Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 8 1989

DATE ENTERED JUL 1 7 1980

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7 **DESCRIPTION**

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XEXCELLENT GOOD FAIR	- DETERIORATED 	UNALTERED	ORIGINAL SITE X_MOVED DATE <u>1928,</u> 1933

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Both historic buildings in the Heg Memorial Park have been moved from their original locations to the present site. Each building has been restored to accurately reflect the environment of the early years of Norwegian settlement. In most cases, where modern construction materials have been employed, the use has been necessary to strengthen the structure or to conform to building regulations (e.g. asbestos shingles).

The 1837 Bendickson cabin is a single story plus loft, rectangular structure. The exterior is constructed mainly of rough logs, laid horizontally with double saddle notching. In place of mud, the gaps between the logs were filled in 1928 with concrete. The exterior of the loft is constructed of horizontal siding. A brick chimney, probably added during the Bendickson ownership of the house, rests on the ridge near the north edge of the gabled roof. The building contains small 6/6 windows at each end of the loft, facing north and south, and larger 6/6 windows in the east and south walls of the ground floor. A north side porch on the gable end is covered by a **shed** roof which is supported by cut log braces and posts, and is framed by horizontal log railing.

The interior of the single floor consists of rough board walls, with the floor of the loft acting as the ceiling, also of rough board. Both the single floor and loft are undivided, open spaces. The building rests on a modern concrete foundation.

The Eielson house is an L-shaped structure which, like the cabin, rests on a modern concrete foundation. The park marker for the house claims that it was built in 1847, but no documentary evidence exists to support this. Each wing is rectangular, with the exterior walls constructed of clapboard. Each is topped by a gable roof with an interior brick chimney resting on the ridge. The north wing of the house is a single story, enclosing one room. The south wing is one story plus a loft, both of which are undivided space. In the loft newer wood has been installed to support the roof. Each wing has a separate entrance fronted by a single small porch located in the angle of the L. The porch is covered by a shed roof, supported by a single log post. All of the house's six windows have been removed and boarded up.

The Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church, also a single story structure, is rectangular, and constructed of brick. The entrance to the church consists of a double door with rounded arch, cut into a projecting brick tower, topped by a clapboard steeple. The original steeple, which consisted of a stone belfry and spire, was replaced in 1921 by the present steeple, which has steep gables at each of its four faces. The belfry is faced on each side by a roundarched louvre; the steeple is topped by a Latin cross. Four stained glass windows frame the north and south sides of the church, indicating a four-bay nave. The rounded arch of the windows suggest a slight Romanesque influence. The church is covered with a gable roof, which has an outside end brick chimney at the rear, east end.

The interior of the church has been modernized with new flooring and decorations, and is divided into a sanctuary and narthex. A basement has been added, and is reached by a small one-story side entryway covered with clapboards and a shed roof.

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SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1837, 1869 ¹	BUILDER/ARCH	HTECT unknown	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SIGNIFICANCE

Heg Memorial Park and the Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church are remnants of the early years of Norwegian settlement in southeastern Wisconsin. The town of Norway was an early focal point of Norwegian immigration to Wisconsin in the mid-19th century. The settlement's leaders included some of the most notable Norwegians in American history. The present park was established in 1925 as a monument to early Norwegian settlement in general and these men in particular. The park's two historic structures and the nearby church are virtually the only remaining reminders of the early settlement years.²

Settlement and religion. Early Norwegian immigration to Wisconsin began in 1838 and 1839, with scattered settlements in Rock County, and in the short-lived community of Muskego in Waukesha County.³ In 1840, two Norwegian businessmen named Soren Bache and Johannes Johannesen purchased a tract of land at Wind Lake, in Racine County. This site became part of the town of Norway, organized in 1848. Many immigrants from Bache's home of Drammen, Norway were attracted to Wind Lake, as were several of the Muskego settlers.⁴ The Drammen group was led across the Atlantic by Even Heg, formerly an innkeeper at Lier in the old country.⁵

