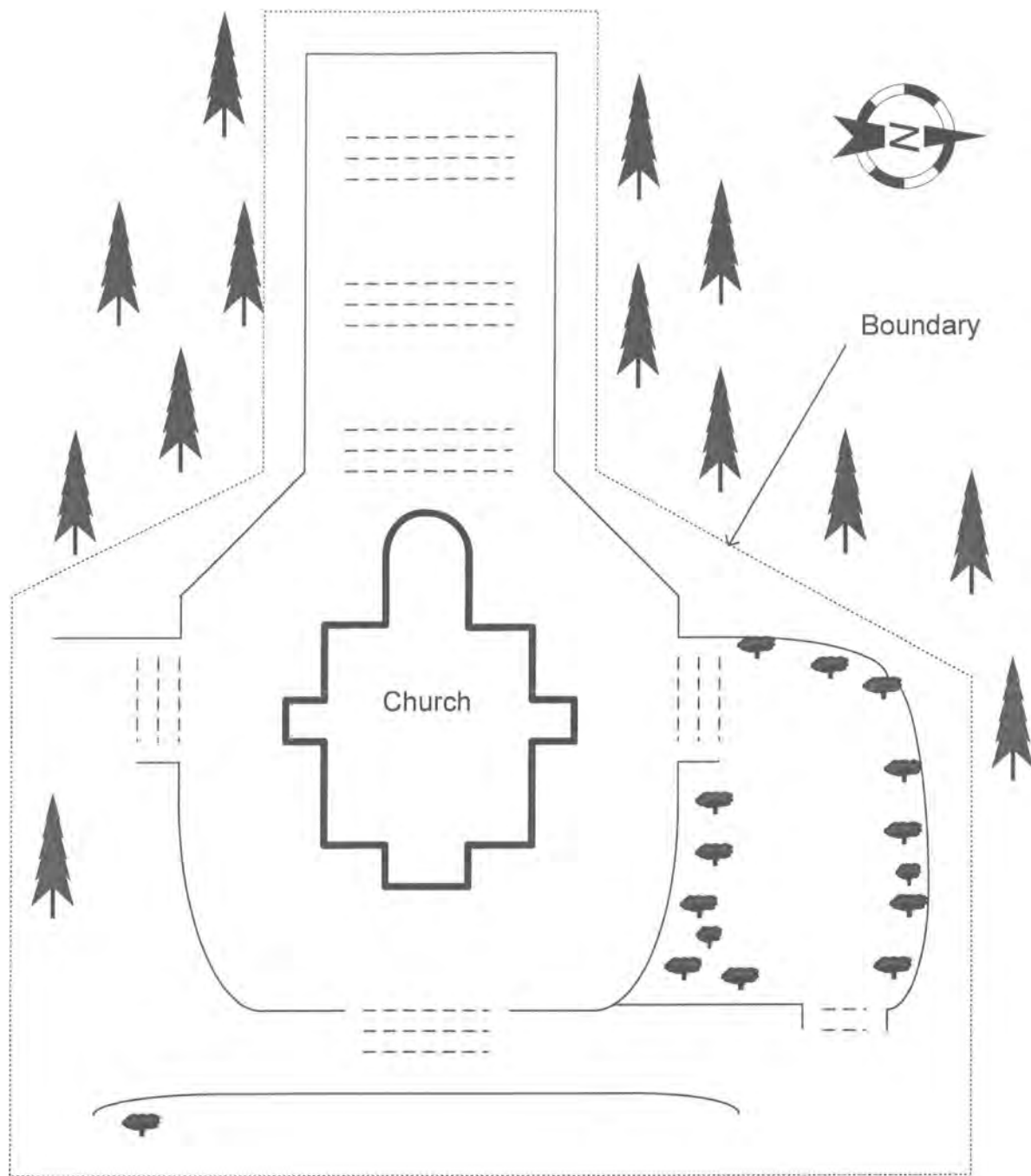
city or town Rapid City SD

state SD

zip code 57702

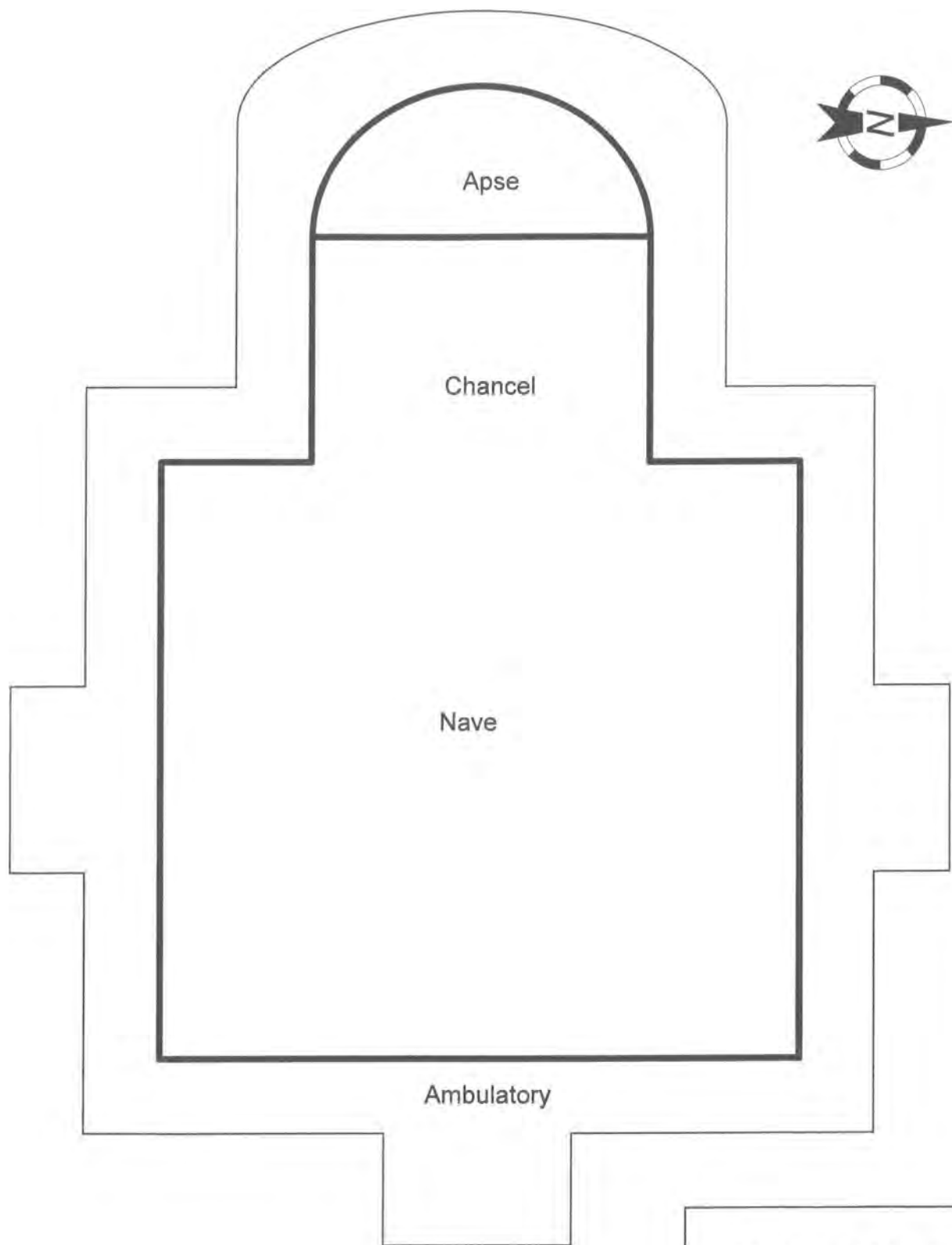
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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 18 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.



Key	
Dotted Lines	Stairs
Solid Lines	Rock Walls
Red Dotted Line	Boundary
Bold Solid Line	Church

Chapel in the Hills
Pennington County
South Dakota
Figure 2



Chapel in the Hills
Figure 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Chapel in the Hills
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: SOUTH DAKOTA, Pennington

DATE RECEIVED: 6/22/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/24/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/07/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/08/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000487

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 8-7-12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0001



