



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

March 21, 2011

Notice to file:

This property has been automatically entered in the National Register of Historic Places. This is due to the fact that the publication of our Federal Register Notice: "National Register of Historic Places: Pending Nominations and Other Actions" was delayed beyond our control to the point where the mandated 15 day public comment period ended after our required 45 day time frame to act on the nomination. If the 45th day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the property will be automatically listed the next business day. The nomination is technically adequate and meets the National Register criteria for evaluation, and thus, automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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National Register of Historic Places
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Web: www.nps.gov/history/nr

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**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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mayer, George P., Boathouse

other names/site number

2. Location

Street & number	7708 Braeger Road	N/A	Not for publication
City or town	Town of Three Lakes	N/A	Vicinity
State Wisconsin	Code WI	County Oneida	Code 085
			Zip code 54562

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

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 official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Mayer, George P., Boathouse

Oneida County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

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.☐ removed from the National

Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Ethan H. Beall

3-21-11

for

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**
(check as many boxes as
as apply)**Category of Property**
(Check only one box)**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

X private	X building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
public-local	district	1	0 buildings
public-State	structure		sites
public-Federal	site		structures
	object		objects
		1	0 total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources**is previously listed in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation CONCRETE and WOOD
walls WEATHERBOARD
roof ASPHALT
other N/A**Narrative Description**

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Description

The George P. Mayer Boathouse is located on the west shore of Planting Ground Lake on the Three Lakes chain of lakes in Oneida County.¹ The c.1920, two-story, two-slip wet boathouse is located on the property at 7708 Braeger Road, which includes a main house, guest cottage, and garage. The Mayer Boathouse is the only resource of the property being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Other buildings on the property have diminished integrity due to alterations.

The Mayer Boathouse has a simple square footprint and faces southeast towards Planting Ground Lake. It is approximately 24 feet wide and 32 feet long. The boathouse retains its original drop-lap siding with corner boards. The pyramidal hip roof is covered with asphalt shingles and features overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends and a center interior brick chimney. Groupings of double-hung, three-over-one, multi-pane windows are found on the second level, while single, three-over-one windows are found on the main level. The hip roof, groupings of windows on the second story, and drop-lap siding emphasize the horizontal lines of this Craftsman-style boathouse.

A modest slope exists between the main house and the shore of the lake. A stone pathway leads from the main house down the bank to an elevated wood plank walkway that provides access to the second-level entrance of the boathouse. A balcony with a balustrade featuring three rows of rectangular cut-outs extends around the entire second story.² The elevated walkway adjoins a staircase that leads down to the dock on the rear (northwest) elevation of the boathouse. The vertical post railing on the elevated walkway was installed after 1993, replacing a cross buck pattern railing.³ A permanent wood plank dock wraps around the southwest, rear (northwest), and northeast sides of the boathouse. A seasonal dock, installed in the summer, extends southwest from the permanent dock of the boathouse to accommodate two exterior boat slips.

The boathouse is supported by a foundation of concrete and wood pilings. The solid concrete foundation along the shoreline includes suspended concrete beams that extend from the shore foundation to three concrete pillars at the front of the building. Wood pilings have been added for additional foundation support.

The front (southeast) facade features two overhead wood retractable doors that enclose the boat slips. Facing the boathouse from the water, the door on the right (easternmost) is larger than the adjacent

¹ The historic name is attributed to the individual who is believed to be property owner that erected the boathouse (see property owner history in Section 8).

² This balustrade design is believed to be original. No other boathouses on Planting Ground Lake appeared to have a balcony or similar balustrade.

³ It is unknown if the cross buck pattern railing was original to the boathouse.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

door. Two replacement plate windows with external three-over-one screen windows flank a wood door on the second level of the façade that allows access to the balcony.

On its first level, the southwest elevation features three, three-over-one double-hung windows. Two bands of windows, comprised of three, three-over-one double-hung windows are located at the upper level of the elevation beneath the eaves. The rear (northwest) elevation features a central five-panel wood door on the lower level to allow access from the dock. On the upper level, a central wood door is flanked by pairs of three-over-one double-hung windows. Like the southwest elevation, the northeast elevation features three, three-over-one double-hung windows on the first level. The second level displays two bands of windows, comprised of three, three-over-one double-hung windows beneath the eaves.

Interior

The first-floor interior can be accessed by a door on the rear (northwest) elevation or by boat from the front (southeast) elevation. The first level interior of the boathouse is functional and simple in design with two boat slips. A wood dock extends around and between the interior boat slips. Two storage rooms are located at the rear of the first-level, in the north and west corners of the boathouse. Unfinished wood rafters are exposed by the open ceiling. A motorized winch is located on the larger of the two boat slips, while the smaller slip does not have a winch to elevate boats out of the water.

