NPS Form 10-900

1. Name of Property

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

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.

	mber						
2. Location							
street & number city or town state Wisconsin	415 East Council S Tomah code WI		Monroe	code	N/A N/A 081	not for p vicinity zip code	54660
3. State/Federal	Agency Certifica	tion					
Historic Places and m X meets _ does not m _ statewide X locally.	eet the National Regis (See continuation s	ster criteria	. I recommend that th				
Signature of certifyin	g official/Title			Date			
State Historic Pres	ervation Office - V	Visconsin					
		Visconsin					
State Historic Pres	cy and bureau perty _ meets _ does no	t meet the N		ia.			
State Historic Pres State or Federal agend In my opinion, the pro	cy and bureau perty _ meets _ does no et for additional comm	t meet the N		ia. Date			

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin	Monroe	Wisconsin	
Name of Property	County and State		
4. National Park Service Certification	. 1		
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. see continuation sheet. removed from the National	H. Beall	11.27.	
Register,other, (explain:)	еерег	Date of Action	
5. Classification			
Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as as apply) private X building(s) X public-local district public-State public-Federal Ownership of Property (Check only one box) X building(s) X structure structure yullic-Federal		ces within Property viously listed resources noncontributing buildings sites structures	
object Name of related multiple property listing:	1 Number of contrib		
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A	previously listed in	the National Register	
6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) SOCIAL/clubhouse	Current Functions (Enter categories from ins SOCIAL/clubhouse	tructions)	
7. Description			
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from ins foundation concrete	structions)	
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(Enter categories from instructions)	(Enter categories from ins foundation concrete walls log	structions)	
(Enter categories from instructions) Late 19 th and Early 20 th Century American Movements	(Enter categories from ins foundation concrete	structions)	

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

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Monroe Wisconsin

Name of Property County and State

8. Statement of Significance

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)		(Enter categories from instructions) SOCIAL HISTORY
<u>X</u> 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.	Period of Significance 1934 - 1967
_D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates 1934
	eria Considerations k "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	
Prope	erty is:	Significant Person
_ A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	(Complete if Criterion B is marked) N/A
_B	removed from its original location.	
_ C	a birthplace or grave.	Cultural Affiliation
_D	a cemetery.	N/A
_E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
_ F	a commemorative property.	Architect/Builder
_G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Tomah Boy Scout Ca	ıbin			Mon	roe	Wisconsin
Name of Property				Coun	ty and State	
). Major Bibli	ographic Refe	erences				
Cite the books, ar	ticles, and other s	ources used in preparing th	is form on	one or mo	ore continuation sh	eets.)
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1. Form Prep	pared By					
name/title	Patricia A. I	Lacey				
organization					_	
street & number	r W5055 US	HWY 10			date telephone	3-31-2016 715-743-4799

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Monroe Wisconsin

Name of Property County and State

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 City of Tomah

organizationdate3-31-2016street & number819 Superior Streettelephone608-374-7420

city or town Tomah state WI zip code 54660

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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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Introduction

The Boy Scout Cabin is located at the very western edge of Buckley Park at the eastern edge of the city of Tomah, on a one acre, level, rectangular, grass covered lot which abuts a sharp hill. The hill travels almost the entire length of the west border and it is covered with dense thicketed undergrowth. The park marks the water shed of Council House Creek and supports several acres of land which has been left in its natural state. The Tomah Aquatic Center, which houses the community pool, is located on the southwest edge of Buckley Park. The cabin faces north onto East Council Street and the west boundary abuts mid- to late- twentieth century homes.

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin is a fine example of a small log cabin, which many communities across America were constructing as a meeting location for their local Boy Scout troop. A community would come together and donate money, materials and in many cases the time and expertise to erect a building of this nature. They were influenced to do this by the Boy Scout Movement which offered to mold their sons into model citizens. The Boy Scout ethic included teaching to how exercise good judgment and developing good character. "No one can doubt that with such training added to his native gifts, the American boy will in the near future, as a man, be an efficient leader in the paths of civilization and peace."

Exterior

Built in 1934 in the Rustic style, this front gable cabin has an overall dimension of 40' X 28'. It rests on a concrete slab. The main, north-facing, façade supports a centered entry having a red painted door. There are paired awning windows are found on either side of the door. Each window of the two-window pair is divided into six lights. The windows are covered with a single, awning style, weathered shutter comprised of upright planks. Horizontal logs begin at the base of the log cabin and rise to the base of the gable-end. Smaller vertical logs clad the gable end. The walls have wide bands of white chinking. A small, weathered, lean-to shed, which is not original to the building, is attached to the west edge of the building extending the width of the front wall.

The corners of the cabin utilize the most common corner system of log construction. The Saddle Notch, sometimes referred to as the "shrink-to-fit" system is designed to become tighter as the logs settle and shrink. It consists of a rounded void cut into the bottom of each log. This void fits snuggly over the round log below creating the corner junction. Most times, as in the case of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin, the notch is made several inches to a foot from the end of the log creating the corner junction which we are the most familiar with.

¹ Boy Scouts of America Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Company, Garden City, New York, 1911), page vi Preface

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Section 7 Page 2

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

The east (side) façade has two, triple-section windows that match the design and materials of the windows on the front of the cabin and are evenly spaced on the log wall. Each window of the three-window units is divided into six lights. The window units are covered with a single shutter comprised of upright planks.

The south (rear) façade has the same configuration as the north façade. The south wall has a centered entry and a door which is painted red. Paired windows matching those at the front of the cabin, are located on either side of the door. Each window of the two-window unit is divided into six lights. The windows are covered with a single weathered shutter comprised of upright planks.