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0002



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0003



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0004



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0005



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD-0006



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0007



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0008



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0009



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0010



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0011



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0012



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0013



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 2014



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0015



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0016



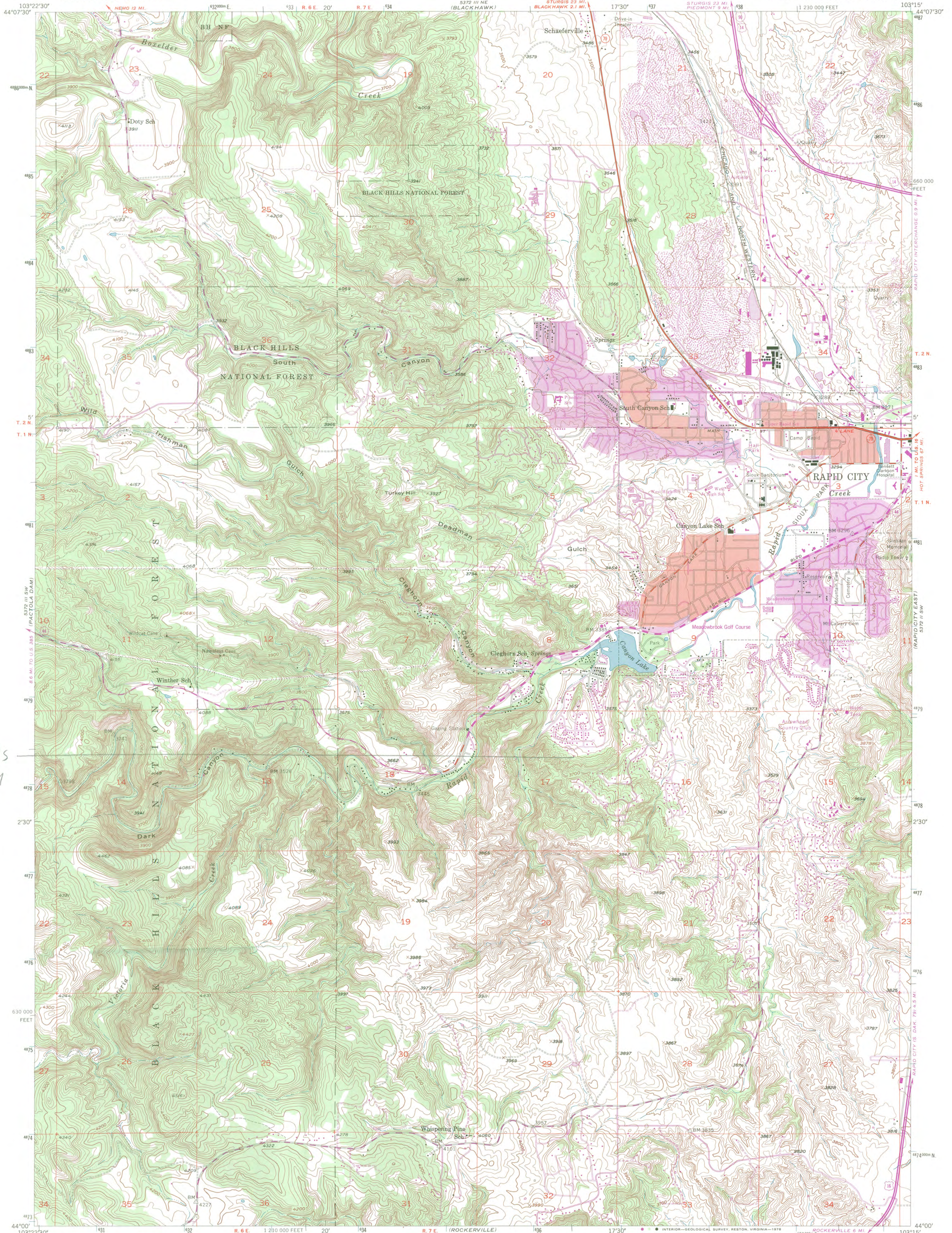
Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0017



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0018



Chapel in the Hills - Pennington County - SD - 0019



Chapel in the Hills
Pennington County
South Dakota
Z=13
E=155609
N=4886232

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods

Aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1953

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum

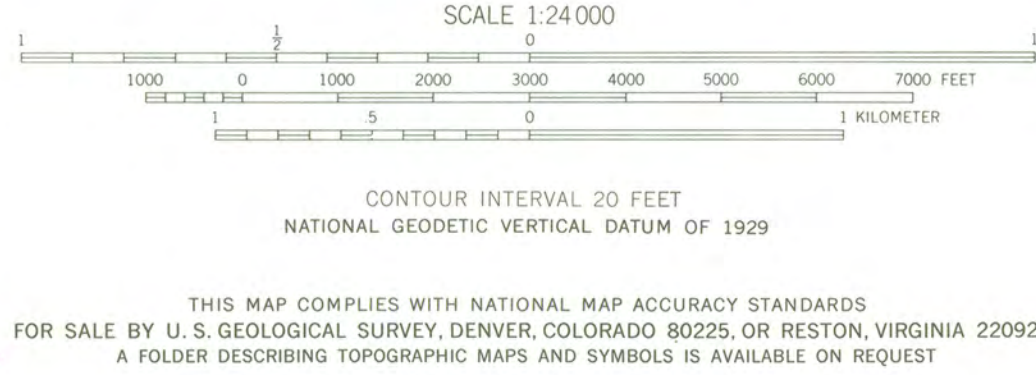
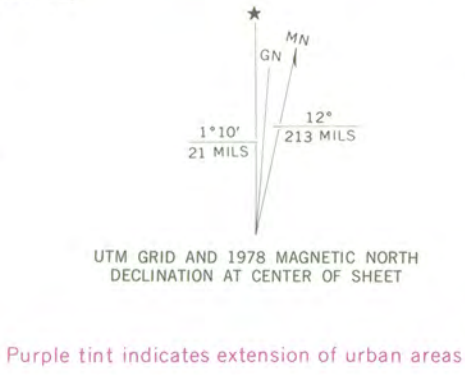
10,000-foot grid based on South Dakota coordinate system, south zone

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Unchecked elevations are shown in brown

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 13, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1976 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1978



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

RAPID CITY WEST, S. DAK.
N4400-W10315/7.5

1953
PHOTOREVISED 1978
AMS 5372 III SE-SERIES V873



18 June 2012

Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
National Parks Service
1201 Eye St NW
8th Floor (MS 2280)
Washington DC 20005

Dear Keeper of the National Register:

Enclosed are four National Register nominations: *Pringle House*, *Chapel in the Hills*, *Weigandt Barn*, and *Golden Summit Mine Foreman's Cabin*.

If you have any questions regarding any of these submittals, please feel free to contact Chris Nelson at 605-773-3103 or at chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us.

Sincerely,

Chris B. Nelson