Bache, Johannesen, and Heg proved to be exceptional leaders for the fledgling settlement. Bache invested more than \$6000 in the undertaking, mostly in land purchases which became farms for the newcomers. Bache also loaned money to many of these people (most of which he never regained) and together with Johannesen ran the community's sole general store.⁶ Johannesen, in addition to his activities with Bache, publicized the Norway settlement by writing a document known as the 'Muskego manifesto.' This was distributed in Europe to encourage further immigration to Racine County.⁷

But Heg was the principal leader at Wind Lake. Heg's barn served as the social and religious center of the settlement for three years, and as a half-way house for new arrivals for years longer. Literally hundreds of Norwegian immigrants lived for a time at Heg's barn until they found homes of their own. In 1847, Heg convinced Bache to provide funds for the establishment of the first Norwegian newspaper in the United States. The first issue of this, the <u>Nordlyset</u> (Northern Light) was printed in Heg's cabin.⁸ During the early part of its existence, the <u>Nordlyset</u> was edited by another Norway immigrant, James Denoon Reymert. Reymert was a teacher turned editor and politician, who in 1848 became the only Norwegian selected as a delegate to help write the Wisconsin constitution.⁹ As a result of these promotions and activities, the town of Norway grew rapidly. By 1850, its population exceeded 750, of which 404 had been born in Norway.¹⁰ Many other Norwegian immigrants stopped at the settlement before setting off to other parts of the middle western states.¹¹

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheets

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Pastor Eugene Leschensky Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church 6236 Heg Park Rd. Norway (Waterford)

WI 53185

FHR-8-300A (11/78) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Heg Park itself is an ll-acre stretch of ground, consisting mostly of open space interspersed with small groups of trees. The park is on level ground, well kept by the Racine County Park Department. Aside from the Eielson House and the Bendickson Cabin, structures at the park consist of a small Norwegian museum, some picnic shelters and tables, and playground equipment, none of which contributes to the nomination.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



NORWEGIAN BUILDINGS at Heg Park, Racine County, 7 Wis CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER, 7 PAGE 2

7. Description (revised, 7/7/80)

The Eielson House original rested at Jefferson Prairie, in Rock County, Wisconsin, where Eielson lived and preached after leaving the Norway settlement. This site is located in the NE¼ of the NE¼ of Section 29, Town 1 North, Range 14 East (Town of Clinton), in Rock County, Wisconsin. The site is south of Tighe Road, about 750 feet east of Highway 140, and is in the middle of a cornfield. Two stones which were part of the front stoop are still on the site, but the only other physical feature of the property were large cottonwood trees which have been removed.

Surrounding the Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church are the graves of the original settlers of Norway. The gravestones, which mark about 150 graves but the remains of many more settlers, are worn but the carved markings are legible. The graves run to the edge of the hill on which the church rests; the hill, in turn, runs down to Heg Park Road.

Submitted by Shoptaugh 7/7/80

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Part of the success of the settlement was due to its strong church life. Large numbers of Norwegians emigrated during this period to escape from the clericaldominated Lutheran Church that was supported by the Norwegian government. This anticlerical, lay movement, known as Haugeanism, was supported by Bache, Johannesen, and Heg. Most of the arrivals from Drammen were sympathetic to the tenets of Haugeanism.¹² Religious services at Heg's barn were conducted by lay preachers until 1843.¹³

Some attempt at organizing the Haugean impulse at Wind Lake was made by Elling Eielson. Eielson was a lay preacher whose influence in America over Norwegian Lutheranism came to be immense. Eielson came to the Norway settlement in 1840, bought land there and began to preach at the Heg barn services. He later married Sigrid Tufte of the community.¹⁴ But despite this his place at Wind Lake did not last. This was partly because Eielson himself was prone to move on frequently, and take his mission work to new areas. Also, he was unable to cooperate with other prominent Haugeans. Eielson was violently anticlerical, and "distrusted anyone who accepted the formal practices of the ordained clergy." When a second lay preacher arrived at Wind Lake. Eielson's departure soon followed. Eielson moved on, first to the small settlements at Rock County, later to other parts of Wisconsin and the middle west, and ultimately as far as Texas. Before Eielson died in Chicago in 1883, he had spent another forty years at his task: he had established the Eielson Synod of the Norwegian-American Lutheran Church, had opened schools for the training of synod clergy, and had won the following of thousands of Norwegian-Americans. His memory and influence are still very strong today.15