The west (side) façade has a weathered lean-to-shed on the north portion, a centered, tall, triangul-shaped shaped stone rubble chimney and a paired prop-open window unit on the south portion. The prop-open window unit is identical to the north and south elevations. The rubble chimney is sculpture-like in nature. It is very wide at the base, tapering gradually at first and then severely tapering as it reaches the height of the roof. The rubble stones vary in size from very small to medium. The roof is clad with asphalt shingles.

Interior

The interior of the cabin is composed of one large room. The floor is smooth concrete. Round log ceiling beams connect the east and west walls of the cabin. In addition, steel cables have been installed from the east wall to the west wall to provide for additional wall strength. The ceiling is open to the underside of the roof. The interior log walls have been painted a beige color. The west wall of the cabin is where the fireplace is located, which is constructed of the same stone rubble as the exterior chimney.

Alterations

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin is in fair condition and has had minimal alterations. Changes include the addition of a small storage room addition, and the walls have been structurally reinforced with steel cable ties.

Integrity

While some components of the cabin need repair, including the roof and possibly a few of the logs, the cabin retains its original design and construction materials. The cabin is substantially unchanged from its date of construction and the small storage room addition does not detract from the cabin's integrity.

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Introduction

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the area of Social History for the role it played in Tomah, associated with the larger Boy Scout movement, particularly reflecting the trend of Boy Scout troops constructing small cabins for club use. The cabin is being nominated at the local level of significance.

The tradition of local Boy Scout troops building a small log cabin as a clubhouse is long-standing and extends across many decades. The Boy Scouts of America was founded in 1910 and its offering to guide and mentor boys and young men appealed to parents, and public officials. Parents and community leaders often worried about the future of young men between the ages of ten and eighteen, and wanted wholesome influences and an environment that emphasized public service. The Boy Scout organization offered both, and the cabin became the place where troop leaders emphasized civicminded, and ethics-based lessons, and led the boys in fun activities. Building a Boy Scout cabin was often a community affair and was a project that never really fell out of favor. Many cabins were built in the 1910s and 1920s but cabins from later decades were also not unusual, such as the subject cabin, constructed in 1934. The Tomah Lions Club, a service club, spearheaded this community cabin project which introduced the young men of Tomah to several real life experiences. They were able to witness the excitement and advocacy of the Tomah community during the fund raising process and once that goal was met, the boys became a part of a team. Along with their fathers, other men in the community and the FERA workers who assisted with the construction of this cabin, they had a hands-on lesson in the construction of a cabin that was characteristic in composition to that of the American pioneer cabin.²

Many communities felt obligated to provide their young men the opportunity to become a Boy Scout. In many instances, this was achieved by the community building a cabin for the sole purpose of providing a place for Boy Scout meetings and activities. The mission of the Tomah Boy Scouts was to provide a social environment where a program of activities could give structure and direction for young men. It was the hope that this guidance would help to avert a situation where one bad decision could affect the rest of their lives.

The philosophy of the Boy Scouts was disseminated through the use of the *Boy Scouts of America the Official Handbook for Boys*, which promoted character and challenged the scouts to learn about their surroundings, nature and their country. Being a Tomah Boy Scout gave many young men a sense of

² Barbara Wyatt, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin Volume 2,* (Historic Preservation Division State Historical Society of Wisconsin, June 1986), page (4-2)

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

belonging, as well as access to adult mentoring. Along the way, the scout would hopefully develop loyalty, courage and kindness. The construction of a small cabin, with the aid of the community, parents, mentors, and in cooperation with other boys in the troop, was a popular way to gain skills, and engage in a fun project that, when completed, must have been immensely rewarding to those boys who participated.

Period of Significance

The Period of Significance extends from 1934 to 1967. This period of time begins with the year of construction and ends with the year 1967 (50 year closing date). The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin has been in continuous use by the Boy Scouts since its completion.

History of Monroe County and the City of Tomah

Monroe County was created with lands removed from La Crosse County on March 21, 1854. The northern tier of Monroe County townships were added with land removed from Jackson County on October 14, 1856. The topography of the Tomah area consists of gentle rolling prairie with a range of hills located to the west of the city. These hills divide the county from north to south and cause the course of county streams to run both east and west. This land feature became a formidable obstacle to the oncoming railroad. The low areas north and east of Tomah support extensive cranberry marshes.³

The first man of European descent to settle in the area of what would become the city of Tomah was Jesse Boorman (b.7-4-1830). In 1854, Boorman purchased three, forty-acre parcels of land. He began to clear the land, but as winter approached he left and went back to Walworth County where he had a 120 acre farm. In 1855, Robert E. Gillett (b. 6-6-1809, d. 9-28-1861) came to the Tomah area and he purchased land south and east of Boorman's land. At the time, Gillett's twenty year old son Robert A. Gillett was employed as a surveyor for the Milwaukee & La Crosse railroad. The railroad was beginning to build a rail line from Milwaukee to the Mississippi River. The Gilletts knew that the railroad was coming and that it would cross Monroe County, perhaps as soon as 1858. The projected route would place it near Council House Creek which bordered the soon to be Village of Tomah on the east.

