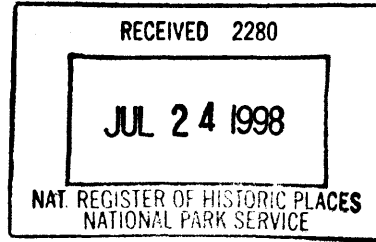


United States Department of Interior
National Park Service



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 an 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 Fort Eagle
other names/site number Galpin, Homer K., House

2. Location

street & number 934 Fort Eagle Lane N/A not for publication
city or town Town of Phelps N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Vilas code 125 zip code 54554

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

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 official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Fort Eagle
Name of Property

Vilas
County and State

Wisconsin

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.
___ See continuation sheet.
___ removed from the National
Register.
___ other, (explain:)

Edson H. Ball

8/20/98

for

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

contributing	noncontributing
14	2 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
14	2 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property
listing.)

None

**Number of contributing resources
is previously listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/Secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)
Bungalow/Craftsman
Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation Stone
walls Weatherboard
Log
roof Asphalt
other Wood

Narrative Description

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

NPS Form 10-900-a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format
(Approved 1/92)

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Fort Eagle
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Vilas County, Wisconsin

Fort Eagle is a Northern Wisconsin estate situated on Big Sand Lake, a 1,480 acre lake near the town of Phelps, in Vilas County. At the turn of the century, and even before, this lake became a popular vacation lake for Chicagoans. During the summer months, it offered an escape from the heat of the city as well as a hideaway from the travails of life.

The estate known as Fort Eagle is located approximately seven miles from the small community of Phelps. Phelps is located 15 miles northeast of Eagle River, a major resort center and the county seat for Vilas County. Fort Eagle is not difficult to reach today, but in the early days it was an arduous journey which involved travel by train, wagon and boat. Take Highway 17 north out of Phelps for 1.7 miles; turn east on County Highway A for five miles and then turn north on Sand Lake Road. In less than a mile the stone gates of Fort Eagle will be visible on the east side of the gravel road. Fieldstone walls with pillars and black wrought iron gates mark the official entrance to the estate. The inscription on the left pillar states: "Fort Eagle"; the right one reads: "The Hookers," (the owners from 1945 to 1958).

The complex consists of the main house, a 1927 Colonial Revival with considerable Craftsman style detailing, a gazebo, a wet boathouse, the "Honeymoon Cottage," a caretaker's cottage with an attached greenhouse, a six car garage, and many other ancillary buildings that help to make up Fort Eagle. Originally, the estate totalled 700 acres. Today, the property has 146 acres with 4,500 feet of shoreline.

Like the nearby community of Eagle River, Homer K. Galpin named his estate "Fort Eagle" because of the inordinate number of eagles in the area. Indeed, an eagle's nest is still located in a large pine tree along the shores of Big Sand Lake, directly in front of the main residence. The eagle is used as a motif throughout the estate, on light switch plates and on a door knocker. Originally there was also a large metal finial with an eagle atop the gazebo. This finial is being duplicated from old photos and will soon be reinstalled.

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Vilas County, Wisconsin

A winding dirt road traverses through a beautiful hardwood, pine, and mature hemlock forest. The topography is uneven; steep hills and a deep valley on the east side with low swamp land on the west side. The drive through the dense woods still retains the feeling of wilderness.

The driveway leading to the house ends with a small circular drive at the rear elevation (south) of the house. The terrain here is slightly uneven with a mixture of mature hardwoods and pines surrounding the complex. The grounds are fairly open around the buildings, but large mature trees are found throughout. Once, huge vegetable and flower gardens filled the open area south of the caretaker's cottage. Homer Galpin had a passion for gardening.

The main house is situated on the crest of a gentle hill which slopes gradually to the water. The grounds are well maintained and include the remains of a rock garden and small waterfalls which empty into two small pools.

The main house at Fort Eagle is currently undergoing a major restoration. It will be restored to its former grandeur, down to the smallest detail. In spite of an inappropriate 1960s additions (a shed dormer with four sliding windows on the east side of the main roof, and also an inappropriate railing over the portico), the house has not lost significant architectural integrity. The present owners, Steve Kaniewski, and his wife, Judith Peck, are committed to removing these inappropriate additions and completely restoring the estate.

Fort Eagle, especially between the years of 1928 to 1932, was an important residence for Homer K. Galpin. Galpin was a powerful political boss for the Republican party in Chicago. In the late twenties he was indicted by the grand jury for mis-management of campaign funds; as a result of this, he gave up his residency in Chicago. Known during those years as "Homeless Homer," Fort Eagle provided him a safe refuge.¹

1. Chicago Daily Tribune, Obituary for Homer K. Galpin, July 28, 1941, p. 10.

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Vilas County, Wisconsin

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Main House

The 1919/1927 Colonial Revival/Craftsman style house, majestically overlooks Big Sand Lake. The original house was built in 1919 and was much smaller, but it was transformed in a dramatic remodeling which took place in 1927. The transformation of the house from a Rustic Style cottage to a Colonial Revival mansion will be discussed later in this document.

Approaching the two-and one-half story house by automobile from the south is impressive. The view of it from the lake (north) is even more so, however, and is an uncommon sight for the woods of Northern Wisconsin. The six fluted colossal order Ionic columns of the structure's full-width portico would look more at home along the banks of the Mississippi River.

The irregular plan 9,000 square foot structure is of wood frame construction, has narrow clapboard siding painted white, and sits upon raised fieldstone foundation walls. The multi-gable roof is covered with variegated green asphalt shingles and simple brackets and exposed rafter ends are evenly spaced under the wide, overhanging eaves of the roof. The overall measurement for the main block is: 55-feet, north to south; 48-feet, east to west. A one-and-one-half-story wing projects to the east and is 21-feet-long x 17-feet-wide.

Three massive Craftsman style exterior chimneys add to the house's solidarity. All three are constructed of the same rounded fieldstones with red tinted mortar joints. Similar in shape and size, they all intersect the eaves of the roof. The only elevation without a chimney is the front north-facing elevation.

The fieldstone found in the chimneys is identical to the fieldstone walls that edge the broad patios that encircle the west, north, and part of the east-facing elevations. The use of this fieldstone is highly decorative and must have been liked by the Galpins. The stone is not indigenous to the area, but rather was trucked from southern Wisconsin. The Galpins chose this material for their original house, built in 1919. The method used throughout to lay

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the stone is called "convex joint." Also called rolling bead joints, the stone work is laid up with mortar that matches the color of the stone. "The wet mortar is raked out 3/4 of an inch and then the tinted mortar is pressed into the joint with the rolling bead jointer, and drawn evenly across the face of the joint to obtain a smooth, continuous rolled joint."²

The fieldstone foundation walls on the east and south elevation of the house have been covered over with pargeting, probably to waterproof cracked original joints.

Fenestration throughout the house consists mainly of single and double pairs of multi-light casement windows. All have solid brass hardware on the interior. Simple wooden lintels and sills are also present on both the interior and exterior. Most all of these windows have wooden muntins with four-over-two lights of Craftsman style design.

Main Elevation (North-facing)

Six semi-circular stone steps and two rectangular steps lead up to the 13' x 62' poured concrete floor, tinted red, of the raised terrace that fronts this elevation. The foundation walls of this terrace, which also continues around the house and fronts portions of the east and west elevations, is clad in fieldstone masonry.

The six two-story fluted columns of the portico that spans the full width of the north-facing elevation of the house have Ionic capitals and are 17 feet in height, with a circumference of 57". The plinths at their bases are 18-inches square. Fluted full-height pilasters affixed to the main facade double the end columns of the portico. The portico ceiling is finished in box-car siding and is painted white. The columns support an entablature and a denticulated cornice. The two-story portico has a flat roof that is accessed through a set of French doors that is centered in the

2. Kreh, Richard T. Mastering Advanced Masonry Skills, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1983, p. 333.

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main gable end. There is a window on either side of the French doors and a louvered ventilator is placed above in the gable end. An inappropriate modern railing now edges the balcony. The railing is constructed of horizontal and diagonal boards, connected by short fluted wooden posts. A metal pipe runs along the top. This railing will be replaced during the restoration.

Unlike most Colonial Revivals, this house has no obvious main entrance. There are three matching sets of eight-light French doors, each pair of which is by a five-light transom. In addition, two pairs of casement windows with four over two lights are located on the east end of the elevation. The terrace steps leading up to the portico are not centered, but rather they lead to the middle set of French doors, which are the main entrance. Small lanterns on either side of the entrance distinguish it from the other two sets of French doors.

The second floor fenestration consists of four pairs of casement windows; one double pair is centered, and a single pair, evenly spaced, is located on either side.

West Elevation

The front terrace wraps around the northwest corner of the house and extends along the west elevation until it meets a side-gabled ell to the west. The terrace measures 47-feet from east to west and is 14-feet-wide. The terrace's walls are three to five feet in height, depending on the grade, and are clad in rounded fieldstone. These walls are one-foot-wide and are capped with four-and-one-half-inch deep x 18"-wide rectangular limestone slabs. Four concrete steps exit the terrace at its south end. The west elevation has a main entrance onto the terrace; a pair of French doors, mimicking those on the front facade. The French door entrance has a lantern on either side, and a pergola canopy overhead that is supported by two ornate curved consul brackets.

One of the massive stone chimneys is located on this elevation. A pair of one-light casement windows is placed on either side of the chimney. A gable-roofed orial bay is placed to the north of the

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chimney and a small six-light window (bathroom) is placed south of the chimney.

The south portion of the west elevation consists of a two-story gable-roofed ell that extends west 6-feet from the main block of the house. This ell is crowned with a gable end that faces west and the west face of this ell is symmetrical with a double pair of casement windows, evenly spaced on the first story and single pairs on the second floor. A narrow six-light window is under the apex of the gable, the eaves of which are supported by three brackets. There is also a single entrance door in the north side of the ell having nine lights on top and paneling on its bottom half.

South Elevation

The focal point of the south-facing rear elevation is its one-story projecting bow window, with a flat roof and fieldstone foundation. The bow window contains four pairs of curved casement windows, each window having eight lights, and each with a four-light transom above. West of the bowed projection is another massive fieldstone chimney. On each end of the elevation a pair of six-light casement windows is placed in both stories. Two more pairs are located in the second story above the bow window and a single smaller six-light window (bathroom) is located to the right of the bow window on the second story.

The attic story has a double pair of casement windows centered in the gable end and there is a rectangular louvered ventilator above. The eaves are supported by five evenly-spaced brackets.

The most commonly-used entrance to the house is found near the east end of the south elevation. A curved fieldstone wall, mimicking the other terrace walls, surrounds its cement stoop, which has two steps. The small gabled entrance canopy above has two supporting brackets and shelters a stained oak entry door that has nine lights on the top and two panels on the bottom. A black metal door knocker decorated with an eagle is placed on this door. A large bell is mounted on a post near this entrance.

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East Elevation

An inappropriate modern shed-roofed dormer was added to the roof on this elevation and contains four sliding windows. There are brackets under the eaves of the main roof line. Another oriel bay is near this section, (the one with the shed roof, rather than the gable), probably changed at the time of the dormer addition. A projecting gable-roofed entrance canopy covers steps leading down to the basement. Two double pairs of casement windows are on the first story with single pairs on the second story.