An internal staircase connects the first level to the second story, which is divided into three rooms and a half bathroom. The internal staircase features a balustrade with a horizontal pattern. The three rooms include a 23.3-foot by 11.5-foot front recreational room facing the water with a wood floor, a 19.2-foot by 13.5-foot room in the north corner of the second level with a linoleum floor, and a 13-foot by 9.3-foot bedroom in the west corner with carpeting. The interior walls and ceiling are constructed of stained plywood with molding covering the vertical and horizontal seams of the plywood. Although the brick chimney remains, the original potbelly stove has been removed. The interior finishes and plan of the second floor (including the installation of a half bathroom) probably date to remodeling and the addition of electricity and plumbing that took place on the property in 1927.

Alterations and condition

The Mayer Boathouse remains in excellent condition. The building has been well maintained and general maintenance and repairs have been completed in a manner sensitive to the historic character of the building. The replacement windows on the front (southeast) façade retain the building's original fenestration pattern and the three-over-one wood screens allow this façade to retain its original appearance from the exterior. The structure of the boathouse has not been altered, and overall, the Mayer Boathouse retains good integrity and continues to reflect its original use and construction.

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Name of Property

Oneida County
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ 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 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c.1920 - 1927

Significant Dates

c.1920; 1927

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Name of Property

Oneida County
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 331894 5077481
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

☐ See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title	Christina Slattery and Christine Long	Date	December 2009
Organization	Mead & Hunt, Inc.	Telephone	608-273-6380
Street & number	6501 Watts Road	Zip code	53719
City or town	Madison	State	WI

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Name of Property

Oneida County
County and State

Wisconsin

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

Organization

Street & number

City or town

Date

Telephone

Zip code

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 Reduction Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Section 8 Page 1

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance

The George P. Mayer Boathouse is eligible for the National Register at the local level under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a representative example of an early twentieth-century wet boathouse designed in the Craftsman style in the Three Lakes Region and Northern Wisconsin. With its original location, design, picturesque setting, original materials, and skillful workmanship, the Mayer Boathouse retains a high degree of historic integrity and is a good example of twentieth-century boathouse design. The Mayer Boathouse is distinctive when compared to other boathouses in the area, which are typically smaller, one-story vernacular examples, and it compares favorably to other boathouses in Northern Wisconsin listed in the National Register. The period of significance for the Mayer Boathouse is c.1920 - 1927, spanning from the building's construction date to the interior modifications with the installation of a bathroom.

Historic Overview

The Mayer Boathouse is located in Wisconsin's North Woods near the village of Three Lakes in northern Oneida County. It is situated on the banks of Planting Ground Lake, part of a chain of 28 lakes (the largest freshwater inland chain of lakes in the world) connecting to Eagle River in neighboring Vilas County. As early as 1860, a trading post was established on the east side of the future village of Three Lakes and Virgin Lake. The trading post served the travelers on the military road linking Fort Dearborn (Chicago), Fort Howard (Green Bay), and Fort Wilkins (Copper Harbor, Michigan), and saw an increase in traffic during the Civil War.⁴

The railroad and logging industry brought increased settlement to Three Lakes and Oneida County. The Chicago and North Western Railroad, seeing the potential for the land, came through the area in 1882. The railroad platted the Village of Three Lakes in 1884. With railroad accessibility, a greater number of logging camps were established in the area. The large market for pinewood brought the Thunder Lake Lumber Company to Three Lakes to begin logging, and the community of Three Lakes grew. By 1886, seven firms were logging east of the Village of Three Lakes. Logs were cut and floated down the Pine and Wolf rivers to sawmills in eastern Wisconsin. Two stores, two saloons, and nine homes existed in Three Lakes by 1890.⁵

⁴ Three Lakes Historical Society, *The Pine, the Plow, and the Pioneer*, Vol. 1, *A History of Three Lakes and Clearwater Lake, Wisconsin, 1881 to 1984* (Three Lakes, Wisc.: Three Lakes Historical Society, 1984), 1-3.

⁵ Three Lakes Historical Society, *The Pine, the Plow, and the Pioneer*, Vol. 2, *A History of Three Lakes, Clearwater Lake, Gagen, Hiles and Monico, Wisconsin, 1881-1986* (Three Lakes, Wisc.: Three Lakes Historical Society, 1986), 4; Club History Committee, *History of the Three Lakes Rod and Gun Club* (1967), n.p.

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Section 8 Page 2

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Coinciding with the increase in logging, the area's natural beauty and lakes began attracting visitors to Oneida County and the greater Three Lakes region. The railroad was an important component of the development of the North Woods' tourism industry and passenger trains brought tourists to the northern wilderness paradise. The railroad companies promoted the area to increase their passenger business. Most of the early tourists were part of fishing parties who came from all over the Midwest to fish the area's many lakes. However, entire families also journeyed to the North Woods for entertainment and relaxation, and many would stay for extended periods of time, at early twentieth century resorts. It was not long before these families began purchasing land and establishing their own family lake retreats in the North Woods.