Robert E. Gillett approached Jesse Boorman offering to trade his land for Boorman's land. As Boorman considered Gillett's proposition, Boorman came to the conclusion that Gillett's holdings would offer better soil composition for agriculture. The trade was recorded on April 24, 1857 (NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4, the NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 and the SW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 4, Township 17, and Range 1 West). When the transfer of land was completed, it included an additional 60 acres of land

³ A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, (Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881), 616-651

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

that was given to Boorman by Gillett. Robert E. Gillett purchased an additional four, forty-acre parcels of land in Section 9, which adjoined Section 4 on the south. He also purchased a tract of land which was one mile in length and one-half mile in width, which he speculated would abut the projected railroad route.

Robert E Gillett employed William Spear a civil engineer from La Crosse to survey the original plat of Tomah within the South ½ of Section 4 and the North ½ of Section 9. Gillett directed Spear that Superior Avenue was to be laid out having a width of one-hundred feet. All other north/south streets would be seventy-five feet wide with the cross streets being sixty-feet wide. The platting process was completed on June 4, 1857. At this time, Gillett offered free lots to anyone who would agree to construct a building on their lot. Two additional additions or subdivisions were added in 1858 and one was added in 1859.

The new village now needed a name. Robert E. Gillett's son Robert A (b.7-6-1834) had been reading a book on the history of the area and came upon the story of a celebrated Menomonee Chief (Thomas Carron) who was known as Tomah. Tomah was born in 1752. The book described him as a striking six-foot tall man with dark eyes and handsome features. Tomah was revered as a Native American who never engaged in war and who had always maintained friendly relationships with the early settlers. Tomah voted to incorporate as a village in 1858, but was not granted a charter until 1866.

The Milwaukee & La Crosse Railroad arrived in the village in 1858. As the surveyors were arriving in Monroe County, the exact line was still yet to be determined. Robert E. Gillett convinced the surveyors to place the railroad through his holdings rather that swinging farther to the south and going through Jacksonville. A hill three miles to the west of the village impeded the completion of the rail line through Tomah. Seven months later, a 1,200 foot tunnel was dug through the hill and the rail line continued on.

Robert E. Gillett was acknowledged as a generous man in 1911 newspaper story; "R. E. Gillett's generosity to outside people, offering them land to settle here, was another incentive which helped to make out population what it is now." It is also important to note the contributions which Robert E. Gillett made to the history of the United States. Gillett was an abolitionist and staunch supporter of Abraham Lincoln. After Lincoln was elected President on March 21, 1861, Lincoln demonstrated his appreciation of Gillett's support by appointing him to be the Minister to Venezuela. Unfortunately, Gillett died before he could assume these responsibilities.

⁴ The La Crosse Leader Press, "History of Tomah Interesting Story" June 3, 1911

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

The onset of the Civil War slowed the growth of Tomah, but upon its conclusion Tomah began to grow exponentially. Hotels, banks, grocery stores, feed stores, meat markets, wagon shops, blacksmiths homes, and churches arose as many found the village situated along the railroad an appealing location. In 1868, the West Wisconsin Railroad Company completed a rail line from Tomah to Black River Falls. In 1871, the Wisconsin Valley Railroad came through Tomah on its way to Wood County. The ensuing building boom from 1872 to 1890 saw the construction of numerous business blocks. The population of Tomah rose to 1,245 in 1880⁶. In 1882, Tomah sought to become a city; however, this did not happen until November 20, 1895, when Tomah received its charter recognizing it as a fourth class city.

In 1890, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad located their Bridge Works Company on ten acres of land located north of the depot. This site was donated to them by the City of Tomah. The Bridge Works employed many men who manufactured wooden bridges, culverts, depots and storage buildings. Also in 1890, the City of Tomah purchased 200 acres of land two miles north of the city and with a governmental outlay of \$25,000, a complex of buildings were constructed for the Tomah Indian Industrial School. Native American boys were taught farming, dairying and carpentry and Native American girls were taught domestic science and art. A local staff was employed to teach 250 children. In September of 1894 bonds were issued in the amount of \$15,000 to build a water works system. The city constructed a pumping station and standpipe which was completed in 1895.

As the new century arrived, the City of Tomah built a new \$25,000 high school, installed 5 ½ miles of sewer system and began to pave the streets. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad moved their Frog Plant (the assembly for the crossing point of two rails) from Milwaukee to Tomah in 1907. This brought a large number of new families to Tomah, as the plant employed 100-150 men and created a boom for the economy of the city. The Frog Plant was operated by a large dynamo which also provided electricity for the city of Tomah. By 1910, the population of the city had grown to 3,419. Tomah constructed a Carnegie Library in 1916.

⁵ Randolph A. Richards, *History of Monroe County Wisconsin, past and present: including an account of the cities, towns, and villages of the county,* (C. F. Cooper & Company, Chicago, 1912), pages 339-397

⁶ A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, (Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881), pages 616-651

⁷ The La Crosse Leader Press, June 3, 1911, "History of Tomah Interesting Story"

⁸ Randolph A. Richards, *History of Monroe County Wisconsin, past and present: including an account of the cities, towns, and villages of the county,* (C. F. Cooper & Company, Chicago, 1912), pages 339-397

⁹ Tomah Monitor, January 23, 1895, "Pure Water"

¹⁰ Randolph A. Richards, *History of Monroe County Wisconsin, past and present: including an account of the cities, towns and villages of the county,* (C. F. Cooper & Company, Chicago, 1912), pages 339-397

¹¹ Wisconsin Historical Society, National Register of Historic Places #76000068

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

The City of Tomah was surrounded on all sides by productive farms. As the twentieth century progressed, Tomah became a centrally located marketing region for livestock and crops. Its access to the railroad provided the opportunity to transport locally produced products to outside markets. As did many areas of the nation, the City of Tomah experienced a downturn with the onset of the Great Depression. It was within this context, that the Tomah Boy Scout cabin was constructed.