East Wing

Covering the north one-third of this elevation is a one-and-one-half story wing that projects 21-feet to the east and is 17-feet-wide. A massive fieldstone chimney is on the east end of the wing, intersecting the apex of its gabled roof. Two more oriel bays are found in this wing; one on its south elevation and one on its north.

The south elevation of the wing has a double pair of casement windows and a small closet window. South of the chimney, on the wing's east elevation, is a set of French doors opening from the study inside out to a rounded terrace that also has fieldstone walls. This set of French doors is smaller than the others; six-lights in each door and no transom, with one panel on the bottom. The north elevation of the wing has two evenly-spaced pairs of casement windows.

INTERIOR

The house has an irregular plan. There are no hallways or foyers to set off the rooms. Because the original house was completely remodeled in 1927, rooms were placed where they best fit. The house contains seven rooms on the main floor; seven bedrooms on the second floor, and three rooms on the third. There are three full baths in the house; one on the main floor, two on the second, and a half bath also on the second floor.

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Living Room

There is spaciousness in this living room, due both to its sheer size and because of its clear views and openness. The living room measures 31'1" by 31'1" square, with 9'6" ceilings and elaborate crown molding of molded plaster, nine inches wide with a nine-inch projection. A crystal and brass twelve-light chandelier hangs from a centered acanthus leaf medallion. The six-inch baseboard has a 3/4-round top molding.

The most impressive feature of this room is the grand curved stairway which begins on the east wall and curves upward to the south. These gracious stairs have a 6 1/2" rise and are 4'7 3/4" wide with bracketed steps. The balustrade is missing, having been removed when the house was vandalized.

Opposite the staircase, on the west wall, is the massive stone fireplace, which helps to balance the room. Constructed of rough-cut stone blocks, it extends to the ceiling height. Vertical stone blocks over the arched 4'2" wide opening measure 3'1" from the hearth. The stone mantel is 62" above the hearth and is 8'2" in length. The hearth is covered with 5 1/4"-square quarry tiles.

The French doors and casement windows along the north and west walls provide a beautiful panorama of the lake, as well as providing a great deal of natural light. On either side of the middle pair of French doors, on the north wall, are arched niches, 5'1" in height and 2' 3-1/2" wide, that contain shelves. These niches help to highlight the main entrance on the interior. On the east wall, in front of the stairway, is an arched door with archivolt trim which leads to the original master bedroom. This doorway is repeated again for a closet, which is under the stairs. Both doors have glass doorknobs.

The wallpaper is the same in the living room and dining room and may be original. It has a western motif with horses drinking from a fountain. It is all done in beige and brown tones. The Galpins' probate inventory is evidence that they liked the southwest and furnished their living room in a western motif.

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Dining Room

A segmental arch, 9'10" wide and 8'9" to the top of the arch, connects the living room with the dining room. The rectangular-shaped room measures 25'4" from north to south and is 16'8" wide. The moldings in this room mimic those in the living room.

The beautiful feature in this room is the bow window with its curved casement windows, measuring 15'5" across and 7' in height; the depth of the curve is 3'7". Under the bowed windows are four wooden planters which fit perfectly into the curved wall. The four planters are set on ball feet and are painted green to match the trim of the windows. Two other entrances which lead into the dining room are: French doors on the northwest wall lead to the breakfast room/sun-room; opposite is a single wooden swinging door with a diamond-shaped light, leading to the kitchen hall.

Breakfast Room

The Breakfast Room, as the Galpins called it, is a long narrow room, 21'6" by 11'6" with a wall of windows on its west elevation. A small Craftsman-styled fireplace, of variegated three inch tiles, is in the southeast corner of the room. The arched opening is 3' wide and 2'6" to the top of the arch. The oak mantel is 5'9 1/2" in length and has a wooden backboard. After viewing the massive stone chimneys elsewhere in the house it is a surprise to find this small-scale tiled fireplace. This fireplace has had some damage and will be restored. Two pairs of double casement windows are on the west wall with a single set west of the fireplace. A door to the outside, located in the northwest corner, leads to the west patio. The ceiling has had acoustical tile installed and now has a Greek Key pattern trim instead of the original crown molding, which will be restored. There is an acanthus medallion in the ceiling.

Master Bedroom and Study

This room was once the Galpins' master bedroom and study. The present owners plan to use it as a second living room. It is

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connected through the arched doorway that is centered on the east wall of the living room. To the east of the bedroom, through a large archway and down a 7 1/2" step, is the east projecting wing. The south end of the bedroom also has another doorway on the that leads to the kitchen area.

The rectangular-shaped bedroom is 31', north to south, and 16' wide. A double pair of casement windows is placed on its north wall and a similar pair is on the south end of its east wall.

The east wing contains a full bathroom (5'8" x 7'7") to the north, with a pedestal sink and built-in bathtub. A pair of casement windows is located on its north wall. Across from the bathroom is a large closet, similar in size, with built-in drawers and a wardrobe. The study beyond is almost square and it has a Craftsman-style fireplace centered on its east wall that is faced in brown brick, has a wooden mantel painted white that is supported by three sets of double brackets, and has a simple square opening.

Kitchen/Butler's Pantry

The kitchen is located in the southeast corner of the house and it is almost square in size and measures 14'9" x 16'6". The rear entry (south) leads into the kitchen; there is plenty of natural light in this room because of three pairs of casement windows; a double pair on the east wall and one pair on the south wall. The floors are of 2 1/4" maple, the same as throughout the house. A five-paneled door in the northeast corner leads to the back stairs. These stairs begin by going north and they then turn to the west. A small window lights this stairway. The cupboards in the kitchen will be redone. The adjacent butler's pantry, west of the kitchen, has a short wall of original cupboards. They will be used as a model for the kitchen cupboards. They have glass doors on top with faceted hexagonal glass knobs, and solid wood doors on the bottom.

The long narrow pantry is 16'11" by 13'3" and has one single six light-casement window on its south wall. A small square hallway, 7'7" by 6'11" is on the north end of the pantry and serves as a hallway between the kitchen and dining room.

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Basement

Between the kitchen and the master bedroom is a doorway to the basement. Originally, the opening was through the butler's pantry. The basement has 7' ceilings with 2" by 8" joists on 16" centers. It is easy to see that the basement began as only a small area, 14' by 20'. During the remodeling in 1927 it was excavated and concrete block walls and poured cement were put under the structure. The fieldstone foundation walls are visible from the basement. It is evident that there is no foundation beneath these walls. A large steam boiler was removed from the original area and also a 3,000 gallon underground fuel oil tank. A new gas furnace has been installed with forced air registers on the first floor, with hydronic heat on the second. Before the new systems were installed, there were cast iron radiators and it took 216 gallons of oil to heat the house for one day.

The original logs used for support are still visible in the basement as well as the old entry to the pantry. In the 1960s the Pallatine Fathers had a tiled floor and shower installed in the southeast corner.

Second Floor

The magnificent curved stairway leads to an L-shaped hall which measures 20' by 7' north to south and 18' by 5'10" east to west. A segmental arch mimicking the one on the first floor, is at the top of the stairs.

The second floor is divided into distinctive sections. There is a definite change in ambiance when going from one section to another. The ceiling height in both parts is 9'2".

The first section (newer) contains three bedrooms and two full baths. The woodwork and doors are more formal in this section. The doors are painted and are inset with rectangular moldings and glass door knobs. The back section (original) is reached through a six-paneled door stained brown. All the doors in this section match. The back stairway (2'9"-wide) is in this section as is a

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large hall, a bathroom, and two bedrooms. Also, the enclosed stairway to the third floor is accessed from this section.

Off of the back hall, down three steps, are two small rooms. These are in the upper story of the projecting east wing of the house.

Bedroom #1 (North)

This bedroom will be used as the present owners' master bedroom. Located over the living room, it is 31'1" (same length as the living room) and 17' wide. The oriel bay on the west wall measures 7'3 1/4" wide and is 13" deep and is full ceiling height.

A dramatic view of the lake is seen through the double pair of casement windows on the north wall. Within the bedroom is a hallway, 7'4" by 3'7" to the south. A large closet is off of this hall and at the end of the hall is the full bathroom which can also be reached from the main hall.

Bathroom #1

This colorful bathroom has 4" square pink wall tiles topped with a narrow green header tile that is 5'3" above the floor. The flooring is a beautiful basket weave tile of pink and white. The pink ceramic towel bars have been broken off. They will be replaced. The original pedestal sink and curved built-in bathtub are still intact. A double-door cedar closet with shelving is on the south wall.

Bedroom #2 (Antique Room)

This bedroom is located in the southwest corner of the house. It is 19' long by 11'8" wide with an alcove on the north wall where a sink once sat. This room is the only one not rehabilitated as yet.

The name "Antique Room" appears on the 1942 estate inventory. No reason was given for naming it this other than for the furniture that was used in here.

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Bedroom #3 (Lavender Room)

The Lavender Room was supposedly the room that Al Capone always stayed in. It is said Capone's favorite colors were lavender and green. The wall paper (now removed) was done in these colors. This bedroom is almost square; 16'6" x 15'2". There are two evenly-spaced casement windows in the south wall and a sink alcove on the east wall.

Bathroom #2

The shape of this bathroom is of an irregular configuration. It is 15' 2 1/2" long and 6'8" at the widest section. The tiles used in this bathroom are more subdued than the first bathroom, but still colorful. The floor tiles are 3/4" checkered design in dark brown and tan. The wall tiles, a golden hue, are brick shaped 3" by 6". A green header tile is used with a decorative row of miniature tiles in green and black. A built-in shower of the same green tiles, 3' by 3'6" projects to the east. A pedestal sink is still intact.

Bedroom #4 (Lydia's Room)

This room is at the top of the back stair in the original section of the second floor. Located in the southeast corner, it has a wall dormer measuring 7 1/2" wide and 18" deep. The room itself measures 14'9" by 16' 4". A closet is on the west wall. One pair of casement windows is on the south wall.

Known as Lydia's Room, it was named for Lydia Loma Morey. Lydia was a Finnish girl who worked for the Galpins.

Bedroom #5 (Pink Bedroom)

This bedroom is also in the original section of the second floor. It is on the north side overlooking the portico through a pair of casement windows. Smaller than the other bedrooms, it is 12'4" by 14'11". A closet is on the south wall under the third floor stairway.

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Bedrooms #6 and #7 (Maid's Bedrooms)

These bedrooms are down three steps off the back hall and are situated on the second floor of the east wing. They are mirror images of each other, small with slanted ceilings and one pair of casement windows in the oriels. It is easy to tell that they are for the hired help. The Galpins had an upstairs maid and a downstairs maid.

Bathroom #3

Located over the back stairwell, this small half bathroom was for the help. It has one small three-light window, and measures 4' x 6'.

Back Stairs and Hall

The back stairway is enclosed, with balustrades on each side of the stairs at the second floor level. The back hall is a large area, and probably was used as a sitting room or a gathering place for the servants. A small pair of six-light casement windows are on the east wall.

Third Floor

A six-paneled door opens to the enclosed stairway that accesses the third floor.

