

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCPS use only
received JUL 9 1980
date entered AUG 18 1980

1. Name

historic B'nai Abraham Synagogue

and/or common B'nai Abraham Synagogue

2. Location

street & number 328 So. 5th Street ___ not for publication

city, town Virginia ___ vicinity of congressional district 8th District

state Minnesota code 22 county St. Louis code 137

3. Classification

Category ___ district ___ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) ___ structure ___ site ___ object	Ownership ___ public ___ private ___ both Public Acquisition ___ in process ___ being considered	Status ___ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied ___ unoccupied ___ work in progress Accessible ___ yes: restricted ___ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted ___ no	Present Use ___ agriculture ___ commercial ___ educational ___ entertainment ___ government ___ industrial ___ military	___ museum ___ park ___ private residence ___ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious ___ scientific ___ transportation ___ other:
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4. Owner of Property

name B'nai Abraham Synagogue Society

street & number 328 So. 5th St.

city, town Virginia ___ vicinity of state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis County Court House

street & number

city, town Duluth state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The synagogue is built with red brick and has a stone foundation. It is approximately 30' by 60'. The high windows are rounded at the top and are stained glass with a marbled texture. The north side entrance has been enclosed with wood and is not in keeping with the rest of the structure. The remodeling of the north facade has required the alteration of the two arched windows originally flanking the entry. The upper sash remains in its original position, however, the lower sash has been moved forward to a position next to the new entry. Although the remaining facades are intact, the alteration of the front entry tends to give the design a disjointed appearance. The building occupies a corner lot and is visible from three sides.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1909

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The synagogue reflects the ethnic diversity of the Iron Range of Minnesota and the importance of religious centers to provide social stability and cohesion for each of the diverse ethnic groups. This particular synagogue is the oldest on the Iron Range. The Jewish population on the Iron Range, like most other groups, came from Eastern Europe but differed in that they had more balanced male/female ratios, indicating the movement of family units rather early on, and also were different in their higher levels of literacy for both males and females and an estimated higher amount of capital on arrival. While rather crude estimates of capital in hand are unreliable, it would help explain the success of the Jewish community on the Iron Range in various mercantile pursuits and other entrepreneurial activities in the limited non-mining sector of the Iron Range economy. The synagogue was the symbol of the bonds that united the Jewish community just as the churches served the same purpose for the Gentile groups. The synagogue had slightly different significance in that it did not hearken back to an immediately lost homeland but had the weight of the two millenia of the Diaspora upon its shoulders. Better educated and with fewer unattached males the Jewish population was drawn gradually away from the Iron Range in the decades after initial settlement illustrating the many different longterm effects that were generated in Iron Range society by the subtle interplay of factors that occurred after immigration. The sacred center of each immigrant subculture therefore represents the accumulated impact of these diverse demographic and socioeconomic population characteristics.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marvin Lamppa, A Report to the Department of Natural Resources on the Historical Aspects of the Vermilion, Cuyuna, and Mesabi Iron Ranges of Northeast Minnesota (Eveleth: 1977).

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1
 Quadrangle name Virginia, Minn.-St. Louis Co.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UMT References

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5	2	6	2	6	8	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

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 Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The B'nai Abraham Synagogue is located on W $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lot 14, and all of Lots 15 and 16, Block 84, Second Addition, Virginia, Minnesota.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Skrief, Director, State Historic Preservation Office

organization Minnesota Historical Society

date September 10, 1979

street & number 240 Summit Avenue

telephone 612-296-9070

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Russell W. Fridley
 Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

6/24/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

W. Ray June
 Keeper of the National Register

date

8/16/80

Attest:

Kristen O'Connell
 Chief Registrar

date

8/8/80