History of the Boy Scout Movement

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, America's parents, state and national officials worried about the future of young men from the age of ten to eighteen. Much of this concern was directed toward the multitude of young poor immigrant boys in large American cities who officials feared were destined for delinquency. "We have constantly kept in mind the evils that confront the boys of our country and have struck at them by fostering better things. The Boy Scouts of America is a corporation formed by a group of men who are anxious that the boys of America should come under the influence of this movement and be built up in all that goes to make character and good citizenship." The purposeful mission of the Boys Scouts of America was to provide structure and direction for young men. This was accomplished by providing a venue of activities which would prevent them from drifting aimlessly through their youth and perhaps avert one bad decision which could affect the rest of their lives.

William D. Boyce was a newspaper and magazine publisher from Chicago, Illinois. In 1909, while enroute to a safari in British East Africa; he was aided by a British Boy Scout in London, England. The scout refused Boyce's tip for his services explaining that he was a Boy Scout and was merely doing his daily good turn. Upon Boyce's return from his safari, he visited the London Scouting headquarters and obtained information on their organization. Armed with the 1909 handbook titled *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship* written by Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the British Boy Scouts, Boyce returned to the United States. Boyce incorporated the Boy Scouts of America on February 8, 1910 and applied for a congressional charter. The National Council was formed in the fall of 1910 with President William Howard Taft as Honorary President and former President Theodore Roosevelt as Honorary Vice President and Chief Scout Citizen. Colin H. Livingstone was the first president of the organization. The control of the organization.

http://www.scoutlander.com/publicsite/unitcustom.aspx?UID=14833&CUSTOMID=47994, pages 1-11

¹² Why the Boy Scouts Work, Heather MacDonald, City Journal, http://www.city-journal.org/html/10 1 why the boy.html, pages 1-9

Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, New York, 1911), page v, vi of Preface

¹⁴ History of the Boy Scouts of America,

¹⁵ Founders, Boy Scouts of America official site, http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/Founders.aspz, pages 1-3

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

On June 21, 1910, 34 national representatives from various boys groups met and their organizations merged into the Boys Scouts of America. By the fall of that year the Boy Scouts of America had over 2,500 applications for leaders from 44 states. ¹⁷

Ernest Thompson Seton authored the first Boy Scout handbook titled *A Handbook of Woodcraft*, *Scouting and Life-craft*¹⁸, which was used until 1911 when the Boys Scouts published *Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys*. The 1911 handbook described the skills that could be learned and virtues that were expected of a Boy Scout. The handbook was the core of scouting and it's over whelming theme was selflessness and thoughtfulness toward others. "We send out our "Official Handbook," therefore, with the earnest wish that many boys may find in it new methods for the proper use of their leisure time and fresh inspiration in their efforts to make their hours of recreation contribute to strong, noble manhood in the days to come."

Chief Scout Citizen, Theodore Roosevelt told the Boy Scouts in 1913 that "manliness in its most rigorous form can be and ought to be accompanied by unselfish consideration for the rights and interests of others."²¹

The Boy Scouts of America tapped into the boredom of America's youth and proposed to satisfy their adventuresome curiosity. The Boy Scouts of America offered to teach a boy how to live, camp, and survive in the woods, how to start a campfire and cook a meal, how to interpret the signs of the forest and the tracks of animals, how to recognize wild fruits, roots and nuts which were good to eat and how to be strong enough to save a life. In turn, he would respect his flag and love his country, obey his parents and leaders, uphold the scout virtues of courtesy, loyalty, self-respect, honor, faithfulness, cheerfulness, thoughtfulness and perform daily the movements founding principal. He would agree to do a good deed to somebody every day, quietly without boasting.²²

¹⁶Boy Scouts of American official site, http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/Founders.aspx, Founders, pages 1-3 History of the Boy Scouts of America,

http://www.scoutlander.com/publicsite/unitcustom/aspx?UID=14833&CUSTOMID=47994, pages 1-11

¹⁸ History of Scouting: Founders, http://historyofscouting.com/founders.htm, pages 1-2

¹⁹ Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Co. Publishing, Garden City, N.Y., 1913) preface vi

Boys Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, New York, 1911), page vi Preface

²¹ Why the Boy Scouts Work, Heather MacDonald, City Journal, http://www.ity-journal.org/html/10 1 why the boy.html, pages 1-9

²² Boy Scouts of America Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, New York, 1911), pages 3-10

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Parents seized on this opportunity to provide direction for their sons and began to enroll their sons into the Boy Scouts of America. Their hope was that this organization would build a solid foundation of character within their sons that would remain with them for a lifetime.

By 1912, Boy Scouts were found in every state. Locally, a patrol was formed with at least eight boys ten years of age or older. One of the eight would become the patrol leader and another would become the assistant patrol leader. A troop was formed by incorporating three or more patrols under a leadership of an adult scout master. These troops would meet in churches, schools, boys clubs and YMCA's. In many cases, local scout troops built their own meeting places in city owned parks or on unused city property.

Through an act of the United States Congress approved on June 14, 1916, the Boy Scouts of America incorporated. Section 3 states that; "the purpose of this corporation shall be to promote, through organization and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance and kindred virtues using the methods which are now in common use by boy scouts." In 1918, Rotary International became the first service club to begin sponsoring Boy Scout troops.

There were three levels or classes of scouts described in the 1911 handbook. To become a Tenderfoot you had to know the scout law, sign, salute, and significance of the badge. A Tenderfoot was also required to know the history of the American flag and the customary forms of respect used in raising, lowering, storing, and destroying tattered flags. He also had to accomplish tying four different knots.