The early nineteenth century brought a transition from a logging industry landscape to a tourist landscape and new methods of transportation to reach the North West. By 1910, the area's supply of lumber had diminished and logging declined as a major industry in the North Woods, and tourism grew to become the area's main industry. Railroads, as the primary means of travel to the North Woods, faced a decline with the growth of improved road networks and the automobile. In 1911 the State Aid Road Law passed, requiring counties to layout a system of proposed highways. Road building began and Three Lakes, located on State Highway 32, was one of the first towns in the state to construct a highway in 1911. Other improved auto transportation routes near Three Lakes included the development of State Highway 51, U.S. Highway (USH) 12, and USH 45. Eventually, passenger trains could no longer compete with the automobile, which became the preferred method of transportation to the North Woods. Whatever the means of transportation for vacationers, however, the popularity and development of the North Woods as a summer home and resort area has continued to be strong from the late nineteenth century to the present day.

People from all over the United States built summer homes and vacationed at resorts in the lake region of the North Woods, including the Three Lakes chain of lakes. The 1924 history of Lincoln, Vilas, and Oneida counties states that the Three Lakes area population of 800 increased to between 6,000 and 10,000 people.⁶ Summer houses and boathouses on the Three Lakes chain were primarily built by people from Chicago and other parts of Illinois, Milwaukee, and St. Louis.⁷ Construction of these lake retreats began by the early twentieth century and has continued through the present.

⁶ *History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties*, 156.

⁷ Three Lakes Historical Society, Vol. 2, 15-16.

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Section 8 Page 3

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

*History of the Property*⁸

The property that contains the Mayer Boathouse has had many owners since its development. The Mayer Boathouse is associated with lot 7 of the Planting Ground Lake Plat of the Town of Three Lakes established in 1927, which was historically part of Government Lots 5, 6, and 7 of Township 39 North, Range 11 East, Section 30. Historic tax rolls, property abstract, and newspaper research was used to compile this property history and to identify the construction date of the boathouse. The development of the property with buildings is known to be as early as 1920; however, the boathouse is not mentioned specifically in records until 1940. Based on the historical evidence, architectural styles, and features of the property, it has been assigned a construction date of c.1920 and is believed to have been constructed during the ownership of the Mayer family, and thus assigning the building its historic name—the George P. Mayer Boathouse.

George P. Mayer of Milwaukee was born in 1860. His father, Frederick Mayer, started his own retail shoe business eight years before he was born, which was incorporated into the F. Mayer Boot & Shoe Company in 1884. George began working for his father's business in 1880, and by 1884 was serving as secretary and treasurer and was president by 1909.⁹

George P. Mayer of Milwaukee became the owner of the property in 1909. No improvements are recorded in the 1910 Oneida County Tax Rolls, but by 1920 the tax rolls indicate that there were improvements (buildings) on Government Lot 6 valuing \$1,980 with the land being valued at \$990. Mayer sold the property to Lakelands, Inc. in 1926, including "personal property contained in buildings."

In August 1927 the plat of Planting Ground Lake totaling 40 lots was approved by the Town of Three Lakes. In this same month, lots 1-12, including buildings, furniture, equipment, boats and motors of lots 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, were sold to William and Ethel Breen of Chicago, Illinois.¹⁰ The *Vilas County News-Review* reported the sale of the former estate of F.W. Mayer as "one of the largest real estate

⁸ This property history was developed from a review of available *Oneida County Tax Rolls* (1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940) in the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives; *Abstract of Title for Lots 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the Plat of Planting Ground Lake (No. 6148)* prepared for Hugo M. Friend by Oneida County Land & Abstract Co., Rhinelander, Wisconsin, December 1957); and newspaper articles.

⁹ Jerome Anthony Watrous, *Memoirs of Milwaukee County: from the earliest historical times down to the present, including a genealogical and biographical record of representative families in Milwaukee* (1909) located on the Milwaukee County Online Genealogy and Family History Library website, <http://www.linkstothepast.com/milwaukee/mkemarMbios.php> (accessed 29 November 2009).

¹⁰ Oneida County Tax Roll from 1930 indicates that William A. Breen owns lots 1-12 with improvements only on lots 10 (\$3,000) and 12 (\$550). Ethel M. Hale paid the taxes on lots 1-11 and R. R. Howard paid the taxes on lot 12.

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Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

transactions reported in this vicinity recently."¹¹ The newspaper incorrectly states that F.W. Mayer, George's father, was the owner of the property.¹² The newspaper described the estate as having 1,200 feet of beautiful frontage with beach and reported that the Breens planned to spend six months of the year at the property and "are improving the property considerably. They are building a new garage and quarters for caretaker and other hired help. Modern plumbing and an electric light plant are also being installed. Already beautiful, the property will now be enhanced by all modern conveniences so that it will be an ideal place to live."¹³ Since no mention was made of construction of a boathouse, it is assumed that the property already contained the boathouse. However, it is assumed that the half bath was added to the second level of the boathouse in 1927 with the installation of plumbing and other improvements that were being made to the property.