In 1843, Soren Bache arranged for a Danish layman named Claus Clausen to come to the town of Norway. Clausen was a moderate in Haugean doctrine and became the Norway congregation's first pastor (ironically, Eielson, in order to perform weddings, had himself ordained in Illinois just fifteen days before Clausen's ordination; Eielson was thus the first Norwegian minister ordained in the United States).¹⁶ With Clausen's guidance, the Norway congregation built a church in 1843, the first Norwegian-Lutheran church constructed in America.¹⁷ This building was a simple structure and was replaced in 1869 by the more elaborate church that stands on the spot today.¹⁸ This church is a nationally significant landmark of Norwegian-Lutheranism in the United States.

Norwegian-American heritage. Heg Memorial Rark has been since 1925 a memorial to Norwegian-American heritage in Wisconsin. Prior to its creation, many Wisconsin Norwegians were active in the Norwegian Society of America, which was founded in 1903 to preserve "the language, history and traditions of the Norwegians" in America.¹⁹ It was through this group that Racine County residents, many of whom were the children and grandchildren of the original settlers of the town of Norway, began to plan a

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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monument to Hans Christian Heg. Heg was the son of Even Heg, and a major figure in leading Norwegians to assimilate with the other citizens of Wisconsin. Through Heg's initiative, the 15th Wisconsin regiment, composed mostly of Norwegians, was raised to serve with the Union Army during the Civil War. It was at the head of this regiment that Heg was killed in battle in 1863.²⁰

Sixty-three years after his death, the Norwegian Society of American presented in 1926 a statute of Heg to the State of Wisconsin at the capitol in Madison.²¹ A second monument to Heg was soon after established in the town of Norway. This was the Heg Memorial Park, situated on an 11-acre parcel of land purchased by the Heg Memorial Committee of Norway, Wisconsin. The committee had been organized among Racine County residents, mainly those of Norwegian extraction, who spent five years raising funds for the project. When completed in 1928, the park was given over to the care of the Racine County Park Commission. It was the first of Racine's county parks.²²

In addition to the memorial, the Heg Memorial Committee established a Norwegian-American museum at the park and moved two historic buildings to the grounds. The first, moved to the site in 1928, was a log cabin that had been built in 1837, and was one of the earliest structures in Racine County. From 1866 to 1928, the cabin was part of the Halvor Bendickson farm at the Norway settlement. The building has been restored and furnished to represent the early years of the community.²³

The second building is the restored home of Elling Eielson. It was donated to the park and moved from its original spot at Racine County to the park in 1933. Furniture originally owned by Eielson was loaned to the park by Eielson's daughter and placed in the house. Although Eielson lived in many places during his lifetime, this house, in which he lived during the late 1840s and early 1850s, is believed to be the only Eielson home in the United States to still exist.²⁴ The remaining buildings in the park, including the museum, are not significant and do not contribute to the nomination.Only the log cabin, the Eielson house and the Evangelical-Norwegian church remain as visible reminders of the early history of this Norwegian settlement.

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NORWEGIAN BUILDINGS at HEG PARK, Racine County, 8 Wis PAGE 2a

8. Significance (revised, 7/7/80)

The manner in which the Heg Park symbolizes the importance of the old Norway settlement is best revealed by the Bendickson cabin. It was selected for its age and condition, but also because of he fact that Halvor Bendickson (1826-1902) had kept the cabin standing, long after he had built a new and comfortable house, as a reminder of his early and difficult years in Wisconsin. He had purchased the old cabin from a Yankee settler, so that the cabin was also emblematic of the necessary cooperation between the different groups in settling Wisconsin. It was with the same respect for the early trials of existence and the need for cooperation that the founders of Heg Park obtained the old cabin and refurbished it, using furniture donated by descendents of the first Norwegians in Wisconsin. In the same manner, Heg Park itself acts as a symbol, being one of the first such parks, created by ethnic descendents to specifically commemorate the transition of their ancestors from an old to a new world. As such, the park is yet today a living museum and monument of the earliest years of Norwegian-American heritage.