To become a Second-class Scout one had to be a Tenderfoot for at least one month. He needed to know first aid and how to treat fractures, shock, burns, sprains and wounds. He needed to understand elementary signaling of Morse code, semaphore, or the Myer alphabet. He had to walk a mile in twenty-five minutes, be able to use a knife or hatchet, build a fire in the open using no more than two matches, cook a quarter pound of meat and two potatoes without kitchen utensils, know the sixteen principal points on a compass and open a savings account.

To become a First-class Scout he had to swim fifty yards, send and receive a message by Morse code, semaphore, or the Myer alphabet, and complete a seven mile (fourteen mile round trip) journey by foot or row boat, providing a detailed account of the trip. He also had to have mastered advanced first aid training, cook a more elaborate meal over a campfire, be able to read a map, describe ten species of

²³ Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Double Day Page & Co., Garden City, NY, 1911), pages viii, ix

²⁴ Timeline: a Brief History of the Boy Scouts of America, www.desertnews.com/article/865572261/Timeline-a-brief-history-of-the-Boy-Scouts-of-America.html?pg=all

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trees or plants, demonstrate how to use an ax to cut down a tree, add more earned money to his savings account, and provide satisfactory evidence that he practiced the scout oath and law in his daily life.

Once a boy had become a First-class scout he could begin to earn merit badges. The purpose of the merit badge was to stimulate the scout's interest in the world around him. Sixty merit badges were offered in 1911. Topics ranged from angling to astronomy, camping, life saving, forestry, music, photography, swimming, and taxidermy. The top merit badge, #60 for Eagle Scout, was given to anyone completing the acquisition of twenty-one merit badges. Each merit badge had clearly defined requirements. The chapters titled: Woodcraft; Campcraft; Tracks, Trailing and Signaling; Health and Endurance; Chivalry; First Aid and Life Saving; Games and Athletic Standards; and Patriotism and Citizenship within the *Boy Scouts of America Handbook for Boys* contained all of the information fundamental to mastering the skills essential in achieving the various merit badges.

Included within the chapter on Woodcraft is the subtitle "Building a Log Cabin." Instructions were provided that took you step-by-step from how to select a high dry site, how to select and cut down a tree, how to notch the logs for assembly and how to chink between the logs. ²⁶ The Pioneer Merit Badge could be partially earned by building a structure that was suitable for three occupants. In addition, Daniel C. Beard, the founder of the Sons of Daniel Boone (which merged with the Boy Scouts in 1910), authored a book titled *Shelter, Shacks and Shanties*, in 1914. By following Beard's instructions, one could build a shelter with nothing but a hatchet. ²⁷ It is hard to say whether these two instructive printings enticed the Tomah Boy Scouts to build their own cabin but that is exactly what they did.

The twenty-first century *Scout - the Boy Scout Handbook A Guide to Adventure, A Guidebook for Life,* still promotes the same ideals and challenges; "Are you ready to become an expert hiker and camper, explore the natural world and to meet challenges with good judgment and skill? Do you want to become a leader and do all you can for your family, your neighborhood and America? Would you like to develop lifelong friendships and a set of values that can guide you through the years to come? Do you want to understand your duties to your religious beliefs and your responsibilities in caring for the environment?" Join the Boy Scouts of America.

These basic core beliefs are coupled with the realities of the world today. The first chapter is titled "Child Abuse" and addresses physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The manual also includes directives on relationships in "Good Judgment in Choosing Friends". "What the Outdoor Code Means" provides direction in helping the scout improve the conditions of wildlife, water, air, forests and the

²⁵ Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, New York, 1911), pages 10-43

²⁶ Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys, (Double Day, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y., 1911), pages 59-63

²⁷ Shelters, Shacks and Shanties, by Daniel C. Beard, 1914, http://www.shelterpub.com/ shelter/sss book.html

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land itself. "Internet Tips" cautions the Boy Scout on how to be safe when using the internet. A Boy Scout can now earn merit badges in Cinematography, Computers, Disabilities Awareness, Fingerprinting, Nuclear Science, Oceanography, Robotics, Scuba Diving, and Space Exploration. More than 1 billion boys around the world have answered the call of Scouting over the last one hundred plus years.²⁸

The structure of the Boy Scouts within the State of Wisconsin has the state divided into ten Boy Scout Councils: Northern Star, Voyageurs, Chippewa Valley, Gateway, Glacier's Edge, Blackhawk, Samoset, Bay Lakes, Potawatomi, and Three Harbor (note map enclosed). Each Council supports a headquarters in a centrally located city. The Wisconsin Boy Scout Councils are then divided into smaller districts which are overseen by a district executive.

The Boy Scout Cabin

The construction of a Boy Scout cabin, as a troop project, was not an isolated phenomenon, nor was it the inspiration of a particular troop leader. The Boy Scout organization advocated that cabin building projects were a wholesome, useful endeavor, which further benefitted each troop who chose to build one, given that the results of their labor was a tidy building having a large room for gathering, anchored by a large stone or brick hearth symbolizing both domestic comfort and the romanticism of America's pastoral origins. After all, this period overlapped with the National Park movement, and the rising popularity of Rustic style architecture; the prospect of building a small rustic cabin for one's scouting troop likely fit in very well with bringing a small piece of that romantic spirit to large cities, small towns and everyplace in between. The boys used math and geometry, learned how to use carpentry tools, and learned the complexities of constructing something of this scale. At the conclusion of construction, the boys also undoubtedly basked in the satisfaction of a successful cabin project. One could even earn a badge.