The Breens were divorced in 1931 and Ethel Breen continued to own the property under two subsequent name changes to Ethel Hale and then Ethel Bartell. In 1933 Ethel Bartell sold the property to Patrick J. O'Malley of Chicago including all buildings and improvements, furniture and personal property. A 1933 article in the *Vilas County News-Review* noted that O'Malley purchased the winter home of the property and that the summer home of the property was sold to an Indiana resident.¹⁴ The property abstract includes a valuation of the property following Patrick O'Malley's death in 1939 and the boathouse is mentioned for the first time specifically in the abstract in 1940 as part of lots 7,8 and 9 with dwelling, boathouse and garage.

The property was transferred from the O'Malley estate to John W. and Helen Lee Knotts of Crown Point, Indiana with all buildings, furniture and property. In 1945, the Knotts sold the property (lots 6, 7, 8 and 9) to Judge Hugo M. and Sadie Friend of Chicago. Judge Hugo Friend, a graduate of the University of Chicago Law School in 1908, practiced law, served as a judge, and was appointed to the appellate bench of the State Supreme Court in 1930. In 1929, Judge Friend heard the case of the conspiracy charges against members of the Chicago White Sox.¹⁵ The Friends sold the property to Oscar H. and Agnes Braeger of Milwaukee in 1957. Oscar Braeger was co-owner of King-Braeger

¹¹ "Buy Mayer Estate on Planting Ground Lake," *Vilas County News-Review*, 1 September 1927 (Vol. 1, No.10), 1.

¹² The abstract and tax rolls record George P. Mayer and his wife Amalia as the owners.

¹³ "Buy Mayer Estate on Planting Ground Lake," *Vilas County News-Review*, 1 September 1927 (Vol. 1, No.10), 1.

¹⁴ "Buys Hale Property," *Vilas County News-Review*, 2 November 1933 (Vol.7, No.20), 1.

¹⁵ "Judge Hugo Friend Receives Tribute from Chicago Paper," *Vilas County News-Review*, 11 May 1933 (Vol. 6, No.47), 1.

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Mayer, George P., Boathouse
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Chevrolet Co. in Milwaukee. The property was owned by members of the Braeger Family until 2008. The Stoeckel Family of Chicago is the current owner of the property.

*Boathouse design and architecture*¹⁶

Boathouses are a resource uniquely tied to the resorts and summer homes of Oneida and Vilas counties. Most late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century wet boathouses, cottages, and resorts located in northern Wisconsin were not architect-designed. These buildings were often completed by local builders and carpenters and were sometimes based on pattern books and building design guides.

Just as garages were built to house automobiles, boathouses were constructed to protect boats from the elements. The lower level of the boathouse serves as the space to store boats. Boat slips with wood decking around them provide spaces for one to three boats and mechanical or manual hoists used to lift the boats out of the water for storage. In some cases small changing or storage rooms are found on the first level. If a boathouse has a second level, it is often used either as living quarters for overflow of guests or family from the main cabin, or more simply, as open recreational rooms offering a reprieve on rainy days, places to play ping pong, or watch the sunset. The second level interior space may be finished spaces including bathrooms, bedrooms and closets, as is often the case when it is used as living space. In cases where the space has historically been used primarily for recreation, it is typically one large open space that may be finished or more rustic with exposed wall framing and ceiling rafters. In either case, bands of windows are common to provide views of the water.

Boathouse construction was typically initiated in the winter with the driving of wood piles through the ice to create the building's foundation. The boathouse was then erected on the pilings. Wet boathouses in northern Wisconsin are typically one-or-two-story frame buildings with hip or front gable roofs. Many of the boathouses are small-scale, utilitarian buildings, featuring square or rectangular floor plans and one or two bays on the front elevation. Although examples occur where limited decorative elements of the Craftsman, Rustic, and Queen Anne styles are applied, northern Wisconsin boathouses tend to be largely vernacular in design with very little architectural style or detail. In instances where these design elements are applied to boathouses, the representative style is readily apparent in contrast to neighboring buildings. The Rustic style utilizes log or partial log construction to imitate the rustic character of log buildings constructed during the early settlement of the area. The Queen Anne style, as applied to boathouse construction, is demonstrated primarily through a prominent turret/lookout tower, wall texture variation, and architectural details.

¹⁶ This discussion of boathouse design and architecture has been compiled using Mead & Hunt's *Land of Silver Lakes and Streams, Survey of Resorts and Boathouses in Oneida County, Wisconsin* (prepared for the Wisconsin Historical Society, 1998), field surveys of boathouses in Oneida and Vilas Counties by the author, and John De Visser, *At the Water's Edge: Muskoka's Boathouses* (Toronto: Stoddard Publishing Co. Limited, 1993).

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Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Characteristics of the Craftsman style that have been adapted to boathouse construction include broad gable or hip roofs, decorative brackets or rafters, multi-pane windows, and dormers on the roof.