The third floor's main room was called the Billiard Room. It once contained a Brunswick-Balke-Callender-Monarch Cushion pool table. One of the folk tales about Fort Eagle is that this massive table with 2" thick slate was installed at the specific request of Al Capone. A huge crane was brought from southern Wisconsin to raise the table up to the third floor.³

3. A folktale written up in an album at Fort Eagle.

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The room is done in knotty pine paneling and has a set of French doors with a window on each side on the north wall. It is possible to access the balcony from here. The balcony floor has been tarred, with crushed gravel placed on top.

The Billiard Room was decorated in a very masculine way. It was done in pine and had seven mounted game animal heads on the walls and three mounted fish when the Galpins lived there.

The Sewing Room

This room, used for sewing, was also where all of the costumes and dolls were kept. The Galpins were friends of the Ringling Brothers Circus people, who gave the Galpins the costumes the circus no longer needed.⁴

"Mrs. Galpin loved little girls. She kept a large supply of dolls in this room to be played with in the Doll House."⁵

A third room on this floor is a room paneled in boxcar siding on the walls and ceilings. It was probably used for storing travel trunks and clothing. There is a closet under the eaves on the west wall.

In the 1960s the Pallatine Fathers added the shed dormer on the east to provide a place for extra lavatories. The plumbing is still visible.

Summary

In spite of the ravages of time, the many owners, vacancy and vandalism, this house is still a fine example of Colonial Revival

4. Interview with Mary Jane Peterson Ludwig, January 24, 1997.

5. Telephone interview with Helen Kinner, March 3, 1997.

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architecture, with Craftsman elements. The present owners are making yeoman efforts to return the house to its former glory. All of the inappropriate additions are being removed. A new heating system and all new electrical wiring and plumbing have been installed. (The complex originally had its own generator for electricity, until 1932, when they were able to get electrical service.) The walls of the house were originally of plastered beaver board. These have all been replaced with dry wall. Cellulose insulation was installed throughout.

Fort Eagle will once again be one of the show places of northern Wisconsin.

1919 House

The original house of Homer and Hilda Galpin at Fort Eagle was probably built in 1918/1919. The land records at the Vilas County Court House in Eagle River confirm this.

In research for this document a special section in the Eagle River Review was uncovered which featured a photo of the Galpin house on Big Sand Lake. It was a two-page spread on Phelps and was published in December of 1923 by the Eagle River paper.

The house featured was a rustic one-story cottage with fieldstone fireplace and foundation. A small gabled dormer is on the main elevation, over an enclosed porch. Rising above this, on the east side, it appears to have a two-story section, probably added ca.1921. The improvements in the tax records double that year. It is believed that the one-story section gained a second floor besides a complete transformation in 1927.

To further prove this theory, in a telephone interview, January 24, 1997, with Ruth Peterson Selph of Sarasota, Florida, the question was posed: "The first time you saw the Galpin house ca.1922, what did it look like?" The response was: "Oh, it was just a rustic brown cottage."

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The theory was further evidenced by an oral interview with Francis Bohnsack ca.1975.⁶ Mrs. Bohnsack was the first child who came to Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club with her father Otto Hartwig in 1900. In the interview Francis states when speaking of the Galpin's home: "The first house was not that big. It was a brown house with a beautiful living room and a large fireplace.

When Fred Wiedenbauer, the contractor for the present owners, began to remove paneling in the large north bedroom on the second floor he also made a discovery. He found a line of tar along the west fieldstone chimney where the roof line had been originally. It was much lower than the present one.

Mr. Wiedenbauer also discovered a unique support system within the walls. He explains: "It is an inverted truss, made up of three or four laminated 2 x 12s, which supports the large open expanse of the living room. Steel rods are used to adjust the tension of the truss. Adjustments can be made on the third floor. There are four adjusting rods for the living room and two for the dining room."⁷

It is obvious upon close examination that changes have taken place: the original and the new basement; the difference between the two sections of the second floor; and the way the east-wing roof does not line up with the main roof line. All of these are further proof of how the house was changed.

Boathouse

The large white clapboard wet-boathouse has some Craftsman elements and is situated in its own tranquil cove west of the main house and approximately 500 feet south of the gazebo. It measures 41' north

6. O'Shaughnesy, Jim. Oral interview with Francis Hartwig Bohnsack, c1975, p. 40.

7. Interview with Fred Wiedenbauer, the contractor at Fort Eagle, March 1, 1997 and April 18, 1997.

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to south and 36' east to west. The structure is supported by posts driven into the sand and sits over the water 110 feet from the shore.

A long wood plank pier connects the boathouse to the shore and a four-foot-wide section continues across the length of the west elevation, while another three-foot-wide section spans the east.

A hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles shelters the boathouse. It has a small balustraded deck on top and exposed rafters under the eaves. A smaller, lower hip roof mimics the main one and serves as a shelter over the entrance. It is supported by three posts and the rafter ends are visible under the eaves.

The entrance is on the east elevation and consists of double doors; each with one light and three panels. Fenestration throughout consists of eleven matching double-hung windows - one over one: four on the west; three on the south and east; one on the north. The openings for three boat slips are also located on the north elevation.

Interior

There are three wet boat slips, each with an overhead door on the north elevation. Two of them are identical, five feet wide with two paneled sections and four lights in each section. The overhead door to the west is larger than the other two, it is eight feet wide with two sections and eight lights in each section.

The interior has a wooden planked floor (2' by 8'), boxcar siding on the walls, open trusses and beams. There are three iron posts which support the beams. The three-slip wet-boathouse is used to house and shelter boats and to store equipment associated with boating and fishing. Cupboards are in the southwest corner.

The unique boathouse in this isolated setting is reminiscent of the past, when every large estate had a wet boat house for their luxury boats. The Galpins had a large wooden inboard motor boat that Mrs. Galpin loved to drive all over the lake.

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Gazebo

The six-sided screened gazebo is situated on the shore of Big Sand Lake, northwest of the main house. Each of the six sides are ten feet wide, with screens on the top half of each section and white clapboard siding on the bottom half. The entrance faces southeast and has a centered, half-screened door, with screening on either side. Inside, the gazebo has a wooden floor, open rafters and unfinished inner walls. The pyramidal six-sided roof of black asphalt shingles has rafters under the wide eaves. The original metal finial, with an eagle on top, is missing but is going to be replaced.

Gazebos were also called summer houses with a view. Many of the wealthy summer people who had lake homes had gazebos. Usually they were furnished with a table and chairs. It provided a cool place to be on a hot summer day.

Caretaker's Cottage/Greenhouse

The caretaker's cottage, situated east of the main house, is a simple vernacular one-storied cottage with clapboard siding, painted white. The first section has a fieldstone foundation that rises up and covers part of the house. The configuration is irregular with probably many additions; the roof is multi-gabled and has black asphalt shingles with two red brick interior chimneys. The windows are double hung.

The main entrance faces west and has a gabled entrance canopy and side lights. Another covered entrance is on the south elevation. A greenhouse projects to the east and is roughly 15-foot-square.

Water Tower

The steel water tower is 100 feet from the lake with a 1500 gallon capacity. The water tower is supported by a steel cross-braced structure. It was reputedly the first water tower in Vilas County.

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Sauna

Originally, this building was a clapboard structure with a pyramidal hipped roof and rafters under the eaves. At some point, however, an inappropriate gambrel roof was added, which includes a loft, and the building is now considered to be non-contributing because of the changes that have been made to it. The one-story structure is white clapboard and sits on a poured cement slab. The overall measurement is 18'5" x 12'5" and faces south. The windows are six-light and the single door is five-paneled.

The sauna became popular in this area because of the Finnish people who settled here. Many of the Finnish farmers had saunas.

Guest Cabin

This white clapboard cabin has a gabled roof with brackets under the eaves and other details similar to the main house. The cabin measures 18'4" x 14'4" and has a gabled entrance canopy with a transom and support brackets, and faces south. A wooden stoop at the entrance has balustrades on each side. Fenestration includes pairs of casement windows on three sides.

Outbuildings

Close to the lake, east of the main house, are two primitive log structures with front-gabled roofs and grey/green asphalt shingles. Both structures face west. The building closest to the lake is a 14' square pump house of vertical logs stained brown.

The building south is of horizontal log, stained brown, with a lean-to on the east elevation. The log structure measures 16' by 14' and was used for cooking maple syrup. Two sinks are still inside.

Another out building is southeast of the above building. It has a side-gabled roof with similar asphalt shingles; a stove pipe projects from the roof. It is constructed of ship-lap siding, stained brown, and measures 20'4" by 16'4". There are two white

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doors - one on the west and one on the south - with one square light. A double-hung window is next to the door on the south elevation. A fenced-in area is adjacent to the east end of the structure.

Honeymoon Cottage

The Honeymoon Cottage is so named because Homer Galpin and his new bride, Hilda, lived there after they were married in 1916, and until their new cottage was finished in 1919.

It is a primitive log structure perched on a hill overlooking the lake. It is surrounded by towering pines and it is located west of the bay where the boathouse is situated.

Facing east, the front-gabled roof is of variegated green asphalt shingles. Under the eaves are 3" round pole rafters. The full horizontal logs are stained a reddish-brown and have dovetail corners.

The main entrance has a Dutch door made of split horizontal logs. Vertical logs surround the door and also the two six-light windows on either side. The main part of the cottage measures 19' by 20'6" and has a small 5' by 8" square shed roof addition on the south elevation, with a double four-light window.

Another addition on the west elevation is not full height, but mimics the larger section in roof style and entrance. A stove pipe is on this section. A new square concrete-block chimney is between the two sections on the south elevation. Sliding glass doors, on the north elevation, lead to a later inappropriate wooden deck. The basement has been excavated and a sliding glass door serves as an entrance for this lower level. A concrete-block foundation has been put under both sections of the building.

Garage

Situated next to the driveway leading to Fort Eagle, this six stall garage is clapboard with cross-gabled roofs, facing east. All of

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the stalls are numbered. The double doors open out and have panels of diagonal boxcar siding and braced framework. There are black iron brackets and hinges on each door.

This structure was built in two stages. The first stage has the one-story side-gabled roof and 8" clapboard siding. A pair of windows, six lights in each, is on the east elevation, with rafters under the eaves.

The second stage, a two-story section, has a front-gabled roof, with double-hung windows under the apex. The clapboard siding is the same, but the windows are different than in the first section.

The second story of this building was where the chauffeur and his wife lived. An entrance door to this section (with two double-hung windows) is on the north elevation.

The first floor interior is finished with plastered walls and planked flooring. A plastered wall runs north to south on the first floor and separates the two sections. An interior stairway leads to the second floor.

The Galpins' sleek, black 1927 chauffeur-driven car, a Nash, is still stored in this garage.⁸

Stable

The small gabled roof structure is of clapboard, painted brown, and measures 17' by 12'. There is room for two horses on ground level with a five-foot loft. The floor is wood planked. A loft door opens on the east elevation where hay can be placed. The north elevation has a 36" by 18" two-light window and a Dutch door.

8. Kimes, Beverly Rae and Clark, Henry Austin, Jr. Second Volume, Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 - 1942: Krause Publications, 1989, p. 977.

