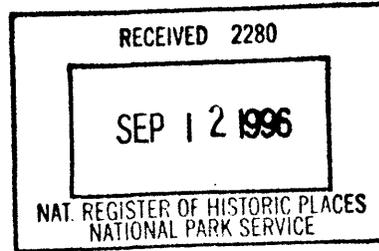


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Vikingsholm

Other names/site number: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 10001 Emerald Bay Rd. (Highway 89) not for publication
City or Town: 10 mi. NW of South Lake Tahoe on State Highway 89 vicinity: X
State: California Code: CA County: El Dorado Code: 017
Zip Code: 96142

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 38 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.)

David Abeyta 9/6/96
Signature of certifying official Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
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 or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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

removed from the National Register

other (explain) : _____

Elson H. Beall 10.10.96

Signature of Keeper Date
Beall of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes that apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

	Contributing	Non contributing	
	6	1	buildings
	1	0	sites
	3	3	structures
	0	0	objects
	10	4	Totals

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE Museum
RECREATION AND CULTURE Outdoor Recreation
LANDSCAPE Natural Feature

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions):

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals
Other: Norwegian and Swedish farmstead revival
Other: Welsh gatehouse farmstead revival
Other: French Eclectic Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions):

Foundation: STONE: granite
Walls: STONE: granite
 WOOD: log
Roof: WOOD: log
 WOOD: shingle
 OTHER: sod
Other: BRICK
 METAL: iron
 GLASS

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

Vikingsholm and Emerald Bay State Park are located at the southwest corner of Lake Tahoe. The falls of Eagle Creek flow down granite cliffs and into Emerald Bay on Vikingsholm's property. Fannette Island, Lake Tahoe's only island, is near the center of the bay. State Highway 89 encircles most of the bay, giving motorists outstanding views of the clear blue-green water and the surrounding Sierra Nevada range. A one-mile footpath descends steeply to Vikingsholm, dropping 360 feet from the highway. Vikingsholm sits at the foot of the bay, on its west shore. Huge pine, fir, and cedar trees shade the house and its surrounding wildflowers. Vikingsholm was constructed

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during the summers of 1928 to 1930. Architect Lennart Palme and contractor Matt Green used local materials and a variety of Northern European architectural ideas in the dwelling. As the summer home of Mrs. Lora J. Knight from 1929 to 1945, Vikingsholm provided rest and relaxation to its guests. As a California State Park property since 1953, the home has provided thousands of tourists with an outstanding example of Scandinavian traditional architecture and woodcarving. The house and its remaining outbuildings are in nearly the same condition as in the time of Mrs. Knight's use. Roof repairs to all wings of the house have changed the original materials but have not significantly altered the character of the house. Environmental conditions are the greatest threat to Vikingsholm's condition, and thousands of visitors each year also create maintenance concerns. Several of the outbuildings constructed for Mrs. Knight have been destroyed.

There are six contributing buildings on the property (the main house of Vikingsholm, the workshop, the duplex, the teahouse, the transformer building, and the gardener's cottage), one contributing site (rock work in two discontinuous places: a trail/retaining wall along Eagle Creek and Mrs. Knight's entrance from the highway), and three contributing structures (the boat bay, Mrs. Knight's road, and the water tanks). Noncontributing resources include one building (restroom) and three structures (pier, parking lot, and service road). All items within the resource count are indicated in boldface type below. Features that have lost their integrity are also described but are not included in the resource count.

The plan of **Vikingsholm (#1 on building location map)** is based on Welsh and Scandinavian country farmsteads; four rectangular wings form a hexagonal courtyard. The north and south wings open from their midpoints at obtuse angles to create a hexagon. These openings also provide access to the flagstone courtyard. The west wing incorporates a raised gatehouse-style breezeway that was used as a driveway. Granite is used in the foundation and in some of the wall surfaces. Siding of pine and fir was hand-adzed and hewn, with additional ornamental handcarvings. Each wing has two red brick crown chimneys, except for the south wing, which has only one, for a total of seven in the house. Crown chimneys are named for their bulbous tops, or "crowns," of horizontally and vertically stacked and mortared brick, which function as chimney caps, keeping rain and debris from falling down the chimney, as well as being decorative. The wings vary in their construction (by number of stories, roof construction and materials, wall finish, and structural system) and are best described individually.

The east wing, which faces Emerald Bay, is the main wing of the house. This wing has three stories, with a square three-story tower at the north end and a round two-story tower at the south end. This wing closely resembles the French Eclectic Style, in which a tower is often connected to an asymmetrical structure, with a pyramidal roofed pavilion at the opposite end from the tower. The steeply hipped roof of the central section of this wing is also common in the French Eclectic Style. Two

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crown chimneys in this wing (from each tower) are faced with mortar, unlike the other unfaced chimneys in the rest of the house. Faced brick is also used around the wing's windows and around the towers (at the cornices and between floors). Cedar shingles were replaced on the hipped roof in 1994. This was the second shingle replacement by California State Parks from the original shingled roof. The attic has five small dormers. This wing has a mortared stone and timber frame structural system. The walls in this wing are granite with mortar flush to the stone. The third story of the north tower is finished with hand-adzed wood, as are the projecting covered balcony on the lake side of the second floor and the projecting stairway to the second floor that faces the courtyard. These wooden sections are of timber frame construction with heavy hand-carved beams in Scandinavian motifs. Serpent designs are carved into the wood above the door and windows facing the lake on the first floor and above the door facing the courtyard. A flagstone veranda at the front door faces the lake.