The construction of larger, two-story, architecturally distinctive boathouses was most popular in north-central Wisconsin in the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁷ By the 1950s, architectural pattern books of summer cabins and boathouses were largely promoting one-story, single-craft designs.¹⁸ However, the 1955 pattern book, *How to Build 20 Cabins*, includes one, two-story, two-craft structure. The designs in the pattern books of the 1950s are either Rustic, using half-log siding, or functional vernacular, with little architectural detail. Both sources advocate the adaptability of their designs, providing the same design for wet or dry boathouses. Overall, the summer cabin pattern books of the 1950s with simpler boathouse designs provide little concordance with the architecturally significant boathouses in the North Woods region from the 1910s to the 1930s.

Two-story boathouses dating from the first half of the twentieth century, with upstairs living spaces, have been found to possess a higher level of architectural interest. Examples of these buildings that retain good integrity have been listed in the National Register. Due to their larger scale, the application of architectural details, although limited, is more common on these boathouses and contributes to their significance. Additionally, two-story boathouses are less prevalent than their one-story counterparts.

The Mayer Boathouse compares favorably to other wet boathouses identified on Planting Ground Lake and the Three Lakes chain. This two-story wet boathouse with two bays retains its overall form, fenestration pattern, windows and wall material, and displays elements of the Craftsman style in the hip roof, exposed rafters, and multi-light windows. The exterior second level balcony with decorative balustrade is also a unique architectural feature of this boathouse. The majority of other wet boathouses on Planting Ground Lake are one-story, more vernacular examples and do not demonstrate the same architectural distinction as the Mayer Boathouse.

The Mayer Boathouse also displays similar architectural distinction as other boathouses in Oneida and Vilas counties that have been listed in the National Register. The Mayer Boathouse and other listed boathouses share the following characteristics: they are large-scale, two-story buildings with two or

¹⁷ The construction period for boathouses was determined based on the time period of recreational settlement of the area, known construction date of a number of boathouses and an assessment of the commonly used building form, materials and architectural styles.

¹⁸ The following information comes from *How to Build 20 Cabins* (New York: Arco Publishing Co. 1955), 128-139; *Summer Living* (1953), 30-31.

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Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

three bays; they contain upper-story living areas; and they retain the original building materials, use, and function. In addition, their architectural details, though modest, are indicative of a distinct architectural style. On the Three Lakes chain – the Mayer Boathouse is comparable in size, scale and architectural details to the Marshall D. Miller Boathouse (c.1920) and the Reay Boathouse (c.1928) that are listed in the National Register.

Conclusion

The Mayer Boathouse is eligible for the National Register at the local level under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a distinctive example of an early twentieth-century, two-story wet boathouse. The boathouse retains its original design, setting, materials, and workmanship, allowing it to retain integrity and continue to convey its historical and architectural significance as a boathouse. The large-scale, upper-story living area and Craftsman-style details demonstrate the building's architectural significance compared to other boathouses on Planting Ground Lake, which tend to be one story and more vernacular in design.

Preservation Potential

Boathouses have been a fixture on northern Wisconsin's lakes since the beginning of the area's summer tourism industry. These structures, located on the water, are more visible to the boater than the lake cottages or resorts on the shores. The boathouses have often served as landmarks for the generations that have enjoyed recreating on the lakes. Since 1979, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has banned the construction of new wet boathouses and placed a limitation on repairs of existing boathouses to 50 percent of the assessed value of the building under State Statute 30.121 *Regulation of boathouses and houseboats*. As a result, the amount of maintenance that can be completed on a wet boathouse over its lifetime is limited. However, under Section (2) (3g), the repair limit does not apply for boathouses with "historic or cultural value, as determined by the state historical society or a local or county historical society established under Section 44.03." Nomination of these buildings to the National Register not only recognizes their historic and cultural value, it also offers a degree of protection by allowing for their continued maintenance.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Verbal boundary description

The boundary of the George P. Mayer Boathouse is shown as a dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "George P. Mayer Boathouse." The boundary extends 20 feet beyond the edge of the boathouse and its permanent dock on all sides. The boathouse is the only building on the property being nominated. Other buildings on the property are not included in the historic boundary due to diminished integrity.