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Garden House

The building situated near the rock garden and waterfall, was known as the Garden House. Recently it has been used for storing gardening equipment. The brown-painted concrete-block building has a gabled roof with simple barge board, along the roof line, painted white. The entry door and windows on the north elevation are also painted white.

Mr. Galpin originally used this building as an auxiliary office. According to the 1942 estate inventory, it had a desk and several chairs.

Doll House

A small 8' by 10' building known as the "Doll House" is located southwest of the main house and along the path to the boathouse under wonderful mature pines. Built of vertical logs and a gabled roof with asphalt shingles, it has horizontal logs under the eaves. It has an entrance and window on the north elevation, with the trim painted white. A sign above the door states that it is the "Doll House." A small white fence runs across the front of it. Mrs. Galpin loved having young girls stay at their summer place. This building was used as a playhouse for their young guests.

Summary

The Kaniewskis plan to restore all of the buildings at Fort Eagle, not just the main house. They want to maintain the sense of time and place which also enchanted the Galpins. All of the buildings are an integral part of Fort Eagle. Each contributes its own history to the activities that took place. It is important that they also be restored.

The Hill Home, once one of the two guest cottages for Fort Eagle, is no longer a part of the estate. It was on land that was sold off when the acreage to the east of the existing property was subdivided.

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The sauna is non-contributing because of the alterations.

There is also a storage structure which is non-contributing as it has been built within the last ten years.

Building Inventory: All buildings but the sauna are contributing.

<u>Building #</u>	<u>Building Name</u>	<u>Date or Circa Date</u>
1	Main House	1919, 1921, 1927
2	Boat House	ca.1920
3	Gazebo	ca.1920
4	Caretaker's Cottage/ Greenhouse	ca.1920
5	Water Tower	ca.1920
6	Sauna NC	ca.1940
7	Guest Cabin	ca.1940
8, 9, 10	Outbuildings	ca.1920
11	Honeymoon Cottage	ca.1916
12	Garage	ca.1921/1927
13	Stable	ca.1920
14	Garden House	ca.1920
15	Doll House	ca.1920
16	Storage Building NC	ca.1990

Fort Eagle
Name of Property

Vilas
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

ca. 1916-1941

Significant Dates

1919

1921

1927

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Galpin, Homer K.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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Significance

The sixteen resources in the Fort Eagle complex are being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for their local significance under NRHP Criteria B and C. The complex is worthy of nomination under criterion C because its main house is a fine example of Colonial Revival architecture mixed with significant Craftsman Style elements and because the complex as a whole is a largely intact and now quite rare example of a Northern Wisconsin summer estate, a number of which were established during the early part of the 20th century by wealthy Chicagoans such as Homer Galpin, the first owner of Fort Eagle.

Fort Eagle is also being nominated under criterion B because for Homer Galpin's important role in the development of tourism in Vilas County. Galpin, the head of the Republican Party machine in Chicago and Cook County, was known as "Mr. Republican" in the 1920s. Through Galpin, his fellow politicians and other wealthy friends and colleagues in the Chicago area found their way to this area of northern Wisconsin. He was the conduit that introduced people such as Chicago Mayor William Thompson and Judge Robert Crowe to the sanctity and beauty of the northwoods. A large article in the Chicago Sunday Tribune, August of 1928, describes the area as the "playground" for the powerful politicians of Chicago.⁹ The period of significance is between 1916, when the first structure at Fort Eagle was built, and extends through 1941, when the estate ceased to be used as a summer residence and hideaway for Homer K. Galpin.

9. "Chicago Public Folk at Ease on Eagle River," Chicago Sunday Tribune, August 26, 1928.

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Historical Background

Vilas County, located in the heart of Wisconsin's northwoods, was formed in 1893, under Chapter 150, from territory that was originally a part of Oneida County.¹⁰

Early settlers in this area encountered a wild and diverse environment. Most of the area consisted of a highland plateau scoured by ancient glaciers. Covering it was a spectacular forest in which scattered pines towered over the surrounding birches, maples and basswoods.

This abundance of trees fueled Wisconsin's lumber industry, which reached its peak in 1892, with northern mills producing an astonishing four billion board feet of lumber. The white pine that attracted the loggers was totally depleted by the late 1890s.¹¹

Many people strongly believed that farming would replace lumbering as a livelihood, but in spite of efforts to clear land and develop agriculture, many found the soil too sandy and the growing season too short.

One thing that the landscape did provide, with its wonderful lakes and forests, was a respite from the heat of the city during the summer months. And because of the wilderness conditions, a less strict dress code was observed. Vilas County had 941 lakes, so it became a natural attraction for sports fishermen. The great event which opened up this whole territory was the coming of the railroad. The Milwaukee, Lake Shore and Western arrived in 1883 and became a part of the Chicago Northwestern system on June 30,

10. O'Jones, George, McVean, Norman S., and others. The History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. Minneapolis. H. C. Cooper, Jr. and Company, 1924, p. 201.

11. Davis, Mark - Wisconsin Magazine of History, Volume 79, autumn 1995, #1. "Northern Choices: Rural Forest County in the 1920s," p. 5.

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1893. The railroad reached Eagle River in 1883 and abruptly changed the status quo.

The first visitors after logging were the sport fishermen who came by train. From 1891 to 1905 transportation from the Chicago area to Eagle River was by rail and then a day's journey to the Phelps area. In 1905 a spur line was built to Phelps.

According to Mark Davis' article in Wisconsin Magazine of History: "In the 1920s two new entrepreneurial options emerged to help the struggling families in the north country. The first, based on America's unquenchable thirst for alcohol, was the illegal but apparently profitable traffic in moonshine. The other was rooted in a new perception of the region's forest and lakes. The boosters of logging, railroads and agriculture began to see that their most valuable resources lay all around them, and with typical enthusiasm and hyperbole they turned to promoting tourism."¹²

One of the early villages in Vilas County was Phelps. Situated on the northeast shore of Big Twin Lake in township 41 north, range 11 east, it was created and named Hackley on May 1, 1905.

A large landholder in this area at the turn of the century was the company of Hackley and Bonnell. In December 1901 the Wisconsin Lumber and Bark Company was incorporated by John H. Bonnell, William A. Phelps, Charles A. Phelps, Charles H. Hackley, O. A. Felger, Dustin Oakes and George C. Covell. The name of the company became known as the Hackley, Phelps, and Bonnell Co. These three men were responsible for the founding of Phelps.¹³

The town was named Hackley until 1913 when it was changed to Phelps. The reason given was that Hackley was constantly being confused with Hatley, a lumber town in central Wisconsin.

12. Ibid. Volume 79, #2, p. 109.

13. Albrecht, Joseph F., The History of Phelps, WI, 1976, p. 3.

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George Herman, a Chicago businessman, began leading a group of sports fishermen to the Hackley area about 1884. They traveled by rail to Eagle River and probably followed the Wausau to Ontonagon Trail to the present-day Phelps. From Phelps they had to take logging and Indian trails to reach the shores of Big Sand Lake.¹⁴

Brown Brothers from Rhinelander had established a lumber camp on the northeastern shore of Big Sand Lake and by 1891 they had completely logged it.¹⁵ George Herman and his circle of fishermen got other Chicago sportsmen interested in purchasing property and in 1891 the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club was organized and incorporated in Illinois.¹⁶

The group bought 800 acres for \$1 an acre. Memberships were sold to their Chicago friends. Members could not own the land, but could lease it for 99 years and build cottages.

When the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club was organized, they used the primitive remnants of the logging camp for their housing. Gradually, women and children were allowed to accompany the fishermen to this remote wilderness. In 1900 the first clubhouse was erected; it was affectionately nicknamed "The Flop." It was used until 1924 when it was destroyed by fire.

Many of the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club meetings were held in Chicago. Without exception the members were from the Chicago area and many of the men were involved in Illinois politics.

14. Bohnsack Adams, Helen. "The History of Big Sand Lake Club," Vilas County, Phelps, WI, 1976, p. 2.

15. Ibid

16. Ibid, p. 3.

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Homer K. Galpin

The Fort Eagle complex is being nominated to the NRHP under NRHP Criterion B for its close associations with Homer K. Galpin, an important figure in Chicago politics during the 1910s and 1920s who was also a very significant force in the establishment of North Woods tourism in Vilas County during the same period.

Galpin was an early member of the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club and was also one of its most important leaders. He was elected president several times: 1903 - 1904; 1910 - 1911; 1924 - 1933. In 1937 Galpin was given the honor of becoming the first honorary member of the club.

Galpin had important political connections in Chicago and was chairman of the Republican Party of Cook County. Galpin was a great and enthusiastic promoter of the northwoods of Wisconsin. He was instrumental in drawing the Chicago politicians, such as Mayor William Thompson; Mayor Robert Crowe and Hugh Smith, Assistant Secretary of the State of Illinois, to the Big Sand Lake Club. Galpin was nicknamed "Mr. Republican" and the Big Sand Lake Club was often called the "Republican Club." Galpin must have liked his image because he kept a huge collection of elephant statues in his living room at Fort Eagle. They were in all sizes and carved from such things as ivory, wood, and marble.¹⁷ Today, although no one seems to know its origin, a huge carved elephant still sits inside the entrance of the Big Sand Lake Club. Could this be one of Galpin's elephants? No one seems to know the answer.

In a ca.1975 interview with Francis Bohnsack, the first child to come to the Big Sand Lake Club with her father, Otto Hartwig, Jim O'Shaughnesy asks: "How did the club get itself put together?" Her answer: "It was only the good will of the people all through the years."

17. Telephone interview with Mary Jane (Peterson) Ludwig of Ludington, MI, February 1997.

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Bohnsack goes on to say that Homer Galpin became very dominant (in the club) in the 1910s and throughout the 1920s, and that the club kept improving because of Homer Galpin's influence.

Galpin and his first wife, Jessie, built a home (situated three houses north of the clubhouse) on Big Sand Lake in 1916. In 1909, however, Galpin had built a small primitive cabin on land he owned on nearby Smoky Lake. He owned two large parcels, lots 21 and 22 at the northwest corner of the lake. This small cabin would be used as a retreat for Galpin and Chicago racketeer Al Capone in the 1920s. In a telephone interview, Bill Koski, a life-long resident of Smoky Lake, related the following: "Homer Galpin and Al Capone used to keep a boat on the end of Smoky Lake. They would take a boat or walk along the shore to Big Sand Lake Club and then cross over the road and walk on a logging trail a short distance until they got to the south end of Smoky Lake. A boat was kept there and they would row the boat to the north end of Smoky Lake where Galpin had his primitive fishing shack in the woods."¹⁸

A small lake adjacent to the north end of Smoky Lake is now named Galpin Lake, after Homer Galpin. West of this lake is another small lake called Moose Lake. Originally it was called Fox Lake and the Galpins used Fox Lake, Wisconsin or alternately Fox Lake, Michigan as their address, as it was on the state line.

In 1916 Mr. Galpin bought a huge tract of land which included almost all of the southeastern shore of Big Sand Lake. There was a well-traveled path between the club and Galpin's Fort Eagle. The path was convenient but also symbolic of the close ties that Galpin kept with the club even though he was not living on the grounds.