The north and south wings are both rectangles opened at the midpoints for courtyard access. They have gabled sod roofs including original sprinkler systems to maintain wildflowers and grasses. California State Parks lined these roofs with corrugated tar paper after leaks developed through the original lead sheeting. These wings have timber frame structural systems.

On the north wing, the roof is continuous across the midpoint opening, creating a small breezeway with stairs leading to the grounds. This wing is finished in hand-adzed wood siding. The northeast half of the wing connects directly to the east wing and houses the kitchen and the servants' dining area. The northwest half touches the west wing but does not connect to allow access. A covered porch along the courtyard side is supported by heavy, hand-carved beams. This area was used for storage and servants' quarters.

The south wing does not have a roof over its entrance to the courtyard. The southeast half of the wing has wood siding and heavy carved beams. The space closest to the east wing includes access to the basement and a staff member's quarters. The remainder of this half of the wing was used to store Mrs. Knight's automobile. The southwest half is L-shaped with the northeast corner cut away. The walls are mortared granite except on the wooden side facing west. The wooden wall has a garage door and a concrete pad in front. This half was used as a workshop and garage. Both halves touch the east and west wings respectively, but they do not provide access to either wing.

The west wing closely resembles a Welsh gatehouse, which traditionally had two one-story sections on each side of an open breezeway and a second story section centered above the breezeway. At Vikingsholm, the second story overlaps with each lower section by seven feet. This wing had an apartment for the caretaker and his family, additional servants' quarters, and laundry facilities. The roofs of all three

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sections are hipped and currently shingled. A tree fell on this section of the building prior to the park system's ownership of the property, and at that time shingles were installed. The original roof was made of split logs held in place without nails or spikes. In replacing the split log roof, the hand-carved beams along all gables and the wooden spikes along the gutters were not disturbed. The carved beams end in dragon heads at the ridge of each section of the roof. Like the split log roof, the spikes are precisely fitted to hold the gutters in place without nails. The wing is finished in hand-hewn siding and has a balloon frame structural system. The west entry to the caretaker's apartment has a covered porch which shades three columns of extensive ornamental carving near the doorways.

All exterior doors are made of solid planks and have decorative iron hinge plates extending across almost the full width of the doors. Exterior ironwork also includes doorknobs, keyhole plates and light fixtures. The windows are generally single-light, and either they are double-hung or they have casements. Antique stained glass imported from Sweden with lead came is also used. These pastel windows are mostly in fixed panels above clear glass windows, although some are in casements. The leaded glass windows have as many as forty lights, which are shaped in squares, rectangles, circles, arches or hexagons.

The interior of Vikingsholm also reflects the same care and craftsmanship as the exterior. Some of the most important features of the interior are not architectural elements. Mrs. Knight's collection of Scandinavian antiques and meticulously reproduced copies is still in the house. These furnishings were carefully selected to fit the house.

The interior walls are hand-planed pine. The width of the boards varies from 18 to 30 inches. The walls were stained with tinted water-stain, sealed with a mixture of nitrocellulose and amyl-acetate, and finished with white wax. Ceilings in the living room and library were additionally painted with designs traditional to Scandinavian peasant homes. Plastered surfaces, including the walls and ceiling of the morning room and of the second floor sitting porch, the walls of the library, and the fireplace of one of the bedrooms, were also painted with Scandinavian designs. The floors are mostly oak, although the second floor hallway and a portion of the living room were carpeted after the home opened for tours. The entry hall and the morning room both have mortared granite floors. The northeast wing (the kitchen and servants' dining area) has the original linoleum flooring.

Ironwork and woodcarving inside the house were completed with as much care as the exterior features were. Wall sconces, curtain rods and rings, interior gate latches, and screens on the six fireplaces are hand-wrought iron. Interior gate latches are original pieces dating from approximately 1640-1740. All other ironwork was produced for Vikingsholm, and some pieces were designed by Lennart Palme. The

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house's custom-made ironwork falls into two categories: pieces made by a blacksmith in a fully appointed shop and pieces in a "craft" style, possibly production manufactured. Other light fixtures and wall sconces are hand-carved and painted wood. Palme also personally carved and painted the door of the entry hall closet in the east wing. Two beams hanging from the living room ceiling are carved with dragons' heads. The balustrade at the top of the stairs to the second floor and the closet doors in Mrs. Knight's bedroom display Scandinavian-inspired wood carving.

Environmental conditions have contributed to the building's deterioration over the years. Annual heavy snows, rising damp, and pests (including carpenter ants, woodpeckers and rodents) create most of the maintenance concerns for the house. Moisture has significantly damaged the decoratively painted plaster on the interior walls of the second floor sitting porch, which is over the courtyard entry of the east wing. Conservation efforts are currently under way to reattach loose plaster, so that it will withstand exposure to moisture, and to preserve the decorative painting.

Visitors to the house also add to its maintenance problems. Inside the east wing of the house, heavy foot traffic has required carpeting to be added to a section of the living room, the stairs to the second floor, and the second floor hallway. Easily reached wall surfaces, such as wall corners and the second floor balustrade, are soiled from thousands of hands running across their surfaces.

