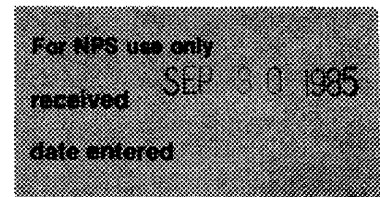


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Continuation sheet 1st Lutheran Church Item number Page 1

This building is presently listed as part of the Lead Historic District.

Site #18

1. Old Finnish Lutheran Church
2. Sinking Gardens, East Main Street
Lead
South Dakota 046 Lawrence 081
3. building; public; NA; occupied; restricted; commercial; educational
4. City of Lead
c/o Women's Club and Chamber of Commerce
Lead, South Dakota 57754
5. Register of Deeds
Lawrence County Courthouse
Deadwood, South Dakota 57732
7. fair; altered; moved, 1963

The building was moved in 1963 to its present site, the Sinking Gardens, which is the section of the Open Cut and the subsidence facing onto Main Street in Lead. Originally it faced west rather than south and was located almost directly across the street.

Built in 1891 by John Niemi and John Saari the church is a basic nave-plan form with a rectangular narthex surmounted by a square steeple and rectangular apse on the rear. This apse appears to be of a more recent date. Each side facade is pierced by three lancet-arched windows. Resting on a concrete foundation, the building is frame and covered in horizontal board siding. The front facade has two interesting details. One is the matching circular windows on the front facade of the nave and located above the rectangular windows which flank the entrance into the narthex. Secondly, the belfrey is open and has a flared-eave, octagonal roof; the belfry itself is built above a flared-eave, pyramidal roof. Recently loud speakers and signs have been mounted on the steeple.

The interior has been radically changed and the building is now used as an art gallery and tourist gift shop. Behind a curtain covering the altar area is a painting of the Ascension of Christ. This was painted by Charles Alaniva, a Finnish miner and was installed in 1907.

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Continuation sheet 1st Lutheran Church Item number Site #18 Page 2

8. 1800-1899; religion; settlement; Finnish ethnic history

Dates: 1891; 1907; 1963 Builders: John Niemi and John Saari

The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church is significant as the only remaining institutional building which marks the history of the Finns in Lead. In addition the church retains an unusual altar painting, painted by one of its members in 1905-1907.

This church was one of three Finnish Lutheran congregations in Lead and is the only one to have survived. The congregation worships across the street in the new First Lutheran Church building, erected in 1963 when several different Lutheran ethnic groups merged into the Lutheran Church in America. Although this congregation is long-lived, it suffered from strife, splinter groups and even total inactivity for several years. For, unlike the rural areas, the Finns in Lead tended to be young, single and highly mobile. The institutional permanence of the church was not as important as it was in areas of permanent, long-term, family settlement.

In 1889 the Reverend Henry Tanner, a missionary from the Seaman's Mission Society in Finland, organized a Lutheran congregation. The congregants met first in the Methodist Church and temperance hall. However, many members decided they needed their own, non-secular, building. In 1891 this structure was erected. In the 1890s when the majority of the members voted to join the Evangelical of Suomi Synod, some congregants left to form their independent group. This congregation was comprised of miners, domestic workers and a few merchants.

The building was erected by John Niemi, assisted by John Saari. In 1963 it was moved when the new church was built. Both locations are within the Lead Historic District.

10: Acreage: less than one

Quad: Lead

Scale: 1:24000

UTM: 13/598520/4911560

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Continuation sheet 1st Lutheran Church Item number Site # 18 Page 3

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the site are four imaginary lines which form a rectangle. The south boundary is the edge of the hillside which is 10 meters from the front wall of the narthex and parallel to it. The west boundary lies 20 meters to the west of the west wall of the church; the north boundary is 10 meters north of the north apse wall; and the east boundary is 20 meters east from the east wall of the church.