

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

For NPS use only

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

received JUN 19 1986
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Highland Park Tower

and/or common Highland Water Tower

2. Location

street & number 1570 Highland Parkway

N/A not for publication

city, town St. Paul

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Ramsey

code 123

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of St. Paul Board of Water Commissioners

street & number City Hall Annex, 4th floor, 25 W. 4th St.

city, town St. Paul

N/A vicinity of

state MN 55102

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ramsey County Courthouse

street & number 15 W. Kellogg Boulevard

city, town St. Paul

state MN 55102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul
and Ramsey County

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980-1982

federal state county local

depository for survey records Ramsey County Historical Society, 75 W. 5th St.

city, town St. Paul

state MN 55102

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Highland Park Water Tower, a brick and cut stone octagonal structure built in 1928, is located at Snelling Avenue and Ford Parkway in the northwest corner of Highland Park, a 265 acre city park located in the neighborhood of St. Paul known as Highland Park. The tower has a base of smoothly dressed, random ashlar Kasota stone, a tan, pressed brick shaft with several windows, and a coursed ashlar, Bedford stone lookout area. The tower has two entrances, one on the north, the other on the west side. A band of small stone arches separates the base of the tower from the shaft and stone dentil course separates the top of the base of the tower from the observation level. Along with the stone dentils are carved stone downspouts and shields. The tower has a 200,000 gallon steel tank, around which is a circular staircase (with 151 steps) leading to an observation platform with rounded arched openings, and topped by a tile roof with a small cupola.

The 134 foot tall tower is located directly north and adjacent to an eighteen million gallon capacity, covered concrete reservoir built in 1923. The tower is at the second highest point in the city of St. Paul and provides a dramatic, panoramic view of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. It is a dominant feature of the Highland Park neighborhood's sky line. The water tower has been preserved in good condition, almost without alteration.

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Highland Park Water Tower, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota

Continuation sheet

Resource Count

Item number 7

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The Highland Park Water Tower nomination contains

1 contributing structure.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" 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 1928 **Builder/Architect** Clarence W. Wigington & Frank X. Tewes

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Highland Park Water Tower, built in 1928, is historically and architecturally significant as a vital part of St. Paul's water system, as the only architecturally significant water tower in the city, as a neighborhood landmark and symbol for over fifty years, and as an important work designed by one of St. Paul's few known black architects, Clarence W. Wigington, who worked under the supervision of then City Architect Frank X. Tewes. The structure was designated an American Water Landmark by the American Water Works Association in 1981, and is one of 98 such landmarks throughout the United States and Canada as of April, 1984.

Clarence W. Wigington was born in Lawrence, Kansas on April 21, 1883. After attending high school in Omaha, Nebraska, he attended architecture school for one year, and then began working for Thomas R. Kimball, the then president of the American Institute of Architects and a nationally recognized architect. While working for Kimball, he spent six years studying at "Professor Wallace's Western School of Art." After leaving Kimball's office and before moving to St. Paul, he received commissions to design a church and two apartment buildings in Omaha, and won the competition to design an administration building and two dormitories for the National Religious Training School in Durham, North Carolina. (This school later became North Carolina State College for Negroes and is now North Carolina State University at Durham).

After moving to St Paul, Wigington received commissions to design creameries at Elk River and at Northfield, and designed the St. James A.M.E. Church, (since remodelled) at Central Avenue and Dale Street in St. Paul for one of the city's oldest Black congregations. Wigington then took a city architectural examination and received the highest grade anyone had ever scored on the test. On August 23, 1915, he began working as an architectural draftsman and designer in the St. Paul Department of Parks, Playgrounds and Public Buildings where he worked until 1949. Among the buildings he designed or worked on in St. Paul were the Keller Golf Course Clubhouse, the Municipal Auditorium (together with two other Blacks then working for the city, draftsman William Godette and engineer Dwight Reed),

(see continuation sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name St. Paul West Quad., Minnesota

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	4	8	6	9	6	0	4	9	7	3	7	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Highland Park Tower nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled, "Highland Park Watertower, 1986" and drawn at a scale of 200 feet to the inch.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patricia Murphy

organization Ramsey County Historical Society date June, 1984

street & number 75 W. 5th St., #323 telephone 612-222-0701

city or town St. Paul state MN 55102

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 6/12/86

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

for Allison Byers Entered in the National Register date 7-17-86
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Highland Park Tower St. Paul, MN; Ramsey County
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B. Significance -- continued

several ice palaces and schools (including Monroe School and various park structures, including the Harriet Island Pavilion. Wigington was a registered architect in Minnesota and a member of the American Institute of Architects and the National Engineering Society. He was active in the Urban League, the Sterling Club, the Elks Lodge and the Episcopal Church. He and his wife lived at 679 St. Anthony Avenue most of the time they were in St. Paul. They moved to Los Angeles in the 1950's, then returned to St. Paul, and then moved to Kansas City, Missouri where Wigington died on July 7, 1967.