Boundary justification

The boundary of the George P. Mayer Boathouse was delineated to encompass the historic resource and provide an appropriate setting. The boundary as shown on the accompanying map is drawn through the seasonal dock. This dock is removed off season and is not an element of the historic boathouse.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section Photos Page 1

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

***Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes
Oneida County, Wisconsin, 54562
Photographer: Christina Slattery, Mead & Hunt, Inc., September 2009
Ink and Paper: Fuji Crystal Archive paper and printing***

Photograph 1 of 13
Boathouse (setting) – front (southeast) elevation
View facing northwest

Photograph 2 of 13
Boathouse – front (southeast) elevation
View facing northwest

Photograph 3 of 13
Boathouse – side (southwest) elevation with docks and front (southeast)
View facing north

Photograph 4 of 13
Boathouse – front and side (southeast and northeast) elevations
View facing west

Photograph 5 of 13
Boathouse – side (northeast) elevation with ramp and staircase
View facing southwest

Photograph 6 of 13
Boathouse – rear (northwest) elevation
View facing south

Photograph 7 of 13
Boathouse – side (southwest) elevation with docks
View facing northeast

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section Photos Page 2

Mayer, George P., Boathouse
Oneida County, Wisconsin

Photograph 8 of 13

Boathouse – second story exterior; close up of ramp and entrance
View facing southeast

Photograph 9 of 13

Boathouse – second story balustrade and window detail
View facing northeast

Photograph 10 of 13

Boathouse – first level interior with two boat slips and raised overhead doors
View facing south

Photograph 11 of 13

Boathouse – first level interior with two boat slips and interior staircase
View facing west