The Boy Scout organization provided quite a bit of guidance to any troop interested in building their own cabin. The Boy Scout handbook offered a sub-chapter, "How to Build a Cabin", and the scouting organization's magazine *Boys Life* recommended additional titles including two written by Boy Scout co-founder, D.C. Beard: "Shelters, Shacks, and Shanties" and "Forest Handybook". Reprints of these books are still available to buy today.

Boys Life also encouraged troops to construct cabins by offering incentives in the pages of the magazine, and wrote feature articles extolling the successes of troops who completed a cabin project.

²⁸ Scout - the Boy Scout Handbook A Guide to Adventure, A Guide for Life, (Boy Scouts of America, Irving Texas, 2011), pages 2-28, 51, 61, 444,445

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Having your troop and community featured in the Boy Scout magazine surely was a point of pride that only added to the excitement of cabin building. From the March 1914 issue of *Boys Life*:

Has Your Troop a Scout Cabin? Many scout troops have built them in the woods near town. They use them as a hike headquarters, and sometimes "camp" there. We're going to publish pictures of a lot of these cabins soon. Send in yours, and tell how you built it. If we can use it, we'll pay you 25 cents. If you will send us the names and addresses of all the boys in your troop we will send each of them a copy of the magazine containing the pictures."

Boys Life proceeded to feature Boy Scout cabins from all across the country: Maryland, California, Texas, Florida, West Virginia, and in many other states. It is likely that Boy Scout cabins may be found in just about every state from coast to coast, as they are found in Wisconsin.

History of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin

In January of 1934, the Tomah Lions Club reported to the community that they were undertaking the project of raising money to build a Boy Scout Cabin. The City of Tomah stipulated that they would donate the southeast corner of Buckley Park for the building site and appointed the Park Board to oversee the cabin and the property. The newspaper applauded the decision to build a Boy Scout cabin; "Nothing could be finer that the provision of a cabin for these boys who are being taught the value of being good citizens and it is certain Tomah's people and organizations will make the project a great big success in every way." Everyone in the community was encouraged to donate to the project.²⁹

The Tomah Journal newspaper continuously promoted the endeavor each week in their newspaper. "The Boy Scout movement embodies all the teaching and training which go to make better citizens." The Wisconsin Power & Light Company donated the use of its display window where a giant thermometer was placed. On the thermometer was indicated the name of each donor and the amount that was given. Anything over \$1 was all that was needed to be recorded on the thermometer. "Tomah's generosity will climb upward until it blows the top off the thermometer." Dr. Harry Vander Kamp acted as treasurer of the fund drive and was in charge of recording each contribution. Anyone wishing to make a cabin donation could take their donation to any of the local banks or the Monitor-Herald newspaper office. By February, \$123 had been contributed to the project by the Tomah

²⁹ The Tomah Journal, "Scout's Cabin will be Built", January 11, 1934

 $^{^{30}}$ $\it The\ Tomah\ Journal,\ "Ask\ Fund\ for\ Scout's\ Cabin",\ January\ 18,\ 1934$

³¹ The Tomah Journal, "Much Interest in Scout Move", January 25, 1934

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community. A list of individuals giving from \$1 to \$21 was published in the newspaper. The Lions Club continued fervently to solicit donations.³²

Arthur C. Boehmer M.D., a former Tomah resident who now lived in Lodi, CA, sent a letter to the Lions Club along with a \$5 donation. In the accompanying letter Dr. Boehmer said, "There is no better investment than investing in the future of our American boys, especially in these trying times of unrest and in the face of so much un-American propaganda."³³

The paper stated that logs for the cabin were being cut, but by May it became apparent additional monies would have to be raised. Due to the ongoing Great Depression, the price of building materials was escalating.³⁴ Work began on the cabin during the week of May 24, 1934. The trenches were dug for the concrete footings. Fred Leonard came to Tomah from Milwaukee and donated his time to supervise the cabin construction. Several additional residents donated their time to assist in building the cabin and an additional crew was provided by the Park Board. The community planned an entertaining benefit in order to raise the rest of the funds needed to complete the scout cabin project.³⁵

In July of 1934, the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin was given a boost when local unemployed Monroe County workers were given funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and began working on the scout cabin.³⁶ FERA had allocated \$250,000 to the Wisconsin Emergency Relief Administration (WERA) for improvement projects throughout the county. The park at Perch Lake had WERA workers grading new campsites, completing tennis courts, laying water pipes to the clubhouse, and building small sheds. The baseball diamond was repaired and bleachers were erected. The Sparta Court House square was seeded and \$2,739 was spent to resurface several streets in Sparta³⁷

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) was the new name given to the Emergency Relief Administration (ERA), which was created by President Herbert Hoover in 1932. As part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, this agency was allotted a fund of \$500 million dollars to alleviate unemployment by creating new unskilled jobs at the local and state government levels. FERA had three major objectives; 1.) Provide adequate relief measures, 2.) Provide work for employable people on the relief rolls and 3.) Assure diversification of relief programs. The states were required to provide

³² The Tomah Journal, "Scouts Building Fund Hits \$123", February 8, 1934

³³ The Tomah Journal, "Scouts Cabin Fund Growing", February 22, 1934

³⁴ The Tomah Journal, "Contributions to Scouts Cabin Fund are Urged", May 17, 1934

³⁵ The Tomah Journal, "Cabin for Boy Scouts Started", May 24, 1934

³⁶ The Tomah Journal", "Work on Boy Scout Cabin Project is Given a New Start", July 15, 1934