Galpin retained his membership in the Big Sand Lake Club (Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club) and as his political power grew in Chicago, his leadership grew stronger in the club.

18. Telephone interview with William Koski, Smoky Lake Reserve, Phelps, WI, March 3, 1997.

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When Galpin and his first wife divorced or had a final separation, he sold their house, located on the grounds of the club, to Mr. Maypales, another Chicago politician. Galpin remarried in 1916. His second wife was Hilda Jensen, a native of Denmark. He had a small log cabin built in a secluded area of his estate dubbed "Honeymoon Cottage" where Hilda and Homer lived after they were married.

After the original clubhouse burned in 1924, a new clubhouse was built in 1924/25 and Galpin was given much of the credit for the success of the club. He was also hailed as a staunch supporter of the welfare of Phelps.

The new club celebrated its opening June 11, 1925. The 15,000 square foot full-log clubhouse is still extant today. A full-page cover story in the Eagle River Review reported that the \$125,000 clubhouse was the epitome of style in Northern Wisconsin. Built by the Finnish farmers who lived in the area it is a massive Rustic-styled log building. Galpin, the president, during the building of the clubhouse, hosted 24 guests at the opening dinner - all 24 guests were residents of Phelps.

Mr. Charles A. McCulloch, owner of the Parmelee Company of Chicago and treasurer and partner in the Yellow Taxi Company, spoke of Galpin in glowing terms: "Know that Mr. Galpin is a good politician in Cook County, holding 'the chairmanship' of the Republican Party for the past nine years, that we rather expected that he was getting ready to be the next mayor of Phelps, and for that reason we were going to present him with a large Tom Mix hat so he could throw it in the ring." He went on to say that he was sure no one would dare to oppose him because he was sure he would be the people's choice, unless Mrs. Galpin should decide to be a candidate.

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Homer Knickerbocker Galpin was born in Chicago in 1870, the son of Homer Brown Galpin and Wealthea Galpin. Mr. Galpin senior served as a deputy sheriff of Cook County for 40 years and was declared to be the "most honest man in Chicago." He died July 4, 1900.¹⁹

Homer K. Galpin attended Metropolitan Business College and took an LLB degree from Chicago College of Law at Lake Forest University.²⁰ As a young lawyer in the 1890s, Galpin became an active Republican worker in the old 20th ward. In 1901 he was elected chief clerk of the County Board of Review and four years later became a state senator of Illinois for two terms, for the 44th and 45th districts. These terms were served between 1905 and 1909. He later became clerk of the Municipal Court, a post he held from 1911 to 1912.²¹

Galpin rose rapidly in the Republican ranks, becoming boss of the 27th ward. By 1914 he was named chairman of the Cook County Republican Committee. He held that post until 1928.²²

In 1906 Galpin lost out as Chief Clerk of the Board of Review. An article in the Chicago Record - Herald dated January 16, 1906 (page three, column two), states that Galpin was a protege of John M. Smyth and Fred M. Blount. The article ends with the comment that Galpin had received several offers of big corporation employment that would bring him a larger income than the \$3,000 annual salary he received from his chief clerkship. It states, however, that he preferred independent practice.

19. Chicago Evening Journal, May 17, 1895.

20. Marquis, A. N. Company. Who's Who in Chicago Vicinity, 1941.

21. Illinois Blue Book, 1993.

22. Chicago Daily Tribune, July 28, 1941, p. 10.

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On April 4th, 1893, Galpin married his first wife, Jessie J. Graham, in Cook County, Illinois. The 1900 U.S. Census reports that they are living with his parents and in 1910 with just his mother, Wealtha. The 1920 U.S. Census indicates that Jessie Galpin is living with two nephews and it reportedly stated that she is widowed. No divorce papers were found, but Galpin, an important man in Chicago politics, is in the society column of the Chicago Record - Herald, dated December 25, 1911, where a brief article states that Homer and his wife may part. The next day, December 26, (page 7, column one), the same paper stated that he had returned home and things were better. Their marriage appears to have been unhappy and eventually they parted.

Entertainment-Recreation

From several personal and telephone interviews with people who knew Homer K. Galpin, a picture emerges of a man who was larger than life. In Phelps he was held in high esteem because of his great interest in the welfare of Phelps and the surrounding area. He personally took on the role of promoting the Phelps area as a vacation land and as a result, the economy of Phelps greatly benefitted when the wealthy Chicagoans Galpin knew either visited or built summer homes in the area.

Galpin was responsible for and credited with starting the special weekend train services that began April 17, 1926. Galpin worked on this project for many years. He pushed for a winter weekend train that would bring people from Chicago to the northwoods during all seasons, not just summer. Galpin and a Mr. Vilas (General Manager of the Chicago Northwestern Railroad) met at the Union League Club in Chicago to discuss this matter. Galpin invited dignitaries from Chicago who traveled north frequently, a Mr. Johnson who was vice-president of the Northwestern Railroad, and also C. M. Christiansen from Phelps, owner of a large sawmill. Mr. Frankenthal, the owner of a large estate on Long Lake, near Phelps, was also invited.²³

23. Eagle River Review, April 15, 1926, p. 1.

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The result of this meeting was a promise for the first weekend run to begin April 17, 1926, which it did. Mr. Galpin felt that it would be a great help in the further development and economy of this area in northern Wisconsin.

To further show the admiration held for Homer Galpin the paper stated: "Early special train service due to efforts of well-known Phelps man" in a small headline. The first paragraph states: "When our first special train service comes up on April 17th we will know that someone, although not here in the winter, was thinking of the Big North Woods in Vilas County. Homer K. Galpin, chairman of the Republican Central County Committee and president of the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club, has been working for several years and has never given up the idea that a weekend train during the winter would be a paying proposition and give an opportunity for those who own summer homes to enjoy winter sports here also."

At the same time that Galpin was helping to promote the welfare of the Phelps area, he was becoming a very powerful man in Chicago. The 1920s in Chicago were times of power struggles between the local politicians and emerging gangsters.

The Volstead Act, prohibiting all alcoholic beverages, was passed by the federal government in 1919 and spawned strange bedfellows. Chicago politicians and the mobsters, who virtually took over Chicago during this period, became deeply intertwined. According to the Organized Crime Survey done in 1929, "The evidence of the alliance of gangster and politician has again and again become a public scandal. The mutuality of their services is not difficult to discover. The gangster depends upon political protection for his criminal and illicit activities."²⁴

24. Landesco, John, Organized Crime in Chicago, Part III of the Illinois Crime Survey, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929, p. 183.

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The gangsters maintained a working relationship with the politicians, and it was necessary that elections turned out to their favor.

Galpin came into great prominence when he became "the brains" of the Republican Machine that ran the campaign for Mayor William Thompson. For the 1928 election he managed the campaign fund, which was composed mostly of contributions from gamblers and bootleggers.

The ties between the gangsters and the political parties grew stronger. In 1924 the Torrio-Capone gang was requested, as a deliberate and openly-discussed part of the campaign plan, to send in their gun-squads to ensure the victory of the Republican candidate. After Torrio's abdication in 1925, Capone consolidated and further developed his affiliation with politicians.²⁵

Capone contributed \$260,000 to "Big Bill the Builder" Thompson's 1928 campaign fund. Thompson, eager to return to office and ready to do anything for votes, promised to re-open brothels, saloons and gambling casinos that the former Mayor Dever and his administration had shut down. He also promised to open 10,000 new establishments. Thompson had been mayor from 1915 to 1923 and lost to Dever in 1924.²⁶

A flamboyant politician, Thompson had a diesel-powered \$25,000 yacht, named "Big Bill," with his own likeness carved in oak as the figure head. Thompson gave his campaign speeches from the deck of his yacht. His followers were nicknamed "fish hunters." The Fish

25. Allsop, Kenneth, The Bootleggers: The Story of Chicago's Prohibition. New Rochelle, Ny: Arlington House, 1961, p. 201.

26. Spiering, Frank, The Man Who Got Capone. Indianapolis, Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1976, p. 17.

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-Fans clubhouse in Lincoln Park, Chicago, was their headquarters and where they had free-flowing, high quality "hooch."²⁷

According to Allsop in The Bootleggers, Homer K. Galpin orchestrated this whole ferocious campaign.

"It was the sort of razzmatazz and slapstick campaign that Chicago loved, and Thompson's popularity began again to come up from the trough to a new wave." Homer Galpin was commonly credited with being the brains behind Thompson and Robert Crowe.²⁸

In political terms "Thompsonism" became the synonym for crooked government. The term "Thompsonism" was also a symbol for spoils politics, police scandals, school board scandals, and alliances with gangsters. Also, the word was used in connection with betrayal of public trust and grotesque campaign methods.²⁹

It was after this campaign that Galpin was subpoenaed to testify before the grand jury to answer questions about the funds he had managed. People questioned where all the money had gone. For two years he evaded a subpoena, keeping out of the jurisdiction of Cook County. He became known as "Homeless Homer" and spent his summers in Wisconsin and his winters in Florida.³⁰ Galpin managed to hide out without being found.

27. Spiering, Frank, The Man Who Got Capone. Indianapolis, Bobbs - Merrill Company, Inc., 1976, p. 202.

28. Ibid.

29. Allsop, Kenneth, The Bootleggers: The Story of Chicago's Prohibition. New Rochelle, N.Y., Arlington House, 1961, p. 201.

30. Chicago Daily Tribune, July 28, 1941, p. 10.

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Lowell Buell, Phelps town treasurer for 37 years, said whenever a strange car pulled into the estate Galpin would run out the lake-side door and follow the path to the Big Sand Lake Club. He would stay there until it was safe to return home. Perhaps it was during the years they were trying to serve the subpoena.

Interestingly enough, it was during these homeless years that the Galpins bought the Mediterranean Revival style Bacheller-Brewer home at 1903 Lincoln Drive (extant) in Sarasota, Florida. In 1929, when Galpin purchased this house, the crash on Wall Street had already happened but it apparently did not affect Galpin and his lifestyle. The Mediterranean Revival-styled house had been designed by Thomas Reed Martin. This house was a popular type of house built during the Florida Land Boom. The Galpins (Homer and his second wife, Hilda), wintered here every year from 1929 until 1941, the year they both died. Many of the wealthy and powerful members of Chicago society who Galpin associated with also wintered in Sarasota, Florida.³¹ His northern Wisconsin estate was not suitable for year-round living. In Florida he used the address Fox Lake, Wisconsin, not Phelps, Wisconsin.

During this period it was rumored that Galpin and Capone were "friends," but no documentation of this could be found. However, without exception, everyone interviewed for this nomination mentioned the connection between Galpin and Capone. Many said that Galpin was Capone's attorney and that he visited Fort Eagle all the time. Others mentioned Galpin's ties to the Arlington Race Track near Chicago. All early records were burned in a fire that destroyed the first buildings.

In addition to being a wonderful recreation and vacation area for Chicagoans, the northwoods also proved to be a wonderful hideaway. Folk stories are plentiful about the infamous gangsters who "hid

31. National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Bacheller-Brewer Model Home Estate at 1903 Lincoln Drive, Sarasota, Florida. Listed in the National Register May 3, 1993.

