Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 15 1977
DATE ENTERED DEC 28 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Schoolcraft Furnace

AND/OR COMMON
Munising Furnace

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
W. of Munising off M-28

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Munising

X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
11

STATE
Michigan

CODE
26

COUNTY
Alger

CODE
003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN
Omaha,

—— VICINITY OF

STATE
Nebraska 68102

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Alger County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Munising

STATE
Michigan 48962

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore

DATE
August 1968

X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Park Headquarters

CITY, TOWN
Munising

STATE
Michigan 48962

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	XORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	XALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	XUNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Schoolcraft Furnace site is located in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore and is northeast of the town of Munising in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The area of land on which the furnace, kilns, and accompanying buildings once stood is in and around a small valley which was formed by glacial movement. At present a second growth of trees and vegetation has grown up in the valley after being cleared a hundred years ago. This valley today is not only historic, but naturally beautiful. The furnace's foundation originally was blasted out of the side of the valley along Munising Creek approximately 1100 feet from the shore of Lake Superior. Visible evidence shows the remains of a blast furnace at mound B and a wooden log road or "corduroy" road and iron ore at A. (See Diagram) There are also several kilns up the hill from the blast furnance remains that can be seen as circular shapes protruding above the ground.

The evidence at A, approximately 200 feet from the Park information center up the valley, shows a series of parallel logs which lead into Munising Creek. At one time there was a wood or "corduroy" road up to the furnace from the lake dock and this is probably the remains of that road. There is also a round metal mass on the opposite side of the Creek which is thought to be a piece of iron ore, or possibly part of the blast furnace.

Mound B is approximately 100 feet uphill from A and is the site of the blast furnace. Exposed quarried rocks, bricks, and pieces of metal which are the remains of the metal reinforcing bars of the blast furnace, are found in an area which is approximately thirty feet by thirty feet. A second growth of trees and vegetation now covers the area.

The area of the kilns up the hill from the furnace is of an undetermined size because of vegetation which conceals much of the evidence. The area is at least seven acres in size. The placement of some of the kilns can be seen during the spring when the vegetation is at its lowest point and the snow is gone. What can be seen are a number of raised circles of grass and dirt which have a diameter of approximately twenty feet which are the remains of the kilns foundations. There is also evidence of access roads and a culvert.

The area of the kilns, area A, and mound B are visible to visitors from the Pictured Rocks Information Center. They are accessible from a path which leads to Munising Falls, a quarter of a mile back at the end of the valley. The National Lakeshore staff also have an Interpretive series and tour of the Schoolcraft Furnace area and its history.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	X INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1867, 1877 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Peter White, H.R. Mather

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Schoolcraft Blast Furnace was one of the most significant of the twenty-one blast furnaces that operated intermittently during the decade that followed the Civil War on different sites in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The furnace's importance does not rely on the mere fact that it smelted iron ore, but that Peter White was involved in its existence and the furnace's relationship with the Bay Furnace across Munising Bay. Peter White was Northern Michigan's most successful nineteenth century banker who exemplified the rags-to-riches pattern. He was not only prominent within the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, but was well known in both political and financial circles of this country. He hoped to develop Marquette, Michigan and the surrounding area into an iron and steel center. The site of the Schoolcraft Furnace represents a time in the history of industry when men were searching for a more economical way to transport iron ore to the steel producing areas of America.

In 1844, iron ore was discovered in the Marquette Range fifty miles west of the Schoolcraft Furnace site. This discovery caused entrepreneurs to build blast furnaces to reduce the ore to iron. All of the blast furnaces were closer to the Marquette Range than to the Schoolcraft Furnace located east of Munising Bay on Lake Superior. The Schoolcraft Blast Furnace was considered profitable because of the presence of a natural harbor and a large supply of hardwood in the surrounding area. This was true even though the iron ore was shipped from Marquette and limestone, used as flux, was brought from Lake Erie. The profitability of the Munising site for a blast furnace was reinforced two years after the Schoolcraft Furnace was in operation with the building of the Bay Furnace, six miles across the bay. The Bay Furnace became a companion to the Schoolcraft Furnace and the crews of both often met socially.