As with many architects working under the City Architect, Wigington did not receive much credit for his design until recently. On July 12, 1976 the St. Paul Board of Water Commissioners held a public ceremony at the water tower to install a ceremony honoring Wigington for "excellence in design of the Highland Water Tower." Up until that time, numerous sources listed the City Architect, Frank X. Tewes, as the architect of the building. Tewes' name still appears on a plaque on the building, along with the names of the engineers: J. W. Kelsey, Chief Engineer, M.S. Grytbak and L.N. Thompson and the Board of Water Commissioners names: George C. Sudheimer, J.H. McDonald, C.J. McGlogan, and Otto W. Rohland, Jr. One can speculate as to whether Tewes name would have appeared on the plaque had the principal architect been a white man.

The Highland Water Tower Cost \$69,483. to construct, and was built by the Feyen Construction Company and William Selby. The stone for the project was furnished by the Wilcox Cut Stone Company, and the steel for the tank was supplied by the St. Paul Foundry Company. No alterations are recorded on the building permit for the water tower.

St. Paul's first water plant was built by a private company, the St. Paul Water Company in 1869-1870, and its source was Lake Phalen in the northeast part of the city. The water was conveyed by gravity through a 16" cement covered sheet iron pipe and a 24" eathenware pipe to downtown St. Paul. The city bought out the private company in 1882 and built its own plant and pumping station north of the city, off Rice Street and Larpenteur Avenue, near McCarrons Lake. Lake Phalen was the main source of water for the city of St. Paul until 1913. The McCarrons Purification and Pumping Plant was rebuilt in 1922.

(see continuation sheet)

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B. Significance -- continued

Most of the city's water now comes from the Mississippi River near Fridley, from near Vadnais Lake in Vadnais Heights, and from the Rice Creek chain of lakes, north of the city. The water is pumped from the Mississippi and Rice Creek chain into a series lakes (Deep, Charles, Pleasant, Sucker and Vadnais), known as the Impounding Reservoir Lake System. From the southernmost lake in this system -- Vadnais -- the water is pumped to the McCarrons plant. After it is purified the water is transferred to clear wells and a large reservoir for storage. Then, it is moved through the city's vast, interconnected distribution system of reservoirs, tanks and water towers.

Today the St. Paul Water Utility serves St. Paul and the following surrounding cities: Mendota Heights, West St. Paul, Maplewood, Lauderdale, Falcon Heights, Roseville, Arden Hills and Little Canada. The Highland Water Tower and the much newer blue steel Highland Water Tank serve the western part of the city, above West Seventh Street. The water is pumped from the reservoir into the tower, and from there it flows by gravity to approximately 9,000 homes in its service area. The Highland Park Water Tower is now open to the public on special neighborhood occasions, such as the annual Highland Art Fair.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Brennan, Christopher P. "From the Mississippi to your mouth, the St. Paul Water Dept. delivers." The Highland Villager. June 8, 1983.

City of St. Paul Building Permits Division. Building Permit #29648, issued Nov. 10, 1927.

Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County. Unpublished architect and contractor file. (at Ramsey County Historical Society).

"Man of the Month -- Clarence W. Wigington." Eyes, vol. 1, no. 2, May, 1946.

Polk's St. Paul City Directories. St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Company. scattered volumes, 1916-1966.

Spangler, Robert M. (Director of Public Information, American Water Works Association). Letter to Patricia Murphy, April 4, 1984.

"They Make the Wheels Go 'Round: Parks Department Architect is History, 'Math' Shark and a Good Athlete." St. Paul Daily News, March 17, 1936.

Thompson, Leonard P. "Beyond the Faucet." St. Paul Water Department mimeographed essay, 1939 (at Minnesota Historical Society Reference Library).