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out." Capone had a northwoods estate of his own in Couderay, WI. It was complete with a watch tower at the entrance for sub-machine gunmen and there was a private lake behind the house where sea planes, loaded with Canadian liquor, landed.

Galpin never did have to face the grand jury in Illinois as a truce was called and Galpin resigned his chairmanship. He must have been "forgiven" as he did return to Chicago in 1932 and again managed campaign funds. This time it was for the campaign of Omer N. Custer, who was running for governor on the Republican ticket.³²

Galpin's last political position was on the Illinois Tax Commission of which Custer was chairman. After the completion of his term Galpin dropped out of politics completely.³³

Galpin left Illinois about 1928 and he never again owned property there. When he was able to return he stayed in a hotel or perhaps an apartment. He kept the houses in Wisconsin and in Florida. According to Polk's Directory of Chicago he was not in residence from 1928 to 1941. In the 1941 directory he was residing at the Belden-Stratford Hotel in Chicago.

A fascinating article is in the August 26, 1928 issue of the Chicago Sunday Tribune entitled: "Where Politicians While Away Their Time." A photo of the Big Sand Lake Club is pictured below the caption. The article is written in a rather sarcastic style, comparing the Chicago politicians who built mansions in the "wooded wilds" to the French Courtiers of the past. "Sequestered in sumptuous rendezvous, most of them in Vilas County are the lake and forest chateaux of Chicago, Cook County, and Illinois courtiers."

32. Chicago Daily Tribune, July 28, 1941, p. 10.

33. Ibid.

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The first politician to be discussed is Homer K. Galpin, chairman of the Cook County Republican Committee. "A visitor will follow the long drive through the woods and brave the storm of 'Private Keep Out' signs along the way. And Mr. Galpin is there, far from the great and madding crowd."

The article states that: "The Galpin chateau situated on that courtier's 800 acre preserve is constructed in the colonial taste." It goes on to talk about Mayor Thompson, Robert Crowe and other Chicago politicians at the Big Sand Lake Club. Big Sand Lake was definitely a refuge for Chicago politicians.

Robert E. Crowe, also a Republican party leader and close friend of Bill Thompson and Galpin, became well known as the Cook County state's attorney who was the prosecutor in the infamous trial of Leopold and Loeb. During the 1924 trial, Crowe crossed swords with Clarence Darrow, the famous criminal lawyer who represented Leopold and Loeb. Crowe won the state's case and the pair were given 99 years for kidnapping and life imprisonment for the murder of 14-year-old Bobby Franks.³⁴ After the trial, Crowe feared for his life. Lowell Buell, town treasurer says, "Crowe always brought his body guards with him to the Big Sand Lake Club."³⁵

During the "roaring twenties" Big Sand Lake Club became an extension of Chicago's high society. Formal dinner dances, bridge parties, and other social activities became weekly events. It was a flamboyant time and probably the most flamboyant member was Homer K. Galpin.

34. Chicago Daily Tribune, obituary of Robert Crowe, June 20, 1958, p. 14.

35. Personal Interview with Lowell Buell, December 6, 1996, Phelps, WI.

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In 1927, the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club changed its name to the Big Sand Lake Club. Perhaps the club recognized that its handsome new clubhouse and the more sophisticated activities it housed needed a new name. It was no longer just a fishing and hunting club.

Fort Eagle's Historical Background

The history of Fort Eagle begins in 1916 when Homer K. Galpin bought land from Hackley, Phelps and Bonnell, the main land owners and founders of Phelps. He purchased about 700 acres for \$500.00.³⁶ 1916 was also the year that Homer married his second wife, Hilda C. Jensen, who had been born in Denmark. Buying this large piece of land was a new beginning for Galpin. His first wife was Jessie J. Graham, whom he married in April, 1893,³⁷ and became separated from intermittently between 1910 and 1914. No divorce papers or 1916 marriage certificate were located, however it does state in the 1941 Who's Who in Chicago that Hilda and Homer were married in 1916.

Mr. Galpin was one of the first men from Chicago who discovered the area. Even before there was the Big Sand Lake Club he had a primitive cabin on Smoky Lake for fishing and hunting.

According to the tax records for Vilas County, the improvements on assessed value of Government Lot 4 jumped from \$900 (1921) to \$6,000 in 1922. There was another large increase in the property assessed value in 1928 when it was assessed at \$10,400. From these records it is probable that the first structure was built in 1918/1919, an addition added in 1921/1922, and the major remodeling was done in 1927/1928.

36. Register of Deeds, Land Records, Vilas County CourtHouse, Eagle River, WI.

37. Marriage Certificate, Cook County Courthouse, Chicago, Illinois, April 4, 1893.

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Those two dates also tie in with Homer Galpin's personal life. He purchased the large piece of land in 1916, the same year he married his second wife, Hilda C. Jensen. The cottage, known as the "Honeymoon Cottage," was probably constructed soon after he purchased the land.

The first section of the house was probably built about 1918, as many stated that the Honeymoon Cottage was built as a temporary place for the Galpins to live while having the new house built.

It was before and during the 1928 campaign for Big Bill Thompson, when so much money was raised from the mobsters in Chicago, that this house was completely remodeled. It became a showplace for grand entertaining and the epitome of the high life of the 1920s.

In a telephone interview with Mary Jane Peterson Ludwig on February 7, 1997, she told of how Hilda loved to entertain. She even hired a woman to assist in entertaining at both places, Fort Eagle, and the large mansion in Sarasota. The woman, Lydia Loma, was from the Phelps area, of Finnish descent. Ms. Loma became a part of the Galpin family. She had her own bedroom at Fort Eagle and also moved with Galpins to winter in Sarasota. The Galpins had her large wedding celebration at Fort Eagle when she was married to Lowell Morey. When Homer died on July 27, 1941, Mrs. Morey was the executor of the estate.

Mary Jane Peterson Ludwig relates: "Mrs. Galpin loved to dance and entertain. There were always parties and guests at Fort Eagle. Hilda was very tall, had beautiful teeth and wore gorgeous clothes and jewelry." She adds: "Mr. Galpin was reserved and always in the background and he loved to work in his gardens."

A social item in the Eagle River Review dated September 4, 1924 states that Miss Anna Peterson, "a noted journalistic writer in Denmark" was a guest of Mrs. Homer K. Galpin.

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In addition to entertaining their wealthy friends and acquaintances Mrs. Galpin also invited underprivileged girls from Chicago. They were housed in the Honeymoon Cottage or at Hill Home (a small cottage to the east, no longer a part of this property). The girls would put on plays and dress up in the costumes that Mrs. Galpin kept on the third floor. Most of the costumes came from the Galpins' close friends in Sarasota, the Ringling Brothers. The Peterson girls and others from the Big Sand Lake Club were included in these activities.³⁸

Lowell Buell told of the generosity of the Galpins. "They had our whole graduating class for tea." He said there were about 20 students who graduated in 1933 from Phelps High School.

Helen Adams Murray (a member of Big Sand Lake Club), who knew the Galpins as a young child and called them "Uncle Homer" and "Aunt Hilda," remembers going to Iron River with the Galpins in their huge black, chauffeur-driven car. While the Galpins attended the services at the Christian Science Church in Iron River, Michigan. Helen and her sister would wait outside with the chauffeur.³⁹

After the Galpins' death - Hilda in April of 1941 and Homer in July of 1941 - Lydia S. Morey, executor, sold the property to C. M. Christiansen of Phelps. Christiansen was a friend of the Galpins and also the owner of the largest lumber company in Phelps. When Christiansen purchased the property in 1943 from the Galpins' estate, he only kept it long enough to log off all of the hardwoods. There are still remnants of a sawmill on the property, probably from this logging.

38. Telephone interview with Mary Jane Ludwig Peterson, January 24, 1997.

39. Telephone interview with Helen Bohnsack Adams Murray, October, 1996.

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On July 1, 1945, Christiansen sold to Mabel and Jerome Hooker. The Hookers bought the land and, because most of the original trees were gone, tried to raise white-faced beef cattle. They owned the land for 13 years and on April 30, 1958 there was a land contract drawn between the Hookers and Conrad and Margaret Rofritz, Jr. For a short time the Rofrits' tried to market the estate as a resort called the "Colonial Estate." The land contract, for 509.8 acres of land, was satisfied March 23, 1962 for \$35,000.

On the 2nd of April, 1962, Conrad and Margaret A. Rofritz sold the estate to the Pallatine Fathers, Inc., a Catholic order, of Milwaukee. They were planning to use it as a retreat and made some drastic changes such as adding the shed dormer on the east elevation for toilets and sinks. They tiled an area in the basement for showers. The Pallatine Fathers could not afford the maintenance but held on to the property for roughly ten years.

They in turn sold it in 1971 to two men from Wausau, Wisconsin, James J. Pope and Ronald Niske. A partnership formed under the name of Fort Eagle Venture. A mortgage was taken out for \$95,000.

On January 3rd, 1974 a warranty deed transferred the land from Fort Eagle Venture to DeGaynor and Company, Inc. of Cable, Wisconsin. A quit claim deed was issued March 22, 1974 to Langford Development Company.

In 1975 DeGaynor declared bankruptcy and the property was subsequently held by Drivers National Bank of Chicago starting on October 12, 1976.

In 1981, the Waters Edge Development Company purchased and divided the property. L. K. Frazier of Janesville bought Fort Eagle in 1984.

In addition to Fort Eagle, Homer Galpin also owned the 160 acre Eagle Farm located to the east off of County Highway A. Today, the road used to reach the farm is named Eagle Farm Road.

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Because of the isolation of Phelps, the Galpins wanted access to fresh dairy products as well as fresh vegetables. In 1922, Galpin brought Hans and Hedwig Peterson from Chicago to run the farm. Hedwig Peterson, a beautician at the Palmer House in Chicago, had become a close friend of Hilda Galpin's. They probably became acquainted when Hedwig did Mrs. Galpin's hair and then, because they had so many commonalities, they became friends. Mrs. Peterson, like Hilda, was from Denmark, and they were both practicing Christian Scientists. The Petersons had two daughters: Mary Jane and Ruth. Both of these women are still living and knew the Galpins very well. The Petersons had one son, Homer Galpin Peterson, named in honor of their employer.

The Petersons ran Eagle Farm from 1922 until 1941, the year both Galpins died. Even though Mr. Galpin owned the farm he improved the house for the Petersons, built a barn, etc., and gave the farm to the Petersons when he died.

The Petersons raised cows, pigs, and chickens along with the vegetables. They supplied the Galpin household with most of their food. Because of the close connection between Galpin and Big Sand Lake Club, the Petersons sold produce and dairy products to the club. Petersons' son, Homer, took children visiting the Galpins for rides in a horse-drawn wicker cart and children at the club were always included in these rides as well.

In 1996, Steve Kaniewski and his wife, Judith Peck, purchased the property just before it was to be parceled off into small lots surrounding the mansion. Many lots further east of the property had already been sold off by this time. What good fortune for Fort Eagle that the Kaniewskis were able to save the main house and all of the other buildings. It is a lake estate in Northern Wisconsin that is so unique and outstanding that it deserves to be preserved for future generations.

