

Record No. _____

INVENTORY FORM FOR NOMINATED PROPERTIES

Name of Property: Water Tower

Owner: Department of Natural Resources Date: 12/17/84

Address: Rock Island State Park

Owner's address: 101 S. Webster St.
Madison, WI

City: _____

County: Door

*160 NRHP Certification

(a) _____ (b) _____

(c) _____ (d) _____

*220 Area of Significance

architecture

165 NRHP Certification Date

(a) _____ (b) _____

(c) _____ (d) _____

230 Period of Significance c. 1929

*170 Thematic or Multiple Resource Nomination Name

Historic Structures of the Thordarson Estate

180 NRHP List Name Water tower

60 Verbal Boundary Description Enclosing the water tower, the boundaries are a square formed by four lines approximately 50 feet from the structure, intersecting at the corners.

*200 Level of Significance local

*190 District Classification _____

*210 Applicable Criteria _____

*215 Criteria Considerations

70 USGS Quad Map Washington Island NE, Wis.-Mich.

80 UTM Coordinates (Format: 99/999999/9999999)

16/515150/5028540

85 Listed Acreage less than one

340 Review Board Date 1/18/85

*use code tables for response

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DESCRIPTION

The water tower is located about one mile from the Thordarson Estate Historic District. Built around 1929, at a cost of \$1502, the water tower is a tall, square structure which narrows slightly as it rises. The roof is hipped and covered with red tiles. The exterior is composed of irregularly coursed stone, much like the boathouse-casino in the historic district. The bottom of the tower features open round arched entrances on three sides. On the fourth side are two round window openings. An historic photo shows the entrances to have been covered with log gates at one time. At the top of the tower on all sides are large square openings. The tower is in good condition and accessible by hiking trail to the main complex (historic district).
(A)

ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING SIGNIFICANCE

The water tower is significant for architecture because it is a good example of stone construction and because it is similar in design and construction method to the stone buildings in the historic district. The stonework of the water tower is very similar to that of the boathouse-casino, and even though it is physically separated from the historic district, it is in very good condition. Other than the absence of the log gates seen on the historic photo, the water tower has a high level of preservation and integrity. The red tile roof also continues the design similarities between the water tower and the stone buildings of the historic district. Because the water tower continues the high quality of construction method found in the other stone buildings of the Thordarson Estate, and the unusual design also found in the stone buildings and structures of the historic district, it is a significant entity of the Historic Structures of the Thordarson Estate.

690 BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- A. Thordarson Papers. Archives Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is some question as to whether the water tower actually functioned as any sort of water tower. There is no pumping mechanism and the structure is not located on a high point on the island. It is possible that the tower was constructed as a "rest stop" for hikers on the estate and perhaps a small hand-operated pump for water was once located in the tower. In any event, it is known as the water tower, and the Thordarson Papers indicate that something called a water tower was constructed on the estate.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

none