Submitted by Shoptaugh 7/7/80

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Notes

1) Ella Stratton Colbo, <u>Historic Heg Memorial Park</u>, Waterford Post, 1975 reprint of 1940 edition, p. 61-62, 65; <u>The Grassroots History of Racine</u> County, Racine County Historical Museum, Inc., Racine, 1978, p. 125-126.

2) Ibid., p. 33, 125-126.

3) H. L. Skavlem, "Scandinavians in Rock County," <u>Rock County, Wisconsin</u>, Wm. F. Brown, ed., C. F. Cooper & Co., Chicago, 1908, Vol. 1, p. 416-451; Frank A. Flower, ed., <u>The History of Waukesha County</u>, Western Historical Co., Chicago, 1880, p. 764-767.

4) Theodore C. Blegen, <u>Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860</u>, Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969 reprint of 1931 edition, p. 124-128. See also Rasmus B. Anderson, <u>The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration</u>, private printing, Madison, 1895, p. 277-278; George T. Flom, <u>A History of Norwegian Immigration to</u> the United States, privately printing, Iowa City, 1909, p. 156-160; Carlton C. Qualey, <u>Norwegian Settlement in the United States</u>, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minn., 1938, p. 47-50.

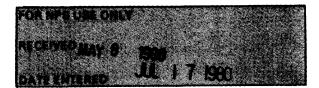
5) For Even Heg see "Even Heg," Works Progress Administration, Wisconsin Biographies, on deposit at the Archives Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin (here-after) W.P.A. Biographies).

6) For Soren Bache see "Soren Bache," W.P.A. Biographies; Flom, p. 159-160. A good source for the early years of the Norway settlement is Bache's diary, published in Norsk ungdom, 15-17, (1927-1929). A translation is workable in Clarence A. Clausen and Andreas Elviken, <u>A Chronicle of Old Muskego: The Diary of Soren Bache, 1839-1847</u>, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minn., 1951.

7) Blegen, p. 129.

8) <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 128-132; Anderson, p. 278; Flom, p. 160-161. See also Albert O. Barton, "Muskego: The Most Historic Norwegian Colony," <u>Wisconsin Magazine of</u> <u>History</u>, 21, (1937), p. 129-138. A collection of <u>Nordlyset</u> is available at the library of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Notes (continued):

9) For Reymert, his experiences with <u>Nordlyset</u>, and his subsequent career, see Albert O. Barton, "The Beginnings of the Norwegian Press in America," in <u>Publications</u> of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Milo Quaife, ed., Madison, 1917, p. 186-212; "James D. Reymert," W.P.A. Biographies; Olaf Morgan Norlie, <u>History of</u> the Norwegian People in America, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1925, p. 164-165; Milo Quaife, ed., <u>The Attainment of Statehood</u>, Madison, 1928, especially p. 918.

10) Joseph Schafer, <u>Wisconsin Domesday Book:</u> Town Studies, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1924, Vol. 1, p. 91-93. By 1850, the Norwegian population in Wisconsin was over 8600, or about 1/3 of the Norwegian population in the United States. See Ruth G. Sanding, "The Norwegian Element in the Early History of Wisconsin," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1936, p. 64-65.

11) Flom, p. 161; Blegen, p. 130; Qualey, p. 51.

12) N. N. Ronning, <u>The Saga of Old Muskego</u>, Old Muskego Memorial, Waterford, 1943, p. 19; Blegen, p. 126.

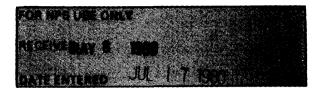
13) J. Magnus Rohne, <u>Norwegian American Lutheranism Up to 1872</u>, MacMillan Co., New York, 1926, p. 47-48; Blegen, p. 249. For a detailed treatment of the Norwegian Lutheran churches, see E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold, <u>The Lutheran Church</u> <u>Among Norwegian Americans</u>, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1960.