Peter White and H. R. Mather formed the Schoolcraft Iron Company in 1866. Money for this venture was supplied by Philadelphia financiers. The company was formed as a result of three previous attempts to make the Munising area profitable. The first attempt was the Munising Company which tried to start a resort community on the southeast shore

(Continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sawyer, Alvah L., History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan, Lewis Publishing, Chicago; 1911.
Michigan Mining Journal, February 12, 1876, P. 4.
The Mining Journal, Marquette, Michigan; January 23, 1960

(Continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9.99 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	529000	5141000
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
David Koenig, Researcher

ORGANIZATION
Department of Art

DATE
10/21/76

STREET & NUMBER
Michigan State University

TELEPHONE
(517) 353-9046

CITY OR TOWN
East Lansing

STATE
Michigan 48824

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ✓ NO ___ NONE ___

Deputy Michael D. Fazio
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ✓ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE June 7, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Robert B. Rettig
~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~ KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/28/77

ATTEST:
~~KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER~~

DATE 12-28-77

Form No 10-300a
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of Munising Bay in 1850 and was sponsored by Philadelphia investors. A tract of land containing 87,000 acres was purchased at a cost of eighty-five cents an acre. The plan was never realized. A road cut through to Bay de Noc on Lake Michigan, following an old Indian trail, and the planning of a village were the only accomplishments. After the Munising Company's capital was exhausted a new company called the Grand Island Ore Company was formed. The latter also lasted a short time. People who remained in the area survived by living off the land. The third company, founded by S. F. Church and H. R. Mather in 1863, was named the General Mineral Land Company. It also had financial setbacks. White and Mather purchased the General Mineral Land Company in 1866, renamed it the Schoolcraft Iron Company, and started construction of the Schoolcraft Furnace on May 17, 1867. The furnace foundation was 1100 feet from Lake Superior at the time of construction. The cost of the structure was increased because the stone had to be quarried on Grand Island and floated across the Bay.

The first blast of the Furnace was on June 12, 1868. The first "pig" iron production was slowed by water-logged charcoal, but after this problem was solved, production was 100 tons per week. The Furnace consisted of one large engine (for the hot air blast) and two smaller engines, (one for the water pump and the other for the ore crusher). All the mechanical parts were made at the Washington Iron Works, Newbury, New York. As a safety measure an 8,000 gallon water tank filled with water from Munising Creek was put on the hill in the event of a fire.

A water balance carried the crushed ore and limestone to the top of the stack to be loaded. Originally five kilns were built in the immediate area and six others were located approximately four miles away in the heart of hardwood forests.

The Schoolcraft Iron Company prospered for two years, but because management officials in Philadelphia had overextended the company financially, iron ore ran out at the site and the furnace closed down. Peter White than bought the bankrupt company on July 12, 1871, for $65,000 and called it the Munising Iron Company. Under this new ownership, the furnace blasted again on April 8, 1872. The Furnace was operated intermittently for several years. The lack of supplies and the closing down for an addition of a bell and hopper to stop the loss of gas when loading the furnace were the reasons.

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Of the twenty-one original furnaces in Michigan's Upper Peninsula nine were in blast in September 1875. The Depression of 1873 contributed to the demise of blast furnaces in the Upper Peninsula. The Munising Iron Company never recovered. Also, other coke smelting processes were found to be less expensive. The furnace was leased to Major Henry Dickands from the summer of 1876 to November 1876, later to Dan Rankin from July 14, 1877 to November 24, 1877, after which it was closed down permanently. Both of these men failed because of a lack of fuel, a lack of iron ore, and the economic conditions of the times. In 1901, the Lake Superior Iron and Metal Company of Hancock purchased the old machinery and moved it to their plant in Hancock.

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LaFayette, Kenneth, "Schoolcraft Iron Company at Munising"; part of an unpublished book on the history of mining in Michigan's Upper Peninsula; 1976.

Dunbar, Willis F., Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, William B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan; 1965.

Information from Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore's file on the Schoolcraft Furnace.