Outbuildings were constructed at the same time as Vikingsholm to house overflow guests and staff, as work sites, and for recreation. Several of these buildings were destroyed by California State Parks. Remains of earlier and later buildings as well as park facilities are also present on the property.

The **warehouse** (#2 on building location map) on the south side of Eagle Creek is a wooden building. It is rectangular in plan and has one story and an attic. There are six-light, fixed windows, a single door on the south wall, and double doors on the east side. The foundation and floor are concrete. It may have been originally used for construction material storage and later for winter boat storage. A few yards from its east facade stands a concrete incinerator with an interior iron platform. The incinerator's function is unknown, although the platform may indicate use as a kiln.

A bridge across Eagle Creek (#3 on building location map) provided access not only to the workshop, but also to Mrs. Knight's picnic grounds. Only the remains of one of the bridge's footings on the north side of the creek are visible. The picnic grounds were covered by a 1955 landslide, and their exact location had not been recorded.

The **duplex** (#4 on building location map) was built around 1930 on the north side of Eagle Creek about 100 yards south of Vikingsholm. It is square in plan and has two stories of frame construction. The shingled roof is gabled with a large dormer

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facing the bay and two red brick crown chimneys. The walls have shiplap-style siding made of decorative false logs. All windows are one-over-one light and double-hung. All exterior doors (two at the front and two at the rear) are made of solid planks. The porches are mortared stone. The front porch is covered and has heavy carved posts supporting its roof. Two small porches at the rear doors are not covered. All interior woodwork (moldings, doors, window sashes) has an opaque orange shellac that is colored and wood-grained. The foundation is concrete and stone. A lean-to addition was removed from an unknown location after California State Parks acquired the property. The building was used as either guest or servant housing by Mrs. Knight but is currently used by the park system. The first floor is a museum and visitors' center, and the second floor is an accessioning office for artifact collections staff.

To the west of the duplex, Mrs. Knight had a granite **trail with stairs and retaining wall** built along Eagle Creek (#5 and 6 on building location map). The wall helps prevent flooding to buildings and stabilizes the recreational trail used by the guests of Mrs. Knight and park visitors. The stairway is an exception among the trails used by Mrs. Knight. All other trails that were used during her residence were incidental and defined only by use, not by deliberate construction.

Mrs. Knight's boating buildings were not precisely recorded. Boat rails on the south side of Eagle Creek (#7 on building location map) indicate that an unrecorded boathouse may have existed in this area at one time. Although the warehouse is approximately 100 feet south of these rails, it may have been used to store boats in the winter. The **boat bay** on the north side of Eagle Creek (#8 on building location map) is u-shaped in plan. The three walls are reinforced concrete, and the south wall is covered with a wooden walkway. The bottom is unlined and may have had boat rails leading to it at one time. The current **pier** (#9 on building location map) was built by California State Parks in 1959. Mrs. Knight had a pier built in 1930 that was somewhere to the north of the current pier, as shown in photographs from that time period.

The **teahouse** on Fannette Island (#10 on building location map) is a stone building that is square in plan. The teahouse was built in 1930 and was used occasionally for afternoon tea. Only the mortared granite walls and foundation of the 16' x 16' building remain. Although the island can only be reached by boat, vandals have destroyed the roof, windows and door. The roof was flat. The door was solid, and there may have been a screen door. A brick-lined, stone fireplace is in the northwest corner. The floor is mortared gray shale. Subtle, natural-looking stairs of rock with some mortar, like those along Eagle Creek, lead up to the building.

The original **transformer building** is approximately sixty feet north of Vikingsholm (#11 on building location map). It is a very small stone building with a pyramid, shingled roof, two windows, a solid wooden door, a wooden shed addition,

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and a wooden-fenced area with a fuel tank. The floor is concrete, and the foundation is mortared stone. It once housed a generator, but it now distributes only electrical power.

A chemical toilet **restroom** was added to accommodate park visitors (#12 on building location map). It is almost directly across the road from the transformer building to the west.

The **gardener's cottage** is also to the north of Vikingsholm (#13 on building location map). This is a wooden building with an L-shaped plan that was built in 1930. The longer section has two stories and a hipped roof, while the shorter section has one story with a shed roof. The roofs of both sections are shingled. The walls have shiplap siding made of decorative false logs like the duplex. The original garage door on the west wall was replaced by California State Parks with an entry door and window. There are six-light fixed windows and six-over-six light double-hung sash windows. The second story was used as a staff residence, and the first story as a garage and shop. State Parks currently uses the building for storage.

Three residences built by Mrs. Knight were demolished in 1957. The Indian House, the Brown House, and the Small House (#14, 15 and 16, respectively, on building location map) were built in 1929 or 1930. The Brown House was used by Mrs. Knight's personal secretary, and the other houses were used by guests when the main house was full.

Two work buildings belonging to Mrs. Knight were also destroyed during the Park's ownership. The shop (#17 on building location map) and the garage (#18 on building location map) were near the gardener's cottage and were probably constructed in 1930. A tree is rumored to have fallen on these buildings in the 1970s, at which time the park system demolished them.

The Hintz House (#19 on building location map) was built after Mrs. Knight's death. Lawrence J. Holland, Vikingsholm's next owner, sold the lot to Fred and Eleanor Hintz. The house was built around 1950, and its site is now a large earth pad. It was used as a park ranger residence until the 1970's, and in 1978, it was demolished.