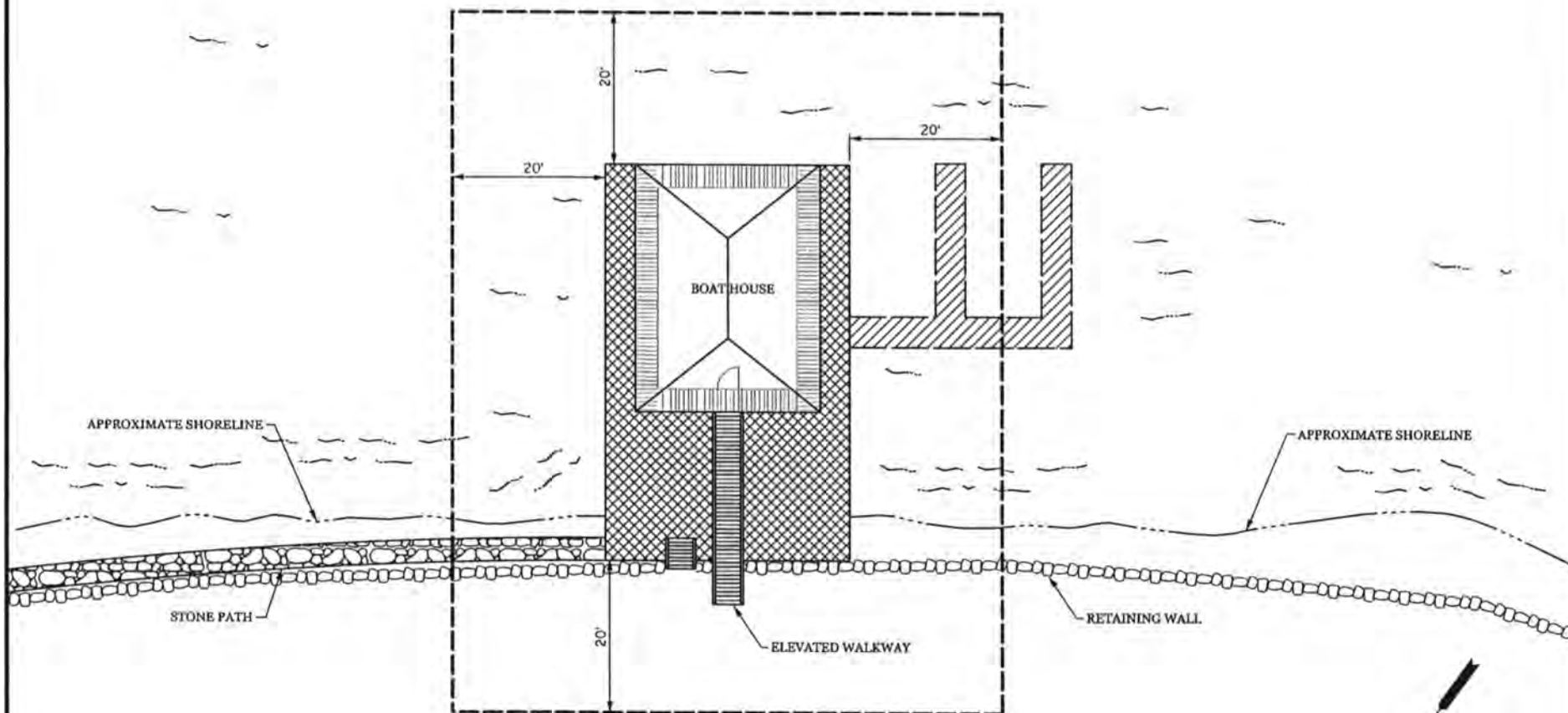
Photograph 12 of 13

Boathouse – second story interior general use room
View facing southeast

Photograph 13 of 13


Boathouse – second story interior general use room
View facing west

PLANTING GROUND LAKE



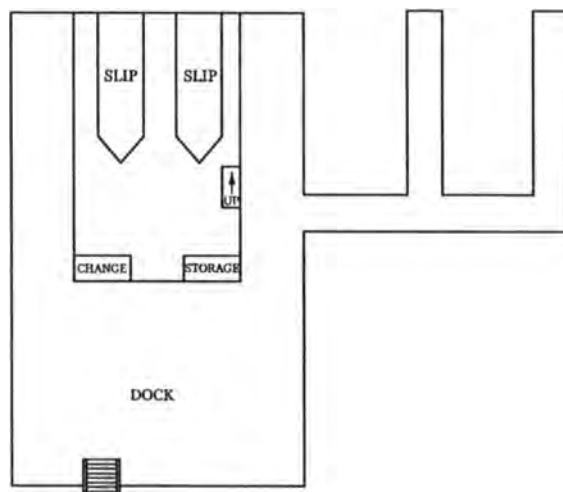
ATTACHMENT #1: GEORGE P. MAYER BOATHOUSE

7708 BRAEGER ROAD
TOWN OF THREE LAKES
ONEIDA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

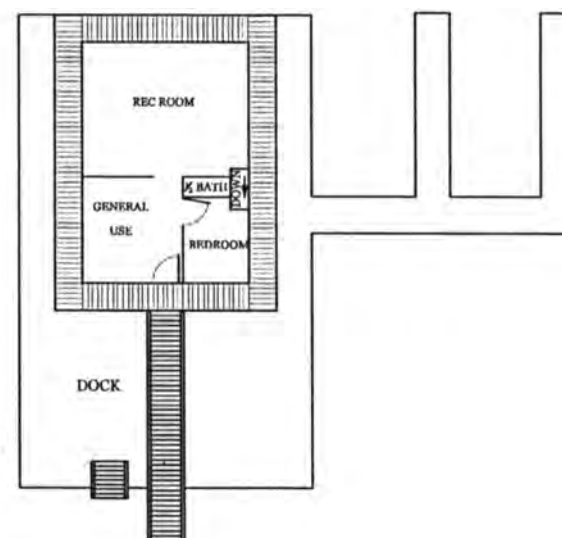
-  SEASONAL DOCK
-  DOCK
-  HISTORIC BOUNDARY



0 10 20
SCALE, FEET



FIRST LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL

ATTACHMENT #2: GEORGE P. MAYER BOATHOUSE

7708 BRAEGER ROAD
TOWN OF THREE LAKES
ONEIDA COUNTY, WISCONSIN



NOT TO SCALE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Mayer, George P., Boathouse
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Oneida

DATE RECEIVED: 2/02/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/09/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/24/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/20/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000115

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3.21.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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



Wayer, George P.; Boathouse
7700 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead + Hunt, LLC.
September 2009

Boathouse (setting) - front (southeast) elevation
View facing northwest
photo 1 of 13

718949, IMG_3033-0004

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P. Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Lenc.
September 2009

Boathouse - Front (southeast) elevation
View facing northwest

photo 2 of 13

718949, IMG_3038_0005

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse

7700 Braeger Road

Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, LLC.

September 2009

Boathouse - side (southwest) elevation with docks and front
(southeast) facade

View facing north

photo 3 of 13

718949, IMG_2987-0001

Fuji, F0000, 11/27/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead + Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - front and side (southeast and northeast) elevations
View facing west
photo 4 of 13

718949, IMG_3053-0006

Fujif, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Lenc.

September 2009

Boathouse - side (northeast) elevation with ramp and
staircase

View facing southwest

photo 5 of 13

718949, IMG_3193, 00007

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7700 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead + Hunt, Linc.
September 2009

Boathouse - rear (northwest) elevation
view facing south
photo 6 of 13

718949, IMG_3225_0008

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Maier, George R. Boathouse
7700 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead + Hunt, Inc.

September 2009

Boathouse - side (southwest) elevation with docks

View facing northeast

photo 7 of 13

718949, IMG_3022, 0002

FLJ1, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - second story, exterior, close-up of ramp and
entrance
View facing southeast
photo 8 of 13

718949, IMG_3319, 0014

Fuji, F0000, 11/27/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - second story ballustrade and window detail
view facing northeast
photo 9 of 13

718949, IMG_30240003

FUJIF, F0000, 11/13/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, LLC.
September 2009

Boathouse- first level interior with two boat slips and
raised overhead doors
view facing south.
photo 10 of 13

718949, IMG_3248_0009

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7700 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - First level interior with two boat slips and
interior staircase
View facing west
photo 11 of 13

718949, IMG_3252_0010

Fujifilm, F0000, 1/23/09



Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7700 Bräeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - second story interior general use room
view facing southeast
photo 12 of 13