The Fort Eagle complex is thus being nominated to the NRHP for its associations with Homer K. Galpin, who, for all his notoriety, was also an extremely important figure in the growth of tourism in the

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Phelps-Eagle River area of Vilas County during the first thirty years of this century. As one of the most important members of the Eagle River Fishing and Shooting Club, Galpin played an important role in promoting the area to other influential Chicago-based businessmen and politicians, many of whom copied Galpin by building elaborate estates of their own in the area such as Sunset Point in Eagle River (NRHP 11-4-93). The money these persons put into the local economy was significant in itself, but the publicity that they brought to the area was even more valuable in the long run and resulted in the entire area becoming a major summer resort area for Illinoisans of every economic stripe. Equally important in this regard were Galpin's successful efforts to institute the first weekend train service to the area from Chicago, which, once begun, was an important means by which tourists were enabled to reach the area in the days before good roads were plentiful.

Architectural Significance

Fort Eagle is also being nominated to the NRHP for its local significance under NR Criterion C (Architecture) because its main house exhibits an impressive mix of Colonial Revival and Craftsman style elements and because of its intact state as a multi-building northwoods estate complex built mostly between 1916 and 1927. The original principal residence of the estate was a fine Craftsman style log and fieldstone lodge built in 1916. In 1927, however, the original house was remodeled and greatly enlarged using such typical Colonial Revival style elements as clapboard siding and a two-story full-width portico. Never-the-less, such Craftsman style elements as fieldstone chimneys, overhanging eaves supported by brackets, and windows featuring muntin designs typical of the style were also used throughout the house, giving its overall design a mixture of styles. Other buildings on the estate such as the boathouse and guest cottages are simpler but more complete examples of the Craftsman style and the entire eclectic ensemble is now a rare northwoods survival of the period.

The Colonial Revival style is a sub-group under the Period Revival style. Colonial Revival houses were popular in the United States from 1895 - 1940. Patterned usually after New England Colonial

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houses, they usually featured gabled roofs, rectangular shapes and symmetry of design. Colonial Revivals can be executed to exactly match an historical house or can combine various Colonial styles with more contemporary elements.⁴⁰

According to Cultural Resource Management, the Colonial Revival and the Neo-Classical styles developed concurrently at the turn of the century. American builders were influenced by the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876 which generated an interest in American traditions. Some Colonial Revivals may more correctly be called Georgian Revivals because of their reference to early American Georgian architecture. Both the Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles became extremely popular in the United States in the period between the 1920s - 1940s.

Many of the original Colonial houses reflect an incremental process of construction over an extended period. The plan of Colonial dwellings may be irregular and complex, with visible additions and enlargements.⁴¹

Twentieth century expressions of the Colonial Revival were rather codified, and by the 1920s innumerable Colonial Revival house designs were featured in builders' magazines. Although offering a variety of individual decorative options, these Colonial Revival houses usually adhered to standard plans and elevations. "By the 1920s, Revival styles broke geographic constraints. The choice of material and the mood of the client determined style as much as anything else, it was Period Revival architecture that impressed the consumers in the first half of the 20th century."⁴²

40. Blumenson, John J. G., Identifying American Architecture, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 1981, p. 25.

41. Rifind, Carole, A Field Guide to American Architecture, New York, NY, New America Library, 1980, p.4.

42. Ibid, p. 98.

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Period Revival styles sometimes assimilate and combine diverse motifs for convenience, gracious living and artistic effects. These houses are often in a garden setting, and may have irregular shapes and characteristics that may not be a pure form of the style. Fort Eagle's main house is just such a structure. While now Colonial Revival in overall appearance, it has also borrowed many characteristics of the Craftsman style, making it more eclectic in nature.

The Columbian Exposition of 1893, held in Chicago, brought about a return to Classicism. Fluted Ionic columns became a popular architectural feature after the turn of the century. These same columns were being used across the country in large commercial and residential buildings. "The unique feature of this Ionic order is the capital consisting of large spiral-like scrolls or volutes. The shaft of the column is fluted and has a flat ridge rather than the arris of the Greek Doric order. The entablature is usually highlighted with dentils along the cornice. The attic base is often used with this order."⁴³ The engaged pilasters, the architrave and entablature of Fort Eagle's main house are also all classical in detailing.

At Fort Eagle, the full width portico does not shelter a grand entrance. In most Colonial Revival houses there is a prominent main entryway. The main entrance to the Fort Eagle house is through a set of French doors. There are three sets of French doors across the front elevation with a set of casement windows on the eastern end. The fenestration is evenly spaced but the French entry doors are off center and are only marked as an entry by the small lanterns on either side of the doors.

The multi-gabled roofs are in keeping with both the Craftsman style and the Period Colonial Revival style. The windows throughout are Craftsman style casements with muntins in a six-over-two pattern.

43. Blumenson, John J. G., Identifying American Architecture, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 1981, p. 83.

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They crank out with screens inside, a convenient-type window for a summer residence, but different from the usual double-hung windows found in most Colonial Revivals. There are no shutters.

The house has other Craftsman elements as well. The English Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was formed in 1888 by a group of artists and architects who were dedicated to reviving the tradition of craftsmanship. The Craftsman style in the U.S. was inspired by Wisconsin-born Gustave Stickley and by the work of two Californian brothers - Charles Sumner Green and Henry Mather Green, who practiced together in Pasadena from 1893 to 1914. All of their designs were given extensive publicity in popular magazines. As a result a flood of pattern books appeared on the market.⁴⁴

The bracket supports under the wide eaves of Fort Eagle are a Craftsman detail as are the casement windows, the three large fieldstone chimneys, and the two interior fireplaces. Another outstanding Craftsman feature is the pergola over the west entrance onto the patio. It is an architectural feature often used in connection with large gardens and also featured in many California Craftsman style bungalows. This entrance was situated so that when one exited from the house, the beautiful rock garden and waterfall would be visible.

The idea of the romantic landscaped suburb had arisen concurrently with the emergence of industrialization, and in fact, it was the railroad which made it possible.⁴⁵

It was also happening in Northern Wisconsin, the once rustic camps in the wilds were being turned into large estates with manicured lawns. There was a certain freedom of design during this period

44. Mc Alester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984, p. 454.

45. Roth, Leland M., History of American Architecture, New York, NY., New America Library, 1980, p. 232.

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whereby a traditional architectural style was modified to meet the needs or convenience of the rural setting.

Summary

Fort Eagle is architecturally and historically a fine and unique example of a Northern Wisconsin summer estate. The beautiful grounds once boasted huge flower and vegetable gardens, Homer Galpin's hobby. There was also a fenced-in area across the road from the garage for a deer reserve.

Besides the main house, several buildings that are also typically associated with large estates such as caretaker's quarters, guest cottages, a gazebo, and recreational buildings such as a boathouse and a green house are all present and intact at Fort Eagle.

Mention the name Fort Eagle or Galpin to people in Phelps, and if they have lived there for any length of time, their eyes will light up and they will have a wonderful tale of remembrance to relate.

Fort Eagle is therefore being nominated to the NRHP for its local associations with the significance area of architecture because this complex of buildings is a rare intact survivor of the estates that were perhaps the most exotic resource type historically associated with northwoods tourism in Wisconsin. Such estates, while never common, were never-the-less an important and well publicized feature of the area in the first three decades of this century and Fort Eagle is now one of the few intact survivors of this type.

In addition, the main house of the Fort Eagle complex is also a fine and largely intact example of the eclectic Period Revival style designs that were built on many of these estates.

Fort Eagle
Name of Property

Vilas
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 146 Acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/6 3/4/5/4/8/0 5/1/0/1/8/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

3 1/6 3/4/6/3/8/0 5/1/0/2/1/6/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 1/6 3/4/5/9/6/0 5/1/0/2/1/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

4 1/6 3/4/6/3/6/0 5/1/0/1/0/9/0
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Mary Jane Hettinga, Librarian	date	3/15/98
organization	Marathon County Historical Society	telephone	715/848-6143
street & number	403 McIndoe St.	zip code	54403
city or town	Wausau	state	Wisconsin

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fort Eagle Vilas County, Wisconsin

Section: 9 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Books:

Albrecht, Joseph F., The History of Phelps, WI, 1976.

Allsop, Kenneth, The Bootleggers: The Story of Chicago's Prohibition Era, New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1961.

Blumenson, John J. G., Identifying American Architecture, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1981.

Bohnsack Adams, Helen, The History of Big Sand Lake Club, Phelps, Vilas County, WI, 1976.

Kimes, Beverly Rae and Clark, Henry Austin, Jr., 2nd Volume, Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805 - 1942, Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1989.

Kreh, Richard T., Mastering Advanced Masonry Skills, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1983.

Landesco, John, Organized Crime in Chicago, Part III of the Illinois Crime Survey, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fort Eagle Vilas County, Wisconsin

Section: 9 Page 2

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Rifkind, Carole, A Field Guide to American Architecture, New York, NY: New America Library, 1980.

Roth, Leland M., History of American Architecture, New York: Harper and Row, 1979.

Spiering, Frank, The Man Who Got Capone, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1976.

Wisconsin Magazine of History, Volume 79, "Northern Choices: Rural Forest County in the 1920s" by Mark Davis, Autumn, 1995 and Winter, 1996.

Wyatt, Barbara, Cultural Resource Management, Volume II, Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

Periodicals:

Chicago Daily Tribune, July 28, 1941. "Homer K. Galpin Political Figure For Years, Dies," p. 10.

Chicago Sunday Tribune, August 26, 1928. "Chicago Public Folk 'At Ease' on Eagle River," Part I.

Eagle River Review, December, 1923. Special edition: "Phelps, A Live Community, Fast Forging To The Front In All Lines - Summer Homes and Resorts In Large Numbers Found At Phelps."

Eagle River Review, June 11, 1925. "Eagle River Fishing And Shooting Club In Brilliant Opening Event," p. 1.

Eagle River Review, April 15, 1926. "Homer Galpin On Job For Vilas County," p. 1.

Eagle River Review, December 23, 1923. "Extensive Changes At Eagle River Club - Homer Galpin Elected President," p. 1.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Fort Eagle Vilas County, Wisconsin

Section: 9 Page 3

Oral Interviews:

Adams-Murray, Helen Bohnsack, Boca Raton, Florida: October 29,
1996; February 11, 1997.

Buell, Lowell, Phelps, Wisconsin: December 6, 1996; March 2, 1997.

Kinner, Helen, Iron River, Michigan: March 3, 1997.

Koski, William, Smoky Lake, Phelps, Wisconsin: March 3, 1997.

Ludwig, Mary Jane Peterson, Ludington, Michigan: January 24,
February 11, 1997.

Selph, Ruth Peterson, Sarasota, Florida: January 24, January 30,
1997.

Wiedenbauer, Fred, Eagle River, Wisconsin: March 1, 1997.

