

1826

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

SEP 29 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bridge No. L6007 other names/site number Stewart Creek Stone-Arch Bridge

2. Location

street & number Skyline Parkway over Stewart Creek city, town Duluth state Minnesota code MN county St. Louis code 137 zip code 55810

not for publication N/A vicinity N/A

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal, building(s), district, site, structure, object, and counts for contributing and noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: Minnesota Masonry-Arch Highway Bridges, 1870-1945 Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal Date 9/22/89 State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:) Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the National Register

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 11/6/89

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Transportation, road-related (vehicular)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Transportation, road-related (vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Stone-arch bridge

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls

roof

other Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Description: Bridge No. L6007

Surrounded by municipal, wooded, park land in the southwestern part of the City of Duluth, the structure is an unaltered, single-span, stone-arch highway bridge that carries an unpaved section of Skyline Parkway over Stewart Creek.

Bridge No. L6007 is built of dark-green locally quarried gabbro -- an abundant, commonly used building material in the Duluth area. Springing about 7 feet above grade from rubble abutments, the single elliptical arch leaps a deep ravine, rising about 10 feet over a span of 30 feet. The voussoirs are well-blocked and very uniform. The rubble spandrel walls are roughly coursed with massive, crudely shaped blocks, extending backwards in a continuous line to form retaining walls for the approaches. Lined with gabbro boulders roughly worked into pinnacles, the approaches lead up to railings topped with double, sawtooth rows of gabbro that define the span of the arch. The bridge's overall width is about 29 feet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Period of Significance

C. 1925

Significant Dates

C. 1925

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Significance: Bridge L6007

Bridge No. L6007 embodies engineering significance in the context of Minnesota masonry-arch highway bridges constructed during the period 1870 to 1945. Built for the Duluth park system about 1925, the structure has the most picturesque setting and design of any stone-arch highway bridge in the state.

As indicated in the contextual statement, Bridge No. L6007 belongs to the category of stone-arch park bridges -- a type that is designed as much for ornamental effect as for load-bearing capability (see Table 3). The bridge's construction history is unknown. Neither the Duluth Park Department nor the Duluth City Engineer's Office has been able to locate pertinent records on the structure.¹ It is known, however, that the bridge was designed as part of a scenic boulevard, now known as Skyline Parkway, which runs for almost 30 miles along the crest of a high ridge overlooking the City of Duluth and Lake Superior.

In 1921, the City of Duluth began purchasing land to extend the parkway from "its present West Duluth terminus around the brow of Bardon's Peak . . . to the Shore Line Park Road [so that] ultimately this road will connect with Fond du Lac and Jay Cooke State Park."² The proposed extension included Stewart Creek, located between West Duluth and Bardon's Peak.³ Although it is unknown precisely when or where road construction began, the Duluth Herald of October 21, 1924 announced that the Stewart Creek segment would "be ready for use next year."⁴ Apparently, the stone-arch bridge was part of the original boulevard construction. On May 19, 1926, the Herald reported that a gift of park land in the Stewart Creek Valley was adjacent to "the stone bridge."⁵ In view of these considerations, it seems reasonable to assign a construction date of "c. 1925" to the structure.

Conveying a mood rather than a style, the bridge is perhaps best described as "Picturesque" -- a term that was classically defined in the mid-nineteenth century by the influential American landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing: "The Picturesque is seen in ideas of beauty manifested with something of rudeness, violence, or difficulty. The effect of the whole is spirited and pleasing, but parts are not balanced, proportions are not perfect, and details are rude. We feel at the first glance at a picturesque object, the idea of power exerted, rather than the idea of beauty which it involves."⁶

In the best Picturesque tradition, the traveler abruptly comes upon the stone-arch bridge in the bend of a secluded twisting road, where it rears its massive, craggy, dark masonry over a wild and wooded ravine. Instead of the gentle curves of a segmental or semicircular arch, the bridge incorporates an elliptical arch on high abutments, which accelerates the vertical thrust of the opening to create the impression of towering space. The romantic qualities of the design are further enhanced by the pinnacle-like boulders lining the approaches and the spikey saw-tooth

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

railings surmounting the arch like a ragged crown. It is to be regretted that the structure's architect or engineer has not been identified, for the Stewart Creek Bridge is the most inspired stone-arch design in the state.

Notes

1. Jeffrey A. Hess, Interview with Jim McCord, Director, Duluth Park Department, June 8, 1988; Hess, Interview with Tim Beber, Engineer, Duluth City Engineer's Office, May 25, 1988. A diligent search of was also conducted in the local history files of the Duluth Public Library, but to no avail; Hess, Interview with Kristine Aho, Librarian Duluth Public Library, June 10, 1988. Although the bridge was included in a city-wide historical and architectural survey conducted by the St. Louis County Historical Society, neither the field inventory form or final report discuss its history; see Inventory Form for Site No. SL-DUL-C-4, Duluth Historic Resources Study, unpublished, July 7, 1983, St. Louis County Historical Society; Lawrence J. Sommer, Duluth Historic Resources Survey Final Report (St. Louis County Historical Society, 1984), p. 127.
2. Duluth Herald, May 16, 1921; the article is transcribed in "Newspaper Record of the Physical Growth of Duluth, Minnesota, 1888 to 1928," unpublished report prepared by City Planning Department with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration, 1939, p. 307, Minnesota Historical Society.
3. "Map Showing Duluth's Highland Boulevard," in "In the Wake of the Voyageur," n. pub., n.d., n.d. The copy of the pamphlet is the Minnesota Historical Society Reference Library is stamped "August 31, 1923," which is presumably the accessioning date. On the map, the route between West Duluth and Jay Cooke State Park identified by dotted lines, suggesting that it had not been constructed at the time of publication.
4. See transcription, "Newspaper Record," p. 311.
5. See transcription, "Newspaper Record," p. 317.
6. A. J. Downing, The Architecture of Country Houses (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969, reprint of original edition by D. Appleton and Company, 1850), pp. 28-29.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	5	5	5	9	0	2	0	5	1	7	2	3	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is defined by a rectangle measuring 37 feet north-south and 33 feet east-west, whose vertices coincide with the outside corners of the bridge's wing walls.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Based on field measurements, as well as measurments provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the boundaries enclose the bridge's superstructure and substructure, including wing walls.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey A. Hess, Historical Consultant
organization N/A date August 1988
street & number 305 Grain Exchange Building telephone 612-338-1987
city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota zip code 55415

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography: Bridge No. L6007

Downing, A. J. The Architecture of Country Houses. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969, reprint of original edition by D. Appleton and Company, 1850.

Duluth Herald, May 16, 1921; October 21, 1924; May 19, 1926.

Hess, Jeffrey A. Interview with Jim McCord, Director, Duluth Park Department, June 8, 1988.

_____. Interview with Tim Beber, Engineer, Duluth City Engineer's Office, May 25, 1988.

_____. Interview with Kristine Aho, Librarian Duluth Public Library, June 10, 1988.

"In the Wake of the Voyageur," n. pub., n.d. Minnesota Historical Society.

Inventory Form for Site No. SL-DUL-C-4, Duluth Historic Resources Survey. Unpublished, July 7, 1983. St. Louis County Historical Society.

"Newspaper Record of the Physical Growth of Duluth, Minnesota, 1888 to 1928."
Unpublished report prepared by Duluth City Planning Department with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration, 1939. Minnesota Historical Society.

Sommer, Lawrence, J. Duluth Historic Resources Survey Final Report. St. Louis County Historical Society, 1984.