718949, IMG_3297_0012

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



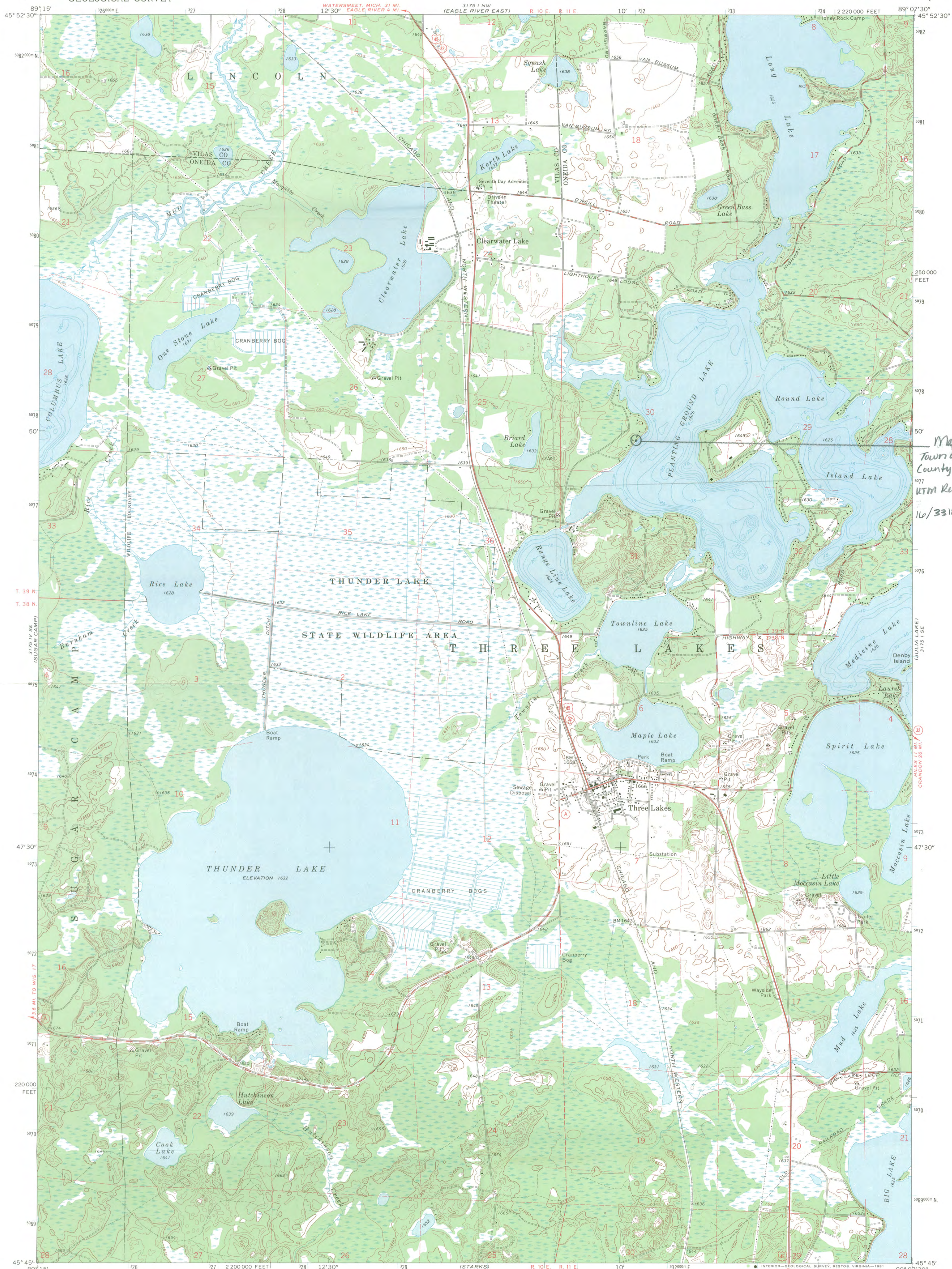
Mayer, George P., Boathouse
7708 Braeger Road
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County, WI

Mead & Hunt, Inc.
September 2009

Boathouse - second story interior general use room
view facing west
photo 13 of 13

718949, IMG_3314-0013

Fuji, F0000, 11/23/09



Mayer, George P. Boothase
Town of Three Lakes, Oneida
County, WI
UTM References
16/331894E/5077481N

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

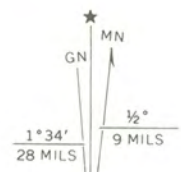
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1970

Depth curves compiled from charts furnished by
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue

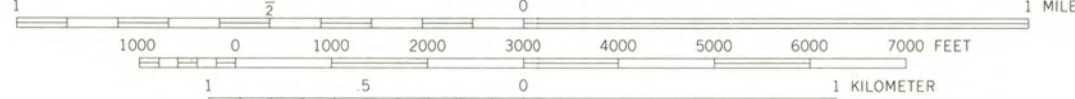
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters north and
9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1970 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24,000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
U. S. Route
State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Map photoinspected 1976
No major culture or drainage changes observed

THREE LAKES, WIS.

N4545—W8907.5/7.5

1970
PHOTOINSPECTED 1976
AMS 3175 1 SW—SERIES V861