An unpaved road was built from State Highway 89 down to Vikingsholm in 1929 (#20 on building location map). Mrs. Knight used this as an automobile road, but today it serves as a footpath for park visitors. **Mrs. Knight's entrance** (#21 on building location map) from the highway is marked by two mortared stone walls, currently 140 to 220 feet in length. The shorter wall, to the south, had sections removed at both ends to accommodate the visitor parking lot and highway department work. The longer wall is apparently undisturbed. Stone culverts along the footpath are both dry laid and mortared. State Parks made repairs to these culverts with every effort to preserve historic stone work while improving drainage. As a state park, Vikingsholm is

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accessible to visitors only by foot, so a **parking area** was created at the top of the footpath. This area (#22 on building location map) was first covered with gravel, but was paved in the 1980's. State Parks also added a paved **service road** to the north of the footpath for official vehicles (#23 on building location map).

Four **water tanks** sit below the footpath near the parking lot (#24 on building location map). These tanks stand on a pine deck built over a mortared stone foundation. The tanks are made of single-wall redwood in vertical planks. They are encircled with threaded metal rod hoops and tensioners. The roofs are 12-sided and made of redwood in 1" x 12" planking, with galvanized steel covering the wood. The tanks are 12' tall and 48' 11" in circumference, and hold approximately 1100 gallons each. The tanks are in good condition, but the wooden deck has broken sections, mostly on the west side.

The paved service road also leads to a State Park camping area. Emerald Bay Boat Camp (#25 on building location map) is on the north side of the bay and may be reached on foot. However, many visitors come by boat and use the State Park's pier. There are three small buildings, including a chemical toilet restroom, that were built by State Parks. This area also contains the remains of two residential and resort properties. The Comyn/Law property was a residential property from the 1890's until it was incorporated into the adjacent Emerald Bay Camp in the 1950's. No buildings remain standing in these areas, but a variety of concrete and masonry features (foundations, retaining walls, parking pads, etc.) still exist. While not a part of Mrs. Knight's property, these resources are representative of other significant occupations of Emerald Bay.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

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- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- 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 fifty years

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions):

Architecture

Period of Significance: 1930

Significant Dates: 1930 - construction of Vikingsholm and outbuildings

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/ Builder: Palme, Lennart, AIA (architect)
Green, Matt (contractor)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.):

Statement of Significance:

Lora Josephine Knight purchased property at the foot of Lake Tahoe's Emerald Bay in 1928 as the site for a summer home. She wanted a home to complement the fjord-like setting, and through the leadership of Swedish-born architect Lennart Palme and local contractor Matt Green, Vikingsholm was completed by 1930. The home incorporates a variety of early Northern European indigenous architectural and decorative styles. Vikingsholm is unique, therefore notable within the Scandinavian building tradition in the United States. Mrs. Knight insisted on preserving the surrounding beauty of Emerald Bay, resulting in a home harmonized with its environment -- and in a construction challenge. Vikingsholm is unlike any other home at Lake Tahoe, but its real significance is based on an incredibly high level of

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craftsmanship and unique artistic ability. Mrs. Knight entertained guests each summer from 1929 to 1945, when she passed away. The home then had two owners before the California Department of Parks and Recreation acquired it in 1952 from Harvey West.

Historical Background and Significance:

Lora Knight was reminded of Scandinavian fjords when she saw Emerald Bay with its narrow mouth and surrounding steep granite peaks. Her nephew by marriage, Lennart Palme, emigrated from Sweden in 1923 with a degree in Mechanics from the Royal Technical University in Stockholm. Palme designed and built "Vikingsborg" for himself in Rye, New York, and after Mrs. Knight visited this house, she decided to have Palme design a building with similar Scandinavian inspiration for her Emerald Bay property. Unfortunately, Vikingsborg no longer exists, but it incorporated traditional sod roofs that Mrs. Knight insisted be a part of her new home. Vikingsholm is the only known example of Lennart Palme's work remaining in the United States. Work in Sweden by Palme is unknown. He became a member of the American Institute of Architects in 1938 and was registered in California and New York.

To gather furnishings and more ideas for the home, Mrs. Knight and the Palmes traveled to Scandinavia in 1928. As a result of this trip, Vikingsholm represents no single architectural style, time period, or national influence. Vikingsholm is a part of the strong Scandinavian building tradition in the United States, which is not homogenous. Swedish-American architecture in particular includes a broad range of buildings. If anything can be said to unite Swedish-American builders, it is their use of the familiar. Swedish American immigrants, whether they were formally trained architects or farmers building their own homes, used examples from Sweden and Northern Europe as they built in the United States.

The earliest Swedish immigrants to North America built log and/or stone cabins in the Delaware River Valley, beginning the 1600's. These cabins have several elements that are traceable to Sweden, including corner fireplaces, carefully notched corner joints, and some construction without nails. Like a typical Swedish peasant home, these cabins are generally rectangular in plan. While Vikingsholm is based on buildings constructed in a similar manner and with similar purposes, it has several important differences. Primarily, Vikingsholm is the design of a trained architect, who researched the indigenous architecture of Sweden and Norway, rather than building with familiar techniques as the early Swedish immigrants to the Delaware Valley did. Vikingsholm is important to later periods of Swedish migration, when historic arts and crafts were regaining popularity in the United States.