³⁷ The Tomah Journal, "List Numerous WERA Projects", August 30, 1934

³⁸ Federal Emergency Relief Act, www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1598.html, page 1

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estimates on the amount of relief needed to alleviate suffering and to administer supervision of the funds that were provided.³⁹

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin neared completion in August of 1934. Only the fireplace needed to be completed. The grounds were graded and a layer of top soil was added before crews planted grass seed. 40 Mason Charles Campbell Sr. donated his time to build the fieldstone fireplace and chimney in October of 1934. 41

On Monday June 3rd 1935 the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin held its grand opening. The community of Tomah participated in festivities which were held at the cabin from 2:30 in the afternoon to 9:30 at night. Exhibits which had been created by the Boys Scouts were on display in the interior of the cabin which had been extensively decorated. Special music was played and the mothers of the scouts hosted an ice cream social. The newspaper reported that this was one of the finest buildings in the Gateway Area Council and a great deal of gratitude was given to the Tomah Lions Club.⁴²

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin has remained in continuous use over the last eighty-two years. It is part of the Gateway Council, which is headquartered in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Conclusion: Criterion A - History

How enduring was the scouting experience? Did it really persist within the scout for a lifetime? A 2005 study of former Boy Scouts was compiled by the polling organization Harris Interactive. What they discovered was that 83 percent of men who were scouts felt that the values that they learned during their scouting years continued to be important to them throughout their lives. Former Boy Scouts that were interviewed for this National Register project and who had not been a scout for thirty to fifty years could not wait to share their scouting experiences.

One sixty-eight year old former Boy Scout, who grew up in Berryland, a low-income housing project in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, spoke to the significance of his years as a Boy Scout. He reminisced that scouting gave him an opportunity to experience things that his family would either never do or never could afford to do. Through his enrollment in the Boy Scouts he was able to go camping, learn how to paddle a canoe, learn how to swim, fish, cook and administer first aid. During the duration of his

³⁹ Essay: The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, University of Washington, content.lib.washington.edu/feraweb/essay.html

⁴⁰ The Tomah Journal, "Scout Cabin is Near Complete", August 30, 1934

⁴¹ The Tomah Journal, "Fireplace at Boy Scout Cabin Built During Past Week", October 18, 1934

⁴² The Tomah Journal, "Grand Opening at Boy Scout Cabin Monday, May, 20, 1935

⁴³ Benefits, Boy Scouts of America, www.scouting.org/parent/benefits.aspx

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scouting years he earned twenty merit badges, something he still treasurers today and something that he has kept safely packed away for all these years.

The 1927 Revised Handbook for Boys, Boy Scouts of America offers the description of "What is a Boy Scout?" First and foremost he is a boy who BELONGS. He is comfortable both in the forest and in the city. He does not lose his way, he can start a fire on the wettest day, he never flinches in the face of danger, he is both kind to man and beast and he is a patriot who is always ready to serve his country. Above all the Boy Scout is of strong body and mind. Instilling these concepts into the young men of Tomah certainly was the hope of the Tomah Lions Club when they approached the community for their support in building a meeting place designated just for local scouting.

The Tomah Boy Scout Scoutmasters, guided by the *Boy Scouts of America Official Handbook for Boys*, taught self-reliance and character building within the environment of this cabin. Here positive and constructive activities were held. Here the young men of Tomah were taught that *Being Prepared* and being self-reliant would get them through life. "A Scout must prepare himself for anything – "to rescue a companion, to ford a stream, to gather firewood, to help strangers, to distinguish right from wrong, to serve his fellowmen, his country and his God."

The attractiveness of the Boy Scouts was that all of this character building was done with fun. This was not school; this was the outdoors, camping, using a knife, lighting matches, tracking animals, and much more. The Tomah Boy Scouts had the opportunity to learn a broad spectrum of outdoor skills from how to start a fire, how to build a shelter, how to fish, how to canoe, and how to navigate using the stars at night. Social skills were attained while earning merit badges, sharing meals, and through the camaraderie of singing around the campfire.

Community leaders believed it was essential for a young man to participate in scouting so that he would choose the path of productive citizenship and not the path of a juvenile delinquent. Parent's enrolled their sons in scouting with the hope that the program would instill lasting character. Many communities felt obligated or almost duty-bound to provide the means for a Boy Scout meeting place. The building of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin was a true community effort. Residents donated money and materials and the City of Tomah provided the park-like setting. A large thermometer in a storefront window tracked the fundraising progress. Many of the fathers along with their sons worked together to build this cabin. Numerous former Tomah Boy Scouts went on to fill diverse social roles in their community as business leaders, teachers, tradesmen, parents, and public servants.

⁴⁴ What is a Boy Scout, Revised Handbook for Boys, First Edition, Boy Scouts of America, http://www.inquiry.net/deals/what is scout.htm page 3

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Additional significance is achieved as the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin was built with assistance from the FERA (Federal Emergency Relief Administration). As part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, Monroe County received \$250,000, in the summer of 1934, to help alleviate the county's unemployment. As work on the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin waned, the newspaper reported that the "Boy Scout cabin project was given a new and gratifying start this week, with FERA workers furnishing the labor." FERA's main goal was to alleviate household unemployment by finding meaningful jobs within the workers own community. When that project was finished, the worker could look upon it with pride during the tough times of the Great Depression.

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin continues to contribute to the social welfare of the young men of the Tomah area. It continues to fulfill its original mission by offering educational and recreational opportunity. The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin experience became the catalyst for a lifetime of making friends and creating fond memories. The Boy Scouts of America formulated the perfect combination of value based educational activities combined with fun!