14) Material on Eielson, including two biographies written in Norwegian, is extensive. For compact, but thorough, coverage of his life, see George T. Flom, "Elling Eielson," <u>Dictionary of American Biography</u>, Malone and Johnson, eds., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1931, Vol. 4, p. 61-62; "Elling Eielson," W.P.A. Biographies; Malmin, Norlie, and Tingelstad, <u>Who's Who Among Pastors in all the Norwegian Lutheran Synods</u> <u>of America, 1843-1927</u>, third edition, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1928, p. 128; Leola N. Bergmann, <u>Americans From Norway</u>, J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1950, p. 148-150; Nelson and Fevold, Vol. 1, p. 71-81.

15) "Elling Eielson," W.P.A. Biographies, p. 8; Rohne, p. 48-49; Nelson and Fevold, Vol. 1, p. 126-150.

16) "Elling Eielson," W.P.A. Biographies, p. 9; Blegen, p. 250.

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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Notes (continued):

17) Rohne, p. 57-59; Ronning, 18-24. For Clausen, see, Malmin, Norlie, and Tingestad, p. 102; Bergmann, p. 89-90; Norlie, p. 197-198, "Claus Clausen,"
W.P.A. Biographies. For Soren Bache's estimate of Clausen, see his diary, edited by Clarence Clausen, p. 133-152. See also Nelson and Fevold, Vol. 1, p. 82-95.

18) Colbo, p. 37-39; Barton, "Muskego," p. 134.

19) Theodore Blegen, <u>Norwegian Migration to America:</u> the American Transition, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minn., 1940, p. 579.

20) For Hans Christian Heg, see Theodore C. Blegen, "Colonel Hans Christian Heg," <u>Wisconsin Magazine of History</u>, 4, (1920), p. 140-165; Richard N. Current, <u>The Civil War Era, 1848-1873</u>, Vol. 2 of <u>The History of Wisconsin</u>, Wm. F. Thompson, ed., State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1976, p. 308, 348.

21) Capital Times, October 18, 1926; Racine Journal-Times, October 18, 1926.

22) Racine Journal-Times, July 5, 1928; Colbo, p. 42-49.

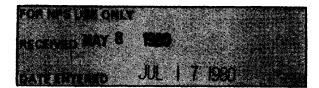
23) Colbo, p. 61-64.

24) Colbo, p. 65; Ronning, p. 64; Charlotte Jacobson, archivist for the Norwegian-American Historical Association, states that the Eielson House at Heg Park is "the only house we can identify with Elling Eielson" -- Charlotte Jacobson to Terry Shoptaugh, December 4, 1979. **CONTINUATION SHEET**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Historical Society of Wisconsin.



Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin

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FHR-8-300A (11/78) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Norwegian Buildings at Heg Park, Town of Norway, Racine County, WI

CONTINUATION SHEET

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18, T-4-N, R-20-E. The Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church is located on a separate parcel of approximately 0.2 acres about 300 feet east of the park on Heg Park Road.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



NORWEGIAN BUILDINGS at HEG PARK, Racine County, 10 Wis CONTINUATION SHEET , ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Verbal Boundary Description (revised 7/7/80)

Heg Park is located in the NW4 of the SE4 of Section 18, Town 4 North, Range 20 East, the Town of Norway, Racine County, Wisconsin. The Park boundaries form a triangular parcel of ground, bounded on the east by Heg Park Road, on the west by the Waterford Town Road and on the south by the surveyed line dividing the north and south halves of Section 18, T-4-N, R-20-E, (Town of Norway) Racine County, Wisconsin. The boundaries of the Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church are formed by a rectangle of about 2 acres, framed on the west by 200 feet of Heg Park Road running south from the entrance drive to the church property, running 400 feet due east on the north and south boundaries and closing at those points with another 200 foot north to south line. This parcel encloses the church and the old graveyard containing the remains of the original settlers. Heg Park Road, then, separates the two boundaries of this nominated area.

Submitted by Shoptaugh 7/7/80