Architectural revivals were common after World War I in the United States, and Swedish-American builders were active in this trend. Traditional European arts and crafts were also gaining popularity in the U.S. and Europe in early in the 20th century. Vikingsholm distinctively incorporates both of these movements. Work by other

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Swedish-American architects and builders from this time period are revivals of distinct schools of architecture, often with Northern European precedents. The American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia is a typical example of work by Swedish immigrants. The Museum was built in 1926, amid not only the general American trend in revival architecture, but also as interest in Swedish heritage gained steam with the upcoming 300 year anniversary of New Sweden Colony on the east coast of North America in 1938. Swedish-born architect John A. Nyden based the building on a seventeenth-century, Georgian-style Swedish manor house called Eriksberg Castle. Like the builders in the Delaware Valley, Swedish immigrants were still inspired by familiar architectural styles from Northern Europe. In the 1920's and 1930's, however, they were trained designers modeling specific architectural trends. Vikingsholm is notable among Swedish-American architecture of this time period because it draws on much earlier types of Scandinavian buildings and because it is based on both indigenous and formal architecture. Carved wood and log construction are common elements of Scandinavian architecture, and the overall plan of Vikingsholm is based on farmsteads in Northern Europe, but the house also has formal architectural inspirations. The arrangement of the east wing of the house is similar to the French Eclectic Style. As an example of revival interest and eclectic styles in American architecture after World War I, Vikingsholm is notable for its formalized elements and for its use of traditional building details.

Although much of its inspiration came from peasant homes, Vikingsholm is popularly considered a "Viking castle." The most important resemblance to a castle is actually quite subtle. The walls of the east wing are finished in the same manner as Olavinlinna, the stone castle of King St. Olav built in 1015 AD. Lennart Palme was attracted to the visual effect of light-colored mortar placed flush to the dark stones, which was actually a functional element in the castle. Flush mortar prevented intruders from using stone work as handholds to climb the castle walls. Attention to color in stone masonry is common among Swedish-American builders.

Vikingsholm is largely based on peasant homes and early Christian churches. Mrs. Knight and the Palmes traveled to Dalarna, a Swedish province noted for its preserved peasant farmsteads from the twelfth century. The plan of Vikingsholm's enclosed courtyard is based on these farms, which were usually square in plan. Museums like the open-air Maihaugen, in Lillehammer, Norway, supplied examples of wooden construction. Maihaugen features an assembly of furnished wooden houses up to 800 years old. Like these peasant homes, Vikingsholm has wide wooden plank siding from massive trees that was hand-hewn and adzed. The exterior artistic elements of Vikingsholm were also inspired from these travels, showing most clearly in the west wing. Crossed dragon beams were inspired by Scandinavia's earliest Christian churches where they offered additional protection from evil. Peasant homes often had hand-carved branches that held gutters in place and offered similar protection from harmful spirits. The three columns of carving near the entry to the caretaker's

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apartment are based on Lennart Palme's sketches from carvings at a church entrance. Diagonal grooving on the south wing's garage door is typical of Scandinavian doors and shutters. The Swedish *parstuga*, or family farm house, was traditionally a set of buildings arranged around a square courtyard; Vikingsholm's overall plan is based on this arrangement with modifications to accommodate existing trees.

Photographs from the journey that are now in Emerald Bay State Park's collection show several direct translations of architectural elements. Split log roofs with birch bark lining were common in peasant homes, and the west wing's original roof was made in the same style with split logs set at right angles to the ridge and running to the eaves, fitted without nails. In Norway, Mrs. Knight photographed these roofs the log ends terminating in heavy spikes along the gutters. The projecting balcony on the east wing, which was constructed in the traditional style with carefully fitted timbers, is much like one photographed in Stockholm. Mrs. Knight found illustrations of sod roofs used in Stockholm during the 15th century like the one Palme built for his own Vikingsborg, and these roofs were also used throughout peasant farms for insulation.

Two of the architectural features that Mrs. Knight imported from Scandinavia actually originated elsewhere. It is likely that plundering Vikings took the same approach that Mrs. Knight did: building elements that they encountered while traveling were brought home and incorporated in their own architecture. Scandinavian raised gatehouses, like the west wing of Vikingsholm, have precedents in Welsh farmsteads. The red brick crown chimneys with bulbous tops, common in Dalarna province, Sweden, were probably originally inspired by Russian architectural elements.

Because Vikingsholm was not to be a Scandinavian shell for modern furnishings, Mrs. Knight and the Palmes looked closely at interior pieces while traveling. Interior walls in Vikingsholm are wide planks that were hand-planed like those in peasant homes. Color and craftsmanship were important in early Scandinavian homes, where long winters were dark and gray, giving ample time to carefully construct and decorate room and furniture details. Ceilings in the living room, library, and second floor hallway were painted with colorful Nordic peasant designs. Two beams hanging from the living room ceiling are carved with dragons' heads at each end and are painted to match the living room decor. These beams are based on similar "dragon" beams used to mark territory in early Scandinavian homes. The man of the house and his honored (male) guests were allowed within the beams, while women and children were required to remain outside the area. The second floor balustrade at the top of the stairs has heavy carved beams much like those on the exterior of the house. Mrs. Knight's bedroom closets have colorfully painted floral designs and carvings.