Summary

The Tomah Boy Scout Cabin is eligible under Criterion A for Social History as an excellent example of a small Boy Scout cabin, associated with the history of the larger Boy Scout movement, and particularly reflecting the trend of scouting troops constructing small cabins for club use. The long standing tradition of local scouting troops constructing Boy Scout cabins contributes to our understanding of the impact that the Boy Scouts organization had in the history of social, member organizations for children. The Tomah cabin is still in use by the Boy Scouts demonstrating the longevity and success of the Boy Scout movement.

Acknowledgments

The project of reviewing this property was funded with the assistance of the Fuldner Heritage Fund whose goal is to target small Wisconsin towns and rural areas that do not have access to CLG grant funding.

 $^{^{45}}$ The Tomah Journal, "Work on Boy Scout Cabin Project is Given a New Start, July 5, 1934

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lot 1 Block 1 of Winter Subdivision

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries enclose all the land that has historically been associated with the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin. The boundary only the cabin and not any surrounding ancillary land.

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Section **photos** Page 1

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

State:

Name of Photographer:

Date of Photograph:

Location of Original Digital Files:

Number of Photographs

Photo 1

North-facing main façade

Camera facing south

Photo 2

East-facing façade

Camera facing west

Photo 3

West-facing façade with chimney

Camera facing east

Photo 4

Saddle Notch corner

Camera facing northwest

Photo 5

Interior

Camera facing northeast

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin

Tomah

Wisconsin

Patricia Lacey

December 2015

Wisconsin Historical Society

5

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Section **figures** Page 1

Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin

Figure 1: Floor plan

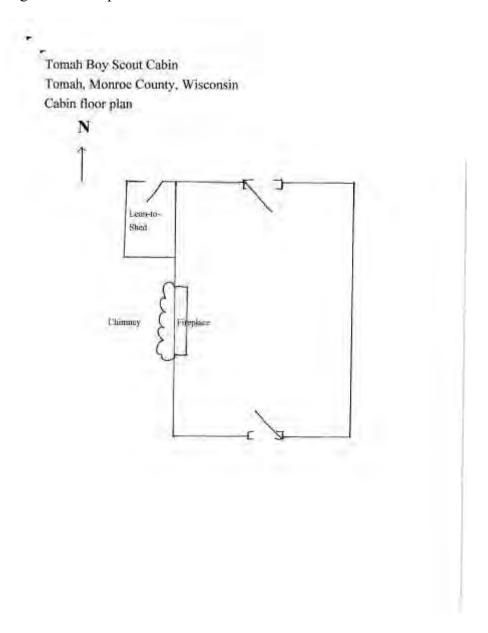


Figure 2: Wisconsin Boy Scout Councils

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Tomah Boy Scout Cabin Tomah, Monroe County, Wisconsin













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nominat	ion			
Property Name:	Tomah E	Boy Scout Cabin			
Multiple Name:					
State & County:	WISCON	NSIN, Monroe			
Date Rece 10/12/20		Date of Pending List: 11/14/2017	Date of 16th Day: 11/29/2017	Date of 45th Day: 11/27/2017	Date of Weekly List: 11/30/2017
Reference number:	SG1000	001856			
Nominator:	State				
Reason For Review	:				
X Accept		_ Return R	eject 11/2	27/2017 Date	
Abstract/Summary Comments:		edural requirements hav nination form is technica			
Recommendation/ Criteria					
Reviewer Edson	Beall		Discipline	Historian	
Telephone			Date		
DOCUMENTATION	: see	attached comments : No	see attached S	LR : No	

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the

National Park Service.



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

February 2nd, 2017

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board c/o Ms. Peggy Veregin Wisconsin Historical Society 816 State St. Madison, WI 53706



Dear Ms. Veregin and members of the Historic Preservation Review Board,

As elected officials who represent Monroe County, we are cognizant of the importance of preserving elements of the region's past even as we look toward the future. For that reason, we are writing to support the nomination of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places.

The Boy Scouts of America were founded in 1910 to instill in young men the principles of courage, self-sufficiency, and patriotism by exposing them to lessons in outdoor skills and survival. As part of their training, many Boy Scout troops undertook the project of building a log cabin, and worked with their communities to attain the resources to do so.

Construction of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin began in 1934. The City of Tomah donated land in the corner of Buckley Park, the Tomah Lions Club and several local businesses provided money and manpower to aid in construction, and unemployed Monroe County workers were given jobs to work on the cabin through funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), a New Deal era agency that was the predecessor to the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Today, over 80 years after its construction, scouts continue to utilize the cabin. The cabin is a testament to the strength of the Tomah community and to the longevity of the Boy Scouts. It deserves to be listed in the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Patrick Testin State Senator 24th Senate District Nancy VanderMeer State Representative 70th Assembly District



RECEIVED 2280

TO: Keeper OCT 1 2 2017 National Register of Historic Places NAT REGISTER OF HIS TORIC PLACES FROM: Peggy Veregin National Register Coordinator SUBJECT: National Register Nomination The following materials are submitted on this Eleventh day of October 2017, for the nomination of the Tomah Boy Scout Cabin to the National Register of Historic Places: Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form CD with NRHP Nomination form PDF Multiple Property Nomination form 5 Photograph(s) CD with image files 1 1 Map(s) Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s) 2 Piece(s) of correspondence Other: COMMENTS: Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67 The enclosed owner objection(s) do or do not constitute a majority of property owners Other: