

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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

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

For HCRS use only

received APR 22 1983

date entered

## 1. Name

historic E. H. Hobe House/Solheim

and/or common N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 5590 West Bald Eagle Boulevard N/A not for publication

city, town White Bear Lake N/A vicinity of congressional district 4th

state Minnesota code 22 county Ramsey code 123

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name Dr. John W. Cretzmeyer Jr. and Barbara J. Jacobson

street & number 5590 West Bald Eagle Blvd.

city, town White Bear Lake N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 55110

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ramsey County Courthouse

street & number 15 West Kellogg Blvd.

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota 55102

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 12/80 - 11/82  federal  state  county  local

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

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota 55102

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date     N/A    

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The E. H. Hobe House or "Solheim" was built in 1897 on a several hundred acre estate on the western shores of Bald Eagle Lake in northern Ramsey County. A guest house, carriage house, and 2½ story barn also once stood on the property. The 2½ story wood frame house sits on a limestone foundation. It has a Mansard and gambrel roof and its asymmetrical and complex design is characteristic of the eclectic nature of some Victorian residential architecture. The main facade of the house overlooks the lake to the east and was once accessible by a road which ran along the lake shore. This facade is three bays wide and is dominated by a rectangular 3½ story corner tower with a slightly bellcast hipped roof from which four gabled dormers faced with bracketed pediments project. Rising from the roof of the tower is a flag pole. At the base of this tower is a small open entrance porch with a pedimented gabled roof supported by two Doric columns. This porch represents the remnants of a much larger porch which once spanned the main facade and wrapped around the southeast corner of the house, and which was constructed ca. 1905 and probably replaced the house's original 1897 entrance porch. Opposite the large square tower at the northeast corner of the main facade is a smaller 2 story rectangular tower-like mass with steeply pitched hipped roof which rises from the southeast corner of the house. The south facade of the house features a one story, round conservatory and a wide 2½ story polygonal tower with small rounded arched dormers projecting from its polygonal cap. A two story gambrel roofed wing, possibly an addition, dominates the western facade of the house. Attached to this wing is a hipped roof open porch supported by Doric columns dating circa 1905. The interesting massing of the design is made even more complex by several gabled dormers and wall dormers projecting from the roofline.

The interior of the house is basically intact and contains eighteen rooms with onyx, marble and granite fireplaces, brass light fixtures, stained and leaded glass windows, and terrazzo floors. The interior woodwork was crafted in Norway, numbered, and shipped in pieces to Bald Eagle Lake to be installed in the house.

The E. H. Hobe House is largely intact and in good condition. Alterations to the original design include the addition of the east and west porches around 1905, the possible addition of the west gambrel roofed wing, installation of some new windows, and the residing of some dormers with cedar shingles. Today the house stands alone on the remaining 2.4 acres of the wooded Solheim estate and is surrounded by much smaller lake cottages and year-round homes most of which were built after World War I.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1897 **Architect** C.F. Struck

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The E. H. Hobe House or "Solheim" (Sunshine House) designed in 1897 by architect C. F. Struck, is historically and architecturally significant as the home of Engelbrecht H. Hobe, a Norwegian immigrant who served in the Norwegian Consulate for forty-nine years and was one of Minnesota's most prominent Norwegian-Americans, as the house in which Hobe entertained a number of Norwegian delegations visiting the Twin Cities, and as by far the largest and most intact Victorian mansion still standing on Bald Eagle Lake in northern Ramsey County.

Of the vast numbers of European immigrants who came to Minnesota in the nineteenth century, the Norwegians were among the earliest to arrive, beginning around 1825. They soon became the third largest ethnic group in the state, ranking in number behind Germans and Swedes. In 1870 the then-united Kingdom of Sweden and Norway established a consulate in St. Paul to help oversee its commercial interests in this country. Norwegian born Hagbarth Sahlgaard was appointed Consul. By 1910, over 26% of the total number of Norwegians in America lived in Minnesota, according to the United State Census.\* In that year there were more Norwegians in Minnesota than in any other two states combined.

One Norwegian immigrant to Minnesota, Engelbrecht Hagbart Hobe, was born in Sondeled near Risor, Norway, in 1860 and came to St. Paul in 1883. Hobe first worked for the Norwegian newspaper Nordvesten (published in St. Paul from 1881-1907) and later, with Swedish-Norwegian Consul Hagbarth Sahlgaard, established the E. H. Hobe Lumber Company at 315 Jackson Street in St. Paul which obtained lumber from Sahlgaard's mill in Knoxmills, Wisconsin. Hobe and Sahlgaard also operated a real estate and steamship ticket business. When the Norwegian American steamship line was established, Hobe served as its first general agent in America, a position from which he retired in 1925.

In 1891 Hobe was appointed Swedish-Norwegian Vice-Consul. When his business partner Sahlgaard died in 1892, Hobe succeeded him as Consul and was charged with the responsibility of transacting commercial negotiations between Norwegian and American businesses, serving as a representative of the Kingdom of Sweden and Norway, and dealing with citizenship matters. Five years later, in 1897, Hobe built a mansion which he named "Solheim" on a several hundred acre estate on the western shores of Bald Eagle Lake, approximately ten miles northeast of St. Paul.

Hobe's role as a Scandanavian diplomat and prominent member of the Norwegian community continued well into the twentieth century. In 1905, when Norway and Sweden became two separate nations, Hobe became a Consul of Norway with jurisdiction over Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. In 1909 Swedish King Gustav V presented Hobe with a Swedish medal of Honor for his diplomatic work. In 1915 Hobe founded the Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce, one of several Norwegian American organizations he helped to establish in the Twin Cities.

\*Carlton C. Qualey and Jon A. Gjerde, "The Norwegians", in June D. Holmquist, ed., They Chose Minnesota. A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), p. 220.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Christianson, Theodore. Minnesota, A History of the State and its People. 4 vols. Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1935.  
Hansen, Carl G. O. My Minneapolis. Minneapolis: Privately published, 1956.  
See Continuation Sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.4 acres

Quadrangle name White Bear Lake West, Minn.

Quadrangle scale 7.5

### UMT References

A 

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

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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E 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

On platted lands, north 135 feet of south 795 feet of part easterly of Boulevard of government lot 7, in Section 3, Township 30, Range 22.

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

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

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Greg Carstens, student intern/Susan Granger, survey staff member

organization Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County

date 6/18/82

street & number 75 W. 5th Street telephone (612) 292-0090/222-0701

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55102

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4/7/83

For HCERS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date

5/19/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

E.H. Hobe House/Solheim, White Bear Lake, Ramsey County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8, 9 PAGE 1

8. continued:

Hobe and his family lived at Solheim until 1917 when they moved to 565 Dayton Avenue in St. Paul. The Hobes then maintained Solheim as a summer home. In June of 1939 when Norwegian Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Martha and their entourage came to the Twin Cities for a four day visit, Hobe supervised all arrangements and entertained the royal couple at Solheim. During the visit, Prince Olav honored Hobe by making him a Commander with Star of the Royal Order of St. Olaf.

Hobe died one year later, in 1940, and was survived by his wife and daughter Ragnhild, who was the wife of accomplished St. Paul architect James S. Brodie. After Hobe's death, his heirs formed the Solheim Corporation to oversee his vast estate. Over the next several years the corporation sold some of Solheim's lake-shore property and donated a parcel of land to Ramsey County for use as a nature preserve. In 1957, Solheim was sold by Hobe's descendants and has been owned by several parties since.

9. continued:

- The Engelbrecht H. Hobe Papers. Minnesota Historical Society.
- "Hobe, Norse Consul, Dies Unaware of Nazi Invasion." Minneapolis Star-Journal, April 19, 1940.
- Holmquist, June D., ed. They Chose Minnesota. A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981.
- Penning, Greg and Gail (former owners of "Solheim"), letter to Patricia Murphy, May 19, 1981.
- Woolworth, Nancy L. The White Bear Lake Story. White Bear Lake: White Bear Lake Chamber of Commerce, 1968.