Plastered surfaces were also traditionally painted in Scandinavian homes. The most striking example of painted plaster in Vikingsholm is in the morning room of the east wing. Intertwining serpents cover the ceiling, and the walls are decorated with

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wavy lines. Fireplaces in the library and a second floor bedroom, and the walls of a second floor sitting porch, have smaller designs, mostly floral. The fireplaces were also placed in the corners of rooms, with the hearth raised over one foot from the floor, as in peasant homes.

To fill these peasant-like interiors, Mrs. Knight and Mr. Palme employed a variety of means during their travels. When possible, Mrs. Knight purchased actual Scandinavian antiques. These pieces are mostly on the first floor of the east wing. The living room has numerous Finnish weavings, a 17th century peasant chair, and a 17th century Norwegian chieftain's table. The dining room has several brightly painted Danish antiques, including a buffet from the 17th century and dining chairs from circa 1750. The pastel leaded glass throughout the house was imported from Sweden. Iron gate latches throughout the house are original pieces from 17th century Northern European peasant homes. Traditionally locks, such as these elaborately incised latches, were placed on the exterior of bedroom doors, so that the home's owner could lock his guests in their bedrooms and therefore sleep free from fear of attack by any of his guests. Mrs. Knight added other interior latches for her guests' comfort, retaining the antiques for their decorative embellishment. After the home was finished, Mrs. Knight also imported custom-woven Finnish rugs for the second floor bedrooms.

Not every object that Mrs. Knight liked was available for purchase. Museum pieces were not for sale, and so in some cases, Mrs. Knight had meticulous copies made and exported. The central piece of furniture in the living room is a copy of an 1860 bridal table in the Nordiska Museum in Stockholm. Bridal tables were traditional wedding gifts in peasant families and were crafted by the bride's father to the bride's specifications. Vikingsholm's copy is complete down to the wear and scratches on the original piece.

Palme also made sketches of furnishings that would be recreated and modified for Vikingsholm. The two bedsteads on the third floor sleeping porch are lengthened copies of a Viking queen's funerary bed from 700 AD, now in an Oslo museum. Furnishings in the second floor bedrooms are based on Palme's drawings of 18th and 19th century museum pieces. Palme designed a dining table to match the antique Danish chairs, as well as the curved light fixture with dragon heads that hangs above the dining table. The architect designed lighting fixtures throughout the home (in hand-wrought iron and hand-carved wood), as well as other interior ironwork for curtain rods and fireplace screens. In 1935, Palme himself hand-carved and painted the entry hall's elaborate closet door. This door is signed by Palme and has raised floral designs painted in pastels, in the same pattern as painted designs on the plastered interior of the closet.

The journey to Scandinavia was essential to the Vikingsholm project, but it did not solve all the questions involved in building the house. The physical setting that

Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay State Park
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initially sent Mrs. Knight to Scandinavia continued to shape construction. Palme's sketches and ideas were the starting point for much hard labor and skilled craftsmanship.

Mrs. Knight wanted a home that would incorporate the ideas she and Palme had acquired in their travels with the natural materials and setting of Emerald Bay. Exterior construction materials were obtained locally to lessen the impact of building among the trees. Granite was quarried from nearby, and pine and fir were cut locally. These materials are important because they not only allow Vikingsholm to blend with its surroundings, but also because they are similar to the materials used in Scandinavia. Mrs. Knight was devoted to preserving the setting as much as possible, and she went so far as to order Palme to construct the house around the site's trees. As the architect describes this mandate: "The problem of placing Vikingsholm without disturbing the trees was perhaps the trickiest I have had to solve in my architectural career either abroad or in these United States because each tree had to be plotted on the drawing board. A space had to be found large enough for the main house, then the wings had to be fitted and swung in such a way as to look quite natural and still not touch the sacred trees." For example, the southwest wing is L-shaped in order to accommodate a tree at its southeast corner. The effect of this care is striking. Since the trees nearest the house are as old and tall as trees throughout the property, Vikingsholm does not stick out as a barren area recently cleared for construction. Instead, the house gives the illusion that it was there before the trees. Wildflowers that bloom throughout the grounds are also found on the sod roofs of the north and south wings. While the sod roofs were inspired by Scandinavian models, their blooms that match the grounds increase the continuity of home and setting. Mrs. Knight insisted on the maintenance of all the wildflowers, and California State Parks continues this tradition.

The construction season at Lake Tahoe also presented a considerable challenge. Heavy winter snows are unpredictable in their onset and their extent; snow can begin accumulating in early fall and can remain on the ground until early summer. The home was essentially completed in one summer, since the first summer (1928) involved only excavating and quarrying the granite for the foundation. Construction was essentially completed in the summer of 1929, with some finishing work done in the summer of 1930. Over 200 workmen were employed in the construction. Without the supervision of Matt Green, the local contractor, it is doubtful that the home could have been completed so efficiently and with such high quality. Green directed the construction of many of Lake Tahoe's splendid summer homes early in this century and was certainly invaluable to this project.