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

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation

Fort Eagle

Section: 10 Page 1

Vilas County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description

A parcel of land being all of Lots Seventeen (17), Eighteen (18), Nineteen (19) and Twenty (20) of the Plat of FORT EAGLE ESTATES located in Government Lot Four and also a part of the Unplatted part of said Government Lot 4, all in Section Three, Section Three, Township Forty-one North, Range Twelve East, Town of Phelps, Vilas County, Wisconsin, and being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the South 1/4 corner of said Section 3 being marked by a G.L.O. monument, thence N 89 degrees 56' 28" W 1006.58 feet (N 90 degrees 00' 00" W of record) along the South line of said Section 3 to an iron pipe on the Southerly R/W line of Outlot 1, a platted Private Road and the Place of Beginning, thence continuing N 89 degrees 56' 28" W 488.25 feet (N 90 degrees 00' 00" W of record) along said South Section line to a G.L.O. monument marking the Witness Corner to the Meander Corner on the Shore of Big Sand Lake, thence along said Shore N 8 degrees 49' 46" E 304.59 feet (N 8 degrees 39' 30" E 305.11 feet of record) to an iron pipe on the Southerly line of said Lot 20, thence continuing along said Shore N 4 degrees 57' 29" E 255.04 feet (N 5 degrees 00' 00" E 254.56 feet of record) to an iron pipe and S 78 degrees 56' 49" E 303.61 feet (S 79 degrees 00' 00" E 303.58 feet of record) to an iron pipe on the line common to said Lots 19 and 20, thence continuing along said Shore S 80 degrees 16' 01" E 119.81 feet (S 80 degrees 18' 05" E 119.80 feet of record) to an iron pipe on the line common to said Lots 18 and 19, thence continuing along said Shore S 82 degrees 49' 04" E 121.04 feet (S 82 degrees 51' 15" E of record) to the line common to said Lots 17 and 18, thence continuing along said Shore S 88 degrees 24' 32" E 104.56 feet (S 88 degrees 32' 30" E 104.55 feet of record) to an iron pipe on the Easterly line of said Lot 17, thence S 1 degree 03' 39" W 399.73 feet (S 1 degree 00' 00" W 400.00 feet of record) along said Easterly line to an iron pipe marking the Southeast corner of said Lot 17 and on the Northerly R/W of said Outlot 1, thence along said Northerly R/W line S 82 degrees 59' 27" W 158.04 feet (S 83 degrees 00' 00" W 158.00 feet of record) to an iron pipe marking the Southeast corner of said Lot 18 and N 53 degrees 55' 35" W 289.97 feet (N 54 degrees 00' 00" W 290.00 feet of record) to an iron pipe marking the Southwest corner of said Lot 19 and on the arc of a 50.00 foot radius cul-de-

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

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation
Fort Eagle
Section: 10 Page 2

Vilas County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description, Continued

sac at the Westerly end of said Outlot 1, thence counterclockwise 131.51 feet along the arc of said cul-de-sac [chord bearing N 80 degrees 34'; 36" W 96.75 feet (N 80 degrees 39' 00" W of record)] to an iron pipe on the Southerly line of said Lot 20, thence continuing counterclockwise 110.57 feet along the arc of said cul-de-sac [chord bearing S 39 degrees 18' 47" E 89.38 feet (S 39 degrees 21' 00" E of record)] to an iron pipe on the Southerly R/W line of said Outlot 1, thence S 53 degrees 55' 46" E 267.56 feet (S 54 degrees 00' 00" E of record) along said Southerly R/W line back to the Place of Beginning. Including the land lying between the lakeshore baseline and the water's edge. Including an easement for ingress and egress over said Outlot 1 and over and across the existing 66 foot wide Private Road over the NE 1/4 NW 1/4, the SE 1/4 NW 1/4, Govt. Lot 2, the NW 1/4 SW 1/4 and the SW 1/4 SW 1/4, all in Section 10 of said T 41 N, R 12 E, to the Town Road known as "Sand Lake Road."

Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries of Fort Eagle encompass 146 of the 700 acres that were historically associated with the original Galpin estate. These 146 acres comprise the historic core of the original estate and they also include enough land to accurately represent its historic appearance and feel. In addition, the boundaries include all of the original buildings and structures associated with the Galpins save only the Hill Cottage, a minor later building that is located at a distance from the rest of the estate buildings and which is now owned separately.

UTM References, Continued

5.	16	345620	5101120	6.	16	345630	5101260
		Zone Easting	Northing			Zone Easting	Northing

Fort Eagle
Name of Property

Vilas
County and State

Wisconsin

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)

Property Owner

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

name/title	Stephen Kaniewski & Judith Peck	date	3/15/98
organization		telephone	715/848-6143
street&number	934 Fort Eagle Lane	zip code	54554
city or town	Phelps	state	Wisconsin

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 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 Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section: Photographs Page 1

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Main House
North and west elevations
Camera facing southeast

Photo 2 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Closeup - Portico
North elevation
Camera facing south

Photo 3 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
West elevation
Camera facing southeast

Photo 4 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
West and south elevations
Camera facing northeast

Photo 5 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
North and east elevations
Camera facing northwest

Photo 6 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
South and east elevations of
East wing
Camera facing north

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section: Photographs Page 2

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, Wisconsin

Photo 7 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. At WI State Historical Society
East elevation of east wing
Camera facing west

Photo 8 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Interior - Living Room
Camera facing north

Photo 9 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Crown molding and wallpaper -
Living Room

Photo 10 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Grand staircase
Living Room
Camera facing southeast

Photo 11 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Arched closet door under stairway
Camera facing east

Photo 12 of 30

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical Society
Stone fireplace
Living Room
Camera facing west

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section: Photographs Page 3

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI

Photo 13 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Dining Room
Camera facing south

Photo 17 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Billiard Room, third floor
Camera facing west

Photo 14 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Breakfast Room Fireplace
Camera facing south

Photo 18 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Gazebo
Camera facing north

Photo 15 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Study Fireplace
Camera facing east

Photo 19 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Boathouse, East & North
elevations
Camera facing Southwest

Photo 16 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Mary Jane Hettinga
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Second floor hall
Camera facing southwest

Photo 20 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State His. Society
Boathouse, facing east

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section: Photographs Page 4

Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI

Photo 21 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Boathouse
South elevation
Camera facing north

Photo 25 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Garage, north elevation
Camera facing southwest

Photo 22 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Boathouse and Gazebo
Camera facing northeast

Photo 26 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Guest Cottage
Camera facing northeast

Photo 23 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Caretaker's Cottage
Camera facing northeast

Photo 27 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Doll House, Main elevation
Camera facing southwest

Photo 24 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Garage, South elevation
Camera facing northeast

Photo 28 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Hist. Society
Log Outbuildings
Camera facing west

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Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI

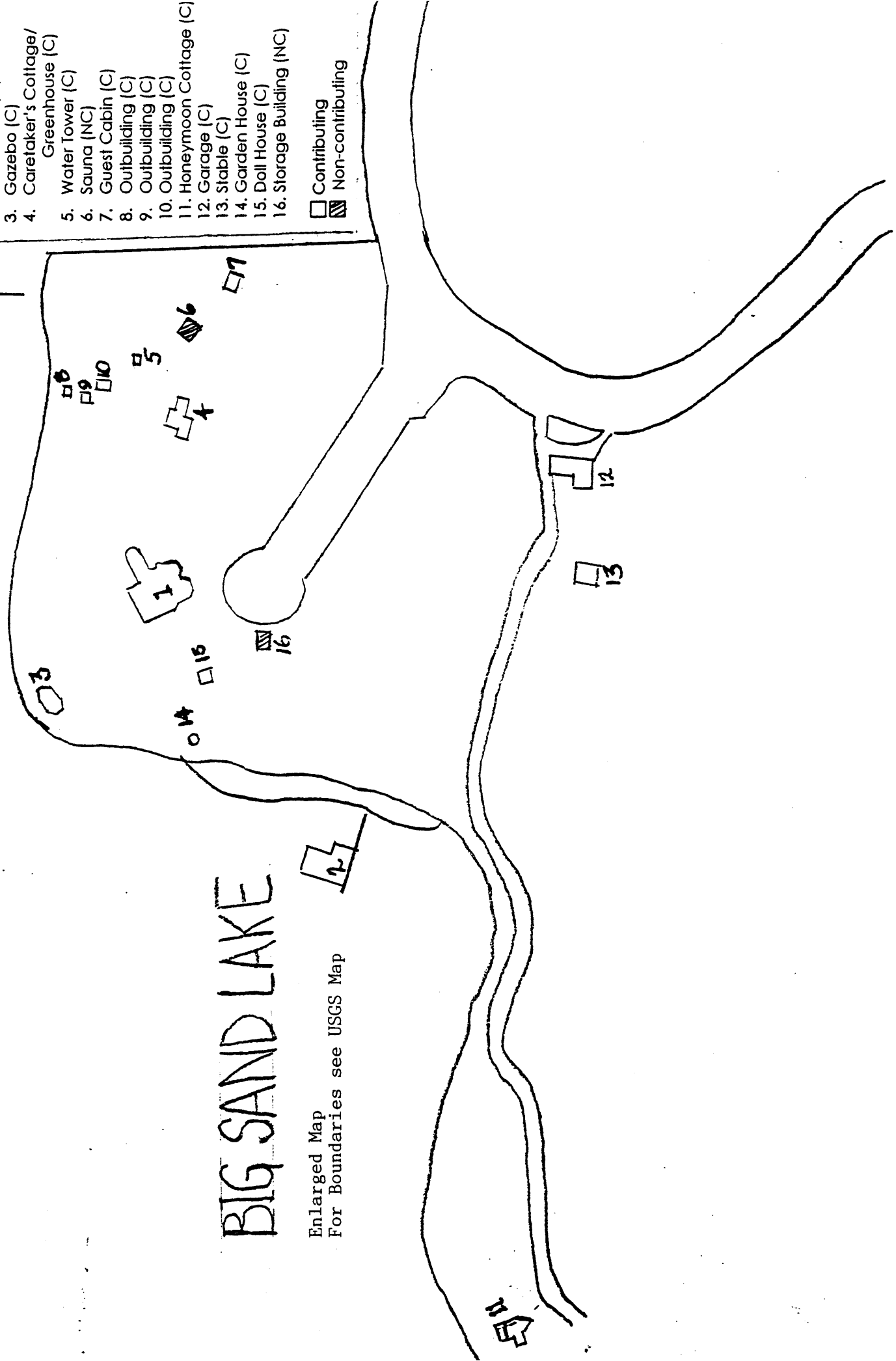
Photo 29 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Outbuilding
Camera facing northwest

Photo 30 of 30
Fort Eagle
Vilas County, WI
Photo by Stephen Kaniewski
December, 1996
Neg. at WI State Historical
Society
Honeymoon Cottage
Camera facing west

Fort Eagle
 Phelps, Vilas Co., WI
not to scale

1. Main House (C)
2. Boat House (C)
3. Gazebo (C)
4. Caretaker's Cottage/
Greenhouse (C)
5. Water Tower (C)
6. Sauna (NC)
7. Guest Cabin (C)
8. Outbuilding (C)
9. Outbuilding (C)
10. Outbuilding (C)
11. Honeymoon Cottage (C)
12. Garage (C)
13. Stable (C)
14. Garden House (C)
15. Doll House (C)
16. Storage Building (NC)

□ Contributing
 ▨ Non-contributing



BIG SAND LAKE

Enlarged Map
 For Boundaries see USGS Map