The artistic qualities of the home required more than the ideas and sketches of Lennart Palme. Two Finnish immigrants living in New York State were brought to Vikingsholm to hew and adze all the exterior wood and to hand-plane the interior wall and ceiling boards. These treatments were essential to the Scandinavian feel of the

Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay State Park
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house, and Palme required it to be done with great skill to create a feeling of softness. Today, replicating the same level of skill in hewing would be almost impossible. One man of Scandinavian descent (identified only as "Roy") from Sacramento completed all the exterior wood carving and many of the interior furnishings. His carvings are rhythmic and organic, displaying great skill in recreating early Scandinavian styles. Because all carving was done by this man alone, the carvings carry a sense of continuity throughout the home. They also represent a remarkable achievement based on the limited time in which he completed the carvings.

The demolition of numerous outbuildings changed the Vikingsholm property significantly, especially since very little was recorded about their appearance or construction. The remaining outbuildings and sites of the demolished buildings are reminders of the extensive numbers of guests that could be accommodated and the staff numbers necessary to do so. Vikingsholm's historic integrity rests on the careful craftsmanship in every detail of the house. Handcraftsmanship as evidenced throughout the home's construction, decoration and furnishing could not be duplicated today. As a vacation home for Mrs. Knight and her guests, Vikingsholm provided evidence of an interested patron, an inspired architect, and a contractor who could efficiently translate their travel-inspired ideas. Because the initial construction was completed from thorough research and with extensive care, Vikingsholm's character endures to the delight of thousands of park visitors each year.

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Emerald Bay Unit History. California Department of Parks and Recreation, manuscript on file.

Innes, Jocasta. *Scandinavian Painted Decor*. New York: Rizzoli International Publishers. 1990.

Klein, Barbro and Mats Widbom, eds. *Swedish Folk Art: All Tradition Is Change*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1994.

Nesbitt, Paul E., Nancy H. Evans, and John L. Kelly. *The Cultural Resources of Emerald Bay State Park*. Sacramento: State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation. 1990.

Palme, Lennart. *Vikingsholm*. Santa Barbara, CA: Carl W. Haagen. 1955.

Skelcher, Bradley. "Achieving the American Dream: The Career of John Augustus Nyden, 1895-1932," *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, v. XLV, no. 3, July 1994. pp. 132-148.

Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay State Park
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Skelcher, Bradley. Personal communication. 3 June 1996.

Smith, Helen Henry. *Vikingsholm: Tahoe's Hidden Castle*. Sunnyvale, CA, K/P Graphics. 1973.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primarily Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency - California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Service Center, Sacramento
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage: 162 acres

UTMs:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 10/750800/4315930 | 5. 10/750839/4315150 |
| 2. 10/551530/4315980 | 6. 10/750430/4315120 |
| 3. 10/751600/4314910 | 7. 10/750430/4315560 |
| 4. 10/750840/4314750 | |

Boundary Description and Justification: See Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior
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Section number _____ Page _____

Item 10 Geographical Data

Acreage of property: 162 acres

Verbal Boundary Description:
Emerald Bay State Park
Vikingsholm Parcel

All that certain real property in the County of El Dorado,
State of California, described as follows:

Lots 2,3,4 and 5 and the East Half of the Southwest Quarter of
Section 21, Lots 1 and 2 of Section 28, all in Township 13
North, Range 17 East, M.D.M.

Excepting therefrom all that portion thereof lying Northwesterly
of the existing Northwesterly right of Way Line of State Highway
89, said Right of Way Line being shown on the Bureau of Land
Management Amended Supplemental Plat of Sections 21 and 28,
Township 13 North, Range 17 East, Mount Diablo Meridian as
accepted December 8, 1994.

Please see map

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries encompass all that remains of the historic
Laura Knight parcel that was conveyed to The California Dept. of
Parks & Recreation.

Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay State Park
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11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Lara Bjork, Collections Registrar; William Lindemann, Museum Curator II; Karen Feischl, Photographer; Michael J. Goorevich, Assistant; Scott Masion, Assistant;

Organization: California Department of Parks and Recreation

Date: Dec. 7, 1995

Street & Number: 7360 West Lake Blvd /
P.O. Box 266

Telephone: (916) 525-5055

City or Town: Tahoma

State: CA

Zip code: 96142

Additional Documentation

See continuation sheets for key to building location map and photograph information.

Submit the following 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

Additional Items (Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

Name: State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation

Sierra District Headquarters

Street & Number: 7360 West Lake Blvd / P.O. Box 266

Telephone: (916) 525-7232

City or Town: Tahoma

State: CA

Zip Code: 96142

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for application to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list

JUN 13 1996

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

ONP

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Section Number Additional Documentation Page 1

KEY TO BUILDING LOCATION MAP OF EMERALD BAY AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Items included in resource count are indicated in boldface type.

MAP #	DESCRIPTION
1	Vikingsholm - photos #01-01 to #07-36 and #07-38 to #07-42 and all slides
2	Warehouse and incinerator - photos #08-43 & 08-44
3	Eagle Creek bridge site
4	Duplex - photos #08-45 & 08-46
5	Rock work: Eagle Creek trail/stairway
6	Rock work: Eagle Creek retaining wall - photos #08-47 & 08-48
6	Boat rails
7	Boat bay - photos #09-49 & 09-50
8	Pier - noncontributing
9	Teahouse - photos #07-37 & 07-39
10	Transformer building - photos #09-51 & 09-52
11	Restroom - noncontributing
12	Gardener's cottage - photos #09-53 & 09-54
13	Indian House site
14	Brown House site
15	Small House site
16	Shop site
17	Garage site
18	Hintz House site
19	Mrs. Knight's road / Park footpath - photos #10-57 & 10-58
20	Rock work: Mrs. Knight's entrance from highway - photos #10-55 & 10-56
21	Parking lot - noncontributing
22	Service road - noncontributing
23	Water tanks - photos #10-59 & 10-60
24	Emerald Bay Boat Camp / Emerald Bay Camp and Comyn/Law Property sites

Photograph Information - black and white prints

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1. Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay State Park
2. El Dorado County, CA
3. Karen Feischl, photographer - prints 01-01 to 08-44
Kerry Davis, photographer - prints 08-45 to 10-60
4. Prints 01-01 to 08-44 taken May 1994; prints 08-45 to 10-60 taken June 1996.
5. All negatives on file at Museum Curator's Office, Sierra District Headquarters, California
Department of Parks and Recreation

Description and Numbering of black and white photographs:

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|-------|--|
| 01-01 | Vikingsholm lakeside, facing west |
| 01-02 | Courtyard north: kitchen entrance, showing crown chimney |
| 01-03 | Courtyard north: breezeway and kitchen entrance, showing crown chimney |
| 01-04 | Front lakeside entrance, looking north to square tower: morning room, first floor; writing nook, second floor; sleeping porch, third floor |
| 01-05 | Courtyard southeast: living quarters on right; second floor landing of interior stairs ahead; window and carving details |
| 01-06 | Front lakeside: dining room window |

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| 02-07 | Courtyard northwest: servants' quarters showing porch with sod roof above; first floor gatehouse north on left |
| 02-08 | Courtyard north: servants' quarters porch and breezeway; sod roof above |
| 02-09 | Exterior of north wing looking southwest: breezeway; kitchen windows in foreground; sod roof above |
| 02-10 | Exterior of south wing looking north through passageway to courtyard, showing flagstone detailing |
| 02-11 | Courtyard south, showing garage and passageway |
| 02-12 | Courtyard west, showing gatehouse |

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| 03-13 | Courtyard west, showing gatehouse carving detail |
| 03-14 | Exterior south side/gable end of gatehouse looking northeast: soffit fascia carving; chimney; log siding surface details |

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| 03-15 | Courtyard west, showing gatehouse carving detail |
| 03-16 | Exterior west side of gatehouse caretaker's apartment: porch pillar and door details |
| 03-17 | Exterior west side of gatehouse caretaker's apartment wing, showing porch and crown chimney |
| 03-18 | Courtyard west: gatehouse breezeway |

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| 04-19 | Courtyard southeast: living quarters on right; second floor landing of interior stairs ahead; flush mortared stone, timber framing, and window details |
| 04-20 | Interior: living room ceiling and dragon beam, looking south toward round library |
| 04-21 | Interior: living room, looking southwest, showing fireplace, dragon beam, textiles |
| 04-22 | Interior: dining room, looking northeast, showing dining set, dragon fixture, fireplace; door to Morning Room on left |
| 04-23 | Interior: top of main staircase looking toward courtyard windows (compare with number 01-05) |
| 04-24 | Morning room ceiling with lighting fixture, lakeside front window detail |

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| 05-25 | Interior: main courtyard entrance door lock detail |
| 05-26 | Interior lock detail |
| 05-27 | Interior lock detail |
| 05-28 | Interior lock detail |
| 05-29 | Interior lighting fixture detail, iron |
| 05-30 | Interior lighting fixture detail, iron |

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| 06-31 | Interior lighting fixture detail, iron |
| 06-32 | Interior lighting fixture detail, wood |
| 06-33 | Interior lighting fixture detail, wood |
| 06-34 | Courtyard main entry foyer closet, signed by architect: door detail |
| 06-35 | Courtyard main entry foyer closet, signed by architect: wall and window detail |
| 06-36 | Lora's bedroom wall looking south, entry door on right |

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- 07-37 Lora's bedroom: fireplace screen detail
- 07-38 Emerald Bay looking west: Vikingsholm from Fannette Island
- 07-39 Emerald Bay looking southeast toward Fannette Island, teahouse above
- 07-40 Fannette Island teahouse view from west, doorway on right
- 07-41 North square three-story tower: view from east side; morning room below, Lora's bedroom on second floor, third floor sleeping porch; mortar washed brick detail
- 07-42 South round two-story tower view from southeast side; library on first floor, round bedroom on second floor, brick details

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- 08-43 Warehouse
- 08-44 Incinerator
- 08-45 Duplex - facing west
- 08-46 Duplex - facing east
- 08-47 Rock work: Eagle Creek retaining wall
- 08-48 Rock work: Eagle Creek retaining wall

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- 09-49 Boat bay - facing northeast
- 09-50 Boat bay - facing southwest
- 09-51 Transformer building - facing southeast
- 09-52 Transformer building - facing northwest
- 09-53 Gardener's cottage - facing southeast
- 09-54 Gardener's cottage - facing northwest

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- 10-55 Rock work: Mrs. Knight's entrance from highway
- 10-56 Rock work: Mrs. Knight's entrance from highway
- 10-57 Mrs. Knight's road / park footpath
- 10-58 Mrs. Knight's road / park footpath
- 10-59 Water tanks
- 10-60 Water tanks

